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System 7: Memory Requirements

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Security: Everyone

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Article Change History

09/17/92 - REVISED
               • To set 2MB capabilities more realistically.

TOPIC ---

The following information provides guidelines for memory (RAM) usage
with System 7.

DISCUSSION --

The minimum requirement to run System 7 is a 2MB system with a hard disk.
User testing shows that this configuration is functionally equivalent to a
1MB configuration running system 6.0.7. But to take full advantage of
System 7 and multiple and/or larger applications you will need at least 4MB
of RAM.

Here is a rough guide to memory usage:

• 1MB - Use system 6 with one application.

• 2MB - Use System 7, the Finder, and one application.

• 2.5MB - Use System 7, the Finder, and one or two applications.

• 3MB to 5MB - Use System 7, the Finder, and multiple applications or one
  large application.

• 5MB to 8MB - Use System 7, the Finder, and multiple large applications
  and/or documents.

Because of System 7's built-in multitasking, users may launch a second application without quitting from the first. In a 2MB system, this will frequently produce an "Out of Memory" error message. To avoid these messages, users with 2MB Macintosh computers should quit each application before using another. This will not affect their ability to use the multitasking features of System 7, such as background printing and file copying.

System 7 consumes 500K to 1MB more memory than system software 6.0.x. Consider adding one to two megabytes of memory to a Macintosh with limited memory. Or use System 7's virtual memory feature, which is available on the Macintosh SE/30, IIx, IIcx, IIci, IIfx, and Macintosh II with optional PMMU.

Because of differences in system ROMs and video architecture, each Macintosh configuration has slightly different system memory usage under System 7. Here are the basic memory profiles of System 7 on various Macintosh computers, using basic install with file sharing and program linking turned off:

System	Memory Consumed	Memory Free*
Macintosh Plus	1056K	992K
Macintosh SE	1125K	923K
Macintosh SE/30	1271K	777K
Macintosh Portable	1085K	963K
Macintosh Classic	1123K	925K
Macintosh LC	1298K	750K
Macintosh IIsi	1216K**	1085K***
Macintosh II	1275K	773K
Macintosh IIx	1268K	780K
Macintosh IIcx	1298K**	750K
Macintosh IIci	1202K	796K
Macintosh IIfx	1185K	2911K****

   *   Available application memory in a 2MB configuration. Any memory
        above 2MB is available for application use as well.
   **   8-bit color video consumes an additional 280K.
   *** 3MB configuration
   **** 4MB configuration

Note: Macintosh file sharing consumes an additional 260K.

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