Making Everything Easier!™

OS X® Yosemite

FOR DUMMIES®

A Wiley Brand

Learn to:

- Get the most out of the latest version of OS X
- Master the key features and tools
- Use OS X to make your work and personal life more organized and fun

IN FULL COLOR!

Bob "Dr. Mac" LeVitus

Coauthor of iPhone For Dummies®

OS X® Yosemite

FOR DUMMIES®

A Wiley Brand

by Bob "Dr. Mac" LeVitus

FOR DUMMIES®

A Wiley Brand

OS X® Yosemite For Dummies

Published by
John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
111 River Street
Hoboken, NJ 07030-5774
www.wiley.com

Copyright © 2015 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey

Published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey

Published simultaneously in Canada

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as permitted under Sections 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without either the prior written permission of the Publisher, or authorization through payment of the appropriate per-copy fee to the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Danvers, MA 01923, (978) 750-8400, fax (978) 646-8600. Requests to the Publisher for permission should be addressed to the Permissions Department, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 111 River Street, Hoboken, NJ 07030, (201) 748-6011, fax (201) 748-6008, or online at www.wiley.com/go/permissions.

Trademarks: Wiley, the Wiley logo, For Dummies, the Dummies Man logo, Dummies.com, Making Everything Easier, and related trade dress are trademarks or registered trademarks of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries, and may not be used without written permission. Mac and OS X are trademarks of Apple Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. John Wiley &

Sons, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in this book.

LIMIT OF LIABILITY/DISCLAIMER OF WARRANTY: THE PUBLISHER AND THE AUTHOR MAKE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES WITH RESPECT TO THE ACCURACY OR COMPLETENESS OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS WORK AND SPECIFICALLY DISCLAIM ALL WARRANTIES, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION WARRANTIES OF FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. NO WARRANTY MAY BE CREATED OR EXTENDED BY SALES OR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS. THE ADVICE AND STRATEGIES CONTAINED HEREIN MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR EVERY SITUATION. THIS WORK IS SOLD WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE PUBLISHER IS NOT ENGAGED IN RENDERING LEGAL, ACCOUNTING, OR OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES. IF PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE IS REQUIRED, THE SERVICES OF A COMPETENT PROFESSIONAL PERSON SHOULD BE SOUGHT. NEITHER THE PUBLISHER NOR THE AUTHOR SHALL BE LIABLE FOR DAMAGES ARISING HEREFROM. THE FACT THAT AN ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE IS REFERRED TO IN THIS WORK AS A CITATION AND/OR A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FURTHER INFORMATION DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE AUTHOR OR THE PUBLISHER ENDORSES THE INFORMATION THE ORGANIZATION OR WEBSITE MAY PROVIDE OR RECOMMENDATIONS IT MAY MAKE. FURTHER, READERS SHOULD BE AWARE THAT INTERNET WEBSITES LISTED IN THIS WORK MAY HAVE CHANGED OR DISAPPEARED BETWEEN WHEN THIS WORK WAS WRITTEN AND WHEN IT IS READ.

For general information on our other products and services, please contact our Customer Care Department within the U.S. at 877-762-2974, outside the U.S. at 317-572-3993, or fax 317-572-4002.

For technical support, please visit www.wiley.com/techsupport.

Wiley also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats and by print-on-demand. Not all content that is available in standard print versions of this book may appear or be packaged in all book formats. If you have purchased a version of this book that did not include media that is referenced by or accompanies a standard print version, you may request this media by visiting http://booksupport.wiley.com. For more information about Wiley products, visit us www.wiley.com.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014946665

ISBN 978-1-118-99119-0 (pbk); ISBN 978-1-118-99121-3 (ebk); ISBN 978-1-118-99122-0 (ebk)

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

OS X® Yosemite For Dummies®

Visit www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/osxyosemite to view this book's cheat sheet.

