

September 17, 2017, Beginners SIG Easier Viewing on Your Mac

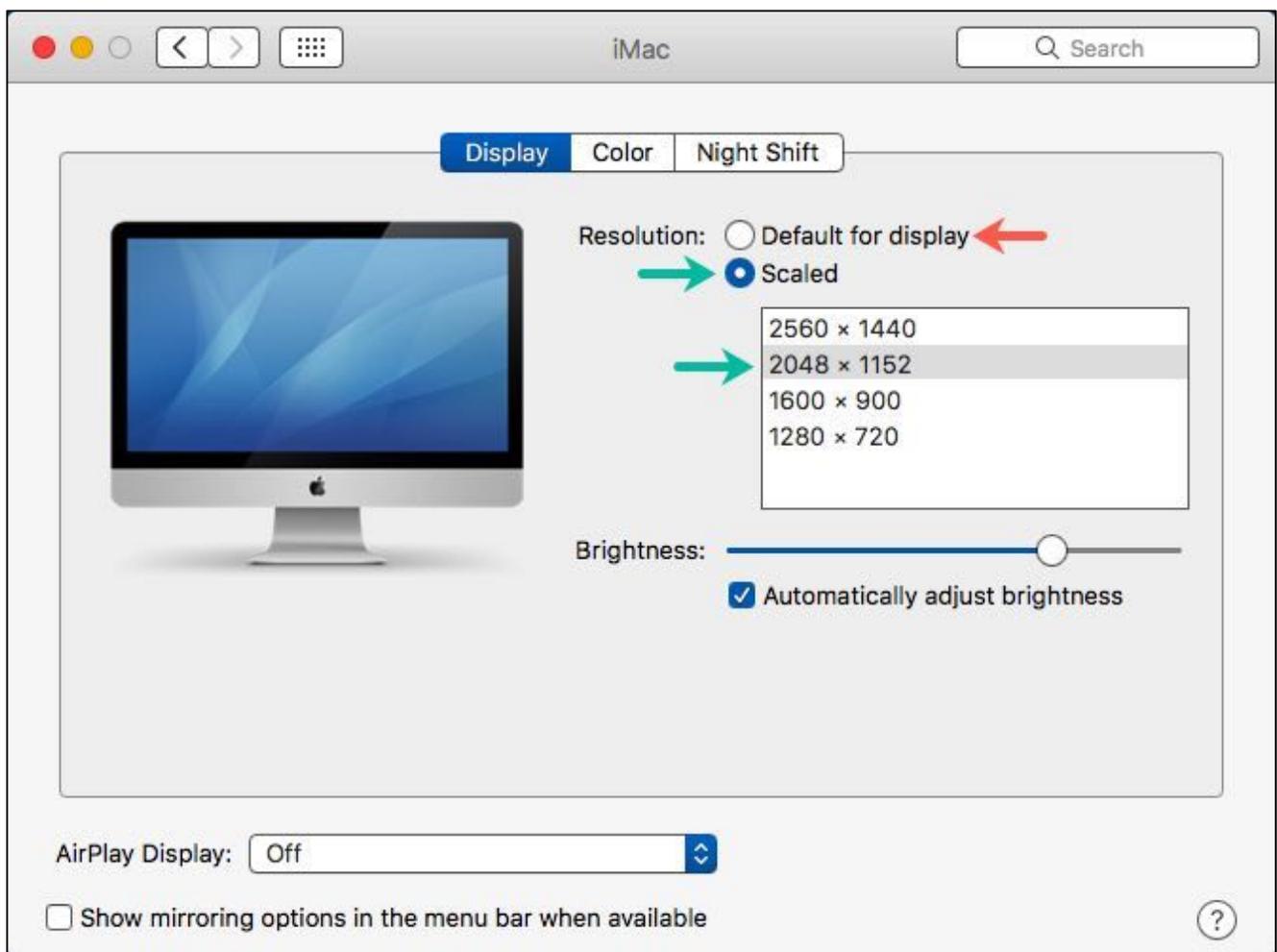
Note: This discussion is based on MacOS, 10.12.6 (Sierra). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS or OS X.

Facts of Life

OK, admit it. Do you find—at least occasionally—that items on your Mac’s screen, even a wonderful retina display, are a bit hard to read? Do you find yourself squinting at text or moving just a little closer to your screen to view something more clearly? Maybe it’s the icon size in a Finder window or the text in your web browser. While age can be a factor, sometimes it’s just a matter of how your Mac is set up. Here are a few suggestions for easier viewing.

