Note: This discussion is based on macOS, 10.14.6 (Mojave). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS or OS X. Most illustrations are from screenshots on my iMac or MacBook Pro.

This presentation will focus on web browser extensions. Previously, web plug-ins were used as an add-on to a web browser to give it additional functionality such as the ability to display additional content it was not originally designed to display. For example, plug-ins were used to enable QuickTime Player and Acrobat Reader.

As noted on Apple's "How to install Safari extensions on your Mac" webpage:

"Safari no longer supports most web plug-ins. To load webpages more quickly, save energy, and strengthen security, Safari is optimized for content that uses the HTML5 web standard, which doesn't require a plug-in. To enhance and customize your browsing experience, use Safari extensions instead of web plug-ins."

Apple's website and the App Store for its Safari web browser explains:

"Safari Extensions allow Mac users to explore the web exactly the way you want. Find helpful information about a web page, display news headlines, or quickly access and share content to your favorite app and services. To get started, choose Preferences from the Safari menu, select the Extensions tab, and click the checkbox to turn on the extension.

"Safari extensions let you extend the browser's capabilities to give you more control. You'll be able to better manage your accounts and passwords, block online ads and trackers, save web pages for offline reading, and much more."

Note: Typically, if the function that an extension provides can be adjusted, this is managed by a separate app.

Adding an Extension to Safari
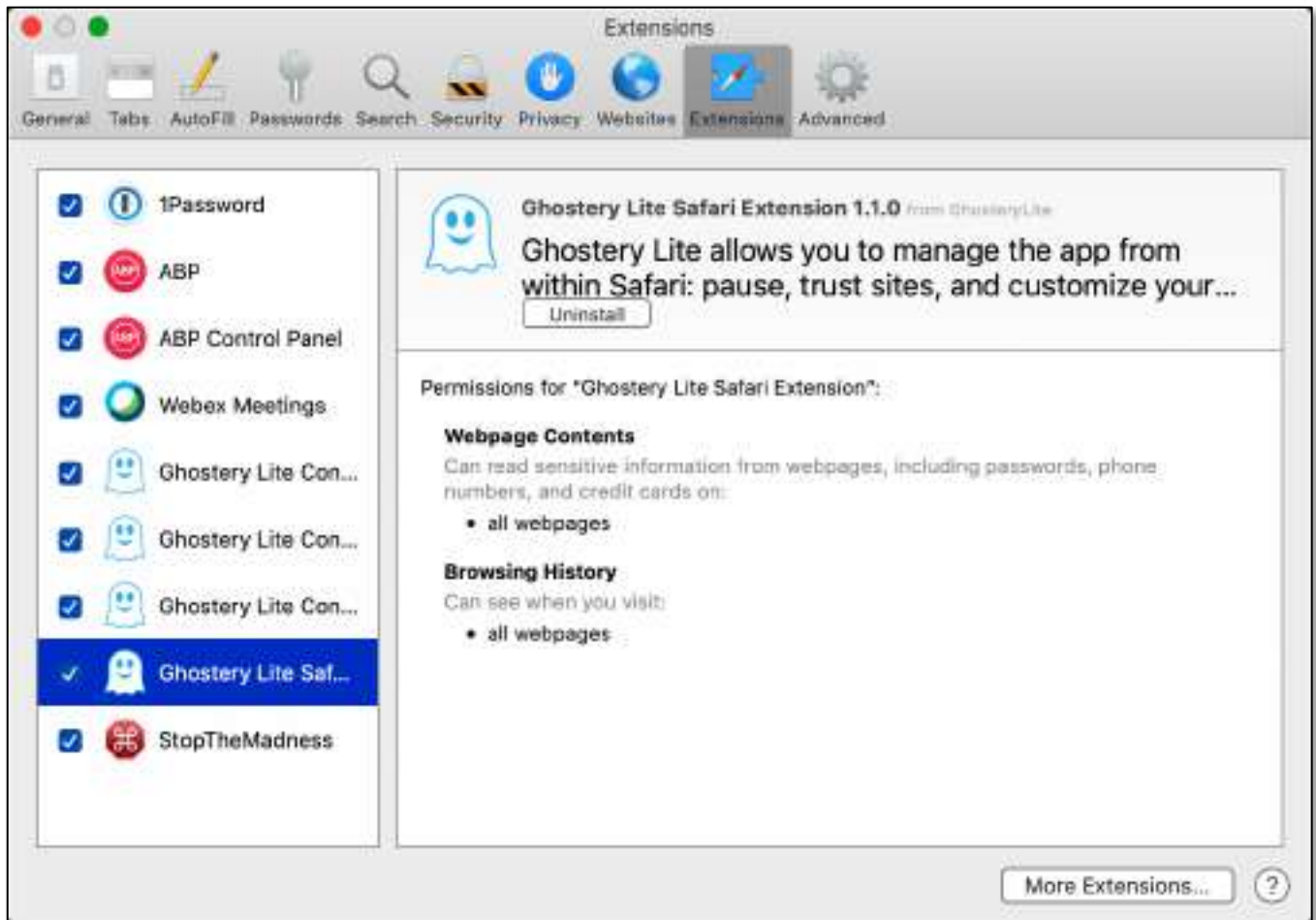
Adding an extension to Safari is an easy process:

- Download it from the Mac App Store.

- Open Safari's Preferences window: Click the **Preferences…** menu item under the **Safari** menu, or use the keyboard shortcut (⌘**+,**).

Safari Preferences – Keyboard Shortcut

- The **Extensions** window will then open:
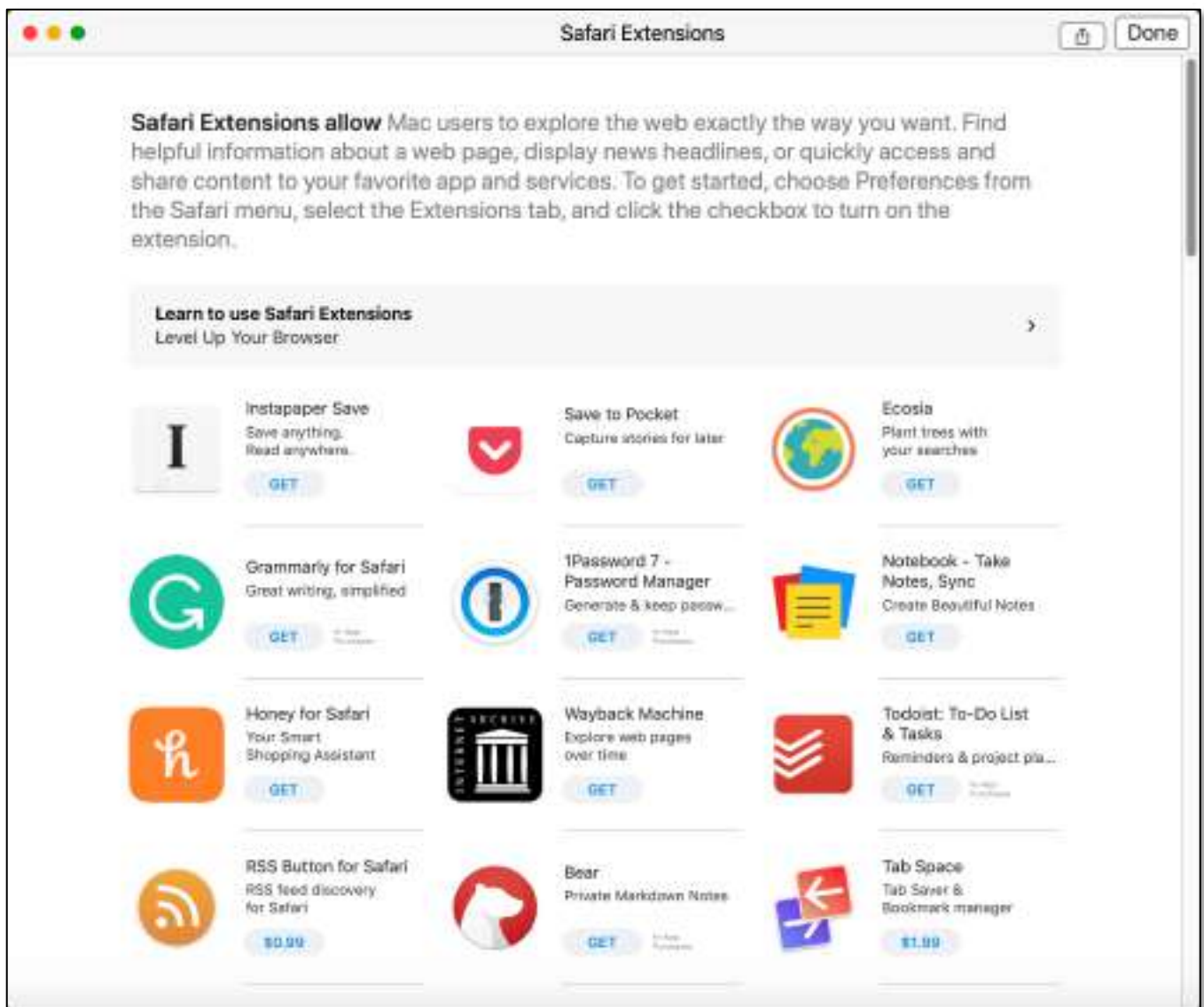

Safari Extensions – Extensions Group

- Then click on the icon for the **Extensions** group to display your installed Safari extensions, including the one that you've added. (See the illustration above.)