Table of Contents

- **Introduction**
  - About This Book
  - Conventions Used in This Book
  - Foolish Assumptions
  - Beyond the Book
  - Icons Used in This Book
  - Where to Go from Here
- **Part I: Introducing OS X Yosemite: The Basics**
  - **Chapter 1: OS X Yosemite 101 (Prerequisites: None)**
    - Gnawing to the Core of OS X
    - A Safety Net for the Absolute Beginner (or Any User)
      - Turning the dang thing on
      - What you should see on startup
      - Shutting down properly
      - A few things you should definitely not do with your Mac
      - Point-and-click boot camp
    - Not Just a Beatles Movie: Help and the Help Menu
  - **Chapter 2: The Desktop and Windows and Menus (Oh My!)**
    - Touring the Finder and Its Desktop
    - Anatomy of a Window
      - Top o' the window to ya!
      - A scroll new world
      - (Hyper)Active windows

Dialog Dealie-Boppers
Working with Windows
Opening and closing windows
Resizing windows and window panes
Moving windows
Shuffling windows
Menu Basics
The ever-changing menu bar
Contextual menus: They're sooo contextual!
Recognizing disabled options
Navigating submenus
Underneath the Apple menu tree
Using keyboard shortcut commands
Chapter 3: What's Up, Dock?
A Quick Introduction to Your Dock
The default icons of the Dock
Trash talkin'
Opening application menus on the Dock
Reading Dock icon body language
Opening files from the Dock
Customizing Your Dock
Adding Dock icons
Removing an icon from the Dock
Resizing the Dock
What should you put on your Dock?
Setting your Dock preferences
Chapter 4: Delving Deeper into the Finder and Its Desktop
Introducing the Finder and Its Minions: The Desktop and Icons
Introducing the Desktop
Bellying up to the toolbar
Figuring out what an icon is
Identifying your Finder icons in the wild
Aliases Are Awesome!
Creating aliases
Deleting aliases
Hunting down an alias's parent
The View(s) from a Window
Moving through folders fast in Column view
Perusing in Icon view
Listless? Try touring folders in List view
You gotta go with the flow
What's on the (View) menu?
Finder on the Menu
The actual Finder menu
Like a road map: The current folder's pop-up menu
Going places with the Go menu

Customizing Finder Windows

Adding folders to the Sidebar

Setting Finder preferences

Digging for Icon Data in the Info Window

Part II: Inside Yosemite (Or How Stuff Works)

Chapter 5: Have It Your Way

Introducing System Preferences

Putting a Picture on the Desktop

Setting Up a Screen Saver

Putting Widgets on the Dashboard

Translation

Flight Tracker

Giving Buttons, Menus, and Windows a Makeover

Adjusting the Keyboard, Mouse, Trackpad, and Other Hardware

Keyboard

Mouse

Bluetooth

Trackpad (notebooks and desktops with a Magic Trackpad)

Styling Your Sound

Changing sound effects

Choosing output and input options

Chapter 6: The Care and Feeding of Files and Folders

A Quick Primer on Finding Files

Understanding the OS X Folder Structure

Understanding nested folders

From the top: The Computer folder

Peeking into the Applications folder

Visiting the Library folders

Let it be: The System folder

There’s no place like Home

Your personal Library card

Saving Your Document Before It’s Too Late

Stepping through a basic Save

Save As versus Duplicate: Different names for the same result

Open, Sez Me

With drag-and-drop

With a Quick Look

When your Mac can’t open a file

With the application of your choice

Organizing Your Stuff in Folders

Files versus folders

Organizing your stuff with subfolders

Creating new folders

Navigating with spring-loaded folders

Smart folders

Shuffling Files and Folders

Moving files and folders

Selecting multiple icons

Playing the icon name game: Renaming icons

Comprehending the Clipboard

Copying files and folders

Pasting from the Clipboard

Compressing files

Getting rid of icons

The Incredible New iCloud Drive

Chapter 7: Four Terrific Timesaving Tools

With a Quick Look

Share and share alike with the Share menu

Slide into Slideshow (full-screen) mode

Spotlight on Finding Files and Folders Faster

Using the Search box in Finder windows

Using the Spotlight menu and window

Finding files by other attributes

Exposé Yourself to Mission Control

The Mission Control pane: It's painless

Hot corners!

Spaces from 30,000 feet (an overview)

Getting around in space(s)

Launchpad: The Place for Applications

Customizing Your Launchpad

Chapter 8: Dealing with Disks

Comprehending Disks

Some disks need to be formatted first

Moving and copying between disks

Surprise: Your PC Disks Work, Too!

