

iTunes and iCal

Overview for Mac OS X

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johnhendron.net



iTunes

iTunes is a program used to organize music and audio files on your computer, play back both audio files and compact discs, and burn playlists of songs and audio files to recordable CD-ROM.

Terminology

<i>MP3</i>	A compressed audio format used for playback of audio on computers and portable devices, such as the iPod
<i>AAC (Advanced Audio Coding), or MP4</i>	A newer compressed audio format used for playback of audio on computers and portable devices—less common than MP3, but has slightly better quality
<i>DRM (Digital Rights Management)</i>	Coupled with several different formats, it limits the use of the audio file. Many songs purchased online include some form of DRM to limit the number of times it can be copied or burned.
<i>WMA (Windows Media Audio)</i>	A proprietary audio format created by Microsoft for compressed audio
<i>AIFF</i>	Native file format found on CDs. It's also the highest-quality sound format, but takes up a lot of space.
<i>WAV</i>	Another “full-fat” audio format, popular on Windows machines.
<i>Encode, “Rip”</i>	The process of taking a full-fat file format, such as AIFF, and converting it into a low-fat version, such as MP3. MP3s are about 10 times smaller than the full-fat versions.
<i>Burn</i>	The process of writing a file to a recordable optical disc, such as CD or DVD.
<i>Audio CD, MP3 CD</i>	Two formats of CDs—audio CDs playback in DVD players and CD players; MP3 CDs only playback in computers and some limited DVD players
<i>Visuals</i>	When music plays back in programs such as

	iTunes or Winamp, you can have the computer display graphic patterns that take into account the waveform information from the playing music.
<i>Playlist</i>	A collection of songs or audio files you can group together
<i>Smart Playlist</i>	A playlist that is created “on the fly” based on logical conditions you create
<i>Streaming Audio</i>	Usually based on the MP3 format, streaming audio comes in small chunks over the Internet and plays back like a radio; the entire song file never copies to your computer.
<i>iPod</i>	Apple’s brand of a portable music player that also includes PDA functions such as a calendar, notes, and contacts. Connects to a Mac or PC via the fast Firewire interface
<i>Party Shuffle</i>	A randomization feature built into iTunes that plays back random selections from your music library or a playlist
<i>Music Library</i>	The collection of music being managed by iTunes
<i>Apple Lossless Codec</i>	A new file format used to rip music; very high quality, about half the size of the full-fat version of the audio file.

Two helpful keyboard shortcuts in iTunes:

Command-R — shows location of song file in the Finder. The song file can then be dragged into a Keynote presentation, copied, etc.

Command-L — displays the currently playing song in your list of songs within iTunes

☛ <http://www.apple.com/itunes/> ☛ <http://www.apple.com/mpeg4/>

iCal

iCal is a revolutionary electronic calendar for OS X that syncs nicely with PDAs and cell phones. It also allows the sharing and subscription of other calendars. iCal’s format is compatible with other electronic calendar programs, so information in your calendar can be shared with users who may not be using Apple’s iCal.

☛ <http://www.apple.com/ical/>