Note 1: Some extensions require a companion app. Typically, when you download and/or run the app, the extension will automatically be installed.

Note 2: On occasion, two extensions will be installed. For example, Add Block Plus installs two extensions (ABP and ABP Control Panel) as shown in the illustration on the next page. Ghostery Lite installs four extensions.

- Check the box next to the extension to **enable** it. As shown in the illustration above, the Ghostery Lite Safari Extension has been selected and clicked to enable.

- If you want to turn off an extension, simply deselect its checkbox. To remove it, click its **Uninstall** button.

- Clicking the **More Extensions** button (lower right-hand corner of the window) takes you to the Mac App Store where more Safari extensions are available for download. (See the illustration on the next page.)

- At last count, there were 79 extensions available. Most are free, but there's a charge for a few of them, at a listed price or as an "in-app purchase."

Mac App Store – Safari Extensions (Partial View of Page)

My Safari Extensions

I only have a few extensions installed:

1Password – This extension by developer Agilebits is for the 1Password password manager app, which I've been using 1Password for nearly 10 years now. It's available from both the developer and the Mac App Store.
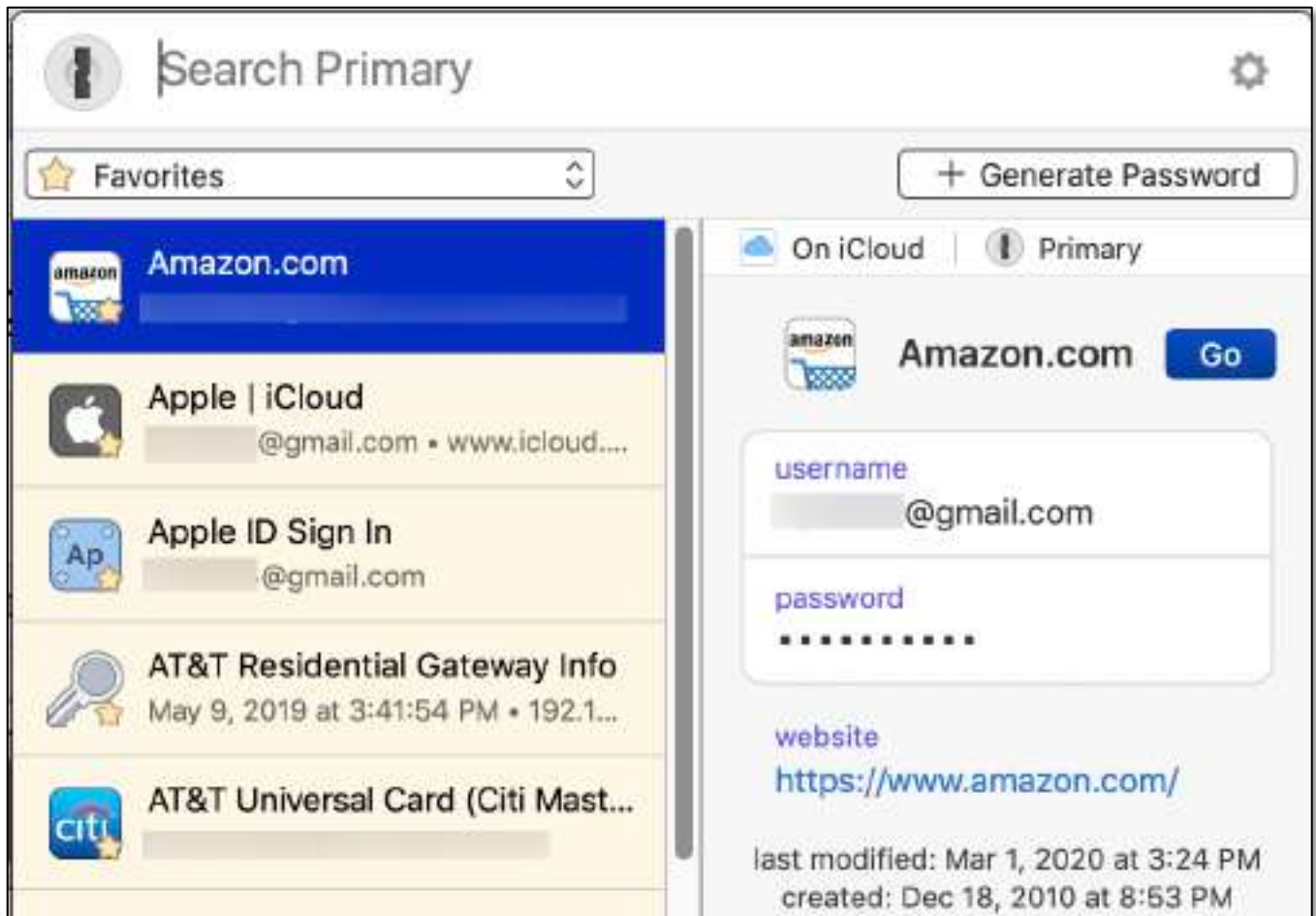
1Password is available for a variety of platforms including macOS, iOS, Windows, and Chrome OS.
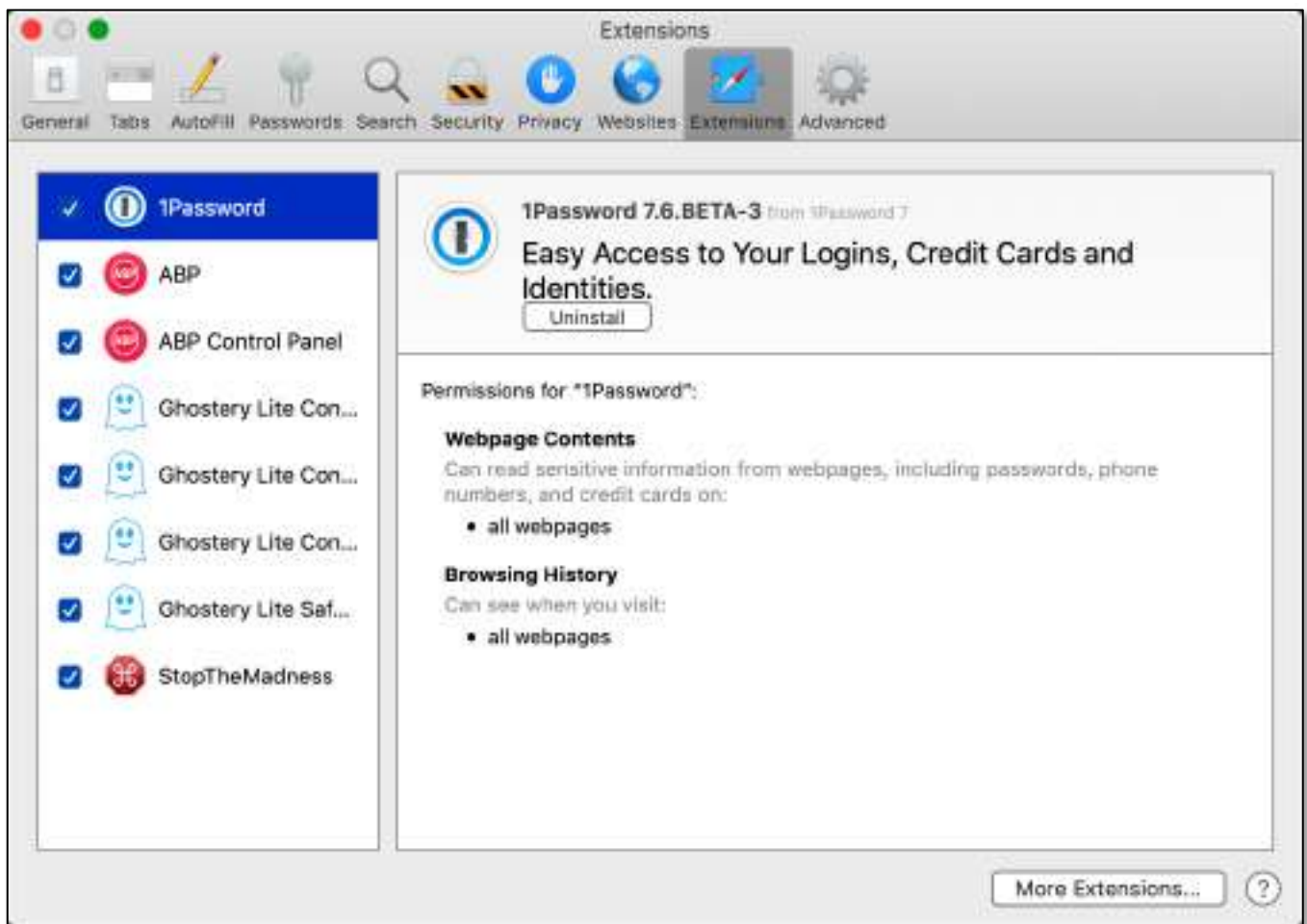
Safari Extensions – 1Password