Part III: Getting Things Done in Yosemite

Chapter 9: Organizing Your Life

Keeping Track with Calendar

Navigating Calendar views

Creating calendars

Deleting a calendar

Creating and managing events

Reminders: Protection Against Forgetting

Getting started with Reminders

To do or not to do: Setting reminders

Everything You Need to Know about the Notification Center

Use Notes for Making Notes

Chapter 10: (Inter)Networking

Getting Connected to the Internet

Your Internet service provider and you

Setting up your modem
Plugging in your Internet-connection settings
Browsing the Web with Safari
Owning your toolbar
Using the Safari Sidebar
What's on your Reading List?
Using the terrific Top Sites page
Searching with Google
Checking out Help Center
Audio and Video Calls with FaceTime
Chapter 11: Finding People and Places
Collecting Your Contacts
Adding contacts
Importing contacts from other programs
Creating a basic group
Setting up a smart group (based on contact criteria)
Deleting a group or smart group
The view is lovely
Sync + Contacts = Your contacts everywhere
Maps Are Where It's At
Finding your current location with Maps
Finding a person, place, or thing
Views, zooms, and pans
Maps and Contacts
Timesaving map tools: Favorites, Recents, and Contacts
Smart map tricks
Chapter 12: Communicate with Mail and Messages
Sending and Receiving Email with Mail
Setting up Mail
A quick overview of the toolbar
Composing a new message
Sending email from the Contacts app
Working with stationery
Checking your mail
Dealing with spam
Changing your preferences
Mail rules rule
Mailboxes smart and plain
Sign here, please
Take a (Quick) look and (Slide) show me some photos
The Yosemite Duo: Markup and Mail Drop
Communicating with Messages
What the heck is an iMessage?
Chit-chatting with Messages
Chapter 13: Sharing Your Mac and Liking It
Introducing Networks and File Sharing
Portrait of home office networking
Three ways to build a network

Setting Up File Sharing
Access and Permissions: Who Can Do What
Users and groups and guests
Creating users
OS X knows best: Folders shared by default
Sharing a folder or disk by setting permissions
Useful settings for permissions
Unsharing a folder
Connecting to a Shared Disk or Folder on a Remote Mac
Changing Your Password
Changing your account password on your Mac
Changing the password of any account but your own on your Mac
Changing the password for your account on someone else's Mac
More Types of Sharing
Screen Sharing
Web Sharing
Internet Sharing
And yet more ways to share
Part IV: Getting Creative in Yosemite
Chapter 14: The Musical Mac
Introducing iTunes
Working with Media
Adding songs
Adding movies and TV shows
Adding podcasts
Learning from iTunes U
Listening to iTunes Radio
All About Playlists
Creating a regular playlist
Working with smart playlists
Burning a playlist to CD
Looking at the Genius playlist
Chapter 15: The Multimedia Mac
Playing Movies and Music in QuickTime Player
iBooks on the Mac
Buying iBooks
Shopping for books without Apple
Reading iBooks
You're the Star with Photo Booth
Viewing and Converting Images and PDFs in Preview
Importing Media
Downloading photos from a camera
Downloading DV video from a camcorder
Chapter 16: Words and Letters
Processing Words with TextEdit

Creating and composing a document

Working with text

Adding graphics to documents

Font Mania

Types of fonts

Managing your fonts with Font Book

Installing fonts manually

Chapter 17: Publish or Perish: The Fail-Safe Guide to Printing

Before Diving In . . .

Ready: Connecting and Adding Your Printer

Connecting your printer

What about wireless printing?

Setting up a printer for the first time

One last thing: Printer sharing

Set: Setting Up Your Document with Page Setup

Print: Printing with the Print Sheet

Printing a document

Choosing among different printers

Choosing custom settings

Saving custom settings

Preview and PDF Options

Part V: The Care and Feeding of Yosemite

Chapter 18: Features for the Way You Work

Talking and Listening to Your Mac

Dictation: You talk and your Mac types

Commanding your Mac by voice

Listening to your Mac read for you

Automatic Automation

AppleScript

Automator

A Few More Useful Goodies

App Store

Accessibility

Energy Saver

Bluetooth

Ink

Automatic Login (Users & Groups System Preferences pane)