Adjust Your Mac’s Display

Macs can have a variety of resolutions; that is, the number of pixels (pixel = picture/**pix** elements or “dots”) in the horizontal and vertical dimensions. In the [Displays System Preference](#), there’s a “native” resolution, the “**Default for display**” setting for your Mac’s display (red arrow in the illustration below). There’s also a **Scaled** setting (green arrows) for lower resolutions as well. All available resolutions for your Mac are can be seen in the [Displays System Preference](#):



Displays System Preference

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The image on the previous page is the [Display System Preference](#) for my 27-inch iMac. The native (“Default for display”) setting is 2560 x 1440 pixels which is the highest resolution (number of pixels) for the display. If one of the [Scaled](#) settings is selected—I use 2048 x 1152—then fewer pixels are used for the display (screen). So, why use a Scaled setting? Read on ...

Since the physical dimensions of the display are fixed, the default setting causes the pixels to be at their closest spacing and provides the greatest amount of screen space to display items, such as the desktop in the Finder.

The downside, however, of using the default (highest resolution) setting is that items (icons, text, etc.) displayed are at their smallest size, and this can make them harder to see clearly.

For example, I measured the width of the display area of my iMac’s screen at about 23.46 inches. Dividing 2560 pixels by 23.46 inches shows that this setting provides a resolution of approximately 109 pixels/inch.

So, at this setting, a Finder icon that is, say, 25 pixels wide is approximately 0.23 inches (25 pixels divided by 109 pixels/inch, just under ¼ inch) in width on the display. At that size, the icon’s detail might be a bit hard to distinguish.

If the Display System Preference were set to the second [Scaled](#) setting (2048 x 1152), then the pixel resolution becomes approximately 87 pixels/inch (2048 pixels/23.46 inches).

Now that 25-pixel-wide icon becomes a little larger, about 0.29 inches wide (25 pixels divided by 87 pixels/inch, ~ 26% larger). That may not seem like much, but I find it enough to make everything easier to distinguish. Of course, you could use a lower [Scaled](#) setting. You’ll get larger icons and text but less space on your display to show them.

Finder – Show View Options

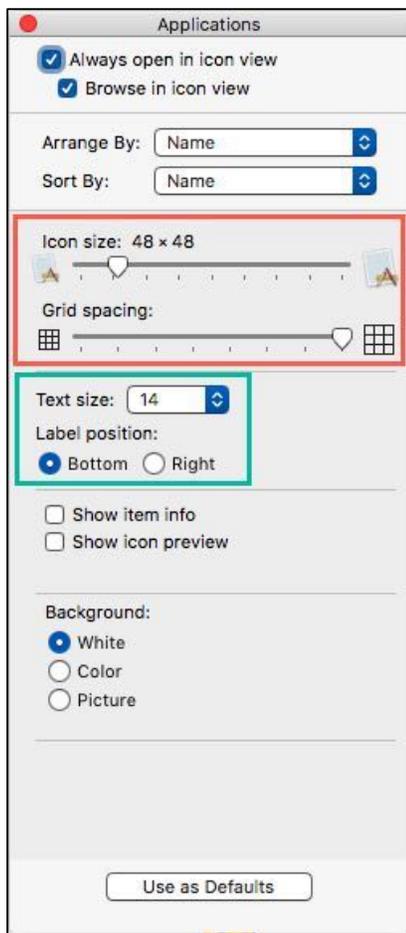
Every Finder window can be adjusted to improve readability. In the [View](#) menu, choose the [Show View Options](#) menu item (keyboard shortcut: [Command-J](#), [⌘-J](#)). This will bring up a [View Options](#) setting window with various adjustment options.

Using the keyboard shortcut will toggle the [View Options](#) setting window on and off. You can also click its [Close](#) button to close it.

