

Mac & Chromebook | Easy | 2 min read

Mac: how to install macOS updates safely

Updates keep your Mac secure and working well. Installing them takes a little time, but doing it the right way avoids problems.

Before you start

- Plug your Mac into its charger.
- Back up first. See our Time Machine guide. An update is normally safe, but a backup protects you if anything goes wrong.
- Check you have enough space. Large updates can need 20 GB or more.
- Make sure you have a good Wi-Fi connection.

How to update

1. Click the **Apple menu**, then **System Settings**.
2. Choose **General**, then **Software Update**. On older versions of macOS this is in **System Preferences**, then **Software Update**.
3. Wait while your Mac checks. If an update appears, click **Update Now** or **Restart Now**.
4. Enter your Mac password if asked.
5. Leave the Mac alone. The screen may go dark and restart several times.

Update or upgrade?

Smaller updates fix problems and security holes. A big upgrade moves you to a new version name. Upgrades can change how things look, and some older apps may stop working. If you rely on a particular app or printer, check it works with the new version before upgrading.

Turn on automatic updates

In **Software Update**, click the small **i** button beside **Automatic updates**. You can then switch on the options to install macOS updates and security responses automatically, if you want your Mac to handle this for you.

Be careful of fake update messages

A pop-up on a website telling you to update your Mac is a scam. Only update from **System Settings**.

When to get more help

Contact us if your Mac says it cannot install the update, if it gets stuck for more than a few hours, if there is no update showing and you think there should be, or if your Mac is too old for newer versions. We can tell you what is safe to do.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.