

Composition

Troubleshooting and Tuning-Up Your Macintosh MacWaves Meeting April 2008

Brookdale Computer Users Group
Presented by Bob Shindel SIG Leader

Tools of the Trade

Maintenance Tools that come with your Macintosh

- Disk Utility

Applications > Utilities > Disk Utility

- Activity Monitor

Applications > Utilities > Activity Monitor

- System Profiler

Applications > Utilities > System Profiler

- Software Update

System Preferences > Software Update

- The System Install Disc

It came with your Mac, Keep it safe and be able to locate it.



Tools of the Trade

More Maintenance Tools that come with your Macintosh

- Terminal: *Not for the timid or novice*

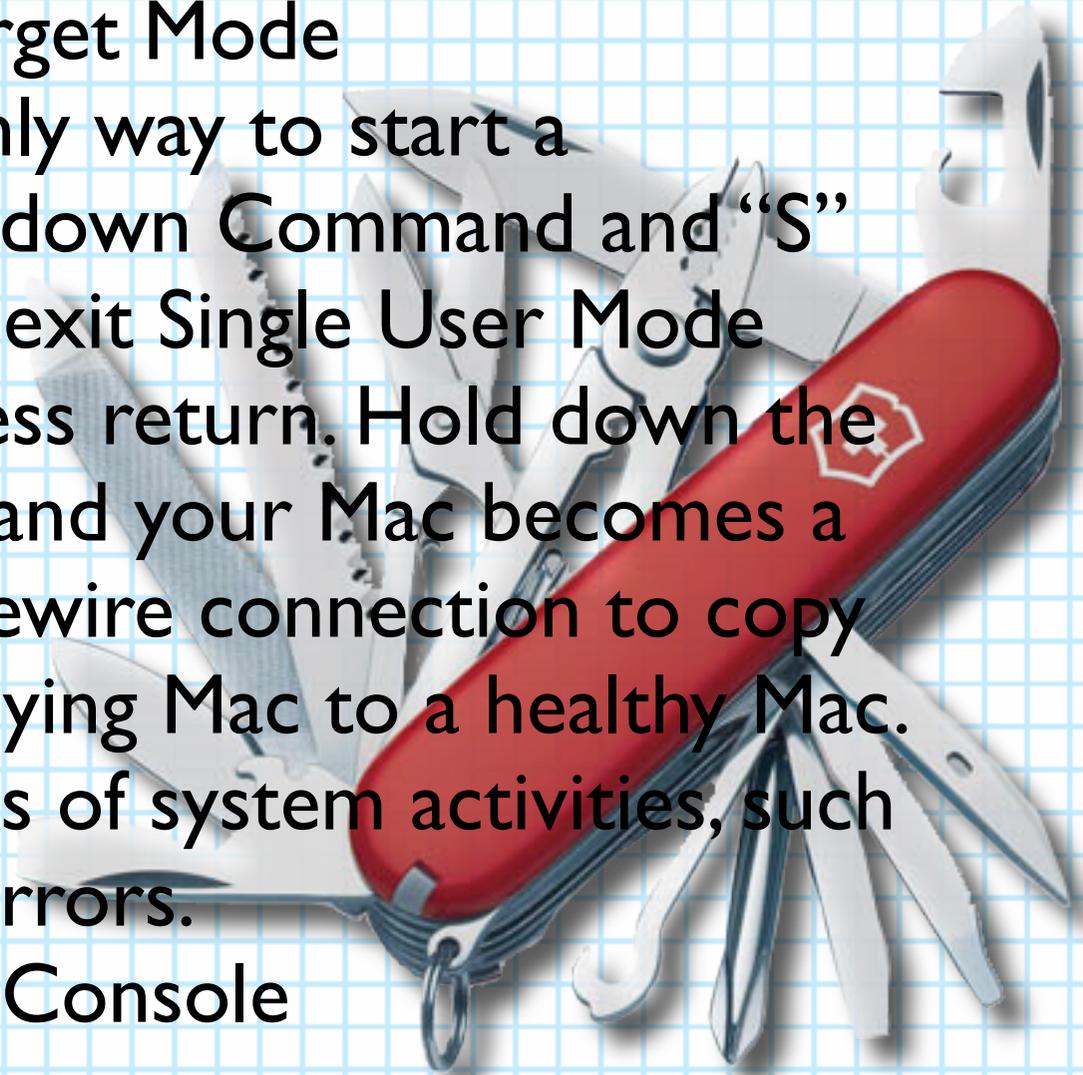
Applications > Utilities > Terminal

- Single User Mode & Target Mode

Sometimes this is the only way to start a troublesome Mac. Hold down Command and “S” keys during start up. To exit Single User Mode type in “reboot” and press return. Hold down the “T” key during start up and your Mac becomes a big hard drive. Use a Firewire connection to copy important files off of a dying Mac to a healthy Mac.

- Console: Shows log files of system activities, such as crashes and general errors.

Applications > Utilities > Console



Tools of the Trade

Tools that you can acquire for your Macintosh

- **Menu Meters:** This is a must for every Mac!

<http://www.ragingmenace.com/software/menumeters/index.html>

- **Grand Perspective**

<http://grandperspectiv.sourceforge.net>

- **AppleJack \$15**

<http://applejack.sourceforge.net/>

- **Cocktail**

<http://www.macosexcocktail.com/index.html>

- **Memtest**

<http://www.memtestosx.org/>

- **Preferential Treatment**

<http://www.jonn8.com/html/pt.html>

- **OnyX** <http://www.titanium.free.fr/>



Sites of the Trade

Sites that help you maintain your Macintosh

- Apple Knowledge Base & Forums

<http://kbase.info.apple.com/> & <http://discussions.apple.com/index.jspa>

- Google: Search Site. Search error codes

<http://google.com>

- Ask: Ask and you will get answers, lots of answers.

<http://www.ask.com>

- Mac Fix It *A paid \$25 Subscription is needed for full access to web site.

