



Southern Maryland  
**Mac User Group**

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Meetings second  
Monday of the month from 7pm to 9pm  
at the SMARTCO warehouse.

## **April 2006**

### iPod - An Overview

by Pixcel Smith

iPods are pretty cool. Everyone wants one but not too many take the time to explore all the things they can do. The Shuffle is pretty straight forward. You put music on it and then it plays it back either randomly or in the same order as the play list. And it works nicely as a USB drive if you set it up for that. The other iPods (the Mini, Nano, Photo, Video...) all come with PDA like features. I'm mostly going to be discussing the iPod Video because that's what I have, but features will be similar.

In the Extras menu there is Clock, Games, Contacts, Calendars, Notes, Stopwatch and Screen Lock.

Clock is pretty straight forward. It shows you the time. You can have multiple clocks, very handy if you are in contact with people all over the world.

Games - The four games currently included are Brick, Parachute, Solitaire and Music Quiz. Brick is the the classic Atari game Breakout - take out the bricks at the top of the screen by bouncing a ball off the paddle at the bottom; fun and addictive. Parachute, is shoot the paratroopers jumping out of the helicopters before they destroy your tank. Solitaire, your basic solitaire game. Finally Music Quiz, identify the song being played from the choices on the screen. You earn more points for the choosing the correct song before

they remove all the incorrect answers. Note: Not so good if you have language lessons or Harry Potter since they have tons of short files and tend to come up way too often.

Contacts - A true lifesaver if you don't carry an address book and can never remember the phone number you want. Contacts syncs with the Apple Address Book. One down side is that it does not pay attention the groups you have made. It just shows a very long list of either the whole address book or the groups you have selected. Still very handy and it copies the information you stored in the Notes section as well.

Calendars - Syncs with iCal. In this case you get all your categories and can view all or just the one you select. You only get Monthly the view. If you have an event on a given day it will put a little red flag in the box for that day. Click on the day and it will take you to a list of items for the day. Click again and it shows you all the information you entered for the event.

Notes - Notes are great. You just drop text files in to the Notes folder on your iPod and presto they show up in the list of Notes. Excellent for to-do lists, grocery shopping lists, books and articles you want to read. The screen is a bit small to be reading long books on but it works well for small notes.

Stopwatch - Your standard stopwatch. Good for timing stuff and it has a lap counter.

Screen Lock - A basic combination lock for your iPod. Looks like those dial locks from high school. Quaint and does the job of keeping people away from the sensitive data you keep in the Contacts and Calendars.

### Using your iPod as a Hard Drive

This is the number one reason for writing off your iPod as an expense. And for me the best way to back up my laptop. If all you use your iPod for is backing up your data - it's well worth it. To use your iPod as a hard drive

you just open the iTunes preferences, go to the iPod settings, Music tab and check the box that says "Enable disk use". Then next time you plug your iPod in, it shows up on your desktop as another drive.

## Syncing

If you are just moving music and use iCal and Address book then syncing with iTunes is just fine. You just go in to the Preferences - [iPod ->Contacts or Calendars](#) and turn on the syncing as you see fit and all is copied over. If you happen to use Entourage however you are not out of luck ZappTek's iPodIt will move your address and calendar data for you. (14.95 USD at [zapptek.com](http://zapptek.com)). If you aren't using Tiger there is Apple's iSync. If you want to access your photos from the hard drive area as well as the Photo menu you need to check the "Include full resolution photos" box. This will take up more space on your iPod but it also backs up your precious digital photos.

## iPod in the Car and House

There are all sorts of gadgets you can get for your iPod. Car chargers, transmitters, receivers, holders, remotes, docking stations, speakers and the list goes on and on. The iTrip is nice if you want to listen to your iPod in the car and on the radio in elsewhere. If it's just for the car then go with something that charges and transmits. For in the house there are all sorts of options. Apple's new iPod HiFi is very nice, if slightly on the expensive side and uses the standard Apple remote. But there are lots of options, I recommend some sort of dock that charges with a remote. There are a few good ones out there. That way you can plug in any set of speakers you already have kicking around the house.