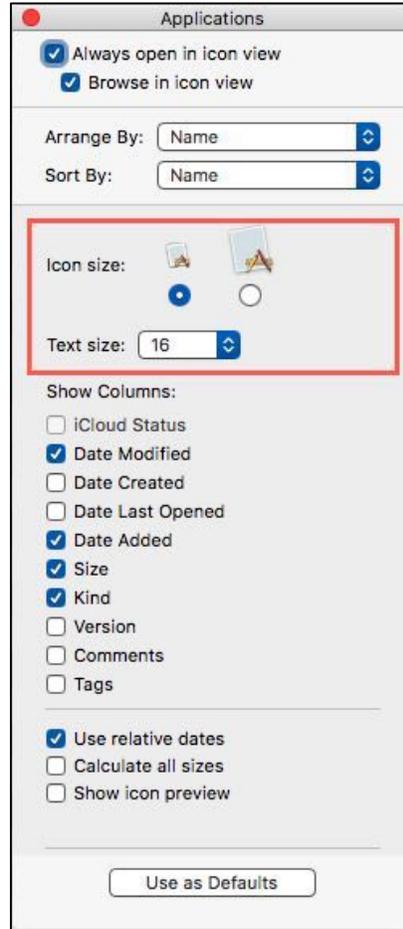
Three different [View Options](#) setting windows are shown on the next page—one for a Finder window using the [View as Icons](#) setting, one for the [View as List](#) setting, and one for the [View as Columns](#) setting. If you happen to have the [View Options](#) setting window open as you change Finder window views, its contents will change accordingly.

Perhaps the most important adjustment in any View is for [Text size](#). Clicking on a pop-up menu gives you the choice of 7 font sizes, ranging from 10 to 16.

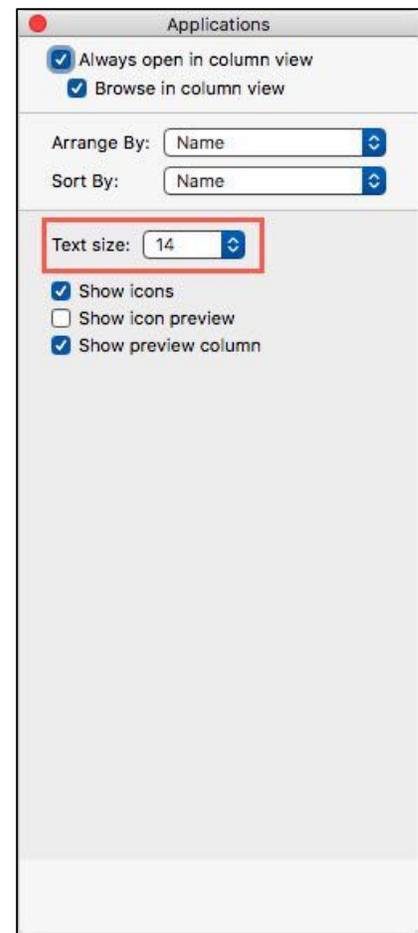
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**Displays System Preference
Icon View**



**Displays System Preference
List View**



**Displays System Preference
Column View**

Icon View. When a Finder window has been set to [View as Icons](#), the [View Options](#) setting window changes to match. (See the *left* image above.)

Notice the section outlined in **red**. To set viewing to suit your preference, use the [Icon size](#) slider to adjust the size of the icons in the Finder window. Set the [Grid spacing](#) slider to adjust the spacing of the icons in the window. Finally, choose the [Text size](#) for icon labels in the pop-up menu (7 text sizes, ranging from 10 to 16) as desired (**green** outlined section).

List View. Changing a Finder window to [View as List](#), my preferred view, the [View Options](#) setting window changes to the one shown in the *middle* image above.

In the section outlined in **red**, you choose the [Icon size](#) that's displayed next to each line displayed in List view.

[Text size](#) can also be changed. Clicking on the pop-up menu gives you the choice of 7 sizes, ranging from 10 to 16.

As you choose increasingly larger text sizes, fewer lines can be displayed in the Finder's List view. However, this is a reasonable trade-off for easier viewing. I've chosen the largest text size, 16, as my preferred viewing option.

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Column View. Changing a Finder window to [View as Columns](#), the [View Options](#) setting window changes to the one shown in the *right* image.

As with the [Icon](#) and [List views](#), the [View Options](#) setting for [Column View](#) has a pop-up menu that gives you the choice of 7 text font sizes, ranging from 10 to 16. (See the section outlined in red in the right image on the previous page.)

Interestingly, it appears that you can choose different font sizes for the List View and a different one for the Column View.

Cover Flow View. The View Options setting window also provides a pop-up menu with the choice of 7 text sizes, ranging from 10 to 16.

Safari's Zoom Options

Some webpages tend to use a really small font, making them hard to read. Fortunately, there are several ways to compensate for this situation.