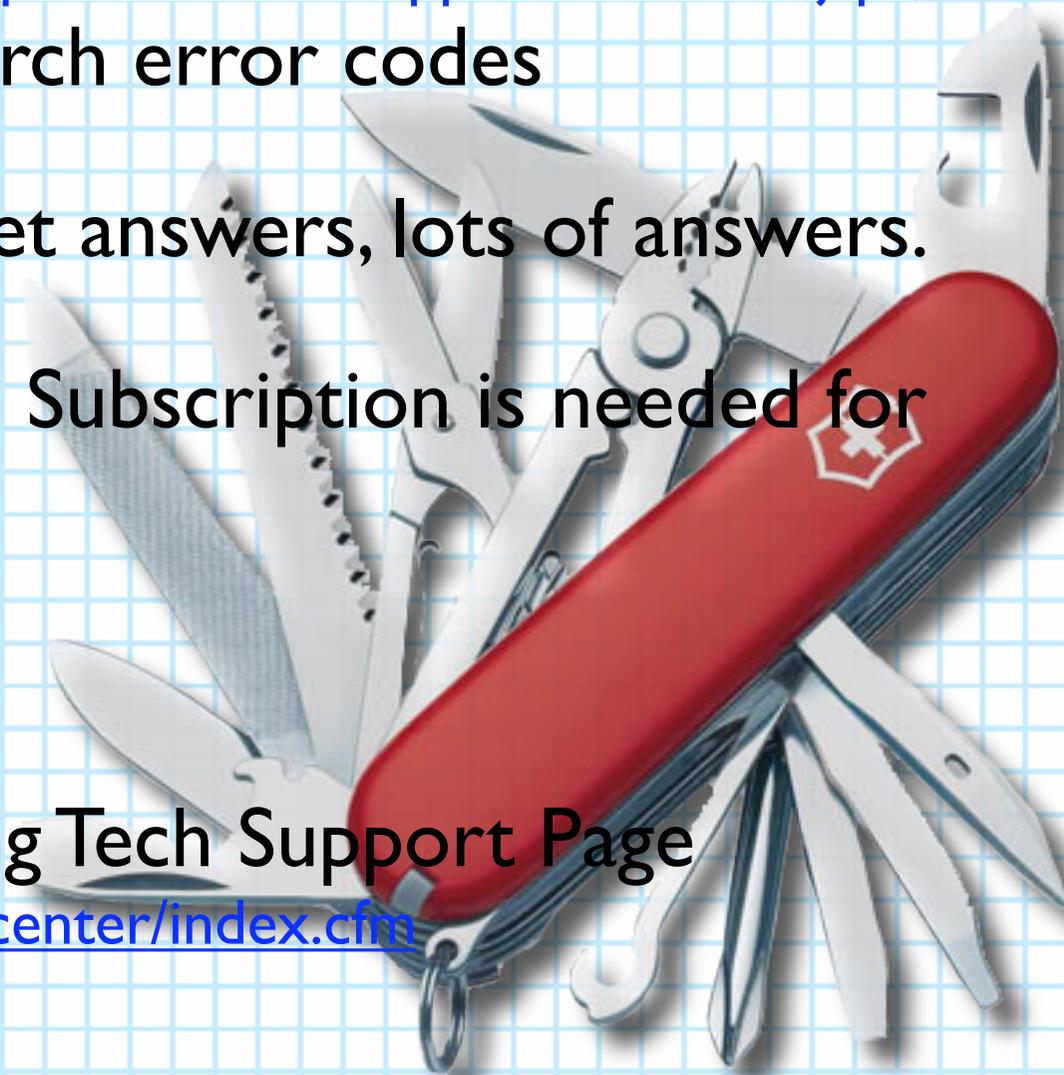
<http://www.macfixit.com/>

- Mac OS Hints

<http://www.macintoshhints.com>

- Other World Computing Tech Support Page

http://eshop.macsales.com/tech_center/index.cfm



Sites of the Trade

More sites that help you maintain your Macintosh

- Mac Users Forum

<http://www.macusersforum.com/>

- The Mac Observer: Site and Podcast

<http://www.macobserver.com/>

- Mac In Touch

<http://www.macintouch.com/>

- The MacCast: Site and Podcast

<http://www.maccast.com/>

- Lynda.com: On line video tutorials.

Subscription Required for full access. \$25 monthly,
\$250 yearly or \$350 Premium.