## iPod with your Camera

The Apple Camera Connector. Very handy if you travel and don't want to drag your iBook or eMac along. Before you leave home make sure your camera works with the connector and you can upload your pictures

on to the iPod comfortably. This is a great way to make those little flash cards last longer. Don't forget to take a wall adapter or dock with you so you can charge you iPod.

## iPod Fashion and Protection

Getting a case to protect your iPod is always a good idea. Resist ripping the protective sheet that it comes with off until you've got a case. Cases are a personal choice. Figure out what you are going to be doing with it. Do you tend to throw it in your pocket? Avoid the rubbery cases as they pick up pocket lint. Are you taking it to the gym or jogging with it? You probably want an armband or a really good clip of some sort. Don't like the look of cases? iShield is your friend. It goes on with soapy water bit and is truly amazing. Have absolutely no idea how you are going to use it? Marware makes a nice multi-purpose case for about \$40 that has a cover, arm band, wrist strap and belt clip and comes in multiple colours. inCase also makes a good combo at about the same price range. There are lots of options.

## iPod Headsets

The headset that the iPods come with are not bad, if you aren't fussy. The Griffin EarJams make them sound much better and fit in your ear more comfortably as well. It's a standard 3.5mm headphone jack so pick your favourite headphones and plug them in.

## iPod Maintenance

Basic maintenance will keep your battery and iPod running. iPods can be used between 0 and 35 degrees Celsius. That doesn't mean they like it. Try to keep them around room temperature. Power cycling the battery once a month is also a good idea. Lithium batteries like to be used so don't ignore your iPod for too long either. To save battery power turn off the backlight and the equalizers. Also flipping songs eats through battery too. You can replace your own battery now (although I haven't seen any 5th

generation ones in town). It's not too bad once you get the case open. Make sure your battery kit comes with tools.

### iPod Support Resources

The following are some useful websites to help you explore and play with your iPod.

[www.apple.com/support/ipod/](http://www.apple.com/support/ipod/) - Apple's iPod support site

[www.iLounge.com](http://www.iLounge.com) - excellent, well-rounded resource

[www.iPodHacks.com](http://www.iPodHacks.com) - Good for hacking around on your iPod

[www.appleFritter.com/kiwi](http://www.appleFritter.com/kiwi) - Kiwi is a subsite of AppleFritter for support - good forums

What you do with your iPod is up to you. The options are vast. Use it just for music. Use it as a PDA. Run Linux on it. Show off your photo library. Backup your data. Watch videos. However you use it, enjoy your iPod.

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## What is the difference between DVD- and DVD+?

### DVD-R and DVD-RW

- DVD-R/W was the first DVD recording format released that was compatible with standalone DVD Players.
- DVD-R is a non-rewriteable format and it is compatible with about 93% of all DVD Players and most DVD-ROMs.
- DVD-RW is a rewriteable format and it is compatible with about 79% of all DVD Players and most DVD-ROMs.
- DVD-R/W supports single side 4.37 computer GB DVDs(called DVD-5 and double sided 8.75 computer GB\* DVDs(called DVD-10).
- These formats are supported by **DVDForum**.  
<http://www.dvdforum.com/forum.shtml>

### DVD+R and DVD+RW

- DVD+R/W has some "better" features than DVD-R/W such as lossless linking and both CAV and CLV writing.
- DVD+R is a non-rewritable format and it is compatible with about 88% of all DVD Players and most DVD-ROMs.
- DVD+RW is a rewritable format and is compatible with about 79% of all DVD Players and most DVD-ROMs.
- DVD+R/W supports single side 4.37 computer GB\* DVDs(called DVD-5) and double side 8.75 computer GB\* DVDs(called DVD-10).
- These formats are supported by the **DVD+RW Alliance**.  
<http://www.dvdrw.com/>

The compatibility statistics mentioned above may have changed since this article was published.

## **Apple has released a number of firmware updates for Intel Macs.**

These are required if you want to exploit Apple's new Boot Camp software that allows users to transform their Intel Macs into dual boot Mac/Windows machines.

