

# HOW TO TAKE A SCREENSHOT ON YOUR MAC

Need a way to capture your Mac's entire screen or only a portion of it? Take a *screenshot* - a picture of your Mac's screen that includes the windows and applications that are currently visible. You can take screenshots when creating documentation, explaining system settings to friends or family members, or just capturing something on your screen that you want to share with others. This tutorial shows you how.

## Capturing the Entire Screen

Capturing everything on your Mac's screen is the fastest and easiest way to take a screenshot. All you have to do is press three keys and the screenshot will be saved to your Mac's desktop. And if you're using two monitors, this method will take screenshots of both displays.

There are some drawbacks to using this method, however. What you gain in convenience, you may lose in professionalism. For example, if a window isn't taking up the entire display, people might be able to see the icons on your desktop. (Of course, you also could crop and edit the screenshot in an image editor of your choice.) But when speed is a priority, you can't beat this method.

Here's how to take a screenshot of your Mac's entire screen:

1. Navigate to the app, webpage, or screen that you want to capture in a screenshot. Remember that using this method will capture everything visible on your screen.
2. On your keyboard, press *Command-Shift-3*.
3. If all goes well, you'll hear the screen capture sound if your Mac's volume isn't muted. That means the screenshot has been saved to your Mac's desktop!

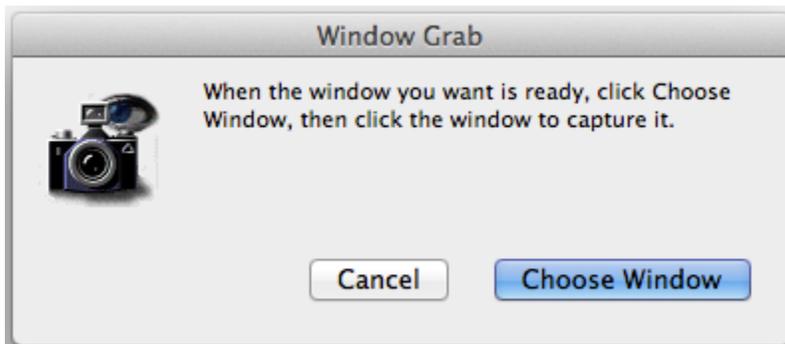
Congratulations! You have taken a screenshot of your Mac's entire screen. Check your Mac's desktop for the file - it will be named something like this: `Screen Shot 2013-02-07 at 10.20.37 PM`. If you are using multiple displays, there will be two files - one for each display.

## Capturing a Window

When capturing the entire screen is overkill, you have another option: Using the Grab application to take a screenshot of a single window on your screen. This is a great option for people who are documenting software and want to draw attention to a specific window of an application.

Here's how to take a screenshot of a single window on your Mac:

1. Open the Grab application. (It's in Applications → Utilities.)
2. From the **Capture** menu, select **Window**. The window show below appears.



3. Leaving the *Window Grab* window open, navigate to the window you want to capture.
4. Click **Choose Window**.
5. Click the window you want to capture in the screenshot.

The screenshot of the window has been captured by the Grab application. Now you can save the screenshot or copy it to another application for editing.

## Capturing a Selection of the Screen

For full control over the area captured in the screenshot, you can use the Grab application to capture a *selection* of the screen. This feature allows you to click and drag to select the selection of the window you want to save in the screenshot.

Here's how to take a screenshot of a selection of your Mac's screen:

1. Navigate to the application or window you want to capture.
2. From the **Capture** menu in the Grab application, select **Selection**. The window shown below appears.