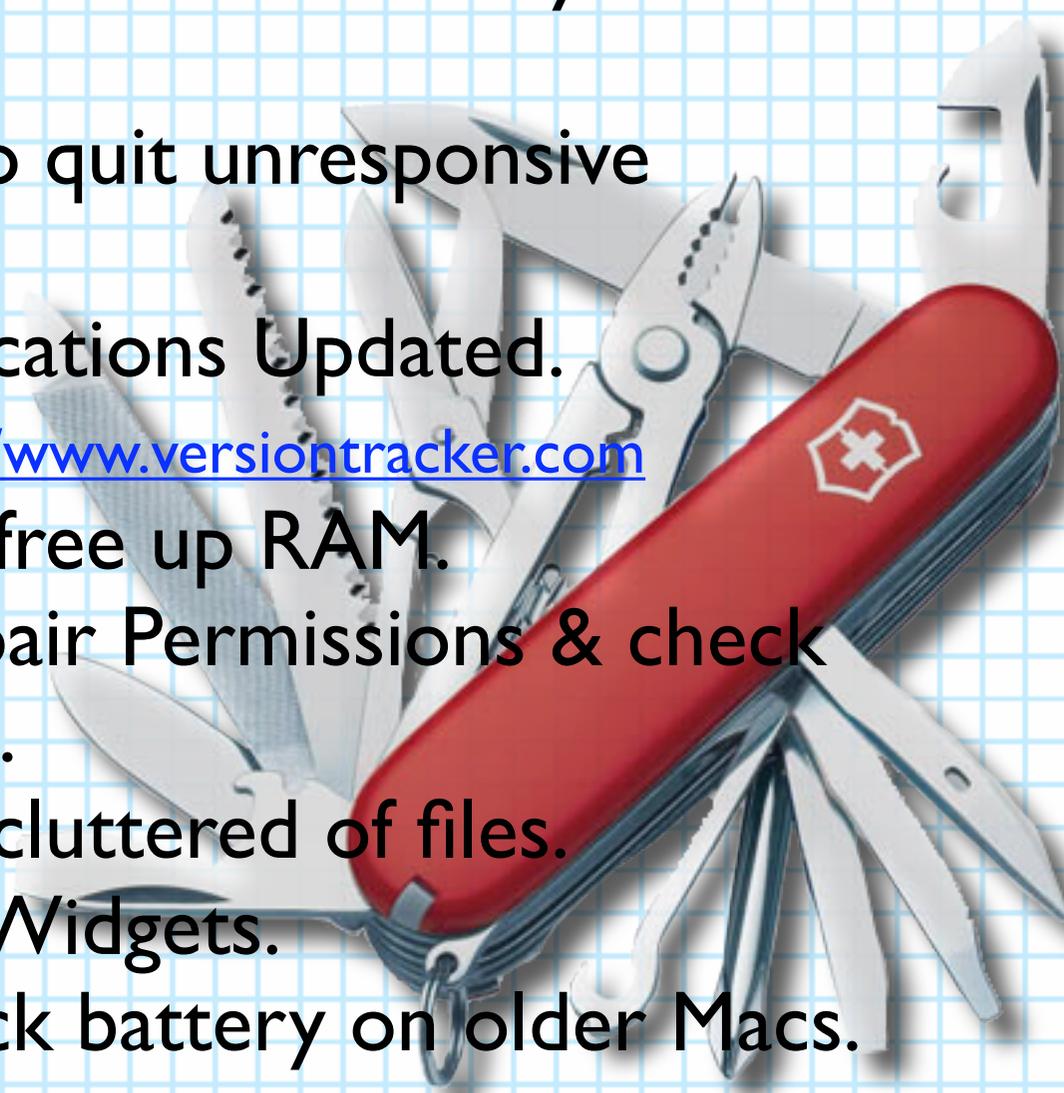
<http://www.lynda.com/>



Tricks of the Trade

The Easy Stuff

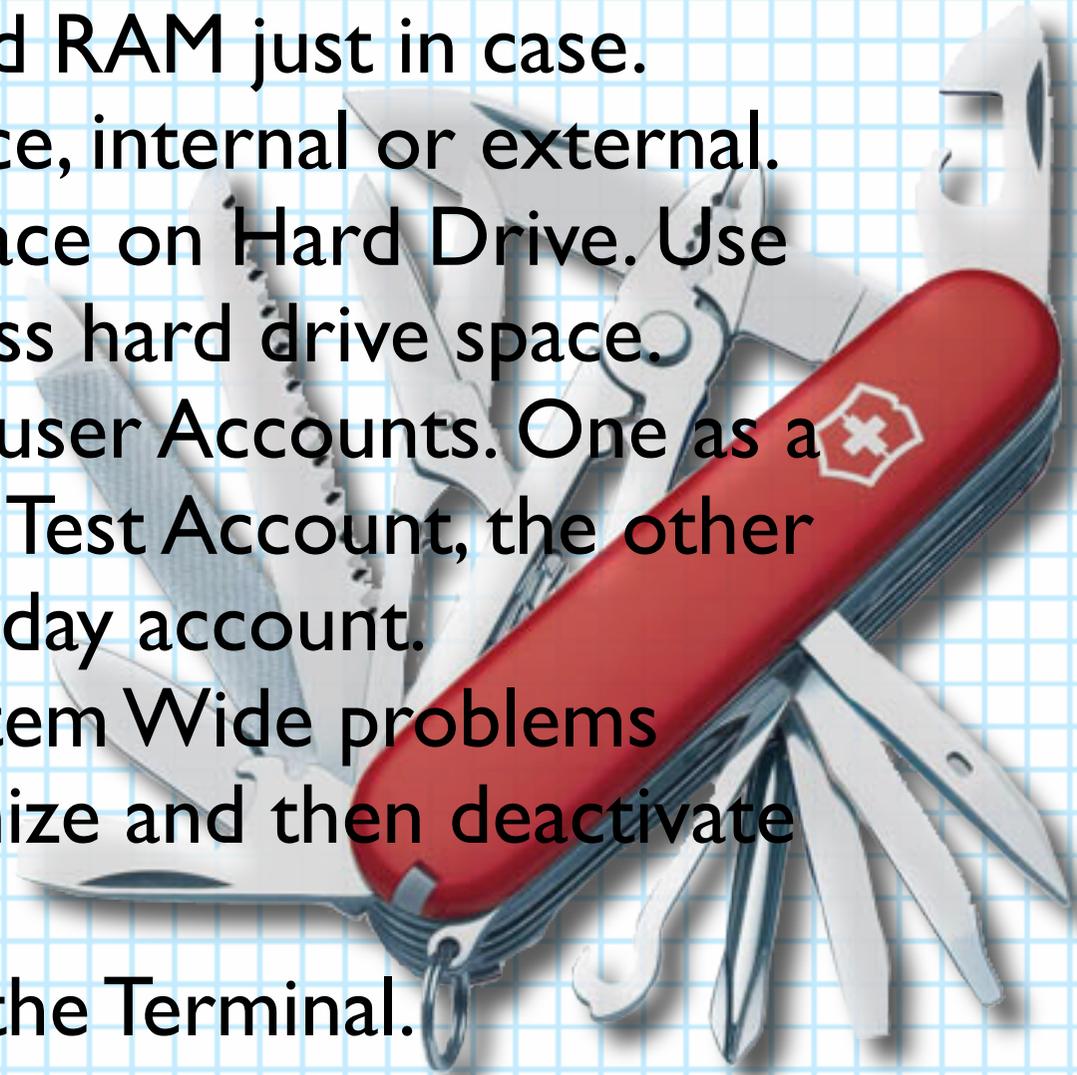
- Reboot, reboot early and often.
- Quit unused applications. Check Activity Monitor for CPU and RAM hogs.
- Use Activity Monitor to quit unresponsive applications.
- Keep System and Applications Updated. Software Update & <http://www.versiontracker.com>
- Restart Safari often to free up RAM.
- Use Disk Utility to Repair Permissions & check condition of Hard Drive.
- Keep your Desktop uncluttered of files.
- Learn to manage your Widgets.
- Replace the PRAM/clock battery on older Macs.



