

Last month, I described my experiment with switching to the Apple Mac platform. My initial goal was to replicate all the same stuff I do with my Windows computers, but do it on a Mac computer. As you may recall I went totally “Cold Turkey”, “Jumped in the Deep End”, or whatever you want to call it and just stopped using Windows. For anyone considering switching from Windows to Mac, here are a few things I learned in the process... written from the perspective of someone who is still learning.

**#1: Remote Access:** When I am out at client sites, I often need to remote back to my office to reference files or other data. In the Windows world, I had been using two products: Remote Desktop and VNC to get back to my Windows computer. There is no version of Remote Desktop to connect to Mac’s, but I am happy to report that VNC is available and works pretty well. Bonus: VNC Viewer is free. The Mac version has two limitations: #1) I can’t specify a user name when logging in, and #2) passwords are limited to 8 characters. I can live without being able to specify a user name, but I wish I could make a longer (and therefore stronger) password. Other remote access options that also work are LogMeIn (\$\$\$), Splashtop (\$\$), or Team Viewer (free for personal use).

**#2: Make the “Finder” work like “File Explorer”:** Coming from the Windows and Linux world, I was often bewildered with the Finder app on the Mac. I finally got the idea that you need to think of it as “File Explorer” and “Start Menu” in one program. Once you get your head wrapped around that, you may want to customize it - just because you can. I happen to prefer files and folders to appear as lists, and on all my Windows computers I set File Explorer that way. Here’s how in Finder: Open Finder, find View Options (the “Gear” icon). I set the options checkboxes to “Show in List View”, “Sort by None”, and finally “Set as Default” ... That’s how I like it.

**#3: Aliases = Shortcuts:** In the Windows world, if you want to reduce multiple mouse clicks, you can create shortcuts (icons) on your desktop. Same is true on a Mac: they are called “Aliases”. Whatever you want to make a shortcut, you can create an alias, then drag it to the desktop. I think it’s easier to do in Windows, but I can live with the Drag/Drop alias method.

**#4: The Dock = The Task Bar:** Along the bottom of the Mac desktop is a bar with icons, and guess what, it is the same concept as the Windows Task Bar. Whatever program you open, you can make it stay in the Dock which is the same as making a shortcut to open programs faster. In Windows, it is a right-click to save to the task bar: in the Mac world, you click and hold the icon, then you can choose the option to “Keep in Dock”. This is the perfect lead-in to the next item...

**#5: No Right Mouse Clicks:** Steve Jobs disliked many things in the computer world (IBM, Microsoft, Adobe Flash, etc.), and the two-button mouse also made his list. Therefore, all Apple mice have but one button. It works great for left-click: so what do you do if you need a right-click? Two Methods: 1) hold down the [Control] key and then click the mouse. 2) Click and hold momentarily, then release. Either method is the same as a right-click.

-John Becker