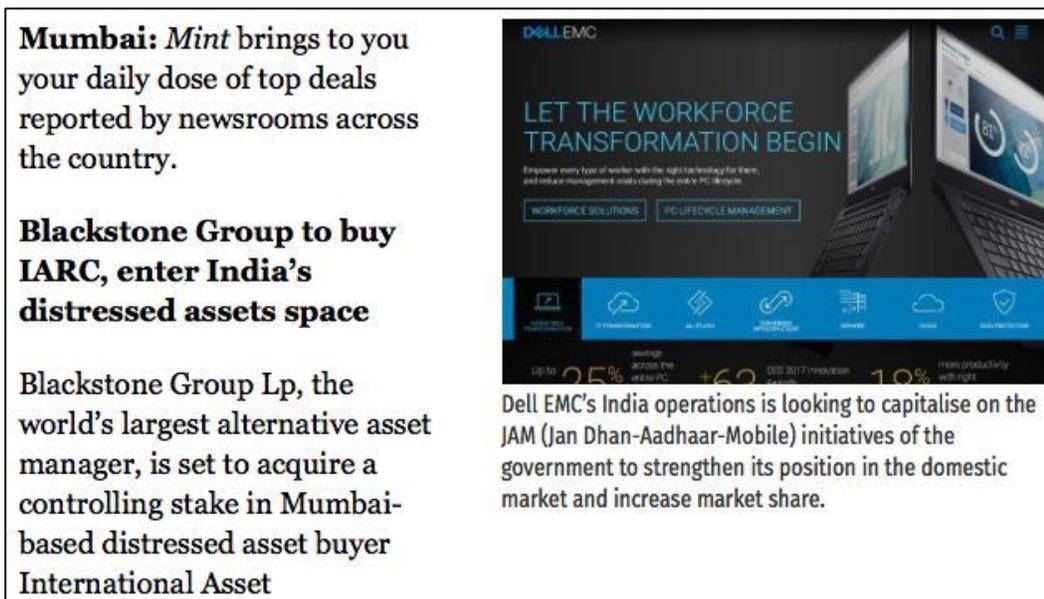
Zoom In. Safari has a [Zoom In](#) feature to enlarge the display of a webpage. In the [View](#) menu, choose the [Zoom In](#) menu item (keyboard shortcut: [Command-+](#), [⌘+](#)).

Note: The keyboard shortcut, [Command-+](#), is a bit misleading since the [+](#) symbol is only available when the [Shift](#) key is held down. So, technically, the shortcut should be [Command-=](#), even when the shortcut is labeled [Command-+](#).

If you have a keyboard with a numeric keypad, you can also use the [+](#) key instead.

Use the [Zoom In](#) option repeatedly as necessary to increase the size of everything (text and images) on the page. (There's a [Zoom Out](#) feature, too.)

Here's a screen clip of a portion of a webpage that uses a small font:



Mumbai: *Mint* brings to you your daily dose of top deals reported by newsrooms across the country.

Blackstone Group to buy IARC, enter India's distressed assets space

Blackstone Group Lp, the world's largest alternative asset manager, is set to acquire a controlling stake in Mumbai-based distressed asset buyer International Asset

DELL EMC

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Dell EMC's India operations is looking to capitalise on the JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) initiatives of the government to strengthen its position in the domestic market and increase market share.

Screen Clip of Webpage with Small Font

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When the [Zoom In](#) option is used, the webpage is enlarged for easier viewing. (See the illustration below.)

Mumbai: *Mint* brings to you your daily dose of top deals reported by newsrooms across the country.

Blackstone Group to buy IARC, enter India's distressed assets space

Blackstone Group Lp, the world's largest alternative asset manager, is set to acquire a controlling stake in Mumbai-based distressed asset buyer International Asset Reconstruction Co. Pvt. Ltd (IARC), reports *Mint*,



Dell EMC's India operations is looking to capitalise on the JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) initiatives of the government to strengthen its position in the domestic market and increase market share.

Screen Clip of Webpage with Small Font (After Using [Zoom In](#))

Everything becomes larger and easier to read. The text (and also the image) are larger. Compare this illustration with the preceding one.

However, sometimes if you enlarge too much, the webpage will be expanded beyond the width of your Safari window. In this case, a horizontal scroll bar will appear to allow you to scroll across the webpage to view its contents.

Make Text Bigger. If the [Option](#) key is held down, then [Zoom In](#) becomes [Make Text Bigger](#) (keyboard shortcut: [Option-Command-+](#) ($\text{⌘}+\text{⌥}$)).

Note: In Safari, you must also hold down the [Shift](#) key to use the [+](#) symbol on the keyboard since the un-shifted symbol for the key is the equals symbol ([=](#)). So, written another way, the keyboard shortcut is [Shift-Option-Command-=](#) ($\text{⇧}\text{⌘}\text{⌥}=\text{}$).

