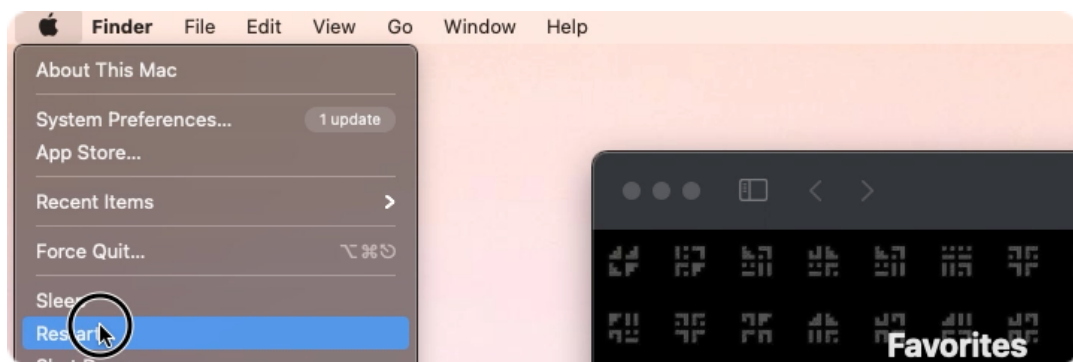# IT Helpdesk

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Quick Tips: Speeding Up Your Mac

Stephen Adams | Updated May 14, 2021

A slow computer can be frustrating, especially when you're in the middle of a very important task. Whether you're troubleshooting an idling machine, or just want to learn more about how to keep your Mac in tip-top shape, these Quick Tips can help your Mac stay fresh, or get to the root of the issue fast.

Note: This document is interactive. Click on a screenshot to reveal the play button for its corresponding video. Click on the links highlighted in blue to view additional, online resources.
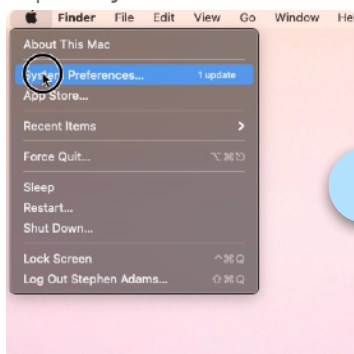
1. Restart and Login

Just like a good night's rest, **restarting your Mac** is one of the easiest ways to speed it up. When the day is done, most of us simply close our laptop and walk away. After all, opening a computer and using it without delay is one of the things that makes modern technology so great. However, this feature keeps your Mac on 24/7, and can put strain on the memory that your apps rely on to run smoothly. You don't need to change what you're doing, but it's important to shut it down or perform a restart from time to time.

Pro Tip: After your Mac restarts and you log back in, take note of which apps launch as it boots up. Are there any you could do without? **Preventing unnecessary apps from opening automatically** can free up much-needed resources and speed up your computer.

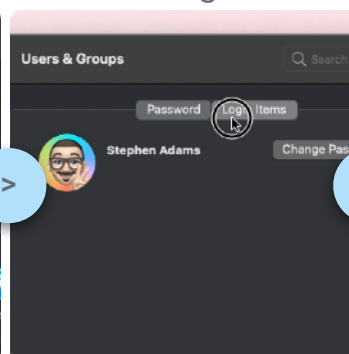To review and edit which apps open automatically when you log in:
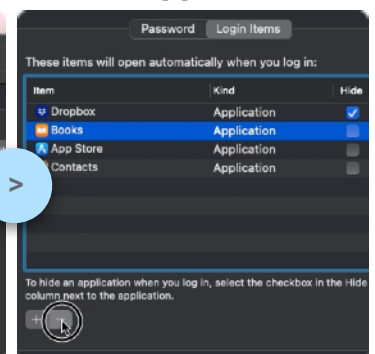
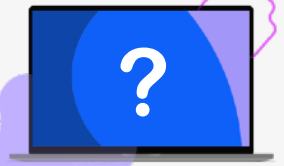Open **System Preferences**   Click on **Users & Groups**   Click on **Login Items**   Click on **[-]** to Remove
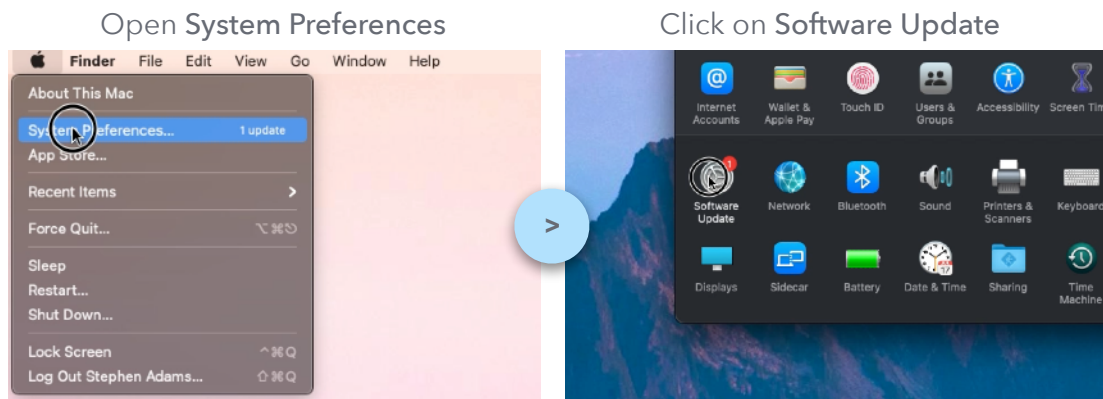
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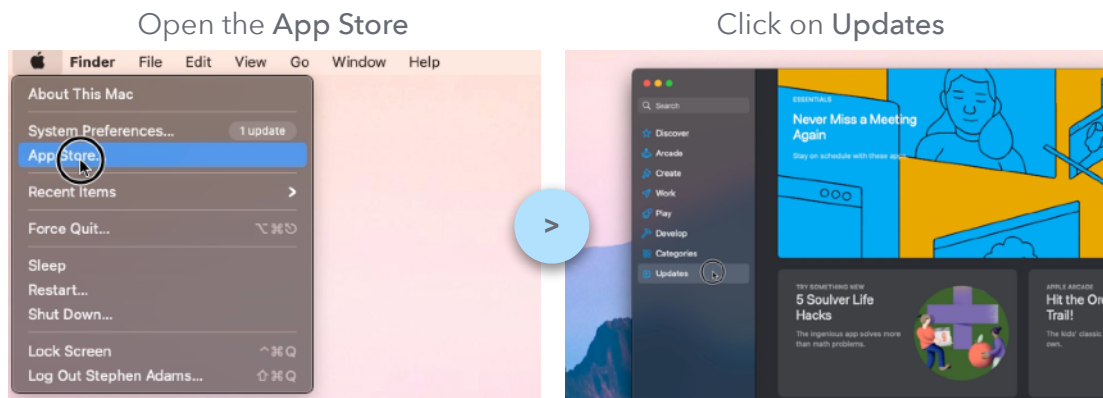## *Quick Tips: Speeding Up Your Mac*