- The 1Password extension enables a pop-up window from which to choose among the websites for which I've set up an ID and password to open. (See the illustration on the next page.)

1Password Pop-up Window (Partial View)

- After clicking an item in the list, the website will be opened, and the username and password will be entered. The user must still click on the appropriate sign-in button on the website to complete the sign in process.

- The pop-up window can be opened via a keyboard shortcut (typically (⌘+\).

  <u>Note</u>: On occasion, I've found that the sign-in process didn't fully complete with either the username or password field not being filled in. This might be due to the responsiveness of the website. Regardless, using the keyboard shortcut again filled in the missing field.

- The 1Password extension adds an icon to the toolbar. Clicking it will also open the pop-up window:

Icons for Safari Extensions (1Password Highlighted)

- Pricing for macOS, Personal & Family category, via subscription is $2.99 and $4.99 per month, respectively, billed monthly. One-time pricing is still available ($64.99) but difficult to find as the developer is focused on subscriptions. The last major upgrade to version 7 was $24.99.

- More information is available at https://1password.com/.

Adblock Plus (ABP) – I use Adblock Plus to help block ads found on websites. It's not perfect—don't believe that any of the ad blockers are—but it does help to reduce the "clutter" on a webpage.

Adblock Plus is available (free) from the Mac App Store.

- As noted earlier, ABP installs two extensions, **ABP** and **ABP Control Panel** as shown in the illustrations below. The ABP Control Panel enables the blocking process to be customized via the Adblock Plus app, including the ability to "whitelist" certain sites as I come across them where I don't mind see the ads.

Safari Extensions – ABP
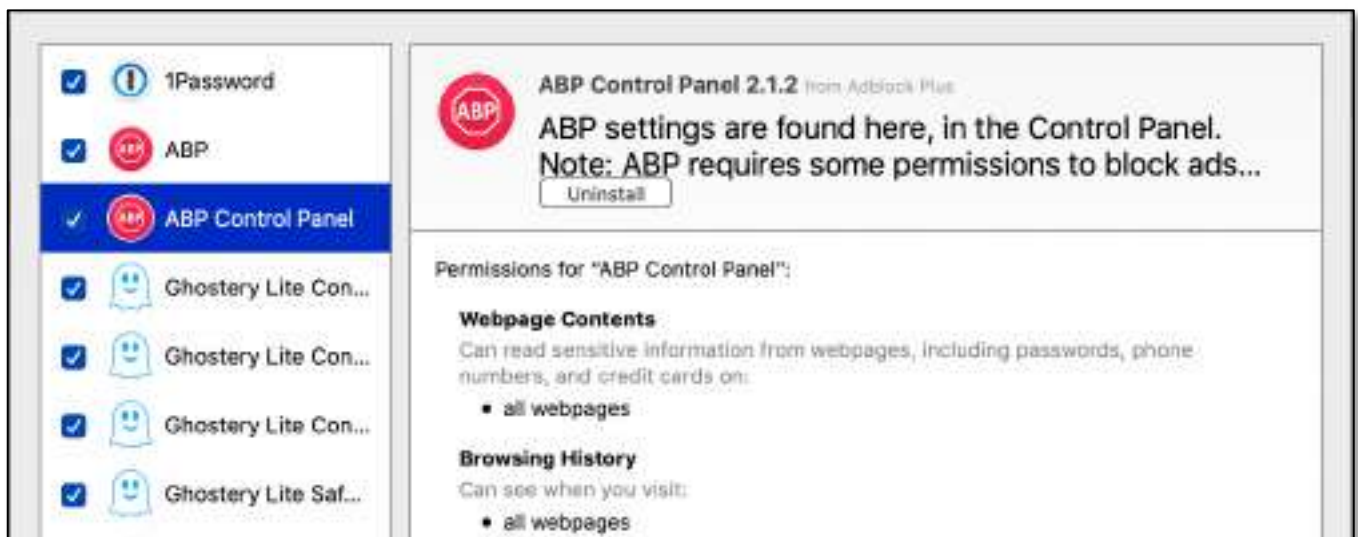
Safari Extensions – ABP Control Panel

- An icon ("ABP" label) is also added to the toolbar for quick access should you decide to disable blocking for the website being used:

Icons for Safari Extensions (ABP Highlighted)

- Click the ABP icon to display a pop-up window to enable or disable ABP by clicking on its checkbox:


Icons for Safari Extensions (ABP Pop-up Window)

- Some websites may ask you to turn off your ad blocker before displaying the full webpage, and this can be done from the pop-up window.

- Click on the **Open Adblock Plus** button to open up the app. The Adblock has three sections:

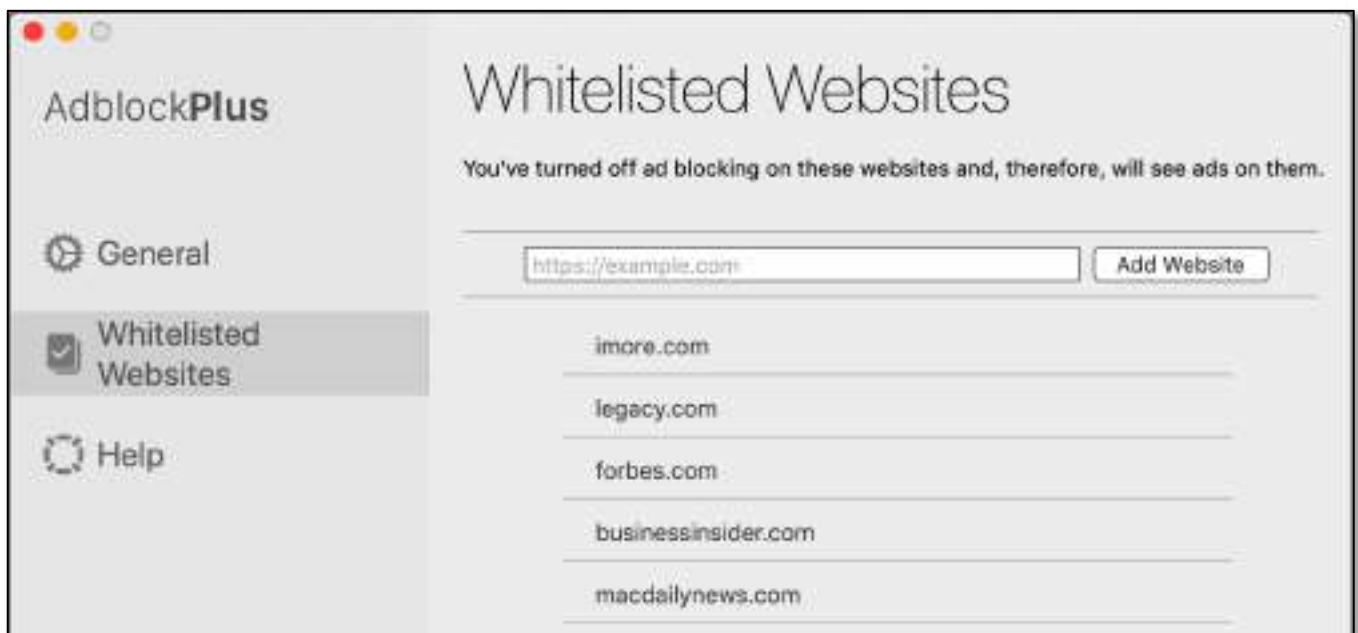 (See the illustrations on the next two pages.)