Tricks of the Trade

The Not So Easy Stuff

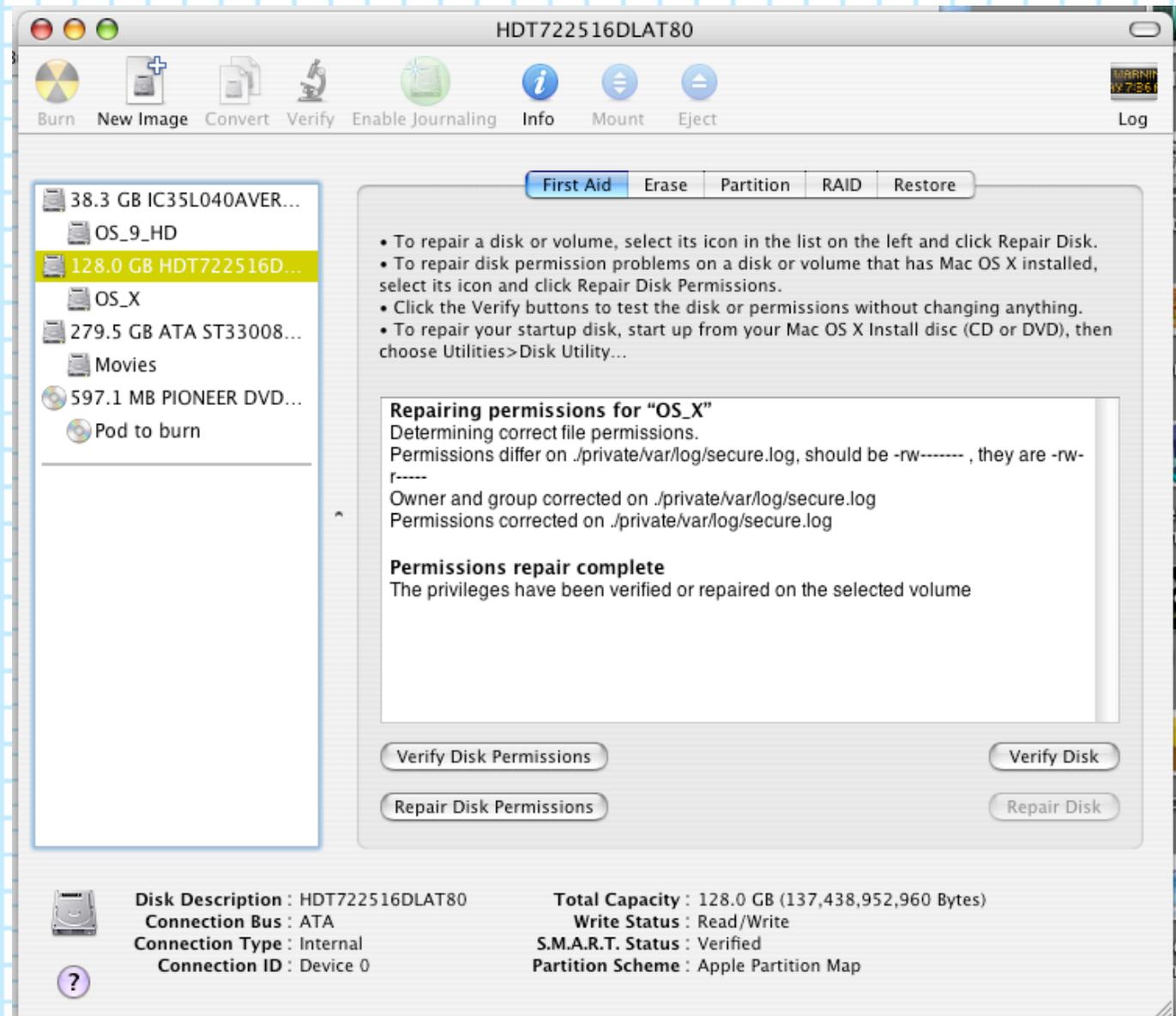
- Add more RAM. Adding RAM is the most cost effective upgrade you can do to any computer. Use name brand RAM, save old RAM just in case.
- Add more hard disk space, internal or external. Keep 30% to 50% free space on Hard Drive. Use GrandPerspective to assess hard drive space.
- Creating a couple more user Accounts. One as a Preventative Maintenance Test Account, the other as a non-administer everyday account. To check for User or System Wide problems
- Use Font Book to Organize and then deactivate unused Fonts.
- Learn to Script and use the Terminal.



