

# Set Up Snow Leopard

Most of the information in this chapter is focused on upgrading to Snow Leopard from Mac OS X versions 10.5 Leopard and 10.4 Tiger. If instead you've bought a new Mac with Snow Leopard already installed, skip further into the chapter to "Migrate Your Information" to get data from another Mac or Windows PC, and then "Manage Accounts" to learn important tips for working with your virtual identity within Snow Leopard. I also cover setting up a Boot Camp partition for running Microsoft Windows on your Mac (yes, you heard me correctly; it's a brave new world!).

## Before You Upgrade

To ensure a smooth upgrade experience, and the safety of your existing data, take the following actions before upgrading to Snow Leopard.

- Update your software. Go to the Apple menu () and choose Software Update, and install any updates that appear. This step is particularly important if any firmware updates are available.
- Back up your Mac. If something should go wrong during the upgrade process, you want to be able to quickly revert to your current version. If you're running Leopard with a Time Machine backup, click the Time Machine icon in the menu bar (⏪) and choose Back Up Now. I also *highly* recommend making a duplicate of your hard disk; that's the quickest way to get back on your feet if something goes wrong. Jump ahead to "Make a Duplicate" in Chapter 8 for details.
- Verify your hard disk to check for directory corruption issues. Launch the Disk Utility application (find it in the Finder by choosing Go > Utilities) and click the Verify Disk button. If errors crop up, you'll need to restart the computer from the Snow Leopard disc and run Disk Utility from there, because Disk Utility can't repair a disk that's currently running the computer; see the sidebar "Repairing the Startup Disk," two pages ahead, for details.
- If you own a MacBook Air, connect its external DVD drive (if available) or make sure you can mount the Snow Leopard install disc from another computer. Open a new Finder window; click Remote Disc in the sidebar; double-click the computer that's sharing the disc; and then double-click the install disc icon.

**tip**

**For better performance, connect both the MacBook Air and the computer hosting the remote disc via Ethernet instead of via AirPort wireless networking while you install Snow Leopard.**

## Upgrade to Snow Leopard

Whether you're currently running Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard or Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger, upgrading to Snow Leopard is a fairly straightforward process. Here are the steps, with important notes as we go along.

1. Insert the Snow Leopard install disc into your Mac's optical drive (or make it available via CD and DVD Sharing).
2. Double-click the Install Mac OS X icon to open the installer (**Figure 2.1**).

**Figure 2.1**  
*Snow Leopard  
install disc.*



**note**

If you're upgrading from Tiger, at this point you need to restart the computer and start up from the installation disc. Leopard owners can begin the upgrade process without restarting (although the Mac will reboot once during the installation).

3. At the installer's startup screen, click Continue, then read and agree to the software license agreement. (If you need to repair the startup disk after running Disk Utility prior to beginning the upgrade process, now is the time to do it. See the sidebar on the next page.)

## Repairing the Startup Disk

Disk Utility can't repair a startup disk that's running the computer, just as you can't perform open-heart surgery on yourself (really, do not try that at home). If you need to repair your startup disk, run Disk Utility from the Snow Leopard install disc:

1. Click the Utilities button, click Restart, and enter your administrator password.
  2. After the computer restarts, it will be running from the install disc. Choose Utilities > Disk Utility and then click Repair Disk. The repair could take several minutes.
  3. Choose Quit from the Disk Utility menu to return to the installer and continue the upgrade process; you don't need to restart the computer.
4. Choose the hard disk onto which you want to install Snow Leopard (**Figure 2.2**). The installer shows only disks with upgradeable operating systems, so you may see just one. If you want to install the software on another attached disk that doesn't appear, click the Show All Disks button and then select the one you want.

**Figure 2.2**  
*Choose your startup disk.*



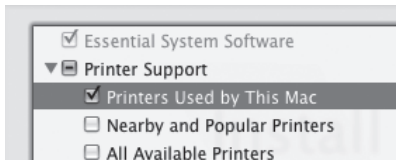
## Installing onto a Clean Slate

What if you want to start over from scratch? Both Tiger and Leopard installation tools included an Erase and Install option that wiped your hard disk clean before installing a fresh version of Mac OS X. That approach let you start with a clean slate and then selectively add your earlier data (from a backup, of course!). Snow Leopard doesn't offer Erase and Install, but you can still do it: start up from the Snow Leopard install disc and use Disk Utility to wipe your hard disk before installing Mac OS X 10.6. Note that iLife is not included on the Snow Leopard disc, so you'll need to install that separately (from the iLife disc or the Applications Install DVD that came with your computer). Also, if you take this route, make sure you first deauthorize iTunes and deactivate any software, such as the Adobe Creative Suite, that requires online authentication.

**tip**

Earlier versions of Mac OS X installed a huge number of printer support files so you could print to nearly any printer. However, if you're like me, your Mac probably interacts with one or two printers at most. Click the Customize button to access a new option in the Snow Leopard installer that can make a big difference (Figure 2.3). Display the Printer Support options by clicking the triangle to the left and choose one of the following: Printers Used by This Mac (enabled by default) updates only the printer files that exist on your machine; Nearby and Popular Printers installs over 600 MB of printer description files for common printers and for those found on the network; and All Available Printers adds 800 MB of printer files.

**Figure 2.3**  
*Install only the printer files you need.*



## Other Customize Options

The Customize screen in the installer lists the following optional components in addition to the Printer Support files, many of which you can disable if you're concerned about conserving disk space.

- **Additional Fonts:** Snow Leopard includes fonts for non-Roman languages such as Chinese and Arabic. If you're sure you'll never run across these languages (on the Web, for example), disable this option.
- **Language Translations:** Install this option if you will be working in multiple languages on your Mac; you can choose which languages to include.
- **X11:** This software provides a windowed interface to Mac OS X's Unix core, separate from the Finder, and is used by some applications such as the Gimp.app image editor.
- **Rosetta:** If you still use older software that was never updated to run on Intel processors, Rosetta (which is not installed by default) translates the PowerPC instructions into Intel-compatible code.

5. Click the Install button. After confirming that you want to proceed, enter your administrator password. Now, go get a cup of your favorite beverage and wait while Snow Leopard installs.

If you initiated the process from within Leopard, the computer will restart itself once to boot from the install disc—don't panic when you hear the restart chime.

When the installation process is done, the Mac restarts and you're treated to Snow Leopard's Welcome animation.