Boot Camp

AirPlay Mirroring

Chapter 19: Safety First: Backups and Other Security Issues

Backing Up Is (Not) Hard to Do

Backing up with Yosemite's excellent Time Machine

Backing up by using the manual, brute-force method

Backing up by using commercial backup software

- Why You Need Two Sets of Backups
- Non-Backup Security Concerns
  - About viruses and other malware
  - Firewall: Yea or nay?
  - Install recommended software updates
- Protecting Your Data from Prying Eyes
  - Blocking or limiting connections
  - Locking down files with FileVault
  - Setting other options for security

Chapter 20: Utility Chest

- Calculator
- Activity Monitor
- AirPort Utility
- ColorSync Utility
- DigitalColor Meter
- Disk Utility
  - First Aid tab
  - Erase tab
  - Partition tab
  - RAID tab
  - Restore tab
- Grab
- Grapher
- Keychain Access
- Migration Assistant
- System Information
- Terminal

Chapter 21: Troubleshooting OS X

- About Startup Disks and Booting
  - Finding or creating a startup disk
  - They call it a prohibitory sign for a reason
- Recovering with Recovery HD
  - Step 1: Run First Aid
  - Step 2: Safe Boot into Safe Mode
  - Step 3: Zapping the PRAM/NVRAM
  - Step 4: Reinstalling OS X
  - Step 5: Things to try before taking your Mac in for repair
- If Your Mac Crashes at Startup

Part VI: The Part of Tens

Chapter 22: Almost Ten Ways to Speed Up Your Mac Experience

- Use Those Keyboard Shortcuts
- Improve Your Typing Skills
- Resolution: It’s Not Just for New Year’s Anymore

A Mac with a View — and Preferences, Too
Get a New, Faster Model
You Can Never Have Too Much RAM!
Get an Accelerated Graphics Card
Get a New Hard Drive
Get a Solid-State Drive (SSD)

Chapter 23: Ten (or So) Great Websites for Mac Freaks

Macworld
The Mac Observer
The Unofficial Apple Weblog
TidBITS
Download.com
Alltop
Apple Support
Other World Computing
EveryMac.com
dealmac
Dr. Mac Consulting

About the Author

Cheat Sheet

More Dummies Products

Introduction

You made the right choice twice: OS X Yosemite (OS X 10.10) and this book. Take a deep breath and get ready to have a rollicking good time. That's right. This is a computer book, but it's fun. What a concept! Whether you're brand spanking new to the Mac or a grizzled Mac vet, I guarantee that reading this book to discover the ins and outs of OS X Yosemite will make everything easier. The publisher couldn't say as much on the cover if it weren't true!

About This Book

This book's roots lie with my international best seller *Macintosh System 7.5 For Dummies,* an award-winning book so good that now-deceased Mac cloner Power Computing gave away a copy with every Mac clone it sold. *OS X Yosemite For Dummies* is the latest revision and has been, once again, completely updated to include all the tasty OS X goodness in Yosemite. In other words, this edition combines all the old, familiar features of previous editions — but is once again updated to reflect the latest and greatest offering from Apple as well as feedback from readers.

Why write a *For Dummies* book about Yosemite? Well, Yosemite is a big, somewhat complicated personal-computer operating system. So I made *OS X Yosemite For Dummies* a not-so-big, not-too-complicated book that shows you what Yosemite is all about without boring you to tears, confusing you, or poking you with sharp objects.

In fact, I think you'll be so darned comfortable that I wanted the title to be *OS X Yosemite Made Easy,* but the

publishers wouldn't let me. Apparently, we *For Dummies* authors have to follow some rules, and using *For Dummies* and *OS X Yosemite* in this book's title are among them.

And speaking of "dummies" — remember, that's just a word. I don't think you're a dummy at all — quite the opposite! My second choice for this book's title was *OS X Yosemite For People Smart Enough to Know They Need This Book,* but you can just imagine what Wiley thought of that. ("C'mon, that's the whole point of the name!" they insisted. "Besides, it's shorter our way.")

The book is chock-full of information and advice, explaining everything you need to know about OS X in language you can understand — along with timesaving tips, tricks, techniques, and step-by-step instructions, all served up in generous quantities.

Another rule we *For Dummies* authors must follow is that our books cannot exceed a certain number of pages. (Brevity is the soul of wit, and all that.) So I wish I could have included some things, but they didn't fit. Although I feel confident you'll find everything you need to know about OS X Yosemite in this book, some things bear further looking into, including these:

- **Information about some of the applications (programs) that come with OS X Yosemite:** An installation of OS X Yosemite includes roughly 50 applications, mostly located in the Applications folder and the Utilities folder within it. I'd love to walk you through each one of them, but that would have required a book a whole lot bigger, heavier, and more expensive than this one.