If you just use [Option-Command-+](#), actually [Option-Command-=](#) ($\text{⌘}\text{⌥}=\text{}$), you may inadvertently trigger the macOS [Zoom/Magnify Accessibility Feature](#) (last item discussed in this presentation summary).

Yes, there's a [Zoom Out](#) feature, too.

Using the [Make Text Bigger](#) option, the text is made larger, but graphics generally remain the same size. Larger text causes the webpage to expand vertically but not horizontally, so there's no need for a horizontal scroll bar. (See the illustration on the next page.)

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Blackstone Group Lp, the world's largest alternative asset manager, is set to acquire a controlling stake in Mumbai-based distressed asset buyer International Asset Reconstruction Co. Pvt. Ltd (IARC),



Dell EMC's India operations is looking to capitalise on the JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) initiatives of the government to strengthen its position in the domestic market and increase market share.

Screen Clip of Webpage with Small Font (After using [Make Text Bigger](#))

Compare this illustration with the one on Page 4 to see how the text, but not the image, has been expanded for easier viewing.

Safari Reader

Safari's Zooming features ([Zoom In/Out](#) and [Make Text Bigger/Smaller](#)) provide convenient ways to improve the readability of webpages. However, what if you want to focus on just the *content* of a webpage and ignore all the superfluous material (advertisements, unrelated images, etc.)? That's where [Safari Reader](#) comes in.

Viewing a Webpage with Safari Reader. For most, but not all, webpages, [Safari Reader](#) shows you the text and related images, eliminating everything else.

Bring up [Safari Reader](#) with the [Show Reader](#) menu item under the [View](#) menu, keyboard shortcut: Shift-Command-R (⇧⌘R).

Dismiss [Safari Reader](#) with the [Hide Reader](#) menu item under the [View](#) menu. Its keyboard shortcut: [Shift-Command-R](#) (⇧⌘R), same as for [Show Reader](#), is a toggle. When [Safari Reader](#) is being used, [Show Reader](#) changes to [Hide Reader](#).

Alternatively, bring up [Safari Reader](#) by clicking on its icon at the *left* end of the Search Bar:



Safari Reader Icon (Left End of the Search Bar)

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Here's the original view of a webpage with a small font:

The screenshot shows the liveMint website interface. At the top left is the logo "liveMint" and the date "17 September 2017 | E-Paper". A search bar is at the top right. Below the logo is a navigation menu with categories: Home, Companies, Industry, Politics, Money, Opinion, Lounge, Multimedia, Science, Education, Sports, and More... The main headline is "Deals Buzz: Dell EMC eyes \$26 billion opportunity in India". Below the headline is a sub-headline: "In other news, Blackstone Group is set to acquire a controlling stake in Mumbai-based distressed asset buyer International Asset Reconstruction". There is a social media share bar with icons for Facebook, Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, and RSS. Below the share bar is an email subscription form with the name "Kavya Kothiyal" and a "Subscribe" button. The article content includes a sub-headline "Blackstone Group to buy IARC, enter India's distressed assets space" and a paragraph: "Blackstone Group Lp, the world's largest alternative asset manager, is set to acquire a controlling stake in Mumbai-based distressed asset buyer International Asset". There is also a section for "LATEST NEWS" with several headlines: "Iraqi PM Haider al-Abadi says fate of Indians workers captured by Islamic State unknown", "USFDA plans new compounding pharmacy policy, agency head Scott Gottlieb says", and "Great Indian Bustard count up in Rajasthan's Desert National Park".

Webpage with Small Font (Original Form)

(Please go to the next page to see how [Safari Reader](#) changes the display of this webpage.)

Here's that same webpage when viewed via Safari Reader:

Deals Buzz: Dell EMC eyes \$26 billion opportunity in India

In other news, Blackstone Group is set to acquire a controlling stake in Mumbai-based distressed asset buyer International Asset Reconstruction

Kavya Kothiyal



Dell EMC's India operations is looking to capitalise on the JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) initiatives of the government to strengthen its position in the domestic market and increase market share.

Mumbai: *Mint* brings to you your daily dose of top deals reported by newsrooms across the country.

Blackstone Group to buy IARC, enter India's distressed assets space

Blackstone Group Lp, the world's largest alternative asset manager, is set to acquire a controlling stake in Mumbai-based distressed asset buyer International Asset Reconstruction Co. Pvt. Ltd (IARC), reports *Mint*, according to two people

Webpage with Small Font (Viewed Via [Safari Reader](#))

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As you can see, the webpage display looks much different than the original, but the *content* is still there and quite readable. What's missing is everything else that you probably weren't interested in (advertisements, other images, other news links, links to various social media, etc.)