o <u>General</u> – Used to control what Adblock Plus shows and hides on websites.
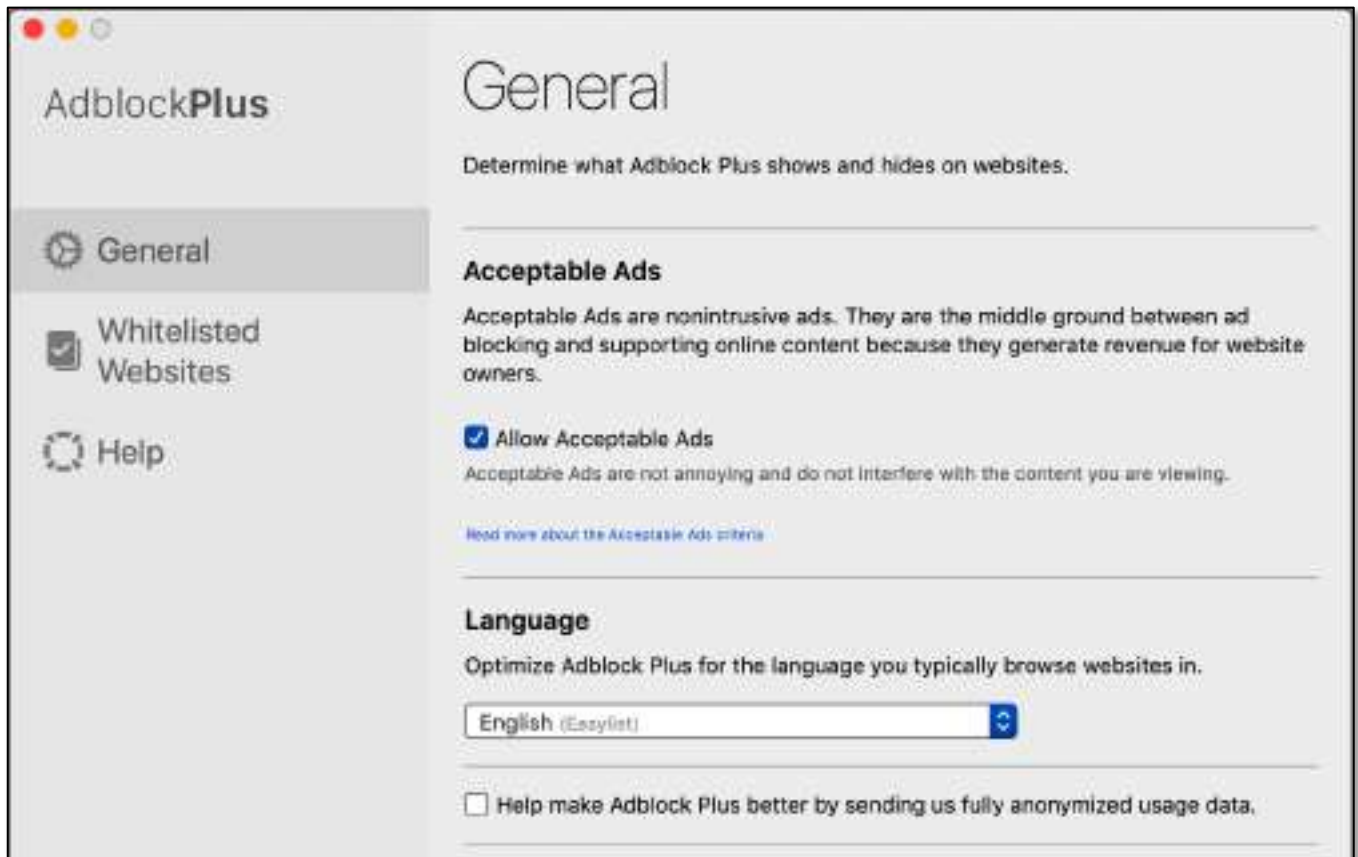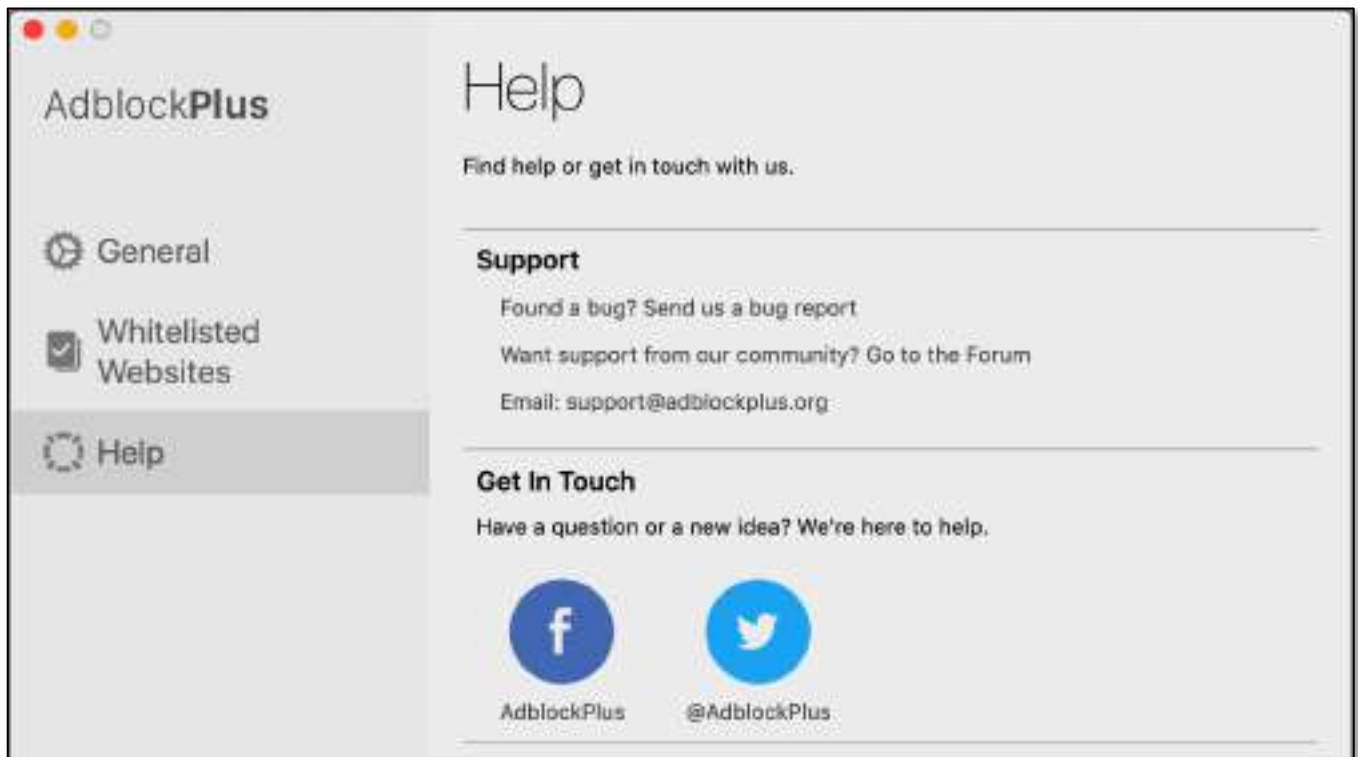

Adblock Plus – "General" Section

o <u>Whitelisted Pages</u> – Use this section to add a website to Adblock Plus where you don't mind seeing ads:

Adblock Plus – "Whitelisted Websites" Section

o <u>Help</u> – Provides an email address to contact Support. It also has information about the Facebook and Twitter pages managed by Adblock Plus.

Adblock Plus – "Help" Section

Webex Meetings – Enables Safari to participate in Cisco Webex video meetings.

• Jim Macak discussed this further at our online meeting.

Ghostery Lite – As explained on the Mac App Store, the main function of this Safari extension is to protect your privacy online by stopping trackers from accessing your personal data. It also blocks ads to keep the websites you visit clutter free.

Ghostery Lite Plus is available (free) from the Mac App Store.

