How to move and copy files in the Finder

Presentation to MacFundamentals Workgroup
of Brookdale Computer User Group
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By Lee Maxwell, MacFundamentals Facilitator

If you've got stuff you want to move, you need to know:

* Where the stuff is now.

* Where you want the stuff to be.

* Whether you want to move it or copy it.

Only three basic requirements, it looks pretty simple. BUT...

Simple?

* Most Mac users have done this many times, and might consider moving and copying a no-brainer.

* However, when you look at the steps involved, it can get pretty complicated, especially for a new user (you know who you are, no need to stand up).

Moving versus Copying
(defining our terms)

* Moving and copying may look the same, but they aren't.

  * Moving items takes them out of one folder and into another folder.

  * Copying items leaves originals in one folder and puts copies into another folder.

* There are more ways to copy items than to move items (more on that later).

* You can move items via copying, then delete the originals.

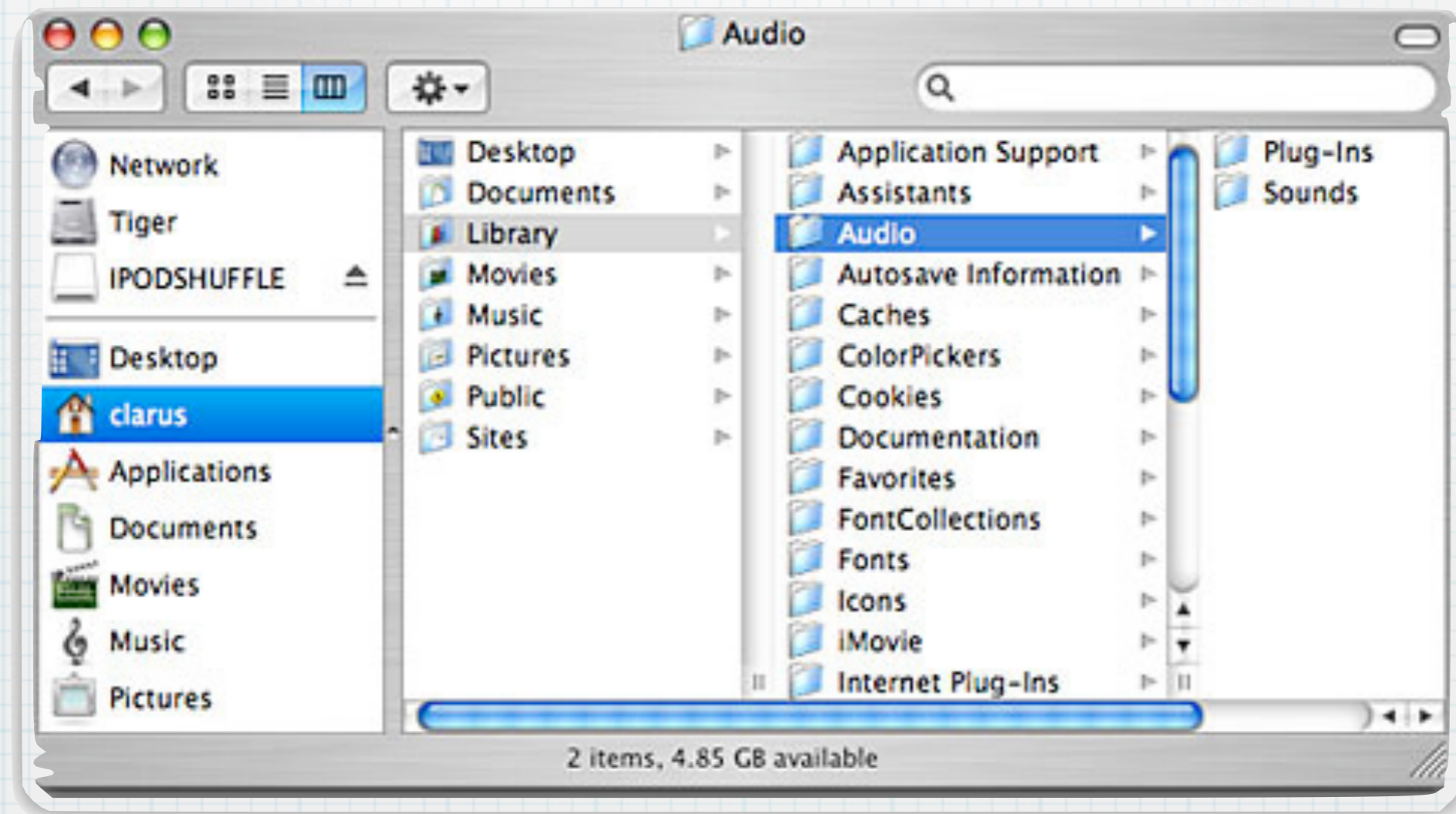* Mac OS X doesn't allow two or more of the same kind of file with the same file name in the same folder.

