

Tech Info Library

TITLE

Mac OS: Extensions Troubleshooting/Extensions Manager
Features

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TOPIC

This article explains the functionality of the Extensions Manager and how to troubleshoot your extensions. The troubleshooting section is at the end of this article.

DISCUSSION

History

The Extensions Manager first made its appearance in the Mac OS in System 7.5. It simplified the way Macintosh users determined what INITs were conflicting with other INITs. In Mac OS 7.6, the Extensions Manager went through a major update and is what we still use today.

What Is Extensions Troubleshooting?

Troubleshooting Extensions is process of trial and error. This process will require you to restart multiple times, which does not harm your Macintosh computer.

How Do I Know if I Have an Extensions Conflict?

If you can startup with the system extensions (Mac OS 8.x All) and your problem does not recur, then you have got an extensions conflict. If you still have the problem using the set Mac OS 8.x All, you should perform a clean installation of your system software.

Is Disabling All the Extensions in the Extensions Manager the Same as Pressing the Shift Key at Startup?

Not quite, see: Tech Info Library Article 17392: "[Extensions Manager: Extensions Off Compared To Shift Down](#)"

EXTENSIONS MANAGER FEATURES

What Are Sets?

A set consists of Extensions, Control Panels, System Extensions, Startup Items and Shutdown Items. The Selected Set displays the name of the current extensions set.

Mac OS 8.x All and Mac OS 8.x Base are locked sets supplied by Apple. These are known-good extension sets, and you have to duplicate these sets to modify them. My Settings is a generic name for a set that has not been named.

View Menu

While you're in the Extensions Manager, open the View Menu. You have more options than just viewing as Folders. Try "View by Packages", you can turn on and off entire software packages with a single click (very useful in troubleshooting extensions). View by Items is one big list of all your Extensions, Control Panels, Startup and Shutdown Items (similar to the Extensions Manager in System 7).

Opening Extensions Manager at Startup

Before the first extension displays at startup, hold down the Space Bar to bring up the Extensions Manager. The changes you make reflect this startup so you do not have to restart again. You have all the same options here as you do in the Finder, most of them in the Selected Set pop-up window.

Press Command and Option keys, close the window and you will restart.

Can I Backup My Extension List?

Not exactly, you can save a list to a SimpleText document from the File Menu. You also can create a report using Apple System Profiler, as well as other useful system information. Also, you cannot import sets.

Identifying Extensions

Be sure to check the Show Item Information section. Information provided there depends on what the vendor wrote into the extension. You can also Get Info in the Edit menu while in the Extensions Manager.

What are the Extensions and Extensions (Disabled) Folders?

In your System Folder, there are Extensions and Extensions (Disabled) folders, setup by the Extensions Manager. They are created if they are not found in the System Folder. When you close the Extensions Manager, all the changes you made are moved by the Finder to the appropriate folder. For example, you disable an extension in the Extensions Manager. Once you quit, the item is moved from the Extensions folder to the Extensions (Disabled) folder.

Troubleshooting Extensions

First, save the current set that has the problem. Next switch to Mac OS 8.x All or Base and restart. If the problem still persists, try disabling the extensions by restarting and pressing the Shift key. If that does not do it, then perform a clean installation of your system software.

Duplicate Mac OS 8.x Set and name it something like "Troubleshooting" or "Test." Using the problem set you saved, determine which extensions from that set are different from our Troubleshooting set. Turn on 3 to 5 of those items while in the Troubleshooting set and restart. Continue this process of turning on items and restarting until the problem reoccurs. You can also turn on a Package at a time, if you choose to View as Packages.

Once the problem occurs, you know that it was one of the last few items you turned on. So start turning off the last group one at a time until you determine which it is.

Once you determine the problem extension, check for version incompatibilities with other extensions or the Mac OS. If you have determined that they are compatible, then try removing and reinstalling the software used to install the extension.

Remember to run a disk repair utility, such as Disk First Aid. If you reinstall a software package, remember to remove the preferences, for that software package, from the Preference Folder. Just drag the preferences to the Trash and empty the Trash.

If you are still having problems, contact the vendor for further assistance.

EXTENDED Information - Apple Internal Use - Service Providers and Support Professional

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