Added bonus: Some websites like to use a gray or light gray font on a white background, resulting in reduced contrast between the text and its background. This can make the text harder to read. Depending on your choice of [Safari Reader's Appearance Options](#) (see below), text can be made much cleaner and easier to read.

Safari Reader Appearance Options. When [Safari Reader](#) is used, its various appearance options can be selected. Click on the settings option icon found at the *right* end of the Search Bar. There's no menu item or keyboard shortcut.

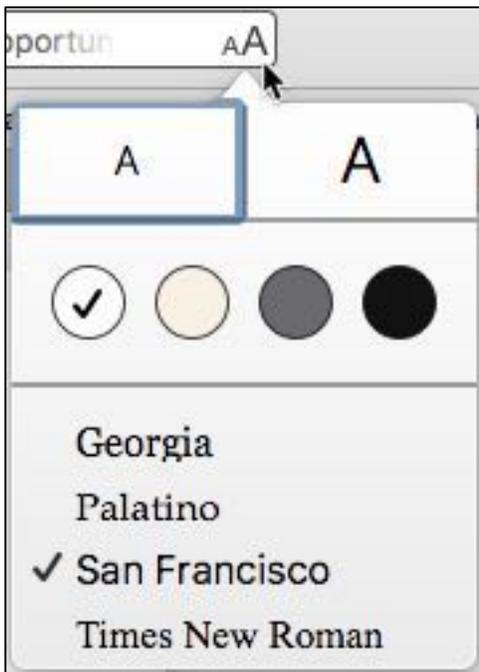


Safari Reader Appearance Options Icon (Right End of the Search Bar)

Once the [Safari Reader Appearance Options](#) icon is clicked, a menu drops down from which you can:

- Make the text smaller or larger,
- Choose among several background colors, and
- Select among several text fonts.

Adjust these settings as desired for comfortable viewing.

