

Dock

Preferences can be accessed from the dotted divider near the right end of your dock. (near the bottom of your dock if you have positioned it on the right or left)

If you control+click or right click this divider you will see options for:

Hiding

Magnification

Position

Minimizing

Hiding is good if you need every inch of your screen. It is a pain if you try to click on something near the dock and end up opening an application instead.

With hiding “on” the dock disappears unless you position your cursor at the edge of the screen where your dock usually is. Then the dock pops out and you can choose an icon. Then the icon disappears again. A short cut to hide the dock is alt+command+D and the same command brings it back.

Magnification is the option that makes your icons “grow” when you hover over them. This is handy because, if you have a lot of icons they are very small.

Position on screen is total preference. I keep mine on the left because the scrolls are on the right side of windows and I don’t want to hit the icons in the dock while trying to scroll down a web page.

Minimizing option is used to determine how an open window minimizes and is held in the dock. If you double click on the title bar on any open window it shrinks down and takes up a spot at the end of the dock. When you click on the minimized window it comes back to full size. The other way to minimize a page is command+m. Then to bring it back, just click on the small window that took up residence in your dock.

If you open up the system preferences all these same changes can be made. My hints are simply short cuts directly from the dock.

Finder

The best tip I found with the finder is to have the path shown at the bottom of the window. To enable this, first have a finder window open. Click on finder in the dock or anywhere on the desktop. If there is not a window open, you can open a new one by clicking command+n or click on file then new finder window.

Now to make the path bar appear at the bottom of the finder window, click view and then show path bar. Now when you click once on a file or folder, you will know where it is located on your computer. You can even move it by clicking and dragging it to a different folder in the path bar.

Spring-loaded folders are a help if you need to move a file or folder back up several levels. You can click and hold the file or folder and drag it to your home folder and if you have spring-loaded folders enabled, that folder pops open and you can then go to the next folder down. for instance if you find a picture where it doesn't belong, you can click and hold it while dragging it to the home folder and while still holding the mouse click down, when home folder opens you can continue the drag to the pictures folder and so on til you have it where you want it.

To turn on spring loaded folders in the finder preferences window. You can even choose how long the delay if before the folder pops open. If you don't want to use spring loaded folders but still want to drag something down several levels of folders, you can still click, drag and hover over the folder you want to open and then hit the space bar. The folder you are hovering over pops open immediately.

Smart Folders.

You can create smart folders that have criteria to narrow down the type of file, when it was created or modified and the time span. It helps to find a file that could be anywhere on your computer.

To start, click on your desktop or on a finder window. Then click on file and new smart folder. the window that opens is the one in which you will make all the criteria for the files that will show up in the smart folder. To the right in the window you will see a plus sign. Click on it to begin your choices to narrow the search such as after you click the plus sign you can choose the kind of file ie. images. Then the type image pops up. After this choice you can hit the plus sign again for more choices. ie created with last 30 days. If you are using the smart folder to find a lost file, then when it shows up in the window, if you click on it, the pathbar shows up and you can move it to where it should have been saved in the first place.

Now the fun things I found.

To minimize a window, you double click on the title at the top of the window. If you want a show, before you click on the title, hold down the shift key. The window will minimize slowly. And to bring it back, click on the miniature window in the dock while holding the shift key. It will reappear slowly.

Exposé is when you make all the windows open on your desktop separate and appear as small windows. You can hover over each window and it's title will show up and you can find the window you want without having to move or close the rest of the windows. If you hold down the shift key and then hit the F3 or F9, which ever your computer keyboard has for exposé, the windows will all separate slowly and the same command brings them back slowly.

A trick that may be part of the accessibility functions is the reverse video. Click these keys in the following order: control, then command, then option, then 8. While holding each down after you click them. The video changes to a negative film effect.

The last was the weather widget.

Click on your dashboard app in the dock.

then hit the plus that shows up at the end of the dock. You can now add or take away widgets from your desktop.

Choose the weather widget.

Now while holding down alt and command, click on the weather widget and the city will change to "nowhere". If you keep holding down alt and command keep clicking on the weather widget, it will cycle through all the different graphics showing the weather conditions.

These are all just fun things. If you want to explore on your own, search for easter eggs for your operating system. (mine is 10.5.8)