  I brief you on the small handful of bundled applications essential to using OS X Yosemite and keep the focus

there — namely, Calendar, Contacts, Messages, Mail, Safari, TextEdit, and the like—as well as important utilities you may need to know how to use someday.

For what it's worth, many books cover the applications that come with OS X Yosemite, as well as applications commonly bundled with Yosemite on a new Mac, such as iLife; the one my publisher suggested I recommend is *OS X Yosemite All-in-One For Dummies,* written by Mark L. Chambers, which is (of course) also published by Wiley.

- **Information about Microsoft Office, iLife, iWork, Adobe Photoshop, Quicken, and most other third-party applications:** Okay, if all the gory details of all the bundled (read: *free)* OS X Yosemite applications don't fit here, I think you'll understand why digging into third-party applications that cost extra was out of the question.
- **Information about programming for the Mac:** This book is about *using* OS X Yosemite, not writing code for it. Dozens of books — most of which are two or three times the size of this book — cover programming on the Mac; this one doesn't.

Conventions Used in This Book

To get the most out of this book, you need to know how I do things and why. Here are a few conventions I use in this book to make your life easier:

- When I want you to open an item in a menu, I write something like Choose File⇒Open, which means, "Pull

down the File menu and choose the Open command.”

- Stuff you’re supposed to type appears in bold type, **like this**.
- **Sometimes an entire sentence is in boldface, as you see when I present a numbered list of steps. In those cases, I leave the bold off what you’re supposed to type,** like this**.**
- Web addresses, programming code (not much in this book), and things that appear onscreen are shown in a special monofont typeface, `like this`. (If you’re reading an e-book version of this book, web addresses are clickable links.)
- For keyboard shortcuts, I write something like ⌘+A, which means to hold down the ⌘ key (the one with the little pretzel and/or symbol on it) and then press the A key on the keyboard. If you see something like ⌘ +Shift+A, that means to hold down the ⌘ and Shift keys while pressing the A key. Again, for clarity, I never refer to the ⌘ key with the symbol. I reserve that symbol for the menu (Apple menu). For the Command key, I use only the ⌘ symbol. Got it? Very cool.

Foolish Assumptions

Although I know what happens when you make assumptions, I’ve made a few anyway. First, I assume that you, gentle reader, know nothing about using OS X — beyond knowing what a Mac is, that you want to use OS X, that you want to understand OS X without having to digest an incomprehensible technical manual, and that you made the right choice by selecting this particular book. And so I do my best to explain each new concept in

full and loving detail. Maybe that's foolish, but … that's how I roll.

Oh, and I also assume that you can read. If you can't, ignore this paragraph.

Beyond the Book

I have written a lot of extra content that you won't find in this book. Go online to find the following:

- **The Cheat Sheet for this book is at**

  www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/osxyosemite

- **Online articles covering additional topics at**

  www.dummies.com/extras/osxyosemite

- **Updates to this book, if we have any, are at**

  www.dummies.com/extras/osxyosemite

Icons Used in This Book

Little round pictures (icons) appear off to the left side of the text throughout this book. Consider these icons miniature road signs, telling you a little something extra about the topic at hand. Here's what the different icons look like and what they all mean.

Look for Tip icons to find the juiciest morsels: shortcuts, tips, and undocumented secrets about Yosemite. Try them all; impress your friends!

When you see this icon, it means that this particular morsel is something that I think you should memorize (or at least write on your shirt cuff).

Put on your propeller-beanie hat and pocket protector; these parts include the truly geeky stuff. It's certainly not required reading, but it must be interesting or informative, or I wouldn't have wasted your time with it.

Read these notes very, very, very carefully. (Did I say *very?*) Warning icons flag important cautionary information. The author and publisher won't be responsible if your Mac explodes or spews flaming parts because you ignored a Warning icon. Just kidding. Macs don't explode or spew (with the exception of a few choice PowerBook 5300s, which won't run Yosemite anyway). But I got your attention, didn't I?

These icons represent my ranting or raving about something that either bugs me or makes me smile. When I'm ranting, imagine foam coming from my mouth. Rants and raves are required to be irreverent, irrelevant, or both. I try to keep them short, for your sake.