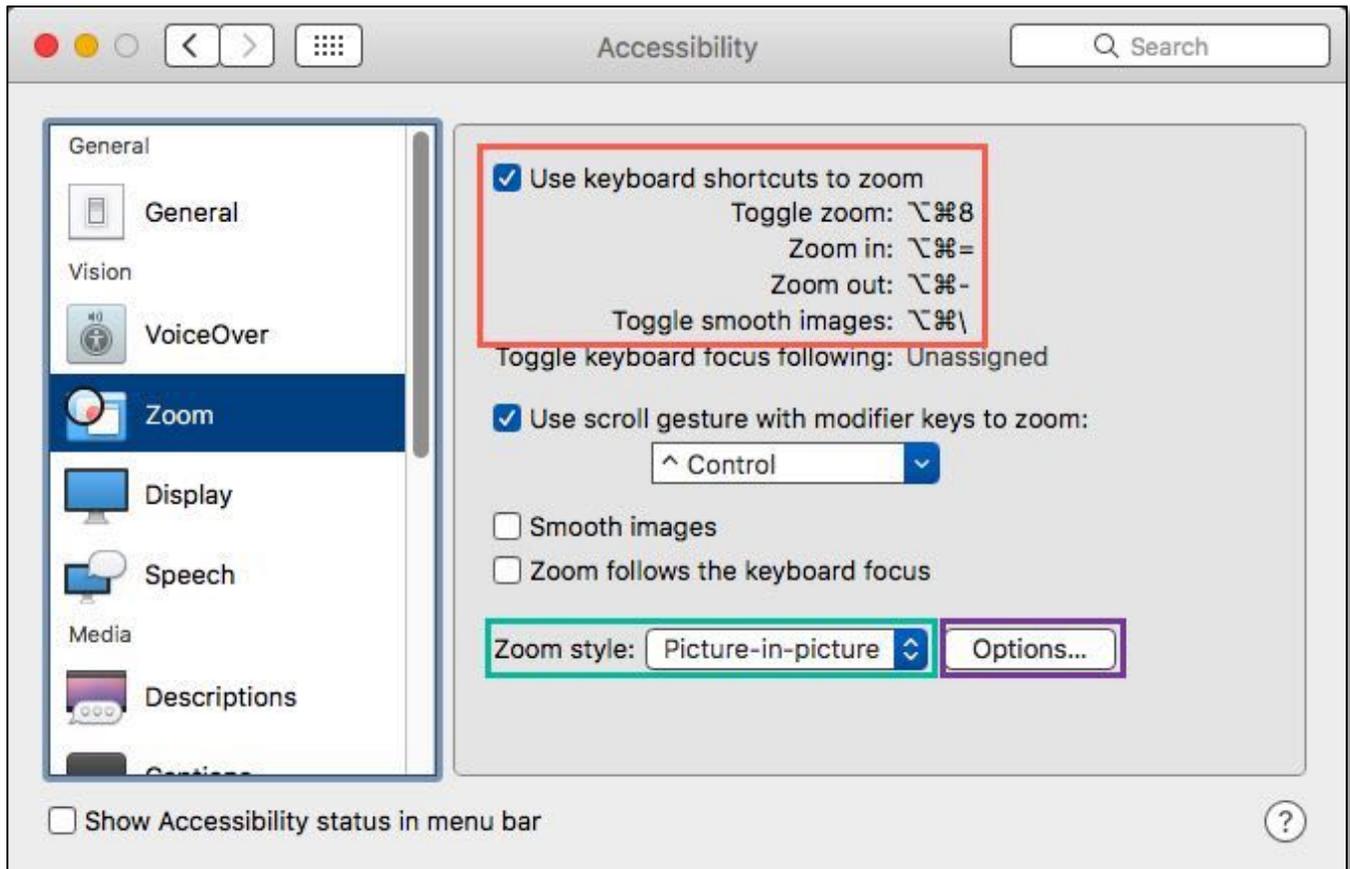


Safari Reader Appearance Options Icon (Right End of the Search Bar)

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Zoom/Magnify Accessibility Feature

One of the features found in the [Accessibility System Preference](#) is the one for magnifying a portion of the screen. This can help enlarge a hard-to-read section on your display. It works everywhere and on any application. However, because pixel spacing is fixed, making a section of them larger will likely result in a slightly fuzzier view. It's a trade-off between size and clarity.



Accessibility System Preference (Zoom Option)

Adjust Zoom/Magnify. To bring up and adjust the [Zoom/Magnify](#) feature, do the following:

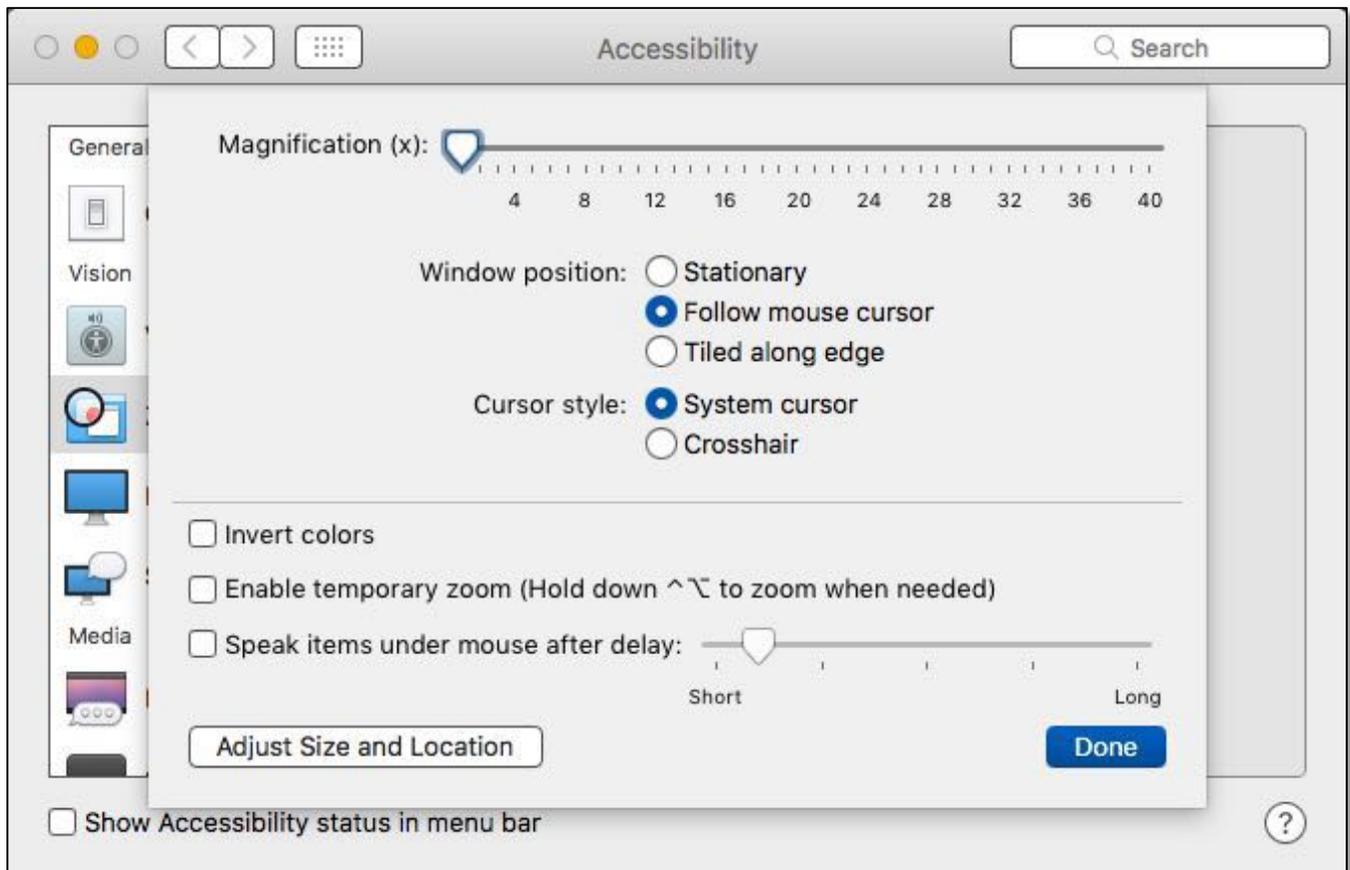
- Click the [Zoom](#) option in the list on the left of the Accessibility System Preference.
- Make sure that the [Use keyboard shortcuts to zoom](#) checkbox is selected. This will allow you to toggle the Zoom/Magnify feature on and off with the keyboard shortcut, [Option-Command-8](#) (⌘⌘8). See the [red](#) highlight box in the illustration.

Note: If you wish, the keyboard shortcuts for "Toggle zoom," "Zoom in," "Zoom out," and "Toggle smooth images" can be changed in the [Keyboard System Preference](#) ([Shortcuts tab](#)).

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- From the [Zoom style](#) pop-up menu, choose [Picture-in-picture](#) to magnify a selected portion of the screen (green highlight box in the illustration). The other option is Fullscreen.
- Click the [Options...](#) box (highlighted in purple in the previous illustration). A dropdown window will then be displayed. From here the amount of initial Magnification can be selected with the slider along with the position of the magnifying window and other options.

(See the illustration below.)

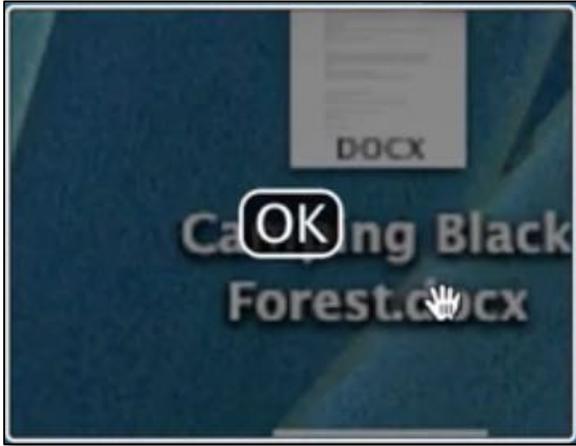


Accessibility System Preference (Picture-in Picture Zoom Options)

- Click the [Adjust Size and Location](#) button to bring up a highlighted box representing magnifying area. Drag any size or corner of the box to adjust the size of the magnify box.

(See the illustration on the next page.)

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Accessibility System Preference (Picture-in Picture Zoom Options, Magnify Box)

- When you have adjusted the [Magnify Box](#) to suit your needs, move the cursor to the center and click the [OK](#) button to set its dimensions. Then click the [Done](#) button in the dropdown window.

Use Zoom/Magnify. Toggle the Zoom/Magnify feature on and off with the keyboard shortcut [Option-Command-8](#) ([⌘8](#)). Once the magnify box is displayed, drag it around on the screen as needed.

Use the Zoom in and Zoom out keyboard shortcuts ([Option-Command-=](#) ([⌘=](#)) and [Option-Command--](#) ([⌘-](#)), respectively) to change the magnification level.

Zoom It. While the zooming function in macOS Sierra works well, I found a nice little utility called [Zoom It](#) (\$2.99 on the Mac App Store) that provides more adjustability and is even easier to use. If you're interested, here's a link to the Mac App Store Preview: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/zoom-it/id476272252?mt=12>

Next Presentation

For the next presentation, we'll take a look at another macOS utility app.

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

-Steve Parker