

Mission Control

- F3 & the Four Finger Swipe
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If you're like me, sometimes your desktop gets cluttered. You might have 2-3 browser windows open, an app or two and some documents/spreadsheets. It's easy to get lost on just your desktop and maybe even wish you had a little more space on your desktop to spread out. If you have a mac, you actually do. Welcome to Mission Control.

F3 & and Four Finger Swipe

Apple wrote the book on productivity gestures. Swipes, pinches and other gestures aren't just for you phone, but they're built into the trackpad of every modern macbook. They're designed for simplicity and efficiency, and my favorite and most used gesture is the four finger swipe. More on that in just a minute.

The F3 button on my Macbook Air launches Mission Control. Sounds cool, right? Well it is. If you've ever lost a window or app on your desktop, Mission Control is the fastest way to find it. Do it right now. F3 launches Mission Control by minimizing all your windows and spreading them out across your desktop so that you can see everything at a glance. Just click on the window you want to bring it front and center. Even quicker than reaching all the way up to the tip top of your keyboard is the four finger swipe. Just take any 4 fingers and slowly swipe up on the trackpad. There it is, Mission Control. Easily view your doc, every window/app on your desktop, and one more important thing.

Multiple Desktops

Personally, I'm a compartmentalizer. If I've got a mess on my hands, the first thing I do is sort everything out into related piles. Having everything scattered in one place drives me crazy. That's the beauty of having more than one desktop. When you enter Mission Control, you'll see a menu at the very top of the screen that says Dashboard and Desktop 1 (maybe you already have more Desktops)... and at the far top right corner of the screen is a +. Go ahead and click on it.

Did you see what happened? You just got another desktop. Do it again. Another one, right? That's crazy, How many can you add? I don't know. I added 15 and realized if I needed 15, I've got bigger problems. Just think of how you could organize your workspace if you had 2, 3 or 5 different desktops.

Let me explain how to make it work.

1. Press F3 or do the Four Finger Swipe to get to Mission Control. You'll see all your open windows neatly separated on your screen with your additional desktops across the top of your screen.
2. Grab one of your open windows and drag it to another desktop. Now that window/app is now on another desktop.
3. Want to go to that desktop, just click on that desktop and it will open up full screen with the windows/apps you just moved.
4. Want to go back to another desktop? Press F3 or do the Four Finger Swipe and you're back at MISSION Control. Select another desktop and you're there.

Swipe Right or Swipe Left

Don't get me wrong, the four finger swipe is amazing. Swipe up to enter Mission Control, but I have a confession. I rarely swipe up. I just swipe right or swipe left. Swiping up takes me to where I can choose what desktop I want to visit next. Swiping right and left just takes me to each desktop.

1. You're likely on Desktop One, since you just learned about this.
2. Put four fingers on the trackpad and simply swipe them to the left.
3. Desktop Two just slid in from the right.
4. Do it again to watch Desktop Three slide in next. Keep doing this for as many desktops you have created.
5. Go back the other way by putting four fingers on the trackpad and swiping to the right.
6. The desktop to the far left is your dashboard (which is somewhat self-explanatory). If you need a calculator, there's one there. You can add more widgets to your dashboard by pressing the + in the lower left corner of the dashboard.

Drag Windows Across Desktops

Let's take this next level. Mission control is great. You can take a high level look at all your windows and apps and drag them to new desktops to better organize. This may be a good way to start. However, later you might have a browser window you want to move one desktop over. No need to press F3 or do the Four Finger Swipe. No, just grab that window at the top like you were going to move it around your screen. Drag it all the way to the right of your screen, so that your cursor is on the edge of the screen (don't let go of the button). In about half a second, the screen will automatically swipe over to your next desktop. Once you're on the new desktop, just move the window wherever you want it.

Need the window or application several desktops over? It's easy, and faster than F3. Drag your window/app to the edge of the screen with your cursor on the edge. In about half a second, the

next desktop will swipe into view. Don't move your cursor or let go of the button and in another half a second, the next desktop will swipe over. Do this for as many desktops over you'd like to move the window or app. Amazing, right?

Application: Why bother with Mission Control or multiple desktops? There are a couple of reasons. First of all, it's an excellent way to organize. Working on multiple projects? Put one project on one desktop and another project on another desktop. That way you can quickly get to your work, but it's not right in your face. Put your email on a desktop and put spotify on another desktop. Whatever you want to do, sort and organize your workspace better with multiple desktops. Second, multiple desktops is a great way to do work that requires quickly going back and forth between two screens. Have you ever had to work in two different windows/applications where you really wanted/needed to see both at the same time? Maybe you were reading content off a PDF and typing data into a form on another window. Maybe you tried to open up both windows beside each other as best as you could, but there just wasn't enough room. Consider opening one window up to full screen and move the other window to the next desktop at full screen. You can very quickly move back and forth between the two windows with a simple four finger swipe. You never have to take your eyes off the monitor (your hand can probably find the trackpad without you looking for it) and when you swipe, the cursor stays at the exact same place on the screen on the new desktop.