Well, now, what could this icon possibly be about? Named by famous editorial consultant Mr. Obvious, this icon highlights all things new and different in OS X Yosemite.

Where to Go from Here

The first few chapters of this book are where I describe the basic things that you need to understand to operate your Mac effectively. If you're new to Macs and OS X Yosemite, start there.

Even though OS X Yosemite is somewhat different from previous Mac operating systems, the first part of the book is so basic that if you've been using a Mac for long, you might think you know it all — and okay, you might know most of it. But hey! Not-so-old-timers need a solid foundation. So here's my advice: Skip the stuff you know; you'll get to the better stuff faster.

I would love to hear how this book worked for you. So please send me your thoughts, platitudes, likes and dislikes, and any other comments. Did this book work for you? What did you like? What didn't you like? What questions were unanswered? Did you want to know more (or less) about something? Tell me! I have received more than 100 suggestions about previous editions, many of which are incorporated here. So please (please!) keep up the good work! Email me at Yosemite4Dummies@boblevitus.com. I appreciate your feedback, and I *try* to respond to all reasonably polite email within a few days.

So what are you waiting for? Go! Enjoy the book!

Part I

Introducing OS X Yosemite: The Basics

Visit www.dummies.com for great *For Dummies* content online.

In this part ...

- In the beginning: The most basic of basics including how to turn on your Mac.
- A gentle introduction to the Yosemite Finder and its Desktop.
- Your Dock: Making it work harder for you.
- Everything you need to know about Yosemite’s windows, icons, and menus (oh my)!
- All the bad puns and wisecracks you’ve come to expect.
- A plethora of Finder tips and tricks to make life with Yosemite even easier (and more fulfilling).

Chapter 1

OS X Yosemite 101 (Prerequisites: None)

In This Chapter

- Understanding what an operating system is and is not
- Turning on your Mac
- Getting to know the startup process
- Turning off your Mac
- Avoiding major Mac mistakes
- Pointing, clicking, dragging, and other uses for your mouse
- Getting help from your Mac

Congratulate yourself on choosing OS X, which stands for (Macintosh) *Operating System X* — and that's the Roman numeral *ten,* not the letter *X* (pronounced *ten,* not *ex*). You made a smart move because you scored more than just an operating system (OS) upgrade. OS X Yosemite includes several new features that make using your Mac easier and dozens of improvements that help you do more work in less time.

In this chapter, I start at the very beginning and talk about OS X in mostly abstract terms; then I move on to explain what you need to know to use OS X Yosemite successfully.

If you've been using OS X for a while, some of the information in this chapter may seem hauntingly familiar; a number of features that I describe haven't changed from earlier versions of OS X. But if you decide to skip this chapter because you think you have all the new stuff figured out, I assure you that you'll miss at least a couple of things that Apple didn't bother to tell you (as if you read every word in OS X Help — the only user manual Apple provides — anyway!).

Tantalized? Let's rock.

One last thing: If you're about to upgrade to Yosemite from an earlier version of OS X, you might want to peruse the article on installing and reinstalling Yosemite in full and loving detail, found at www.dummies.com/extras/osxyosemite.

Gnawing to the Core of OS X

The operating system (that is, the *OS* in *OS X*) is what makes a Mac a Mac. Without it, your Mac is a pile of silicon and circuits — no smarter than a toaster.

"So what does an operating system do?" you ask. Good question. The short answer is that an OS controls the basic and most important functions of your computer. In the case of OS X and your Mac, the operating system

- Manages memory
- Controls how windows, icons, and menus work
- Keeps track of files
- Manages networking

- Does housekeeping (No kidding!)

Other forms of software, such as word processors and web browsers, rely on the OS to create and maintain the environment in which they work their magic. When you create a memo, for example, the word processor provides the tools for you to type and format the information. In the background, the OS is the muscle for the word processor, performing crucial functions such as the following:

- Providing the mechanism for drawing and moving the onscreen window in which you write the memo
- Keeping track of a file when you save it
- Helping the word processor create drop-down menus and dialogs for you to interact with
- Communicating with other programs
- And much, much more (stuff that only geeks could care about)

So, armed with a little background in operating systems, take a gander at the next section before you do anything else with your Mac.