Task checklist

- ☐ Find the stuff you want to move/copy.
- ☐ Open the window showing the stuff.
- ☐ Open the window of the destination.
- ☐ Position the windows side-by-side.
- ☐ Select the items in the window to move/copy (some or all).
- ☐ Move or copy the items.

If you know where the stuff is...

* Great! Go ahead and open the folder, so you can see the items.

* If you know where the folder is, but don't see it, you need to navigate to it and open it.

* Double-click on the hard drive icon on your desktop to open a Finder window.

* Switch to the Column view to navigate to the folder where the items reside. (This is the fastest way to get there, but not the only way.)
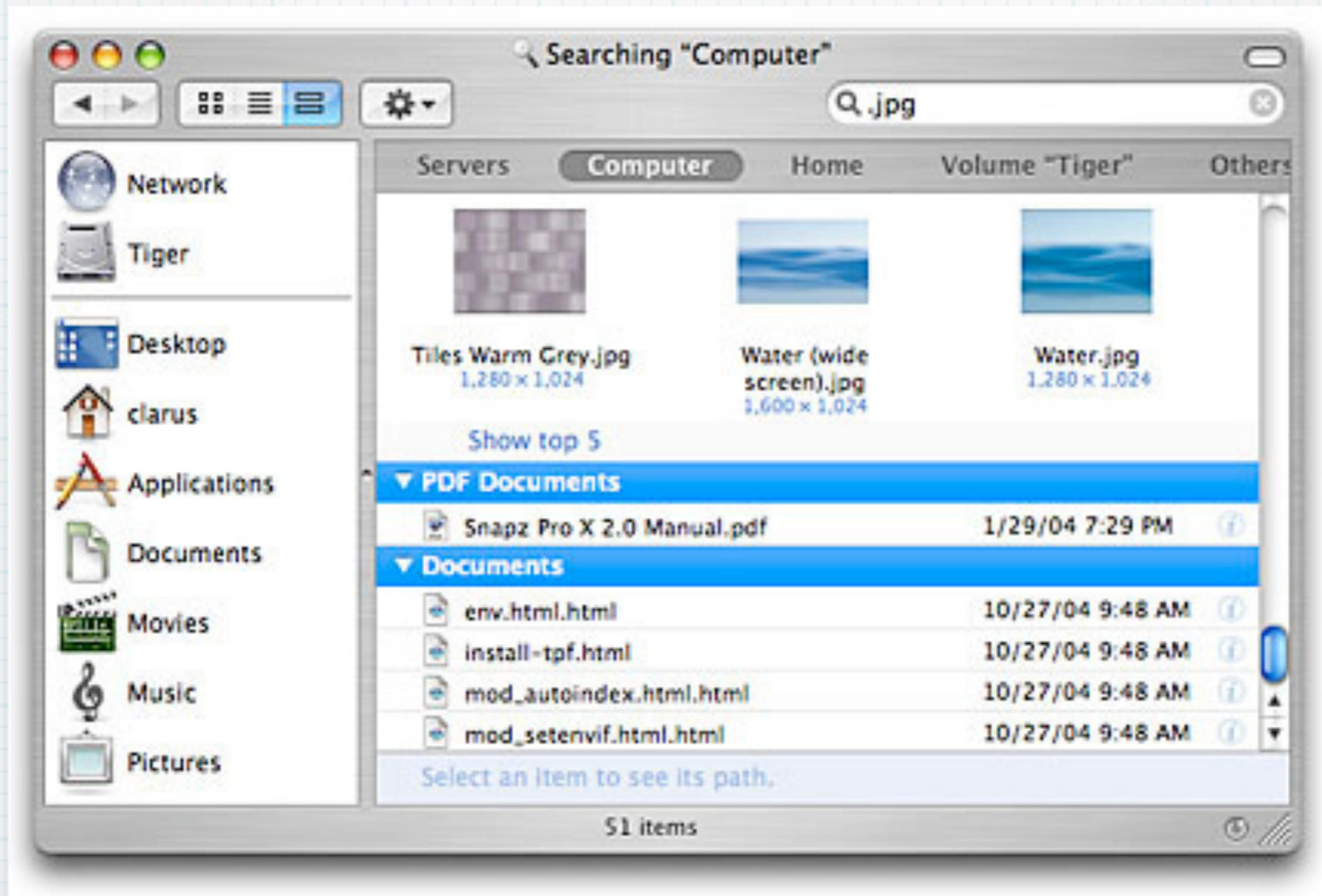
Column View