Disk Utility



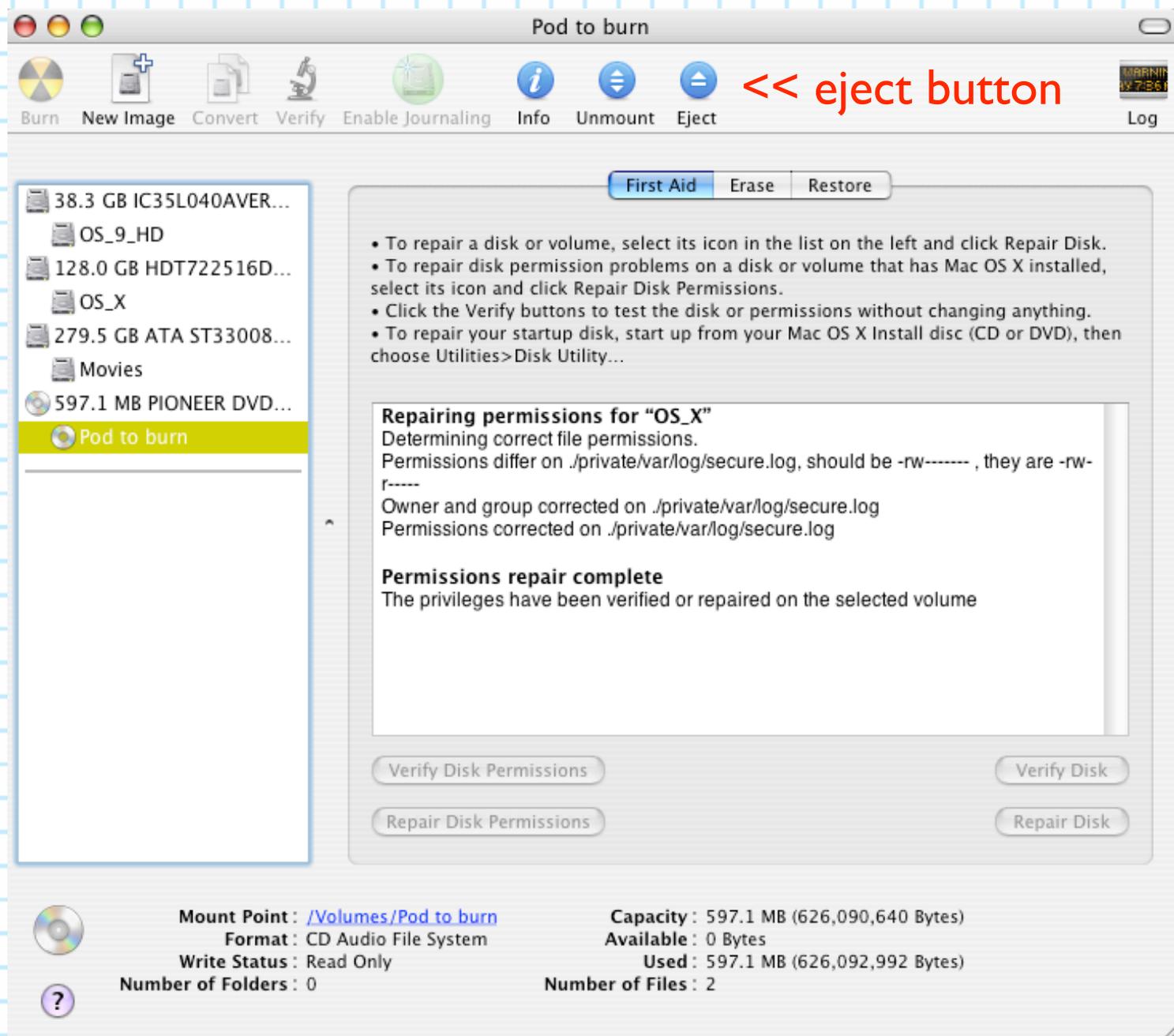
The Disk Utility can Verify then Repair Permissions. It can also Verify the Disk, but cannot Repair the HD.





Disk Utility and Stuck CD/DVDs

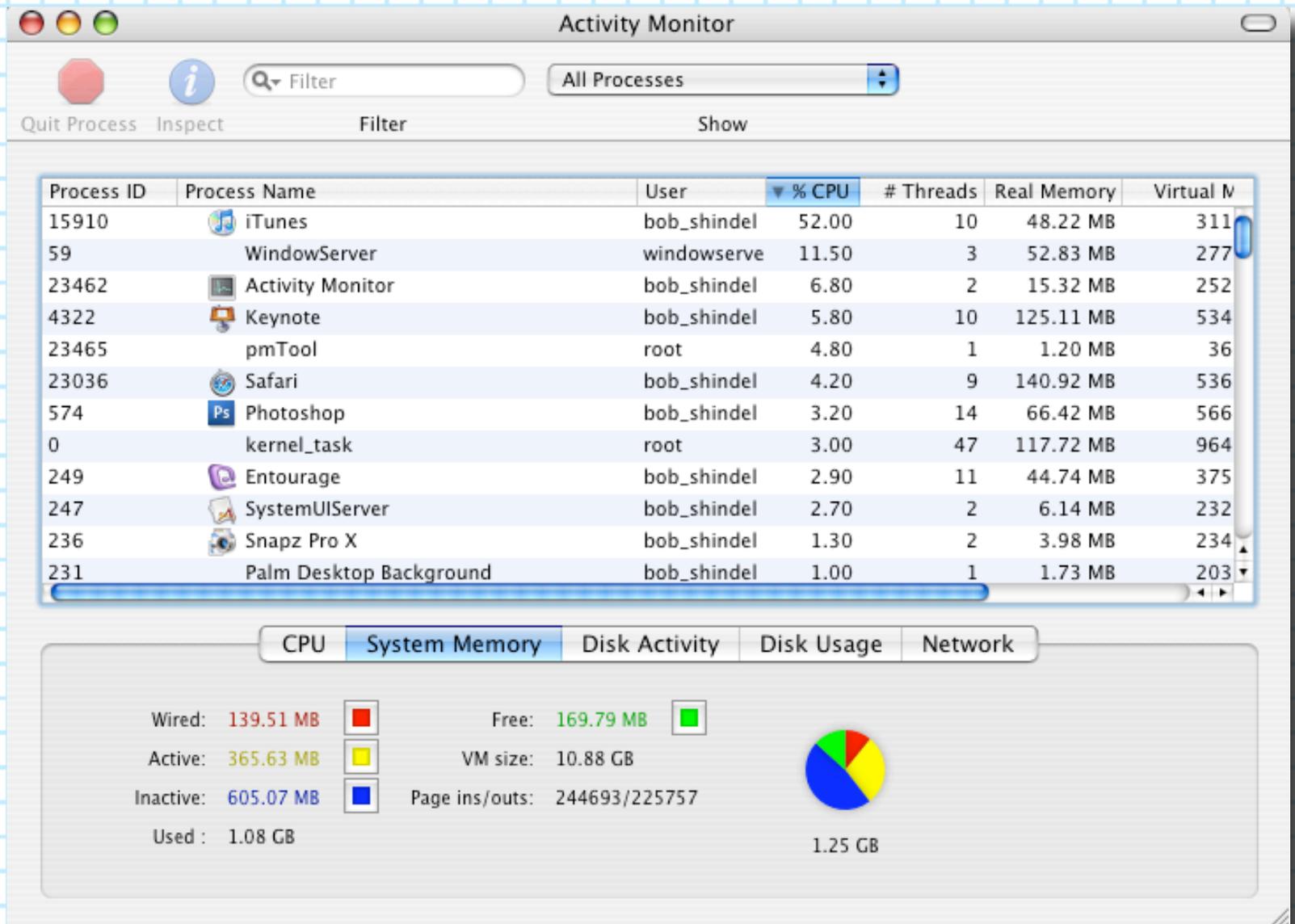
The Disk Utility can be used for Ejecting stuck CD or DVDs. Holding down the mouse button during start up will eject a stuck CD/DVD.



