

Macintosh Learning Center

--- Shell Weinberg

Laguna Woods Town Centre

Laguna Woods Village Community Center, 3rd floor

Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday

Reviewing Fundamentals & Basics:

Finder and the Desktop (when using OS X)

An area of some confusion for Beginners and new users is the Finder and its partner the Desktop. So I thought it would be helpful to repeat the Fundamental & Basic information I had offered in a column two years ago.

The subject today is the often used **Finder**. Interestingly, when you boot the Mac you will always see **Finder** in 2 locations on the screen. Each presents information, or commands, that can be used to navigate within the computer system. However, even though the word **Finder** is the same, there is actually a very different reason for using one or the other.



Look at the upper left corner of your Menu Bar... next to the Apple is an area referred to as the *Application menu* and this is where the word **Finder** will probably be showing. (Note: The **Application menu word** will change according to the Application you have launched or activated.)

When you drop this menu you will see the **commands** available to you. Some of them appear black (*available*) and some of them are grayed (*this means not available and will not function in the mode on your screen*). A single click on a black command will activate or open that item. These commands deal with management of the Operating System.

Because the word **Finder**, as it appears on the Menu Bar, always shows when you are in the **Desktop** mode, it sort of makes these two words interchangeable. So, when active in the



Finder you're also at the Desktop, and vice versa. The fact is, there really is a technical difference between the two words but for simplicity I prefer to think of them as interchangeable. You will never see the word Desktop on the Menu Bar.



Now, the second location for **Finder**, is the icon in the first position on the Dock. Same word, different use. A single click on this icon **opens a window** which will show you the applications, programs, folders, and files that are stored on your Hard Drive. A double click on one of these icons will launch the program or open a window.

And now you know the difference... when you want to access the **Finder commands**, go to the **Finder on the Menu Bar**.

When you want to see the **Finder window**, showing where your various files are stored, go to the **Finder on the Dock**.



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