If you don't know where it is, you can find it...

* Find your hard drive icon on your desktop, and double-click on it to open the window.

* In the search field on the right side of the button bar, type in a word associated with the stuff you want to move.

* Spotlight should come up and show you all the results it can find. Hopefully your stuff is listed.

* If it is, you can double-click the enclosing folder icon at the bottom of the window to open it.

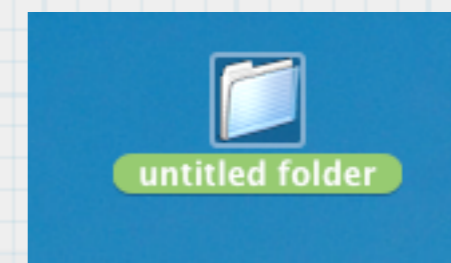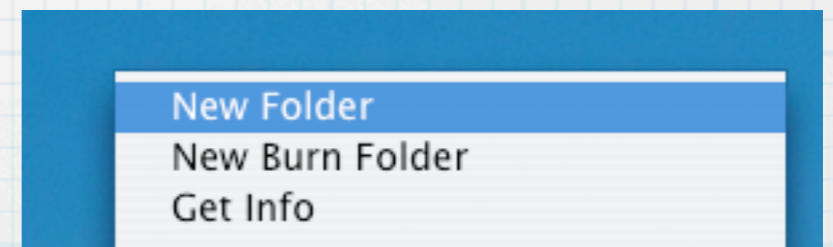# Using the search field to find items and where they are located
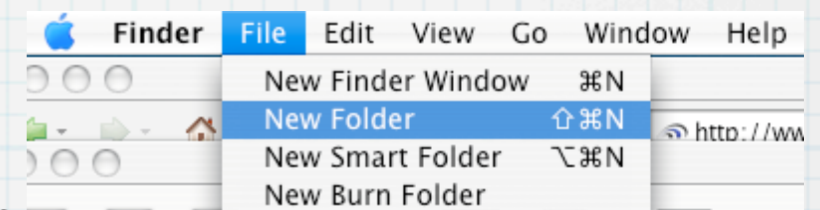
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Where are you going to move or copy this stuff?

* Now that you've opened the folder containing the stuff you want to move or copy, you should open the folder to which you want to move or copy the stuff.

* You can open the destination folder the same way you opened the folder with the stuff.

* If you don't have a destination folder, you can create one.

Creating a destination folder

* First, decide where the destination folder should be created, then open the folder that will contain the destination folder.

* Do any one of these three things:

    * Go to the Finder command in the menubar, then go to New Folder, or
    * use the keyboard shortcut Shift-Apple-N, or
    * right-click (two-button mouse) or control-click (one-button mouse) to get a contextual menu item to create the folder.

* The new folder will be created in the window that is already open and selected. Double-click on the folder icon to open it.