The Activity Monitor

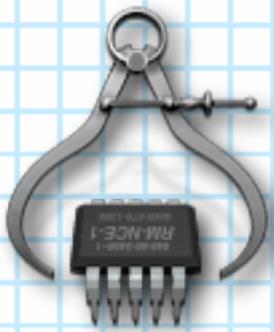


A wealth of information resides here. CPU usage, Real and Virtual Memory usage, Disk usage and Network information. Note the 11.5% usage for the WindowServer, this is the sign of a cluttered desktop!

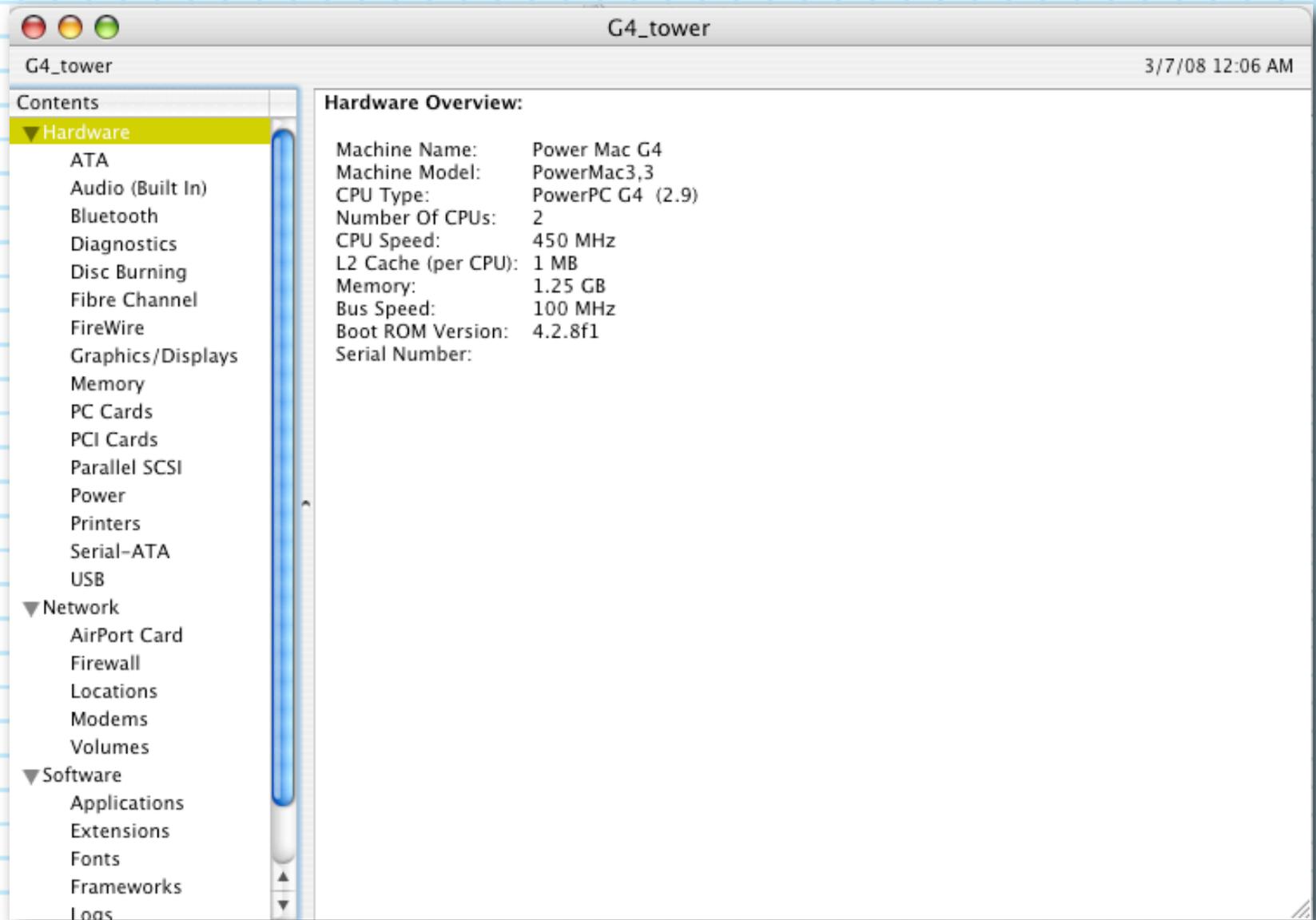


Page ins/outs shows you the virtual memory usage. Lots of Page outs activity means you should buy more RAM. Note the huge 10.88 GigaByte Virtual Memory Block.

