



Chapter 9
Mac & Windows
“JV” Skills



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“The more you know about the other platform, the more you know about your own!”

-- Knute Holian 6/10/96, Skill Path Seminar --

Some Words about Macs and PCs

Many schools face the much debated dilemma: should they become cross platform. More often than not, the schools were originally all Apple and now for a variety of reasons - Trustee pressure, parental pressure, cost factors, support issues, the desire for tablets - must consider adding PCs to the mix. The major stumbling block is cost; we don't mean the cost of the purchase, but the hidden costs of training previously successful Mac users, purchasing software for the new PC environment, training the previously Macintosh skilled computer coordinator in the new technological environment, and the major amount of time involved in setting up new labs with new networking systems, new peripherals, and new headaches.

While we don't have the answer to all the problems raised, we do have some suggestions. One, almost all major applications are cross-platform. Two, so many applications are now web-based-- Google Apps, webspiration--and countless Web 2.0 sites are used, so the issue of Mac vs PC has become almost irrelevant. It is true, however, that PC tablets are enticing, while the Mac iLife suite of iMovie, iTunes, and Garageband is equally compelling. iPads and Droid tablets, now, confuse the issue even more. Throw netbooks and the Chromebooks into the mix, and there is no easy answer.

Shared concepts and the Key to Success

The Key to success is stressing that the Windows environment is similar to the Mac operating system and the two systems share features. After the initial dismay of seeing the different desktops, users can learn that much of the vocabulary remains the same: desktop, folders, files, etc. and that the skills of navigating to folders, Save vs. Save As, and using keyboard shortcuts are not fundamentally different. But more important is to stress the need to be flexible about technology by acquiring the necessary phlegmatic problem-solving and critical thinking skills to move easily between computing environments and applications. This is a skill both teachers and students need to learn.

Macintosh	PC Equivalent
Hard Drive on the desktop to see files, folders, and programs	My Computer on the desktop to see files, folders, and programs
Go menu	Start Button
System Preferences under the Apple Menu	Control Panels under Start Button, point to Settings, choose Control Panel from submenu
Red, yellow, green buttons on left hand corner	Minimize button on right hand corner to shrink to taskbar to show and hide applications
Keyboard shortcuts with Command and Option	Keyboard shortcuts with Control and ALT
Moving and resizing windows with title bar and click-dragging corner	Moving and resizing windows with title bar and click-dragging corner or sides
Dock	Taskbar in Windows 7 functions like the Dock
etc.	Recycle Bin to delete files, folders, etc.
Red button on top left corner of window	Close Box on top right corner of window
Double click to load files or programs	Double click left mouse button
Aliases	Shortcuts
Contextual shortcut menus with Control-Click on files, folders and applications	Contextual shortcut menus with Right Mouse-Click on files, folders and applications

Mouse Control Learn to distinguish between single click, double click and dragging. **Single-Clicking** blackens a file or makes a choice. **Double-Clicking** opens a file, highlights a word or starts up an application. This is the basic logic, but it takes time - like riding a bicycle - to build up your intuition regarding single vs. double-click. When in doubt, use single-click. If nothing happens, be more aggressive and double-click. Selecting text and then clicking the mouse and keeping the mouse button held down, and then rolling the mouse so that the cursor is at a new location and then releasing the button is called **Dragging and Dropping**.

PC Versus Mac Mouse One major difference between the Macintosh and PC environment is the use of the mouse, with the PC mouse taking advantage of both a left and right mouse button. The left mouse button functions similarly to the single Mac button, the button to use to select files, folders, etc. and the one to use when double clicking. The PC mouse takes advantage of the right mouse button to provide contextual shortcut menus when clicked on files, folders and applications. Macs actually have the equivalent function of contextual menus with the addition of holding down the CTRL button while clicking on an icon. Use this feature to save time.

The Desktop Finder or Desktop on PC The screen with the trash can or Recycle Bin is called the Desktop Finder on the Mac or Desktop on a PC. From here you can double click on a disk or folder to open it or you can double click on an application to start it. In both environments, you can use the desktop as a storage place for Aliases or Shortcuts to files and folders that you want available for immediate access.

Key Points Important keys on the Mac include Option, Command, and Ctrl. Remember to hold down the Option button or the Command button while you push and release another key. On the PC, the equivalent keys are the ALT, CONTROL (abbreviated CTRL at times), Tab and Function Keys marked F1, F2, F3, etc.

Folders vs. Files Files are specific documents that you create with your software when you Save. Folders are containers or cubbies that you create to hold and organize your files.

- To create a New Folder from the Desktop Finder in the Mac, first open your disk or desired window. Then choose New Folder under the File menu. When it appears highlighted as Untitled Folder, do not mouse-click; just type in the Folder name and push Return.
- To create a New Folder from the Desktop on the PC, right mouse click on an empty part of the desktop and choose New, then Folder from the contextual menu. Or similar to the Mac, you can go to the File Menu, then New, then folder.

Saving Remember **The Rule of Three** when saving:

- SAVE with a **descriptive file name**
- SAVE onto the **correct disk** (hard drive, file server, memory stick or floppy disk)
- SAVE within the **correct folder**

Do not push Return or click the Save button until you are satisfied that you have obeyed the **Big Three**. In Boston, we remember the big three — Larry, Kevin and Robert — who won 3 championships in 81, 84 and 86 and the big three — Paul, Kevin and Ray — who won in 2008.

Save vs. Save As When you have not yet saved, the two choices are identical and cause the computer to give you the Save As dialog box. Once you have saved a document correctly by always keeping the Big Three in mind, choosing Save instructs the computer to save as before — same disk, folder and file name.

- In contrast, the Save As choice is a request on your part to change one or all of the Big Three. By choosing Save As, you access the Save As dialog box and can change any of the 3 items. Using Save As is desirable when you want to change the file name or when you want to save a second time in a different folder or when you want to make a backup by saving onto a second disk (floppy or hard).

The Rule of Four When you save a file, you are saving in the standard format preferred by the software company. However, many times, it is advantageous to save your file in a different format so that some other software can access it. We at Summercore call this **the rule of four**. If you save a Word document as RTF or save an Excel spreadsheet as a CSV file, you are practicing the **rule of four**. Saving a JPG file from PowerPoint or Photoshop is practicing the **rule of four**. A user of the latest 2008 Microsoft Word software may need to practice the **rule of four** so that the file is a DOC file and not a DOCX file if the recipient is using older software.