Updates are available for iMac, Mac mini and MacBook Pro computers.

Apple has also released Firmware Restoration software (Firmware Restoration CD v 1.0). It says this software update: "Is used to restore the firmware of an Intel-based iMac (early 2006), Mac mini (early 2006), or MacBook Pro (early 2006) to original factory condition."

These software updates are available from Apple's [support pages](#).

## **RSS Explained**

RSS - really simple syndication -- is a labor-saving tool that allows people to tune into information sources that interest them. The information source could be a blog, a podcast, a videocast or any web site that includes RSS feeds.

The value of RSS accrues when you subscribe to multiple RSS feeds. You can then monitor multiple information streams with a minimum of effort.

There are many different software tools for subscribing to RSS feeds. One of the most popular is a web site named Bloglines. Some web browsers let you subscribe to RSS feeds. Safari 2.x and Firefox are two browsers that do. Firefox lets you

to subscribe to RSS feeds using something called Live Bookmarks. You can also use a Firefox extension named Sage to subscribe to RSS feeds.

RSS's primary value is that it brings information to you without you having to visit multiple web sites. In a knowledge economy, anything that streamlines the flow of information from producer to consumer gives benefit to both producer and consumer. You tune into the information you do want, and tune out the information you don't want.

### Some Examples of How RSS Simplifies Peoples' Lives

I asked some technology consultants to explain how RSS brings value to peoples' lives. Curtis Brown at MissionMovers.org, in Seattle, is a strong believer in RSS. He explains, "RSS has invaded every part of our life, but we just don't know it. RSS is an information delivery method that gives added convenience to both senders and receivers of the information."

As an example, RSS feeds can be used by a nonprofit organization to distribute different kinds of information to different people. One RSS feed could be the organization's calendar of events or classes. Another could be a call for volunteers. A third feed might be information for funders. The more feeds an organization offers, the more narrowly tailored the information delivered to people served by that organization or supporting that organization.

Here are some other examples of RSS feeds. A used car dealer can have an RSS feed that details newly arrived used cars. A public library could have an RSS feed of newly purchased books. A police department can have separate RSS feeds for different neighborhoods, giving up-to-date information on safety concerns in each neighborhood.

Curtis Brown explains that information received in an RSS feed can be filtered by keyword and colorized in text. So you have control over the RSS feed. You decide the ways in which that stream of information is going to serve your needs.

Curtis explains that RSS feeds become immensely useful when people work collaboratively in a wiki. (A wiki is a web page that different people

can edit.) Changes to the web page can be monitored via an RSS feed. This allows anyone participating in the wiki to have a clear idea of who is adding the most value to the wiki. RSS allows for better monitoring and gives added transparency to the collaborative process.

Curtis goes on to explain that there are two kinds of RSS feeds -- static feeds and dynamic feeds. A static feed might be sports scores or the feed from a single blog. A dynamic feed is a stream of information where there is searching going on to pull out specific pieces of information to add to the stream.

It's also possible to combine several RSS feeds into a single new feed. One web site that let's you do that is [rssmix.com](http://rssmix.com). Why would want to do that? Suppose you live in a metropolitan area with several different library systems spanning several counties. Each library system provides an RSS feed of the events happening within their library system. You'd like to keep track of library events in multiple counties. [rssmix.com](http://rssmix.com) would let you combine RSS feeds in that way.

Another RSS enthusiast, Bruce Roy, in Sydney, Australia explains - "I have found the RSS facility in The Next Generation of Genealogy Sitebuilding (TNG) very useful for the family tree site. It enables people interested in following the family tree to get information about changes to the tree without having to check the website's "What's New?" or wade through the data."

One other advantage of RSS is that it lets you tune out mainstream media and tune into alternative media and personal media. If you find the CBS Evening News a touch thin in how it covers the news, with RSS you have an alternative source of news where news stories don't need to be squeezed into 45 second slots.

Another RSS enthusiast, Winthrop Morgan, in the Washington DC-area had this to add:

"Regarding your request for examples of how RSS brings benefits into peoples' lives, I highly recommend you consider including Join Together Online as a great Win- Win- Win model.