Task checklist

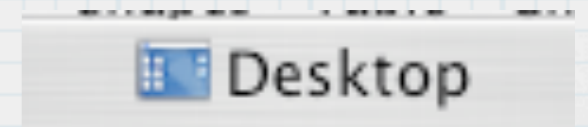- ☑ Find the stuff you want to move/copy.
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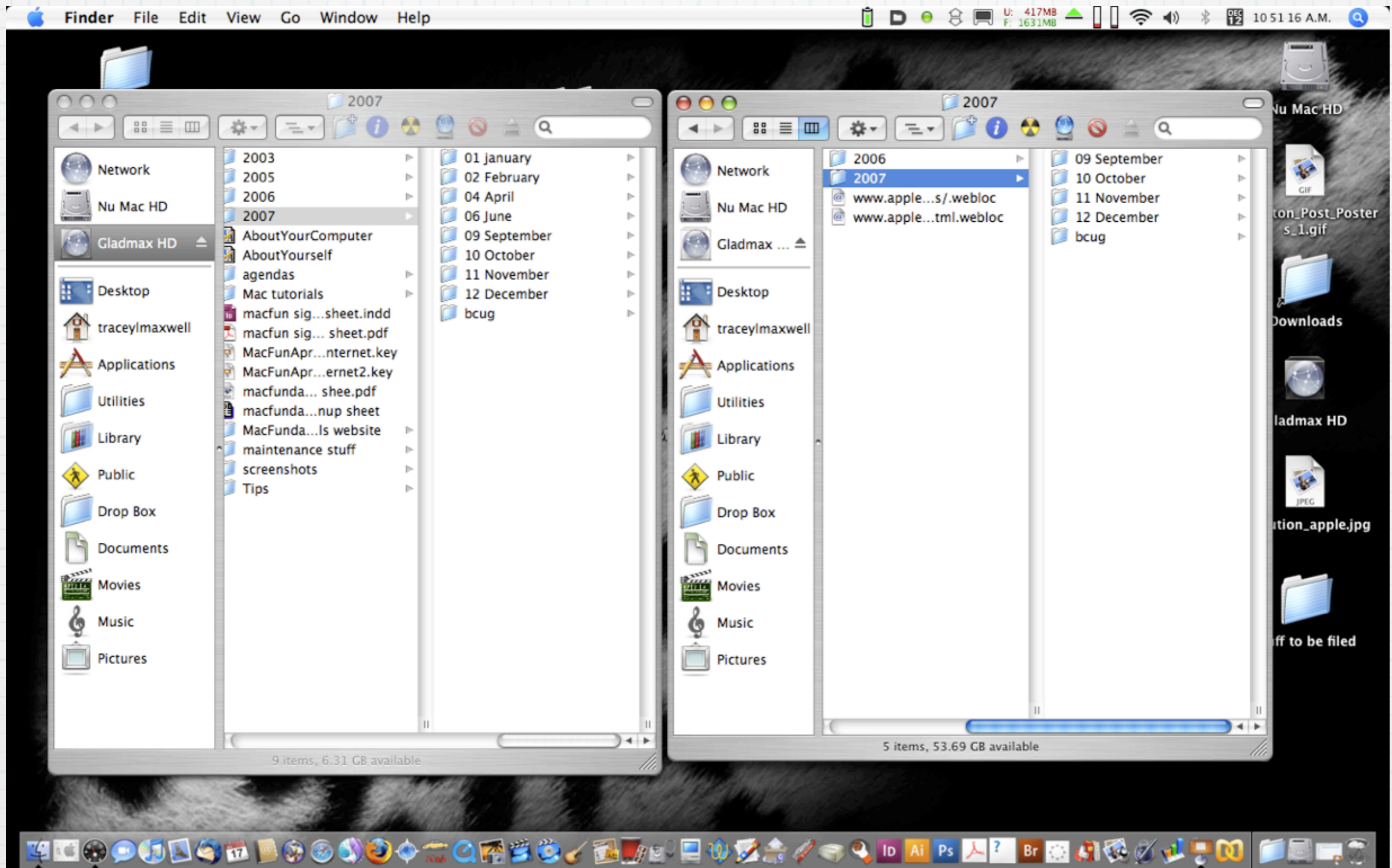# Moving/copying to a folder icon, instead of another open window

* You can always select items in one window, and then drag them onto the icon of your destination folder.

* However, you must precisely position the tip your mouse arrow on the window icon to move or copy them correctly.

* It's easier to move/copy from one open window to another.

Moving and resizing Finder windows

* Once you've opened the destination folder, it helps to move and resize both folders so they are side-by-side.

* You resize a Finder window by clicking on the resize tab on the lower right corner of the window, holding the mouse button down, and dragging the tab.

* Drag the tab up and/or to the left to make the windows smaller; drag the tab down and/or to the right to make the windows larger.

* To move a window, click on its title bar, hold the mouse button down, and drag.

Desktop

Finder windows side-by-side

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☐ Move or copy the items.

Selecting your stuff...

* In order to move or copy your stuff, you need to select it.

* You can tell if items are selected if they are highlighted with your highlight color.