• Ghostery Lite is enabled via its Safari extension. (See the illustration on the next page.)
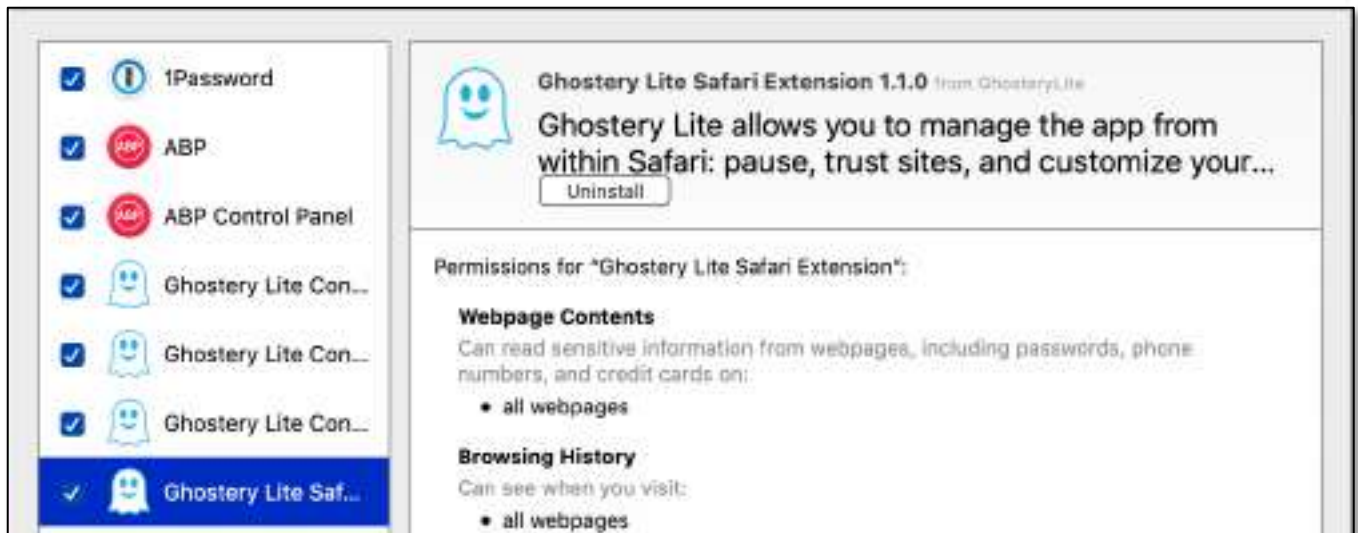
Safari Extensions – Ghostery Lite

- In addition, Ghostery Lite installs three additional extensions (called "comprehensive Content Blockers"):
  - Cosmetic Filters:

Safari Extensions – Ghostery Lite Content Blocker (Cosmetic Filters)

  - Network Filters:

Safari Extensions – Ghostery Lite Content Blocker (Network Filters)

o <u>Privacy Filters</u>:

Safari Extensions – Ghostery Lite Content Blocker (Privacy Filters)

• An icon (little "ghost") is added to the toolbar for quick access to its settings and also to provide some feedback:

**Icons for Safari Extensions (Ghostery Lite Highlighted)**

• Click the Ghostery Lite icon to display a pop-up window to access its settings:

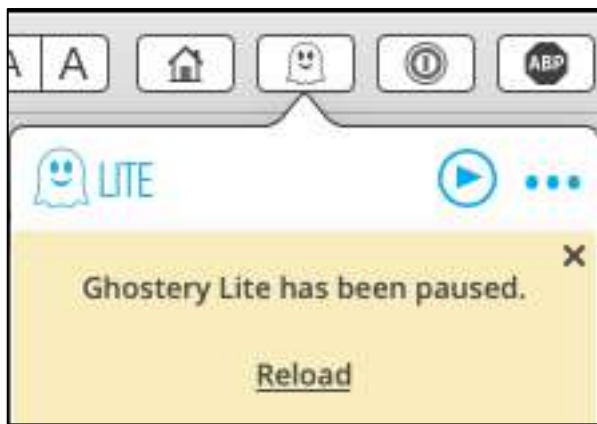**Icons for Safari Extensions (Ghostery Lite Pop-up Window)**

- Click on various items in the pop-up window to access Ghostery Lite settings:
  - o The **Pause/Run** button at the top of the pop-up window is a toggle that will pause and run/enable Ghostery Lite:
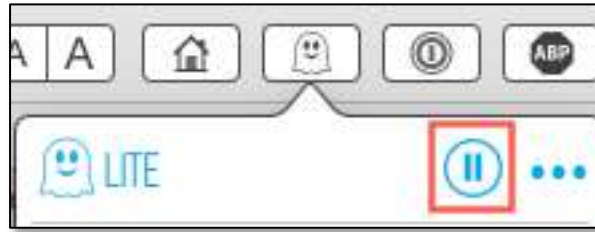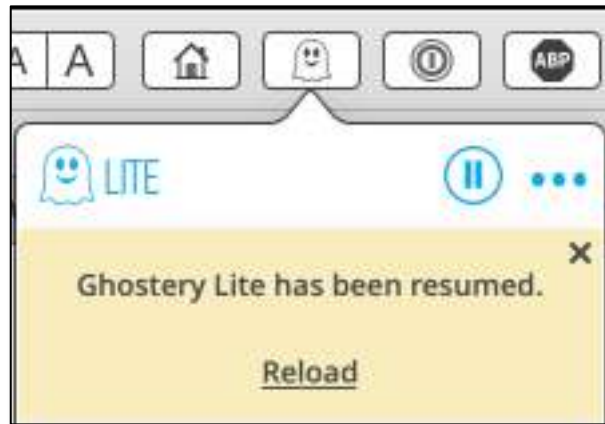

Ghostery Lite – "Pause/Run" Button

Clicking on the Pause/Run button:

| **Paused** | **Enabled** |

  - o Clicking the ellipsis button at the top of the window opens the Ghostery Lite app:

Ghostery Lite – "Open App" Button

  - o **Protection Buttons** – Choose between the **Default Protection** and **Custom Protection** features of Ghostery Lite (illustration below). Clicking on the small hexagonal information button explains purpose of the buttons.

Ghostery Lite – "Protection" Buttons

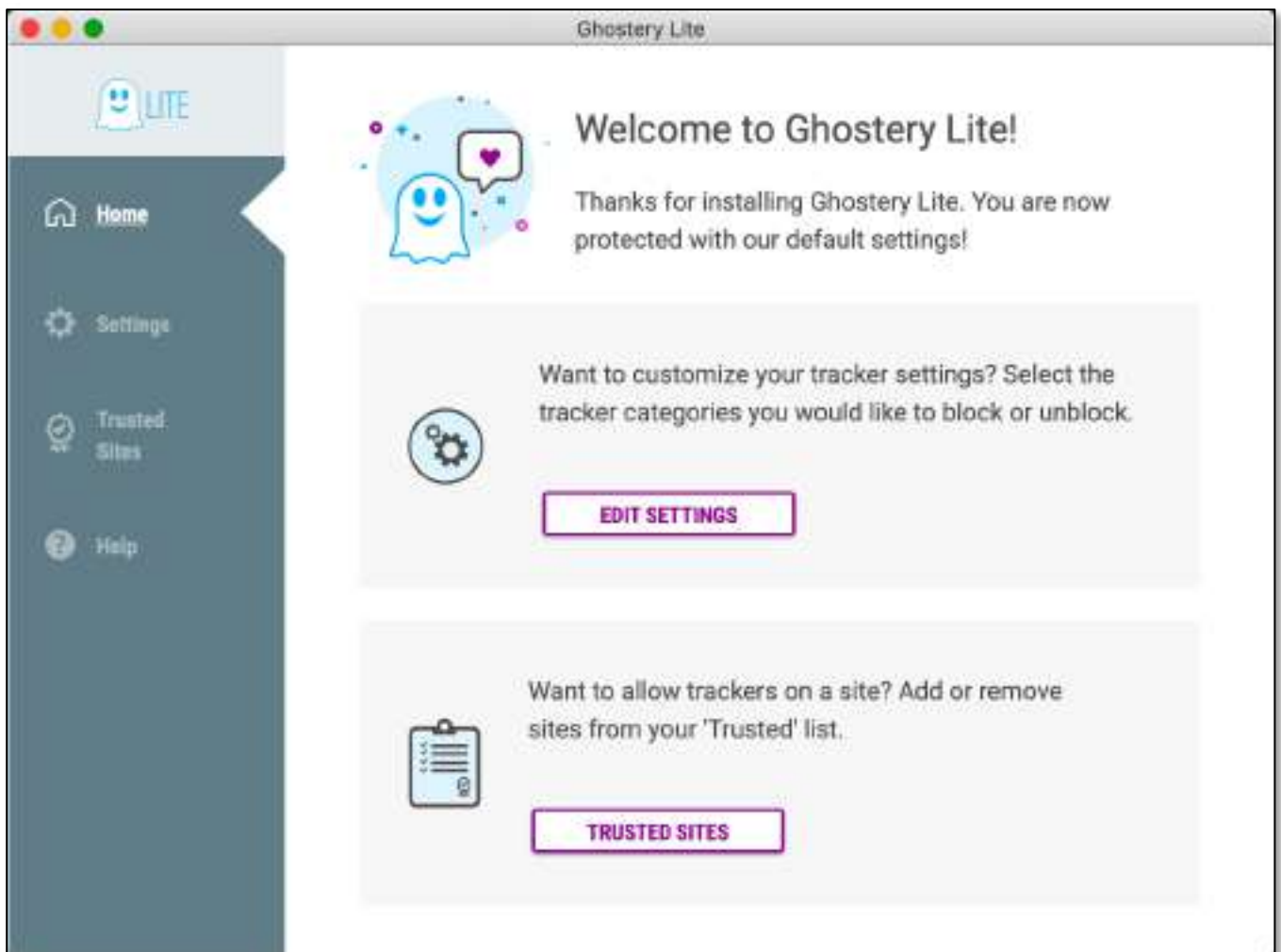o The rest of the pop-up window shows the name of the current webpage, how long it took to load, and includes a **Trust Site** button:


Ghostery Lite – Webpage, Load Time & Trust Site Button
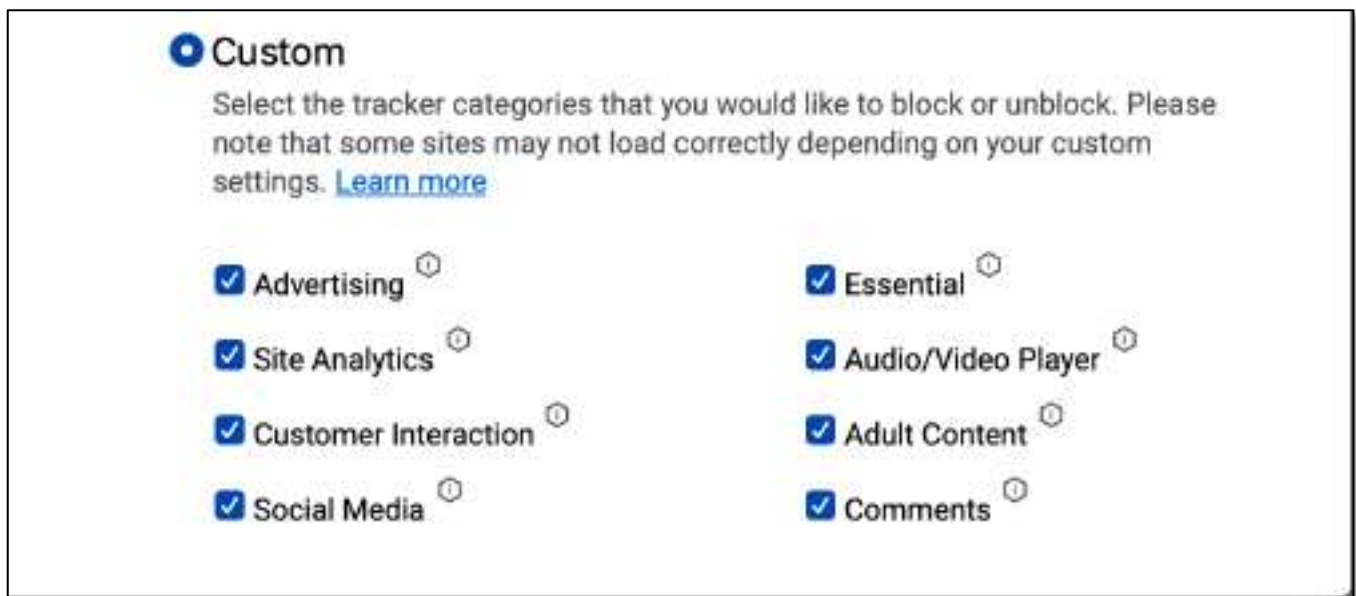
- Ghostery Lite App:

Ghostery Lite App – "Home" Section

- In the **Home** section, you can choose to **Edit Settings** and also to enter **Trusted Sites**:

  o The **Edit Settings** button opens the **Settings** section of the app where you can choose to use Ghostery Lite's **Default** setting or **Custom** settings, both of which have a **Learn more** link that takes you to the app's FAQ webpage:
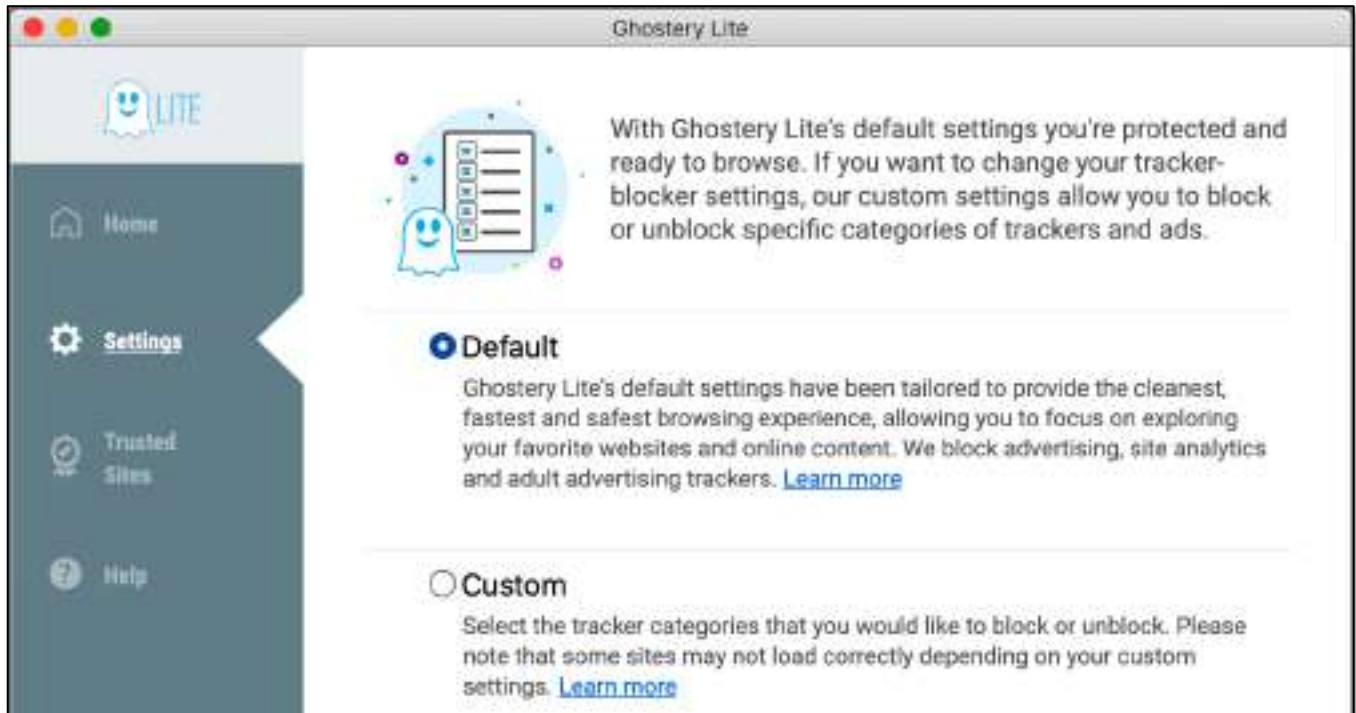
Ghostery Lite App – "Settings" Section

  o The **Custom** button allows you to select which tracker categories that you wish to block or unblock. The small information icon next to each one explains the function of each category.

Ghostery Lite App – "Settings" Section (Custom Categories)

- The **Trusted Sites** section shows a list of websites that you have "trusted" (and also the ability to remove one by clicking the "**x**" next to the website name). In addition, it has a field where you can enter a website name and then to click the **Trust Site** button to add it to the trusted sites listing.

