

LEARNING MADE EASY



9th Edition

MacBook[®]

for
dummies[®]
A Wiley Brand



Use the new Control
Center to simplify macOS[®]

Dive into features offered by
the newest MacBook models

Create your own travel
Guides with Maps

Mark L. Chambers
Author of *iMac For Dummies*, 10th Edition



MacBook®

9th Edition

by Mark L. Chambers

**for
dummies®**
A Wiley Brand

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Introduction

Laptop owners are special people.

You see, a laptop owner demands everything from a computer that a desktop owner does: reliability, performance, expandability, and ease of use. Owners of Mac Pro, Mac mini, iMac, and iMac Pro desktop computers can draw the line right there, because their computers are designed for a stationary existence. But you and I are laptop owners. We also need that same computer to be an inch thick (or less). We demand that it run for hours on a single battery charge. We require that it be light as a feather. We want to conquer the coffee shop, the library, and even a lecture hall or two!

Today's Apple laptops deliver all that and more. If you've bought one of these modern masterpieces — or you're thinking about it — I applaud your good taste, common sense, and discerning eye. Apple laptops have everything: super performance; a top-shelf LED screen; rugged reliability; and a trouble-free, powerful operating system. Heck, your Intel-based Apple laptop can even run — wait for it — Windows 10. (If you absolutely have to, the option is there.)

I wrote this book for myself — and for every other Apple laptop owner who wants to become a laptop technowizard. In these pages, you find a guide to both your laptop's hardware and macOS Big Sur, the latest version of Apple's superb operating system. After I cover the basics that every laptop owner should know, you find out how to accomplish all sorts of cutting-edge audio, visual, and Internet projects. (Oh, and if you already have another of my books, you know that I don't skimp

on the power-user tips and tricks that save you time, effort, *and* money.)

Foolish Assumptions

So who is the target audience for this book? As in past editions, I make no assumptions about your previous knowledge of computers and software. I figure that you've just bought a MacBook or are considering buying one. Perhaps you've found a bargain on a gently used older MacBook, and you need guidance as you learn the ropes. Those are the *only* assumptions I make. And unlike other books that require a lot of technical expertise to understand, this book's only requirement is your desire to become a Mac laptop *power user* (someone who produces the best work in the least amount of time and has the most fun doing it)!



TIP

By the way, if your friends and family predicted that you'll spend half your life savings on software — or that no “decent” software is available for Mac computers — just smile quietly to yourself! The MacBook comes complete with more productivity software than any Windows box, and this software is better than anything available on a PC!



REMEMBER

This book was written on one of the latest Intel quad-core MacBook Air models. Because of changing hardware, owners of older Mac laptops may not be able to follow along with every feature I cover. If you've upgraded an older MacBook to macOS Big Sur, however, you should be able to use most of this book with no problem.

About This Book

In writing about the MacBook, I've kept one precept firmly in mind: macOS Big Sur, the operating system you'll run, is just as important as the laptop itself. Therefore, you'll find that *MacBook For Dummies*, 9th Edition is just as much about familiarizing you with all the software you get as it is with introducing hardware features such as the Touch Bar, the keyboard, and the trackpad. After all, it's relatively easy to connect a power cable and turn on *any* new computer. What comes next is the challenging part!

As in my other *For Dummies* titles, I respect and use the same everyday language you do, avoiding jargon, ridiculous computer acronyms, and confusing technobabble whenever possible.

If you're upgrading from a PC running the Windows operating system, I've got tips, tricks, and entire sections devoted to those hardy pioneers called *Switchers*. You discover both the similarities and differences between your MacBook running Big Sur and a PC running Windows. I also show you how to make the switch as easily and quickly as possible.

A word about the conventions I use: Even with an absolute minimum amount of technospeak, this book needs to cover the keys you have to press or menu commands you have to choose to make things work. Therefore, please keep in mind this short list of conventions as you read:

- » **Stuff you type:** If I ask you to type (or enter) something, such as in a text box or field, that text appears in bold, like this:



- **REMEMBER Type me.**

You usually have to press Return before anything happens.

- » **Menu commands:** I list menu paths and commands by using another format. This instruction indicates that you should click the Edit menu and then choose the Copy menu item:

- Edit ⇒ Copy

- » **Web addresses:** No up-to-date book on a computer would be complete without a bag full of web addresses for you to check out. When you see these in the text, they look like this: www.mlcbooks.com. (By the way, that website does exist. You're always welcome to check out my little acre of Internet space!)

- » **For the technically curious:** Your MacBook is an elegant and sophisticated machine, and it's as easy to use as a computer can be. But from time to time, you may be curious about the technical details that surround your hardware and software. (Perhaps you disassembled alarm clocks as a kid, as I did.) Techie stuff is denoted with a margin icon, as discussed in the

next section. You don't have to read the technical notes unless you want to know what makes things tick. (Pun by sheer accident.)

