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PowerBook Software: Frequently Asked Questions (8/96)

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PowerBook Software: Frequently Asked Questions (8/96)

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TOPIC -----

This document contains the answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) about PowerBook software.

Questions Answered in This FAQ:
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- 1) What is the Control Strip and how can I get it?
- 2) I am using System 7.1, can I use the Control Strip?
- 3) I want to use the Control Strip software on my desktop Macintosh. Is this possible?
- 4) The Control Strip is stuck in the middle of the screen. How can I move it?
- 5) Whenever I hit a key on my keyboard I hear a beep sound and the character does not register on the screen. What's going on?
- 6) What is a system enabler, why do I need it, and which version should I use?
- 7) I just installed a screen saver but I've noticed that after the screen saver kicks in, it slows down significantly. What is causing this?
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16) I made a backup of the information on my PowerBook 145B/150 hard drive. Now I would like to restore just one of my control panels. Can I restore a single file from the backup?

17) I did not make a backup of the system software on my PowerBook 145B (or PowerBook 150), and now I think I need to reload the operating system. I do not want to upgrade to System 7.5. Where can I get a new copy of the software that came with my PowerBook?

18) I am upgrading my PowerBook with Express Modem to System 7.5. What version of the Express Modem software should I be using?

19) Do I need the Duo Battery Patch?

20) What ColorSync System Profile should I use on my PowerBook?

21) What is an extension conflict and how do I know if I have one?

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23) What is zapping the PRAM and when should I do it?

24) Where else can I go for answers?

DISCUSSION -----

1) Question: What is the Control Strip and how can I get it?

Answer: The Control Strip is a PowerBook-specific feature (until recently, see below) that allows easy access to AppleTalk, file sharing, hard disk spin down, the PowerBook control panel, PowerBook sleep, and sound volume. The Control Strip also gives an indication of the battery level, estimated battery time remaining, and battery usage level. The Control Strip is a thin, horizontal bar that can be easily dragged to any part of the screen, resized, reordered, or closed. In addition to the Apple Control Strip modules, there are many other Control Strip modules available as shareware at online services. To add a Control Strip module, drag the module into the Control Strip Modules folder in the System Folder and restart the computer. The Control Strip comes with system software versions 7.1.1 and later.

2) Question: I am using System 7.1, can I use the Control Strip?

Answer: The Control Strip only works with system software version 7.1.1 and later. If you try to drag the Control Strip modules and control panel into a System 7.1 (or earlier) System Folder, the Control Strip will not show up.

3) Question: I want to use the Control Strip software on my desktop Macintosh. Is this possible?

Answer: Until recently, Apple has only supported the use of the Control Strip software on PowerBooks. There are third-party patches to allow use of the Control Strip on a desktop Macintosh, but this solution is not supported by Apple. The only desktop configuration currently supported with the Control Strip is a desktop Macintosh using the AppleVision 1710 Display, which comes with software that allows the Control Strip to be used on any Macintosh.

4) Question: The Control Strip is stuck in the middle of the screen. How can I move it?

Answer: You can drag the Control Strip vertically and horizontally at any time by holding down the Option key while dragging it. You can also rearrange the order of the Control Strip modules by holding down the Option key while dragging the modules in the Control Strip.

5) Question: Whenever I hit a key on my keyboard I hear a beep sound and the character does not register on the screen. What's going on?

Answer: You have invoked the Slow Keys feature of the Easy Access control panel. Slow Keys is designed to make typing easier for disabled persons and requires that you hold down a key for several seconds before it is recognized. Slow Keys is activated by holding down the Return key for more than 5 seconds. You can turn Slow Keys off in the Easy Access control panel or remove Easy Access from the control panel folder altogether and restart the computer.

6) Question: What is a system enabler, why do I need it, and which version should I use?