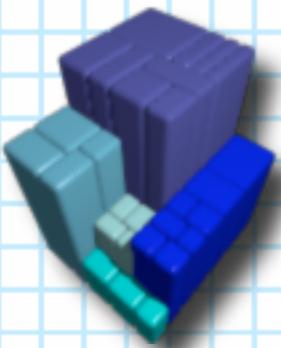
System Profiler



Tells you
all you
need to
know
about the
Hardware
inside your
Mac. RAM,
CPU, and
more.

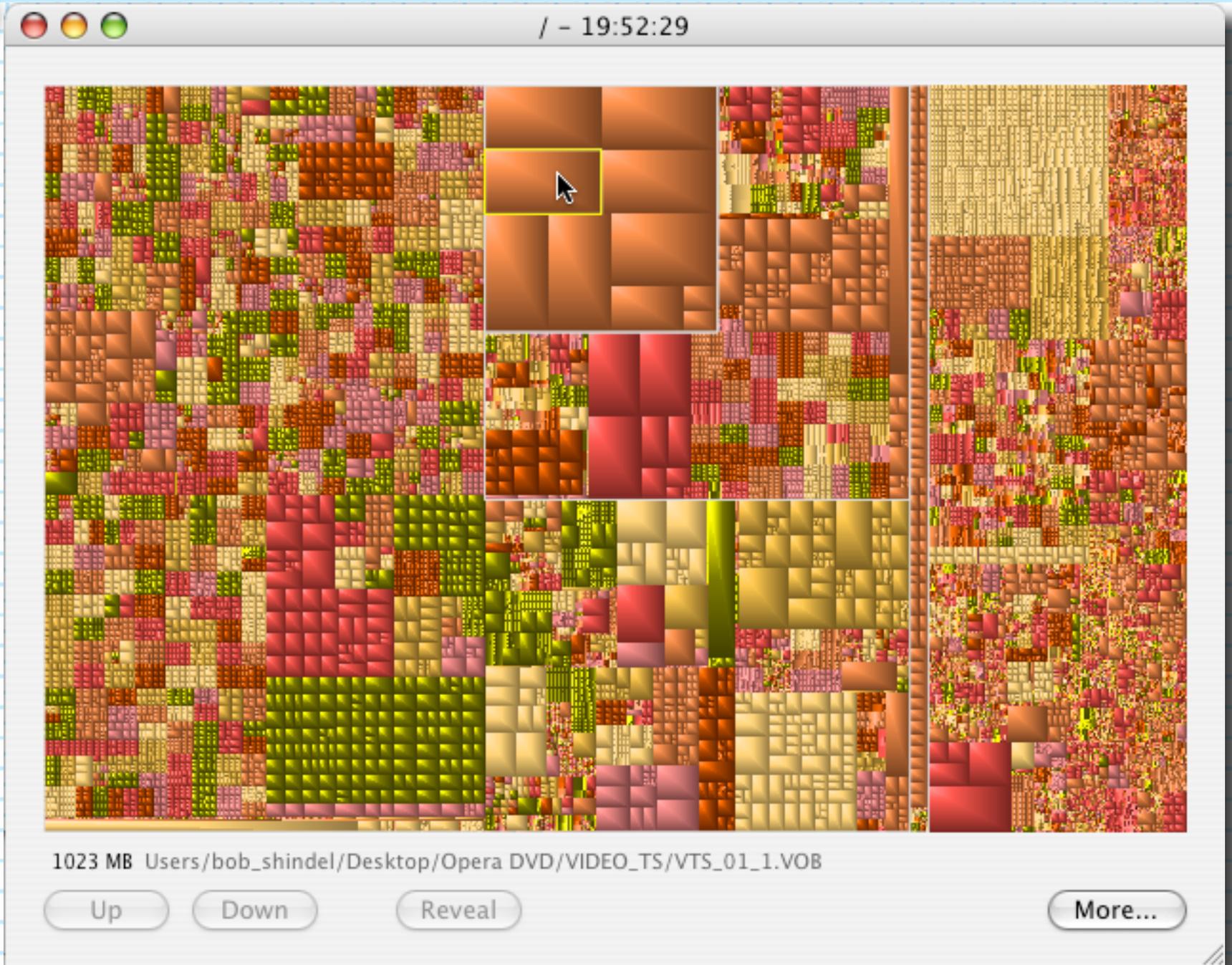


USB/Firewire problems? Look to see if devices show up in the System Profiler. See if you have any open RAM slots.



GrandPerspective

All the files to the right of the video file are iTunes files!





The Software Update

The Software Update is set to run automatically. If your Apple Applications are not in the Applications Folder, Software Update will not know that they are installed and will not update them.

Updating your software is always one of the first steps you should do in troubleshooting your Mac.



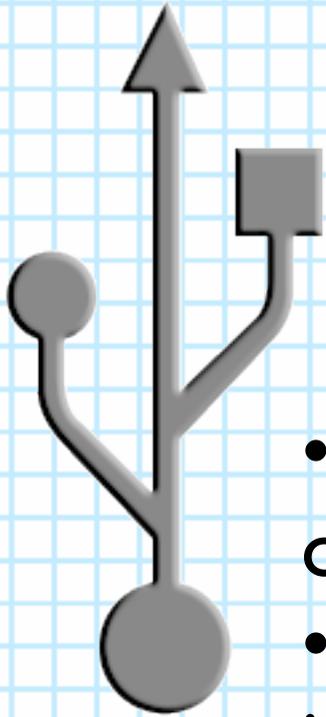
Hunt down Corrupt Preferences

After corrupt Politicians, corrupt Preference Files are perhaps the most common source of problems. Become familiar with Preferences and their locations.

Preferential Treatment as a freeware utility that helps locate corrupt problems.