Ghostery Lite App – "Trusted Sites" Section

- The **Help** section provides links to Ghostery Lite's support and information webpages:

Ghostery Lite App – "Help" Section

StopTheMadness – Back in February 2020, the TidBITS website had a nice review of StopTheMadness (https://tidbits.com/2020/02/17/tired-of-web-sites-blocking-standard-browser-controls-stopthemadness/).

StopTheMadness is available (free) from the Mac App Store.

• Quoting from the TidBITS review: "Have you been frustrated by Web sites that prevent you from copying text and images, add advertisements to copied text, add tracking junk to URLs, keep you from pasting in passwords, and block the Control-click contextual menu? Developer Jeff Johnson has created a browser extension called StopTheMadness that puts an end to these and other annoying practices."

• StopTheMadness is enabled via its Safari extension:

Safari Extensions – StopTheMadness

• Its settings are managed by a companion app. Starting the app reveals a window with 5 settings tabs.

(See the illustration on the next page.)
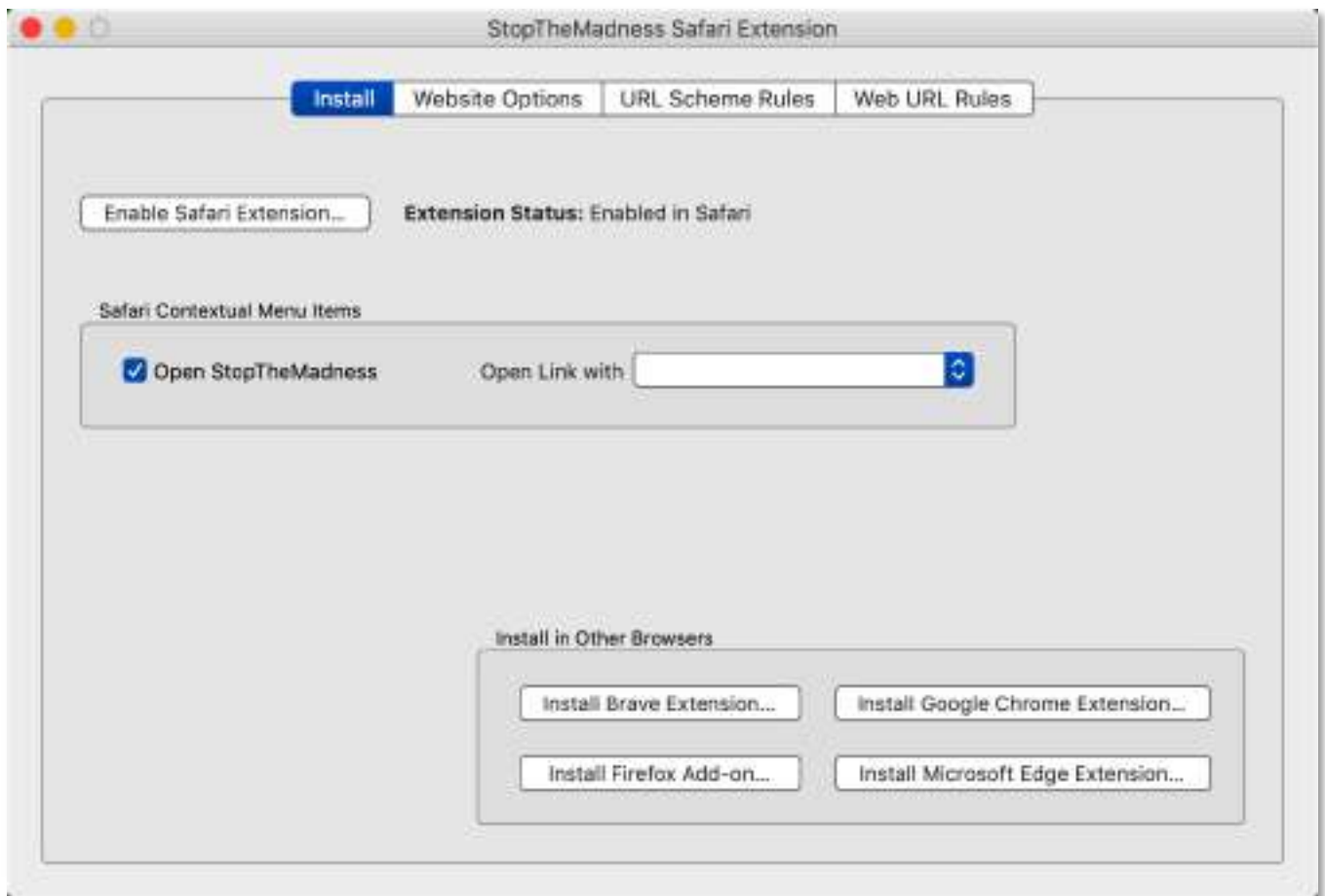
StopTheMadness Window – "Install" Tab

- **Install** Tab – Includes a button to enable the Safari extension
  (**Enable Safari Extension…**).

  o Default: Stops websites from disabling Safari's contextual menu.

  o Safari Contextual Menu Items section – Inserts an **Open StopTheMadness…**
    item into Safari's contextual menu to access the app (comes up when you
    Right- or Control-Click):

Safari Contextual Menu – Open StopTheMadness

o If desired, you can add an item to Safari's contextual menu to open links in an alternative browser by choosing from the **Open Link** with pop-up menu:
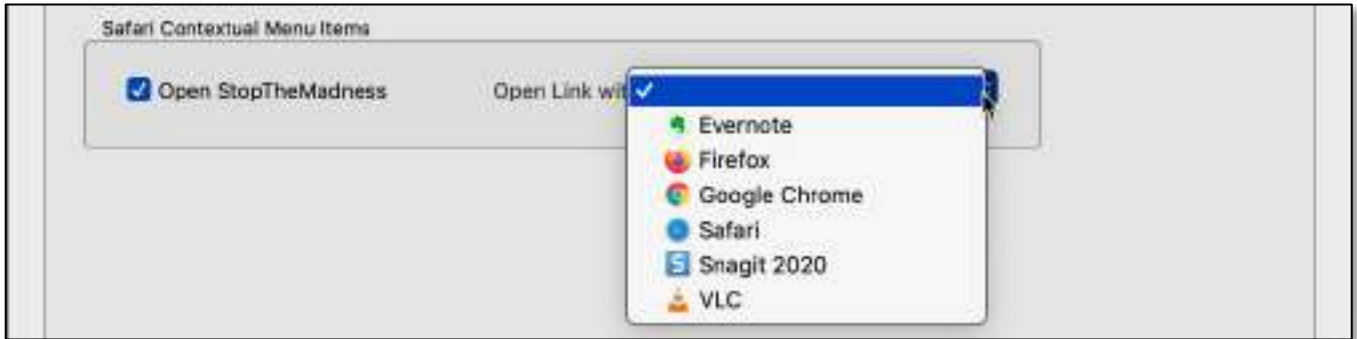
**StopTheMadness – "Open Link With" Pop-up Menu**

o Install in Other Browsers – This section is provided for installing StopTheMadness in other web browsers:

StopTheMadness – "Install in Other Browsers" Section

- **Website Options** Tab – Provides user control, both "Recommended" and "Use with Caution," to enable and disable StopTheMadness features.

