

## Checking for Software Updates on Your Mac

**Important:** Before updating your Mac, be sure you have a recent backup, just in case you run into any problems. We also recommend that when updating, you do so from a trusted connection (e.g., from a university connection, via a VPN connection, or from your home; avoid using open WiFi hotspots, etc.)

**1) Apple Mac OS/X (major version):** Run the most recent version of OS/X available from Apple. See <http://www.apple.com/osx> for information on obtaining the latest version (at the time this document was written, Mountain Lion is available from the Mac Apps Store for \$19.99)

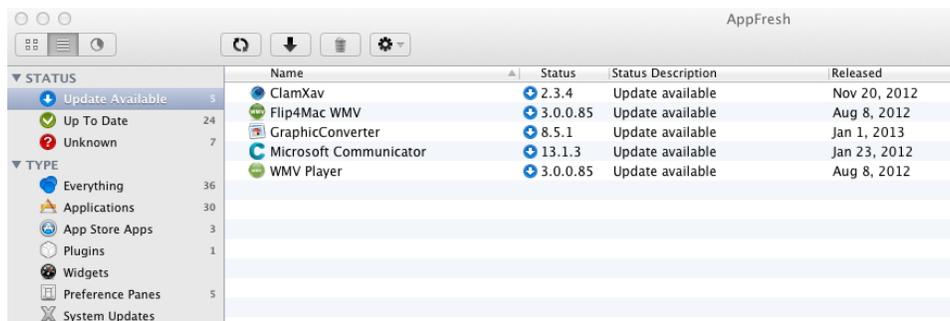
Note that a supported version of Mac OS/X is NOT available for legacy PowerPC Macs, therefore *legacy PowerPC Macs running OS/X should no longer be used* since its no longer possible to keep them patched!

**2) Apple Mac OS/X Updates:** From the Apple menu in the upper left hand corner, run "Software Update..." to check for most OS/X updates to the version of OS/X you're currently using.

Note that if you're running an older version of Mac OS/X (neither the current version, nor the preceding version), updates may no longer be getting made available. Thus, it is important that you always run the most recent major version of OS/X on your Mac.

**3) App Store Updates:** Many users may have applications downloaded from the App Store. To check for updates for those applications, go to the Apple menu in the upper left hand corner, run "App Store..." and click on "Updates" in the App Store.

**4) AppFresh for Mac:** AppFresh is a commercial product that can automatically check for updates to most installed products on your Mac. AppFresh is available for a free two week trial, or purchase it for \$14.95 from <http://metaquark.de/appfresh/mac>



The screenshot shows the AppFresh application window with a table of updates. The table has columns for Name, Status, Status Description, and Released. The updates listed are:

Name	Status	Status Description	Released
ClamXav	2.3.4	Update available	Nov 20, 2012
Flip4Mac WMV	3.0.0.85	Update available	Aug 8, 2012
GraphicConverter	8.5.1	Update available	Jan 1, 2013
Microsoft Communicator	13.1.3	Update available	Jan 23, 2012
WMV Player	3.0.0.85	Update available	Aug 8, 2012

### Manual Checks for Some Particularly Common and Important Software on Your Mac:

#### 5) Browsers:

**Firefox:** In Firefox, from the Firefox menu, check About Firefox. If an update is available, you'll be advised and it will typically automatically install.

**Chrome:** In Chrome, from the Chrome menu, check About Chrome. If you see the box "Set up automatic updates for all users," do so.

**Opera:** In Opera, from the Opera menu, click Check for Updates.

**Other:** Safari will be updated as part of applying Mac OS X updates in step 2, above

**6) Browser Plugins (used in/part of all popular browsers):**

In each browser of interest, visit <https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/plugincheck/> (it will work for most browsers)

Another tool for checking browser plugins is available at <https://browsercheck.qualys.com/>

*Safari users:* In Safari, go to Preferences ==> Extensions. Click Update in the lower left corner. While there, select "Install Updates Automatically"

**7) Acrobat Reader:** In Acrobat Reader, go to Help --> Check for Updates...

**8) Flash Player:** Visit <http://helpx.adobe.com/flash-player/kb/find-version-flash-player.html>

**9) Java:** Not all users will have Java installed. If you don't need Java, don't install it. If you do have Java installed on your Mac, when you go to System Preferences, you will see a Java preferences item in the "Other" section of your System Preferences. When you go to that item, if an update is available, you'll be able to click "Update Now." Be sure to click "Install and relaunch" when prompted to do so. Note that you may need to run Update Now several times in a row in order to get all available patches needed to be fully up-to-date.

**10) Microsoft Office:** Microsoft Office will automatically check for updates when it is run, however you can manually check for updates by running an Office application (such as Microsoft Word), and then going to Help --> Check for Updates.

**11) Antivirus Software Updates:** Although some users may not run an antivirus product on their Macs, many do. Be sure that any antivirus product you're using is fully up-to-date, including any signature files. Because this process varies from package to package, you may need to consult your A/V product documentation. Just as an example of the process for one popular Mac antivirus product, if you're using Sophos, in Sophos you'd go to the Sophos Anti-Virus menu and click Update Now.

**Advanced User Update Checks (these checks will not be applicable to most average consumer users)**

**12) Apple Developer Tools:** If you've installed the Mac OS/X Developer Tools, go to your /Applications folder and run Xcode , applying any updates that may have been made available (e.g., this may include updates for the command line tools or other applicable components).

**13) X11 Windows Support:** In addition to the Mac's native windowing system, some users also run X11 Windows (the classic Unix windowing system). If so, you can obtain the latest version from <http://xquartz.macosforge.org/trac/wiki/WikiStart>

If you use XQuartz, you may want to get in the habit of periodically checking for/installing the latest version.

**14) Mac Package Managers:** Some users also may have installed software using a so-called "package manager," such as MacPorts. If you're using MacPorts, be sure to periodically open a Terminal window and do:

```
$ sudo port selfupdate
$ sudo port upgrade outdated
```

**What about Google Updater?** It's no longer needed/now retired. See <http://tools.google.com/mac/updaterfaq.html>

**Feedback/suggestions?** Contact Joe St Sauver ([joe@oregon.uoregon.edu](mailto:joe@oregon.uoregon.edu))