Answer: A system enabler provides system software code for your specific PowerBook to work with system software. An enabler is not required if you are using a version of the system software that was released after your particular model of PowerBook was released. For instance, if you are using a PowerBook 160 and System 7.5, you do not need a system enabler. If the enabler is needed and is missing, the computer will start up with an error message about the version of the system software being incorrect. The correct enabler can usually be found in the System Folder on the Disk Tools disk that came with the PowerBook.

7) Question: I just installed a screen saver but I've noticed that after the

screen saver kicks in, it slows down significantly. What is causing this?

Answer: It is most likely the case that processor cycling is activating and causing the screen saver to slow down. For instructions on turning processor cycling off, see the question below.

8) Question: What is processor cycling and how do I turn it off?

Answer: All PowerBook models implement a feature called processor cycling (formerly known as processor rest) intended to save battery life. This feature activates when the computer detects that the keyboard, mouse, trackball, or Trackpad has not been used for more than a few seconds. At this time, the processor speed is reduced to about 3 MHz and all processing functions become extremely slow. Processor cycling will not activate while the computer is doing any sort of data transfer.

Note that by default processor cycling is on, and although it is intended to for battery life conservation, it will also activate while running off AC power.

The method of turning off processor cycling will depend on the version of the system software you are using:

System 7.0.1

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Step 1

Open the Portable control panel.

Step 2

While holding down the Option key, click on the word "Minutes".

Step 3

Select Don't Rest and click OK.

System 7.1

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Step 1

Open the PowerBook control panel.

Step 2

While holding down the Option key on the keyboard, click the Options... button in the control panel.

Step 3

Select "Don't allow cycling".

System 7.5 or later

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Step 1

Open the PowerBook control panel.

Step 2

Make sure the toggle switch in the control panel is set to Easy.

Step 3

While holding down the Option key on the keyboard, drag the toggle switch from Easy to Custom and let go.

Step 4

Uncheck the "Allow processor cycling - more battery savings" checkbox.

9) Question: What does the Assistant Toolbox extension do?

Answer: The Assistant Toolbox extension adds several features and functionalities to a PowerBook:

* Battery Management

The Assistant Toolbox adds to the base system's ability to manage battery life.

* Persistent RAM disk

Gives the PowerBook the ability to save RAM disk data to the hard disk when shutting down and read it back in when starting up. Normally, a RAM disk is lost when the PowerBook is completely shut down.

* Sleep Fkey

Using the key sequence Command (Apple)-Shift-0 (the number), you can quickly put the PowerBook to sleep.

* Later Laser

Later Laser allows deferred printing of documents when the PowerBook is disconnected from a printer or network. When you reconnect, the documents print when the printer is available. Later Laser is only active when a laser printer is chosen.

* SCSI Sleep

SCSI Sleep mounts any previously connected hard drives as a PowerBook comes out of sleep.

* Anti-Submarining Cursor

The Anti-Submarining Cursor feature is a software fix for the "submarining" cursor effect on the gray-scale passive-matrix screens. "Submarining" is when

the cursor disappears as it is moved quickly. This is an important feature for all passive-matrix gray-scale PowerBooks.

* Always AppleTalk

The Always AppleTalk feature lets you activate AppleTalk without restarting the computer.

All of these features are built in to the Assistant Toolbox extension and are loaded automatically when the extension is loaded.

10) Question: What does PowerBook File Assistant do?

Answer: PowerBook File Assistant, now simply named File Assistant, is a program that can automatically synchronize a file, a folder, or an entire volume between two computers. This program can be very useful for PowerBook owners that often find themselves in the situation where they are maintaining a database on a central computer and then updating the information on the road with the PowerBook. When the user comes back with the updated information, they simply connect the two computers and run the File Assistant program and all files on both computers are up to date and synchronized. The File Assistant program is bundled on the hard drive of all currently available PowerBook computers.

11) Question: I am trying to use PowerBook File Assistant to synchronize two files but I get the error message that they do not have the same creation date. How can I get around this?

Answer: PowerBook File Assistant will not synchronize two files that have the same name but different creation dates. If File Assistant generates this message in error, remove the Assistant Data file from the Preferences folder within the System Folder, and set up the synchronization again.