3. Click and drag to select the portion of the screen you want to capture.

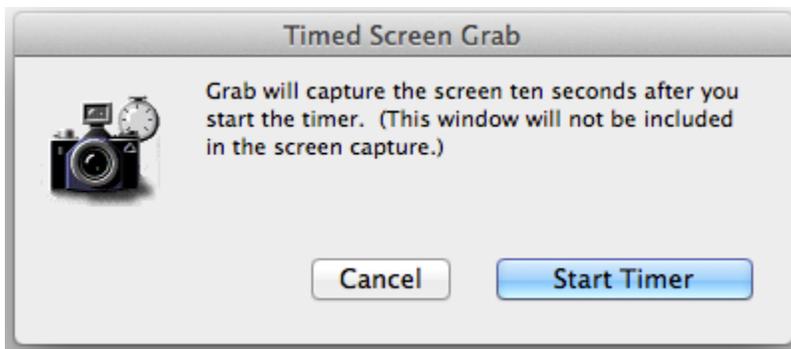
The screenshot of the window has been captured by the Grab application. Now you can save the screenshot or copy it to another application for editing.

### Taking a Timed Screenshot

For those applications and windows that are difficult to capture with the keyboard shortcut or the Grab application, you use the *timed screen* feature in Grab. Use this and your Mac will automatically take a screenshot in 10 seconds.

Here's how to take a timed screenshot on your Mac:

1. From the **Capture** menu in the Grab application, select **Timed Screen**. The window shown below appears.



2. When you're ready to start the 10 second countdown, click **Start Timer**.
3. Within 10 seconds, navigate to the application or window you want to capture.

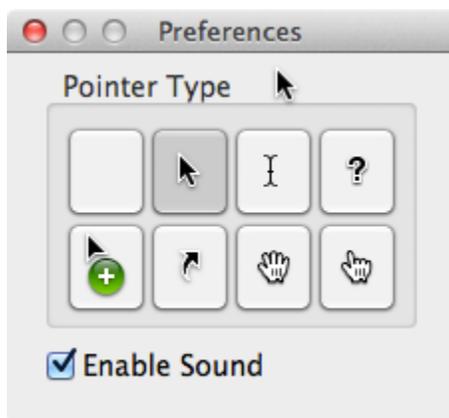
The screenshot of the window has been captured by the Grab application. Now you can save the screenshot or copy it to another application for editing.

## Showing or Hiding the Pointer in Screenshots

By default, the pointer will be hidden when you take screenshots. This is probably the ideal setting for most screenshots (you'll learn how to add callouts later), but there might be times when you want to show the pointer to draw attention to a setting or menu item. Fortunately, the Grab application allows you to show the pointer in screenshots. (Note that there is no way to show the pointer when using the first method described in this tutorial to take screenshots of the entire screen.)

Here's how to set the Grab application to show or hide the pointer in screenshots:

1. From the **Grab** menu in the Grab application, select **Preferences**. The window shown below appears.



2. To hide the pointer in your screenshots, click the first button in the window, which is blank.
3. To show a pointer in your screenshots, click the button with the pointer you want to appear.
4. Close the *Preferences* window.

Now when you take screenshots in the future, the Grab application will hide or show the pointer based on the setting you selected. If you decided to show the pointer, be sure to position the pointer where you want it on the screen before you take the screenshot.

## Adding Callouts to Screenshots

Now that you have a screenshot, you can edit it and add *callouts*, which are text and shapes that draw attention to something in the image. The Preview application installed on your Mac is perfect for this task. For more information, see [Punching Up Screen Grabs With Preview](#).

## Learning How to Take Great Screenshots

Taking great screenshots on your Mac is a fine art that takes practice. If you're looking to jump start your screenshot skills, you might be interested in another one of our articles: [Taking Great Screenshots in Mac](#)

[OS X](#). It's written by Kirk McElhearn, a senior contributor for Macworld magazine who shares valuable tips for taking the best screenshots possible.

## Using Other Screenshot Applications

Grab isn't the only application that can take screenshots. If you're looking for something with a little more oomph, you can try using another application. For example, the Preview application on your Mac is also capable of taking screenshots. There are also several third-party apps capable of capturing screenshots.

[Skitch](#) is a free app that allows you to capture selections of your screen and add callouts. [LittleSnapper](#) is a good option for people who take a lot of screenshots. It creates a library of screenshots that makes organizing images easy. And if you need another option, [Snapz Pro](#) provides some powerful options that aren't available in any other applications.

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