2. Updates and Apps

Updating your Mac to the latest software is essential to keeping it running at its best. Apple's macOS updates include not only new features and improvements, but they also address critical security flaws and bug fixes. **Updating your apps** is equally important, as developers regularly deploy stability patches and improvements (just like we do for [the business's] apps and services). Some bugs aren't always obvious, and they can cause a computer or app to slow down.

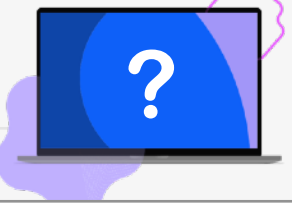#### To check for available macOS updates:

Open **System Preferences**   Click on **Software Update**

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To check for available app updates:

Open the **App Store**   Click on **Updates**

    >

Pro Tip: As you work on your Mac throughout the day, make a habit out of scanning the dock for apps you're no longer using. <u>Quitting</u> **unused apps** keeps your system focused on the apps and processes you're actually using, and can help you stay one step ahead of unexpected lag.
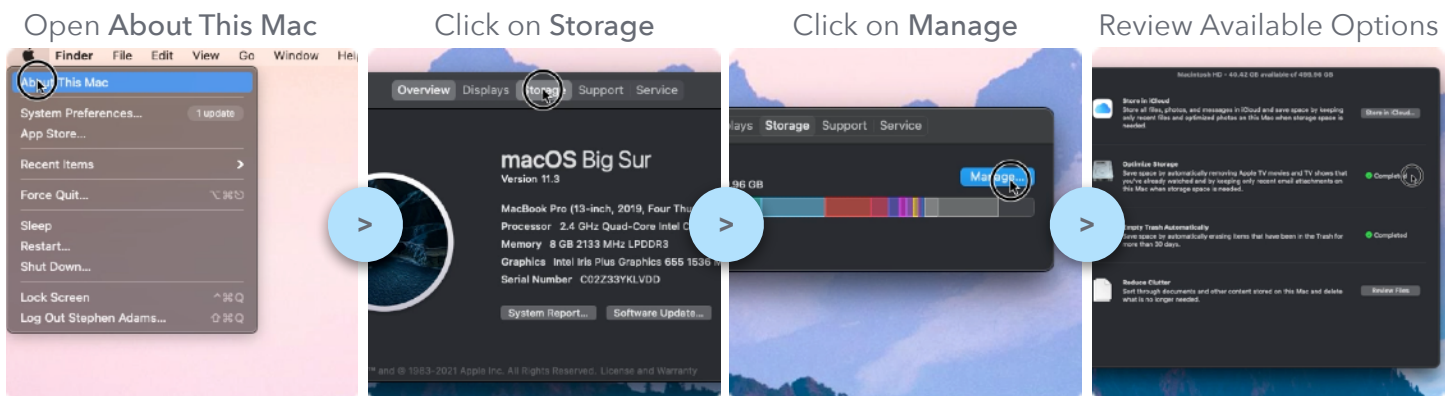
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3. Storage and Troubleshooting

If your Mac is feeling sluggish, take a look at how much free space is left on the hard drive. Your computer's storage does more than just organize and hold your files: much like a congested highway, a full hard drive will make your apps run slowly. Additionally, the system might not be able to download important files, emails, and updates. Thankfully, macOS has some built-in features that can help with **freeing up space**.

To review and take control of your storage:

Open **About This Mac**	Click on **Storage**	Click on **Manage**	Review Available Options

Pro Tip: Try **viewing Activity Monitor** whenever your Mac starts to freeze or hang. This is a built-in Mac app that offers in-depth information about your computer's performance and how much strain is being put on each of its components.

Open Activity Monitor and click through each tab. The interface and the amount of technical data displayed can be a bit daunting, but don't worry! You don't need to know what each process name or numerical value represents. Instead, check if any of the charts at the bottom of the page are reporting strain (a spike or a red line), or if there are any processes listed in red. In some cases, this information can reveal which app or piece of hardware is most at fault or in need of attention.

Get Support

We hope these tips helped clear up any issues you may be experiencing, and that you've learned something new along the way! As always, feel free to reach out to me directly in Slack **@Stephen Adams**, or post in the **#it-support** channel to ask questions and get help. When reporting an issue, remember the importance of **taking notes**, and including any of the steps you might've tried in this guide, as well as any other information you feel might be relevant.