12) Question: Sometimes I can't seem to use my internal modem and print at the same time. Why is this?

Answer: On most PowerBook models that have only one serial port (200's, 2300's, 190's, 5300's), the serial port is mapped as a modem port. Under normal conditions this isn't a problem - the internal modem can be used at the same time as a serial device such as a printer is being used. The exception to this is if you are using a communications program that does not use the Apple Communications Toolbox (CTB). If this is the case, you will need to respectively set the PowerBook, PowerBook Setup, or Express Modem control panel to Internal, Compatible, or "Use internal modem instead of modem port". The location of this setting will depend on what version of the modem and system software you have. When the PowerBook is set like this, the serial port cannot be used with serial devices. However, it can be used with LocalTalk devices.

The vast majority of communications programs that are developed for Macintosh right now will use the CTB. If you find that you have an older communications program, contact the manufacturer to see if there's an update.

13) Question: Sometimes I get errors when printing to my StyleWriter (or any serial printer). Why is this?

Answer: As discussed in the previous question, a PowerBook with a single serial port (200's, 2300's, 190's, 5300's) introduces some variables to serial printing. Three things must be true to print to a serial printer with a single serial port PowerBook:

Step 1

AppleTalk must be set to inactive in the Chooser or something other than LocalTalk must be selected in the Network control panel.

Step 2

If you have an internal modem you will need to respectively set the PowerBook, PowerBook Setup, or Express Modem control panel to External, Normal, or uncheck "Use internal modem instead of modem port" (see above). The location of this setting will depend on what version of the modem and system software you have.

Step 3

When selecting the serial printer in the Chooser, you must select the modem port or the combined printer/modem port. Do not select the printer port.

14) Question: I have connected a 14" display to my PowerBook, but I am only getting a 640 x 400 image on the external monitor. What should I do?

Answer: It sounds like you have video mirroring enabled. Open the PowerBook Display control panel and see if mirroring is on. If so, it generates the same image on both displays. Since many PowerBooks have a screen resolution of 640 x 400, the external monitor mirrors that resolution.

Turn off mirroring, then check your settings in the Monitors control panel. To make your external monitor the main monitor, drag the menu bar in the Monitors control panel from monitor 1 to monitor 2.

15) Question: How do I back up the files on my PowerBook 145B or 150?

Answer: Instructions for backing up the information on the PowerBook 145B or PowerBook 150 are available in the online Apple Technical Information Library. Use the search string "PowerBook 145B and backup" instructions to locate the article "PowerBook 145 & 150: Backup and Restore Instructions." The instructions are also detailed in the User's Guide that comes with both computers.

16) Question: I made a backup of the information on my PowerBook 145B/150 hard drive. Now I would like to restore just one of my control panels. Can I restore a single file from the backup?

Answer: No. The PowerBook 145B and 150 backup does not allow for restoring single files.

17) Question: I did not make a backup of the system software on my PowerBook 145B (or PowerBook 150), and now I think I need to reload the operating system. I do not want to upgrade to System 7.5. Where can I get a new copy of the software that came with my PowerBook?

Answer: You can order a pre-made backup of the operating system for a PowerBook 145B and 150 by contacting Apple at 800-767-2775. A shipping and handling fee will apply.

18) Question: I am upgrading my PowerBook with Express Modem to System 7.5. What version of the Express Modem software should I be using?

Answer: You should upgrade your Express Modem software to at least version 1.5.3. Earlier versions may not work properly with System 7.5.

19) Question: Do I need the Duo Battery Patch?

Answer: The Duo Battery Patch should be installed on any PowerBook Duo 210, 230, or 250 that is using PowerBook Duo Enabler 1.0, and has an Express Modem installed. This is the only configuration of PowerBook Duo which receives any benefit from the presence of the Duo Battery Patch. System software versions 7.1.1 and later do not require the patch.

20) Question: What ColorSync System Profile should I use on my PowerBook?

Answer: If you have a PowerBook 180c, 540c, 5300c, 5300ce use PowerBook 180c Standard.