<http://www.jonn8.com/html/pt.html>

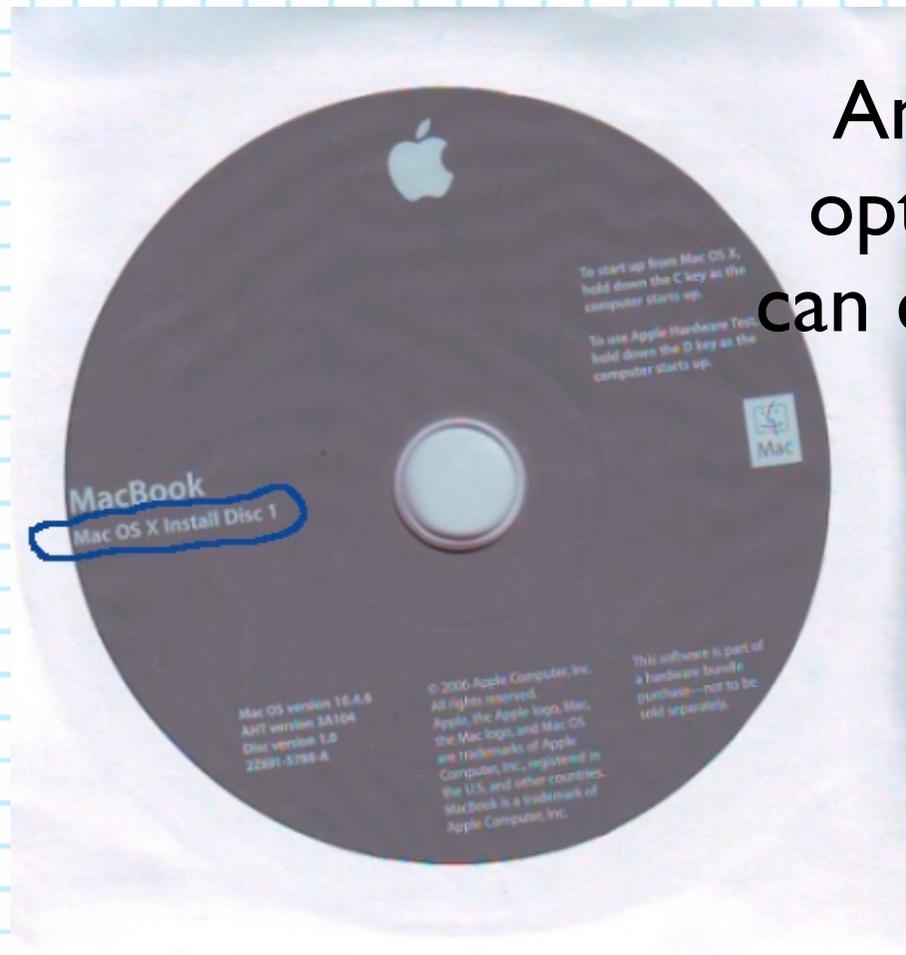
Troubleshooting USB & Firewire Devices



Check the cable first!

- If the USB device is plugged into the Keyboard, or hub; plug it directly into the computer body.
- If the USB/Firewire device is plugged directly into the computer, change USB/Firewire Ports.
- Swap out the USB/Firewire cable for another.
- Try a USB/Firewire hub with an external power supply.
- Unplug all other devices for possible conflicts.
- After exhausting the cable options check firmware updates for the USB/Firewire Device.

To Boot your Mac with from a CD/DVD hold down the “C” or option key at Start-up.



An external drive is a better option, but the install disc still can do the job for repairing your hard drive.



Remember, do not repair Permissions when booting up from the Install Disc.



Safari: Eliminating Slowness and the Dreaded Spinning Beach Ball

- Interrupt the Network: Disconnect Network

- Turn off Java

- Trash Safari Preferences

Home> Preferences> com.apple.Safari.plist

- Remove 3rd Party Add-Ons: ie. PithHelmet, SafariSIA, Safari Magic ect.

- Reset Safari, this clears history, cookies, ect.

Safari> Reset Safari

- Clear favicon Home>Library>Safari>Icons

- Disable Plug-ins, then restart Safari and check for improved speed.

Safari>Preferences>Security>Enable plug-ins

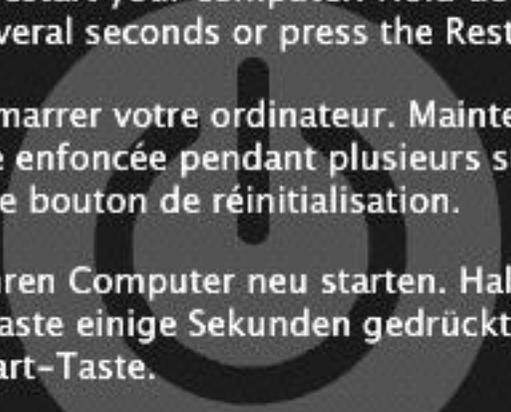
- Check Network Speed: <http://www.2wire.com>



Airport and Wi-Fi Problems



- Check for Firmware Updates, know your router manufacturer, make and model.
- Toggle Router, Switches and Hubs in that order.
- Perform a Hard Reset of your Router.
- Turn off Wireless Encryption: WEP, WPA.
- Switch Channels: Try channels 1 or 11 as the other channels overlap, channel 6 is the default channel for most routers and may be crowded.
- Toggle the AirPort Card.
- Check and quit 3rd Party wireless applications.
- Check for appliance interference: 2.4 GHz wireless phones and microwave ovens are suspects.



You need to restart your computer. Hold down the Power button for several seconds or press the Restart button.

Veillez redémarrer votre ordinateur. Maintenez la touche de démarrage enfoncée pendant plusieurs secondes ou bien appuyez sur le bouton de réinitialisation.

Sie müssen Ihren Computer neu starten. Halten Sie dazu die Einschalttaste einige Sekunden gedrückt oder drücken Sie die Neustart-Taste.

コンピュータを再起動する必要があります。パワーボタンを数秒間押し続けるか、リセットボタンを押してください。

**Keep you Mac healthy and happy
and you should never see this again.**