One last thing: As I mention in this book's Introduction (I'm repeating it here only in case you normally don't read introductions), OS X Yosemite comes with more than 50 applications. Although I'd love to tell you all about each and every one, I have only so many pages at my disposal. If you need more info on the programs I don't cover, may I (again) recommend *OS X Yosemite All-in-One For Dummies,* written by Mark L. Chambers, or *iLife For Dummies,* written by my old friends Tony Bove and Cheryl Rhodes (both published by Wiley).

The Mac advantage

Most of the world's personal computers use Microsoft Windows (although more and more people are switching to the Mac). But you're among the lucky few to have a computer with an OS that's intuitive, easy to use, and (dare I say?) fun. If you don't believe me, try using Windows for a day or two. Go ahead. You probably won't suffer any permanent damage. In fact, you'll really begin to appreciate how good you have it. Feel free to hug your Mac. Or give it a peck on the disc drive slot (assuming that your Mac has one; most, including the MacBook Air and Mac Mini at this writing, don't). Just try not to get your tongue caught.

As someone once told me, "Claiming that the Macintosh is inferior to Windows because more people use Windows is like saying that all other restaurants serve food that's inferior to McDonald's."

We might be a minority, but Mac users have the best, most stable, most modern all-purpose operating system in the world, and here's why: Unix, on which OS X is based, is widely regarded as the best industrial-strength operating system on the planet. For now, just know that being based on Unix means that a Mac running OS X will crash less often than an older (pre-OS X) Mac or a Windows machine, which means less downtime. Being Unix-based also means getting far fewer viruses and malicious software. But perhaps the biggest advantage OS X has is that when an application crashes, it doesn't crash your entire computer, and you don't have to restart the whole computer to continue working.

By the way, since the advent of Intel-powered Macs a few years ago, you can run Windows natively. That's right — you can now install and run Microsoft Windows on any Mac powered by an Intel processor, as I describe in Chapter 18. Don't let that Unix stuff scare you. It's there if you want it, but if you don't want it or don't care (like most of us), you'll rarely even know it's there. In fact, you'll rarely (if ever) see the word *Unix* again in this book. As far as you're concerned, Unix under the hood means your Mac will just run and run and run without crashing and crashing and crashing.

A Safety Net for the Absolute Beginner (or Any User)

In the following sections, I deal with the stuff that OS X Help doesn't cover — or doesn't cover in nearly enough detail. If you're a first-time Macintosh user, please, *please* read this section of the book carefully; it could save your life. Okay, okay, perhaps I'm being overly dramatic. What I mean to say is that reading this section could save your Mac or your sanity. Even if you're an experienced Mac user, you may want to read this section. Chances are you'll see at least a few things you've forgotten that will come in handy now that you've been reminded of them.

Turning the dang thing on

Okay. This is the big moment — turning on your Mac! Gaze at it longingly first, and say something cheesy, such as, "You're the most awesome computer I've ever known." If that doesn't turn on your Mac (and it probably won't), keep reading.

Apple, in its infinite wisdom, has manufactured Macs with power buttons on every conceivable surface: on the front, side, and back of the computer itself, and even on the keyboard and monitor.

So if you don't know how to turn on your Mac, don't feel bad; just look in the manual or booklet that came with your Mac. It's at least one thing that the documentation *always* covers.

These days, most Macs have a Power button near the keyboard (notebooks) or the back (iMacs). It usually looks like the little circle thingy you see in the margin.

Don’t bother choosing Help⇒Mac Help, which opens the Help Viewer program. It can’t tell you where the switch is. Although the Help program is good for finding out a lot of things, the location of the power button isn’t among them. If you haven’t found the switch and turned on the Mac, of course, you can’t access Help anyway. (D’oh!)

What you should see on startup

When you finally do turn on your Macintosh, you set in motion a sophisticated and complex series of events that culminates in the loading of OS X and the appearance of the OS X Desktop. After a small bit of whirring, buzzing, and flashing (meaning that the OS is loading), OS X first tests all your hardware — slots, ports, disks, random access memory (RAM), and so on. If everything passes, you hear a pleasing musical tone and see the tasteful gray Apple logo in the middle of your screen, as shown in Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1: This is what you’ll see if everything is fine and dandy when you turn on your Mac.

Here are the things that might happen when you power-up your Mac: