



MAC TUNE-UP GUIDE

7 Practical Checks Before You Assume an Older Mac Needs Replacing

QUICK ACTION CHECKLIST

- ☐ 1. Find What's Eating CPU
- ☐ 2. Review Startup Programs
- ☐ 3. Reduce Transparency
- ☐ 4. Manage Spotlight Search
- ☐ 5. Clear Cache Files Carefully
- ☐ 6. Check Free Storage
- ☐ 7. Restart the Mac

1 Find What's Eating System Resources

WHERE TO GO: Applications → Utilities → Activity Monitor → Click CPU

Activity Monitor displays every active program and background task. Click the % **CPU** column header to sort items from highest to lowest. Look near the top for any unfamiliar program consuming a large percentage of power.

Helpful Guideline: Before quitting an unknown process, verify what it is. Certain built-in macOS background tasks legitimately require high CPU for temporary maintenance.

2 Review Startup Programs & Background Items

WHERE TO GO: Apple Menu (🍏) → System Settings → General → Login Items & Extensions

Apps configured to launch automatically slow down startup and consume memory all day. Under **Open at Login**, select apps you do not need immediately and click the minus (-) button.

Helpful Guideline: Review the "Allow in the Background" list below it. Keep background items enabled if they belong to essential security software or cloud backup tools.

3 Reduce Transparency

WHERE TO GO: Apple Menu (🍏) → System Settings → Accessibility → Display

Older graphics chips work hard rendering see-through menus and frosted window panels. Turn on **Reduce transparency** to ease graphics overhead.

Speed Tip: To minimize window animation lag, open *System Settings* → *Desktop & Dock* and change **Minimize windows using** from "Genie effect" to **Scale effect**.

4 Manage Spotlight Search Indexing

WHERE TO GO: Apple Menu () → System Settings → Siri & Spotlight (or Spotlight) → Search Privacy

Spotlight continually catalogs files to deliver rapid search results. If you have large external archive drives or backup folders you rarely search, click **Search Privacy** and add them with the plus (+) button to stop background indexing.

Helpful Guideline: Only exclude folders you never search. Keep primary daily locations like Documents, Desktop, and Downloads off the privacy list.

5 Clear Cache Files Carefully

WHERE TO GO: Finder → Top Menu: Go → Go to Folder... → Type ~/Library/Caches

Software creates temporary files to accelerate repeat tasks, but outdated files can linger. You can safely clear out files inside specific app folders that have grown excessively large.

Helpful Guideline: Delete only the files inside individual cache folders, not the root folders themselves. Apps may launch slightly slower once while rebuilding fresh caches.

6 Check Free Storage Space

WHERE TO GO: Apple Menu () → System Settings → General → Storage

Your Mac requires open drive space for virtual memory swapping and temporary file handling. If free capacity drops below 15% to 20%, system speed slows markedly. Review the categories to remove unused large apps or old downloads.

7 Restart the Mac

WHERE TO GO: Apple Menu () → Restart...

While putting your Mac to sleep is convenient, running continuously for weeks leads to background buildup and memory leaks. A full restart gives macOS a fresh start, clears out active memory, and runs automatic maintenance scripts.

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