

Mac Maintenance and Backup

by **Joe Kissell**

Joe Kissell says that he spent 10 years in the Macintosh software industry before escaping to write numerous books, including 12 of the most popular Take Control ebooks. He is a TidBITS senior editor and a frequent contributor to Macworld. From what I know of writers, escaping from the software industry into writing is a little like leaping out of a frying pan into the fire. That said, Joe has found an excellent home in the writing industry as his books continue to be technically excellent while being totally readable by the common Macintosh user.

This book addresses the one topic that is important to all Mac users, be they the casual home user or the power industrial user - how to look after your computer so that it is always ready for you to use.

The book starts with how to get started on the right foot: from installing the latest version of MacOS, software updating, options, keeping things tidy and maintained, this chapter provides a valuable overview of some important ideas to think about. This window on caring for your Mac is followed by a further 7 chapters expanding on daily, weekly, monthly and annual tasks to keep everything running. There is even a chapter on things that you may never need to do! This section of the book is rounded out with what to do when a new version of MacOS is released (Buy it!) and some useful instructions on how to monitor your Mac's health.

The most important aspect of maintenance is a rock-solid backup strategy that protects all your important data in the event of catastrophe. The final 4 chapters of the book discuss Backups; deciding upon your backup strategy, choosing your backup hardware and software, and setting up your backup to run. You'll find time-tested recommendations that help you set up, test, and maintain your backups, complete with instructions on how to restore after a crash, and important hints along the way.

Three appendices complete the book: Troubleshooting, Different sorts of backup software, and a primer on using Retrospect, a long-time player in Macintosh backup software.

Joe's expertise is evident throughout the book, both technically demonstrating that he has been there and done that (and made that mistake!), and artistically in producing a book full of very useful information in a highly readable format. I am getting a copy of this book to give as a Christmas present, and I am sure that it would also be a useful addition in a handy section of your bookshelves.