Join Together Online (JTO) (<http://www.jointogether.org>) has long been a pioneer in using the Internet to support people working on substance abuse and gun violence issues. Every month, one million JTO web pages are viewed by over 350,000 people.

JTO uses RSS feeds to not only help their web presence spread, but also to provide vital to support state, municipal, and nonprofit drug treatment and prevention program managers and their audiences. While these programs' web masters might have a modest web presence, they lack the wherewithal to continuously produce new content, or even gather and republish it. Without new content, their audiences lack a reason to come back to their Web site. The JTO RSS service enormously increases both the return visit value of these sites and the presence of authoritative information in this highly charged information space.

To keep the RSS feeds fresh and riveting, JTO employs a small editorial staff who aggregates both online and offline news on substance abuse funding, policies, and more from authoritative sources. They edit this news down to its essential content, and then republish it via RSS, as well as to users of their site and subscribers to their e-mail news services."

### RSS Relieves Cluttered Email Inboxes

If you have traditionally received a lot of your information via email, RSS can provide some relief to your inbox. Would you like to follow a particular email list, but can't stomach subscribing to one more email list? If that list is on Yahoogroups, you can follow the list via the list's RSS feed. An excellent free tool for reading RSS feeds is Bloglines. (<http://www.bloglines.com>)

RSS feeds are almost always spam-free. The provider of the RSS feed doesn't want you to unsubscribe from the feed -- so they treat you with respect.

Ben Sheldon, in Lowell, Massachusetts, passes along this RSS tip: "Google still only offers email news alerts, but this utility lets you use create an RSS feed out of any Google News search term.

[<http://www.justinpfister.com/gnewsfeed.cfm>]

I aggregate my name, my projects (DigitalBicycle, ServiceSpeak), and my street and city so that if something happens I should know about, I will."

If you're still with me, I'll pass along a few small tips of my own. I use RSS, Bloglines and my Digg.com account to keep track of what Digg stories my friends are digging (i.e. voting for.) I just copy the RSS feed from the bottom left of <http://digg.com/users/pshapiro/friends> and then paste it into Add Feed in Bloglines.

Between Katie Couric and the 50 friends I have on Digg, which do you think provides the richer quality of information to me? Right. Just for kicks I subscribe to the Associated Press RSS feed, so I'm in the loop with whatever Katie knows.

I also use the free service at Squeet.com to send me an email whenever one of my friends submits a story to Digg.com, so they don't have to let me know about their submissions. That email alert capability might well come to Digg sometime.

I use RSS to keep me posted on new items of interest to me that are posted to Del.icio.us. For example, if anyone submits an item to Del.icio.us with the tag digitalstorytelling, I find out about that really easily in my Bloglines account.

That puts me in touch with anyone doing digital storytelling anywhere on the planet. And I don't even have to subscribe to another email list to be in touch with them. I like that.

Phil Shapiro

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Content List and via the newsletter article exchange of the Association of Personal Computer User Groups.

This article -- with associated links-- can be found on the web at <http://rssexplained.blogspot.com>

## **Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary for the iPod debuts**

By Macworld staff

iPREPpress and Merriam-Webster have released a version of [Merriam-Webster's Pocket Dictionary for the iPod](http://www.ipreppress.com/Pages/Reference/MWPocket.htm).<http://www.ipreppress.com/Pages/Reference/MWPocket.htm>

The downloadable dictionary includes 40,000 words and their definitions, a pronunciation guide, an abbreviation guide, and a Handbook of Style.

"Merriam-Webster is pleased to work with iPREPpress to offer our dictionaries and thesauruses to iPod users," said James Withgott, vice president and associate publisher at Merriam-Webster.

Under the partnership, the companies will produce a series of portable references for the iPod over the next two months including: Merriam-Webster's Pocket Thesaurus, Merriam-Webster's Rhyming Dictionary for song and hip-hop writers, Merriam-Webster's Pocket Atlas, and The Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Quotations.