* There are different methods for selecting items in the Finder window.

If you want to select everything in the window...

* You can click on the Edit pull-down menu in the menubar and select the Select All command.

* You can do the same thing by using the keyboard shortcut Apple (Command)-A, or by right- or control-clicking to open a contextual menu, then select all.

* All items in the window become highlighted.

If you don't want to select everything...

* There are two ways to select only some of the things in the window to move or copy.

* You choose the method that works best, depending in part on whether you want to move/copy only a few of the items in the window, or whether you want to move/copy most of those items.

Methods to select items in a finder window

* Click and shift-click: Click on one item in the windows, then hold down the Shift key on your keyboard, and click on items to create a group selection. Good for selecting a few items. Note: You can also use the Apple/Command key to select only the items you want to select!

* Marquee selecting: Move your mouse near a group of items you want to select, hold your mouse button down, drag a temporary box over the items you want to select, then let go of your mouse button. Good for selecting many items.

Selecting items also depends on the view...

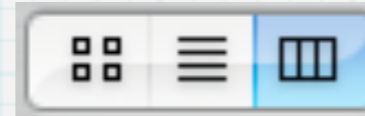* You can view items in a finder window in three different ways:
  * Icon View
  * List View
  * Column View

* Each of these changes how you see items in the window, which in turn influences how you select them.

Selecting the best selection method

* You can use either selection method in any of these views, but some work better in some views than others.

* For example, marquee selections work better in the icon view, while shift-clicking may work better in the list or column views.

* Either way works in any of these views.

Unselecting selected items

* In case you select an item or items you don't want to move or copy, it's easy to unselect them, or remove them from a group selection.

* Just hold down the Shift key and click or drag over the items you don't want to select, and they will no longer be selected.

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- ☐ Move or copy the items.

It's all in the tip o' the mouse, the mouse button, and your finger on the mouse button...

* Move the point of your mouse icon right on top of the icon of one of selected items, then click your mouse button.

* After you click on that icon, DON'T LET GO OF YOUR MOUSE BUTTON! If you do, you will lose your selection, and you will need to select the items again.

* Focus on your mouse icon, and drag the items into the destination window. Make sure the mouse icon is over that window.

* Let go of the mouse button, and items will be moved.

Copying via drag-and-drop

* Copying items via drag and drop is as simple as moving items, except for one important difference.

* You need to hold down the Option key on your keyboard before dragging items.

* You should see a green circle with a plus sign appear next to your mouse arrow icon as you drag-copy files.
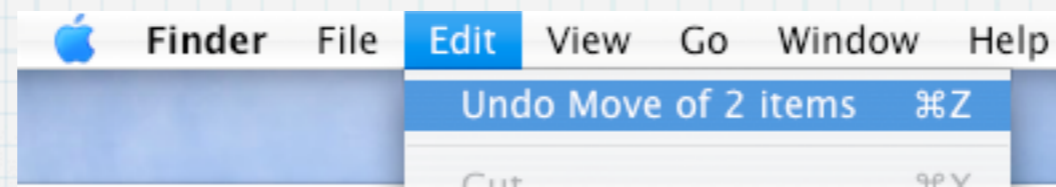
Copying via copy-and-paste: Step One

* This is a more UNIX-like method.

* With the items selected, go to the Edit pulldown menu and select copy, or...

  * Use the keyboard shortcut Apple-C, or

  * Right-click or control-click to get a contextual menu, and select copy.

* The selected items are copied into the clipboard, or temporary memory.

Copying via copy-and-paste: Step Two

* Click on the window of the destination window to make it active.

* Paste the copied items into this window by either:

  * go to Edit>Paste.
  * use the keyboard shortcut Apple-V.
  * Right-click or control-click to get a contextual menu and select Paste.

* The items are copied from the clipboard into the destination folder.

Undoing it

* If something doesn't go right, you can undo THAT LAST THING YOU DID.

* Just go to Edit and select Undo,

* use the keyboard shortcut Apple-U.

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Congratulations!

* You have successfully moved or copied items from one folder to another.

* A note on moving stuff from your hard drive to, say, a flash memory drive, and back:

    * Mac OS X ALWAYS copies items from one hard drive to another, and it always considers a flash memory stick another hard drive.

    * The same is true of moving files over a network from one computer to another.

That's all, folks!
Thanks for your time and attention.