If you have a PowerBook 165c, 520c, 190cs, 5300cs use PowerBook 165c Standard.

If you have a PowerBook 270c, 280c, 2300c use PowerBook 270c Standard.

Non-color PowerBooks do not use ColorSync.

21) Question: What is an extension conflict and how do I know if I have one?

Answer: The resources that are added to your system software by programs and utilities are typically called extensions or INITs and are kept in the Extensions folder or the Control Panels folder in the System Folder. If these extensions are not completely compatible, they can cause the computer to do strange things.

With PowerBooks, symptoms that are typical of being caused by an extension conflict are: freezing, Type XX errors (where XX is a number), "floating point coprocessor not installed" errors, not coming out of sleep properly, not

auto-dimming the display, not auto-sleeping, not spinning down the hard drive, not reading floppy disks correctly, displaying anomalous information or "garbage" on the screen, getting errors when printing, not accessing external devices, modem not connecting properly or dropping the line, not connecting to a network properly, and many others.

22) Question: How do I troubleshoot an extension conflict?

Answer: If a problem is consistent and "testable," it is very easy to determine if the problem is being caused by an extension conflict.

If you are using System 7.1 or earlier, try starting up the computer with the Shift key held down to turn the extensions off. You should see the message "Welcome to Macintosh, Extensions Off." If the symptoms go away when the extensions are off, then you have an extension conflict.

Identifying the Conflicting Extension:

Step 1

Create a new folder on the desktop called "Removed Extensions."

Step 2

Move all items of Kind "system extension," "control panel," or "Chooser extension" from the System Folder, Extensions folder, and Control Panels folder to this new folder. When you open these folders, choose "by Kind" from the View menu to help identify the files you need to move.

Step 3

Close the System Folder, and restart the Macintosh. Test for the problem.

Note: If the problem still occurs, check your System Folder to make sure you've removed all the extensions and control panels.

Step 4

Move a few items from the new folder on the desktop to the closed System Folder and restart the Macintosh. Make sure you note which items you moved.

Step 5

Attempt to recreate the original problem.

Repeat steps 4 and 5 for each item in the Removed Extensions folder until the problem recurs. The last item returned to the System Folder is likely to be the cause of the problem.

If you are using System 7.5 or later, you have the luxury of having a built-in Extensions Manager in the Control Panels folder. Select the System 7.5 Only set of extensions from the Extensions Manager control panel, then restart. If the

symptoms go away, then you have an extension conflict. You can then use the Extensions Manager to turn a few extensions and control panels off at a time, then restart the computer. When the problem comes back, one of the items you last selected is most likely causing the problem. You can also activate the Extensions Manager by holding down the Space Bar while the computer is starting up.

23) Question: What is zapping the PRAM and when should I do it?

Answer: "Zapping" or resetting the PRAM (parameter RAM) resets most of the information in the PRAM chip to its default value. This chip is powered by the backup battery and is used to hold settings that you want to be set even after the computer has been turned off, such as the time (although the time is not reset when zapping the PRAM). Many control panel settings such as sound, mouse speed, and memory are kept in the PRAM as well as many network, SCSI, and screen settings.

To reset the PRAM, restart the computer and hold down the Command (Apple), Option, P, and R keys. Wait for the computer to make its startup chime twice. You may then release the keys. Be aware that resetting the PRAM will reset such settings as the sound volume and mouse speed to their default value, and will purge the contents of a RAM disk if you are using one.

You should only reset the PRAM if you are having a problem that you think could be caused by corrupted information in the PRAM chip. A good tip that the PRAM might be corrupted is if a certain control panel won't hold it's setting or isn't operating correctly, the computer is having trouble printing, or there is a problem with networking.

24) Question: Where else can I go for answers?

Answer: If you haven't done so already, check the other PowerBook FAQ documents. Also, depending on where you found this FAQ, you should have access to Apple's Technical Information Library (TIL). This library contains thousands of technical articles which are easily searchable using boolean search strings.

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