(See the illustration on the next page.)
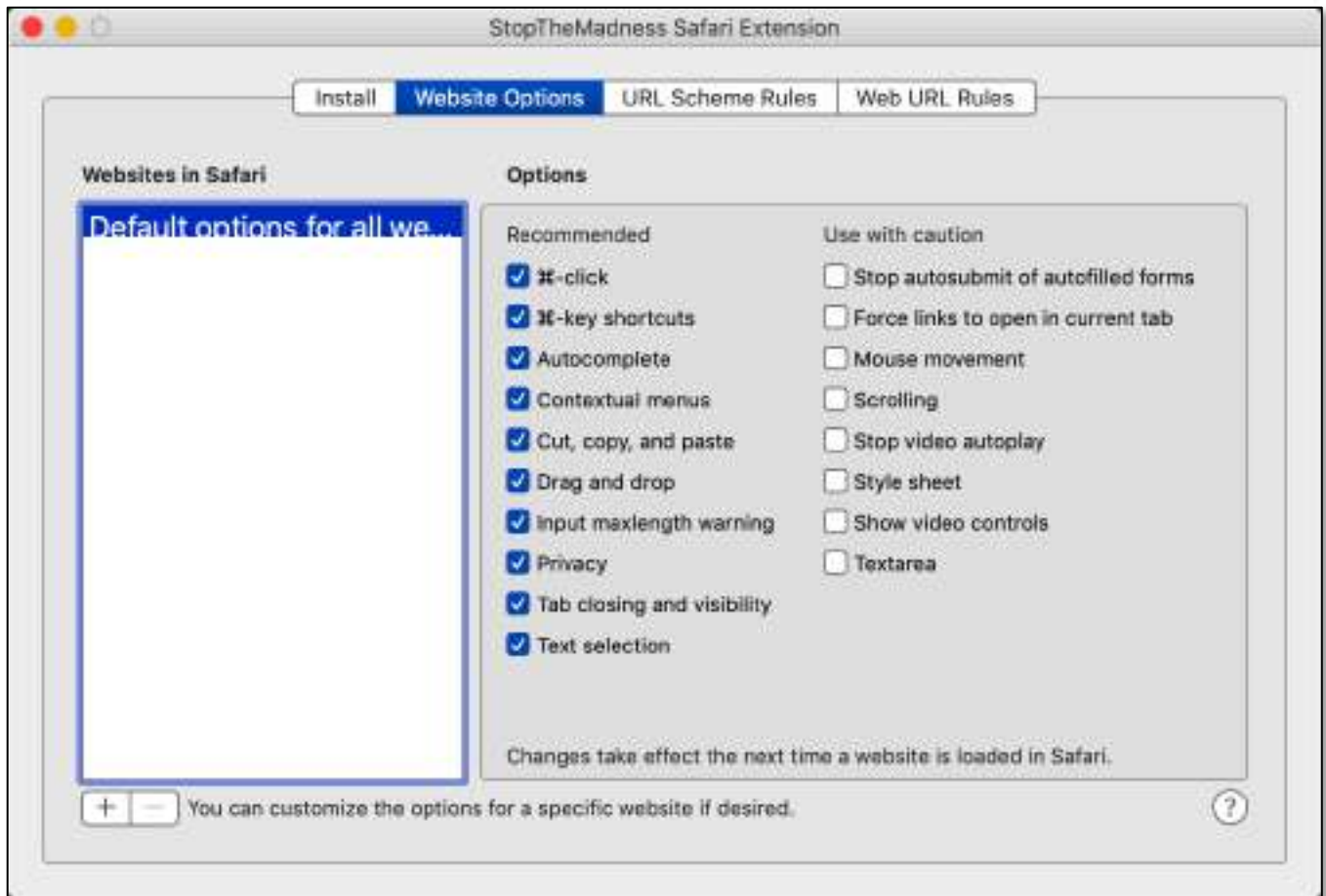
StopTheMadness Window – "Website Options" Tab

- **URL Scheme Rules** (Advanced Feature, one that's too advanced for this discussion) - StopTheMadness has the ability to automatically open clicked links in other apps, according to your preferences.

StopTheMadness Window – "URL Scheme Rules" Tab

- **Web URL Web Rules** (Advanced Feature, another one that's too advanced for this discussion) - This feature is enabled by default, but there are no rules by default, so it has no effect until you define some rules.
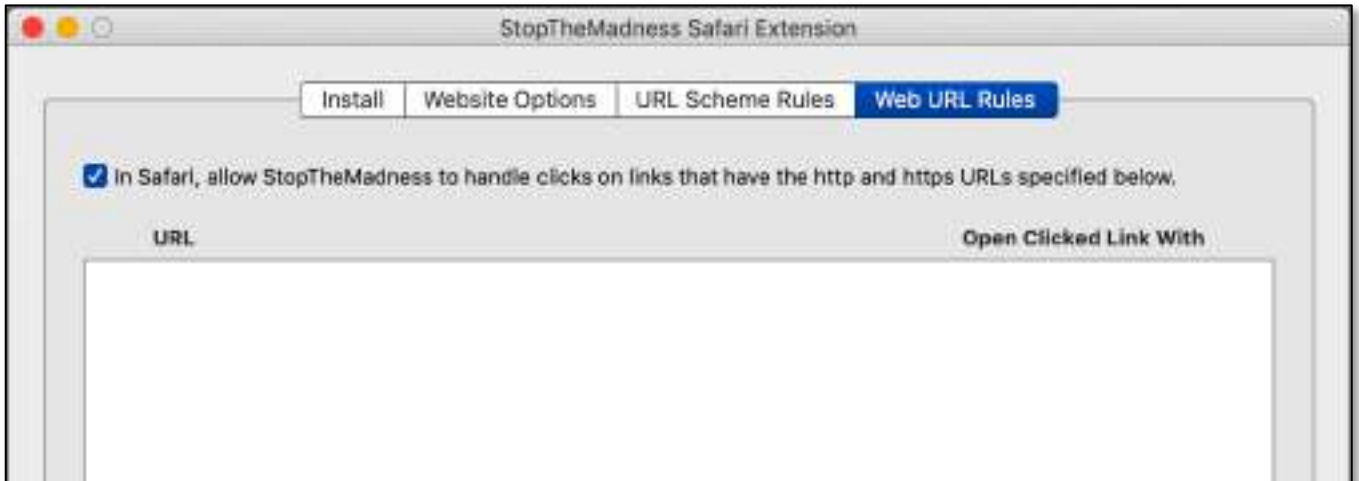
StopTheMadness Window – "Web URL Rules" Tab

Summary

After a redesign of the Safari web browser, most web plug-ins are no longer supported. Instead, Safari uses extensions to enhance and customize your browsing experience by loading webpages more quickly and strengthening security.

Safari Extensions let you extend the browser's capabilities to give you more control (better manage your accounts and passwords, block online ads and trackers, save web pages for offline reading, etc.). They allow Mac users to explore the web the way you want to find helpful information about a web page, display news headlines, or quickly access and share content to your favorite app and services.

Add an extension to Safari by first downloading it from the Mac App Store. Next, open Safari's Preferences window. Then click on the icon for the **Extensions** group to display your installed Safari extensions, including the one that you've added. Finally, click the checkbox next to your newly-added extension to enable it.

Next Presentation

For the next presentation, we'll take a look another macOS feature.

Have a favorite Mac Tip or utility? Please feel free to pass it along, and I'll see if I can work it into a future presentation.

If you have any suggestions for presentation topics, including macOS utilities, please contact me at slp4668@gmail.com.

–Steve Parker

Credits & Reference:

• How to install Safari extensions on your Mac (https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT203051)

• Mac App Store Preview (https://apps.apple.com/us/story/id1456414021)

• 1Password 7 (https://support.1password.com/explore/whats-new-mac/)

• Adblock Plus (https://adblockplus.org)

• Webex Meetings/Mac (https://www.webex.com/downloads.html/)
• Webex Meetings iPhone, & iPad (https://apps.apple.com/us/app/cisco-webex-meetings/id298844386)

• Ghostery Lite (https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ghostery-lite/id1436953057?mt=12)

• StopTheMadness (https://apps.apple.com/us/app/stopthemadness/id1376402589?mt=12)

Part 2: Browsers and extensions/add-ons demo - June 2020

- - Jim Macak

Browsers

Search for "best browser for Macintosh"
	Yikes! Up to 14 browsers are available

What are your browser requirements?

	• *best compatibility with your macOS:* Apple's Safari
		the default browser for macOS, iOS
		has fairly good built-in privacy
		fewer extensions compared to some other browsers
			Apple has made it more "difficult" to program extensions

	• *compatibility with most websites:* Google's Chrome - https://
www.google.com/chrome/
		Chrome is currently *the* most popular browser and some
websites are "coding" for Chrome
		privacy concerns: it's from Google!

	• *greater privacy:* Mozilla's Firefox - https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/
firefox/new/
		many privacy-oriented and other add-ons available
		"lock-down" instructions are available - https://
www.privacytools.io/browsers/#about_config

	• *previously promising but now with some concerns:* Brave browser -
https://brave.com
		the company had questionable money-making tactics in the
past

	• *ultimate privacy and anonymity:* Tor Project's Tor Browser
		How Tor Works - https://tb-manual.torproject.org/about/
		Onion Services - https://tb-manual.torproject.org/onion-
services/

Extensions/Add-ons

Be careful adding extensions: security and privacy concerns
         malware-like behavior of some extensions

My Safari extensions (not in Steve's demo)

- Subscribe to Feed (NetNewsWire)
        https://ranchero.com/netnewswire/

- Wayback Machine
        http://web.archive.org

Recommended browser add-ons to improve privacy
        https://www.privacytools.io/browsers/#addons
        no extensions are listed for Safari on this website