The debut product features simple scroll-and-click navigation to search for over 40,000 words and their definitions. Users search for words on the iPod through a hierarchical menu and hyperlinked structure.

Merriam-Webster's Pocket Dictionary is available for download now. It costs \$14.95 but is currently available at an introductory price of \$9.95.

# Apple software lets Intel Macs run Windows XP - UPDATED

By Jonny Evans



Apple's bid to attract Windows switchers has been massively ramped-up with the release of new Apple software that lets Intel Macs run and install Windows XP.

The software - an 83MB download - is called 'Boot Camp'. A beta version of the software is [available immediately](#). It will also feature in Leopard, Apple's next major release of Mac OS X. Leopard will be previewed at Apple's Worldwide Developer Conference in August.

## **Which is the 'X'iest solution?**

Boot Camp lets you run Windows XP, but you do need a Windows XP install disc. Once installation is complete, users can restart their computer to run either Mac OS X or Windows XP.

Once installed, Mac users just need to hold down the Option key at startup to choose between Mac OS X and Windows. (Windows users need to look for

the Alt key if they aren't used to a Mac keyboard). After starting up, your Mac runs Windows completely natively. Simply restart to come back to Mac.

"Apple has no desire or plan to sell or support Windows, but many customers have expressed their interest to run Windows on Apple's superior hardware now that we use Intel processors," said Phil Schiller, Apple's senior vice president of worldwide product marketing.

### **Modern Macs run dated Windows**

The software imitates a Windows BIOS. Commenting on this, Apple says: "Macs use an ultra-modern industry standard technology called EFI to handle booting. Sadly, Windows XP, and even the upcoming Vista, are stuck in the 80's with old-fashioned BIOS. But with Boot Camp, the Mac can operate smoothly in both centuries."

"We think Boot Camp makes the Mac even more appealing to Windows users considering making the switch," said Schiller.

American Technology Research analyst Shaw Wu thinks there may be even more to this release, telling Macworld: "With support for both EFI and BIOS for booting, I believe Microsoft Vista will also be supported on a Mac."

### **Massive Mac market share boost predicted**

Apple's move may massively inflate its market share. A recent report from Needham & Co analyst Charles Wolf urged Apple to do everything it can to make it easy for Windows users to switch to the Mac.

Wolf ran a series of surveys across US colleges, and found that transforming Macs into dual-boot machines would perhaps double Apple's market share, raising it as high as [9.2 per cent](#).

"Such an increase would translate into almost one million additional sales, equivalent to a 22 per cent increase in Apple's 2005 Mac shipments," Wolf wrote.

Speaking since the software launched, American Technology Research analyst Shaw Wu told Macworld: "I believe this is Apple's thirtieth birthday surprise and it could potentially be a significant game-changer. We believe a key reason why Apple hasn't converted more 'switchers' is its lack of strong Windows compatibility. But now with Intel processors and chip sets, Apple is able to offer full compatibility with Windows XP on a Mac."

**Security alert - be alert**

Apple also warns Boot Camp trainees that they need to maintain their Windows security. In a section titled, 'Word to the Wise', the company observes: "Windows running on a Mac is like Windows running on a PC. That means it'll be subject to the same attacks that plague the Windows world. So be sure to keep it updated with the latest Microsoft Windows security fixes."

Boot Camp simplifies Windows installation on an Intel-based Mac by providing a simple, graphical step-by-step assistant application that dynamically creates a second partition on the Mac hard drive for Windows. It will also burn a CD with all the necessary Windows drivers needed to run and install the OS on a Mac from a Windows XP installation disc.

The public beta is preview software licensed for use on a trial basis for a limited time. Apple does not provide support for installing or running Boot Camp and does not sell or support Microsoft Windows software.

Boot Camp requires an Intel-based Mac with a USB keyboard and mouse, or a built-in keyboard and TrackPad; Mac OS X version 10.4.6 or later; the latest firmware update; at least 10GB of free space on the startup disk; a blank recordable CD or DVD; and single-disc version of Windows XP Home Edition or Professional with Service Pack 2 or later.

*Updated with comment from analyst Shaw Wu*