Icons Used in This Book

Like other technology authors, I firmly believe that important nuggets of wisdom should *stand out on the page!* With that in mind, this *For Dummies* book includes margin icons for certain situations:



TIP

This icon is the most popular icon in the book. You find it parked next to suggestions I make to save you time and effort (and even cash!).



TECHNICAL
STUFF

You don't have to know this information, but the technologically curious love high-tech details. (We're great fun at parties, too.)



WARNING

Always read this information before you take action! I'm discussing something that could harm your hardware or throw a plumber's helper into your software.



REMEMBER

Consider these nuggets to be highlighter stuff — not quite as universally accepted (or as important to the author) as a Mark's Maxim (described next), but

good reminders nonetheless. I use this icon to reinforce what you should remember.



MARK'S
MAXIM

These gold-plated, cream-of-the-crop truisms are *MFRs* (short for My Favorite Recommendations). In fact, I'll bet that just about any MacBook power user would tell you the same. Follow my Maxims to avoid the quicksand and pitfalls I've encountered with all sorts of Macs for three decades.™

Beyond the Book

Thanks to my hard-working good friends at Wiley, a ton of extra content accompanies this book. Fire up your Safari browser, go to <https://www.dummies.com> and search for **MacBook For Dummies** to find the following:

- » **Cheat Sheet:** I've created Cheat Sheet pages that cover things like common keystrokes and maintenance procedures that every MacBook owner should follow on a regular basis.
- » **Bonus chapter:** If you're dying to find out how to share data among wireless devices via Bluetooth technology, check out the handy Bluetooth bonus chapter at www.dummies.com/go/macbookfd9e or on my website (www.mlcbooks.com).
- » **Updates to this book, if any.**

Where to Go from Here

Each chapter is a reference for a specific hardware or software topic. Thanks to the fruit of the hard work of my editors, you can begin reading anywhere you like because each chapter is self-contained. If you want to get the most out of this tome (and your MacBook experience), however, there's nothing wrong with reading this book from front to back. I will point out, though, that J. K. Rowling and Stephen King have nothing to fear from my no-frills prose!

Time for the first Mark's Maxim in this book:



MARK'S
MAXIM

Take your time. After all, learning how to use your MacBook isn't a race. And don't worry if you're not a graphic artist, professional photographer, or video editor. With your Mac laptop and its software, you don't have to be!™

Part 1

Tie Myself Down with a Desktop? Preposterous!

IN THIS PART ...

Tour the features of your MacBook and macOS Big Sur.

Compare the different MacBook models.

Unpack and set up your MacBook.

Maintain your laptop's battery *the right way*.

Familiarize yourself with the basics of macOS.

Chapter 1

Hey, It Really Does Have Everything I Need

IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Identifying the important parts of your Mac laptop
 - » Comparing MacBook models and getting set up
 - » Handling your MacBook with care
 - » Buying additional stuff you might need
-

Most action films have one scene in common: I call it “gearing up,” because the good guys strap on their equipment in preparation for battle. (The era doesn’t matter: You see “gearing up” scenes in movies like *Gladiator*, *Predator*, and *Aliens*.) You’re sure to see lots of clicking straps and equipping of offensive weapons (and sometimes even a dash of war paint). The process usually takes a minute or so all told, with whiplash camera work and stirring martial music in the background.

Well, fellow Mac road warrior, it takes only *two seconds* and *one move* — closing the lid — for you to gear up. Your MacBook is a self-contained world, providing virtually all the essentials you’ll find on a desktop iMac, Mac Pro, or Mac mini. This is indeed the second “decade of the laptop,” meshing nicely with your smartphone and that wireless connection at your local coffee shop. You’ve selected the right companion for the open road.

Unlike Apple's other designs — such as the Mac mini, the Mac Pro, and the iMac — your MacBook's exterior looks much like a PC laptop. (In fact, an Intel-based Mac laptop *can* run Windows if it absolutely must.)

But your laptop holds several pleasant surprises that no PC laptop or tablet can offer — and, with the MacBook Air and MacBook Pro, you'll lose pounds and inches from your chassis!

In this chapter, I introduce you to the hardware and all the major parts of the machine. You even find out how to unpack and connect your computer. And as frosting on the cake, I preview the software of which Apple is so proud, as well as the accessories you should buy now rather than later.

Welcome to your Mac laptop, good reader. Gear up!

An Overview of Your Mac Laptop

Sure, your MacBook Pro may be about half an inch thin (a MacBook Air is even more svelte; I get to that later in the chapter), but a lot of superb design lives inside. You encounter the same parts you'd find in a desktop machine. In the following sections, I discuss those important parts — both the stuff you can see and the stuff that's shoehorned within.

FEELING OUTDATED? NEVER!

Are you using an older MacBook? It seems that Apple's product line changes every time you tear a page off your 12-month calendar. In addition, every new generation of laptops includes new whiz-bang features. Sometimes, you can add those features separately to your older machine, such as an