



*MacOS X: The Missing Manual, first edition*

By David Pogue

Pogue Press/O'Reilly Press, 2002, \$29.95

(retail)

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**Reviewed by Christopher Ursich**

Mac OS X: The Missing Manual ("TMM," for short) is a great introduction to Mac OS X, for OS 9 users and new Macintosh users alike. With a friendly approach, it addresses all the subjects someone new to the OS needs to understand.

All the books in Pogue's "Missing Manual" series are meant to stand in for the user manuals that Apple and other companies sadly just don't provide anymore. These books aren't just the same text by a different author, though.

Many people can be turned off by the "Geometry class" style of traditional manuals. In such a book, you'd start with "first principles" like what it means to "open" a file, and "save" versus "save as." TMM isn't like that. Instead of that colder, somewhat pedantic approach, Pogue explains Mac OS X with excitement, humor and practicality. Hard technical information isn't lost; Pogue included a good selection of it in sidebars, where it can be read by those who are interested, but safely ignored by those who aren't, without interrupting the flow of the discussion.

TMM covers version 10.1 of OS X. In my judgment, Pogue did a good job in choosing the topics to be covered, and in giving the right amount of copy to each. He organized them wisely too. For example, since most people will already have it installed, Pogue covers OS X installation in Appendix C rather than on page 1. Instead, the first three chapters immediately help you get your bearings in the new environment. They discuss how to work with windows, folders, the dock, etc. There's lots of content here to help OS 9 users translate their skills to the new OS. With the lay of the land explained, Pogue next describes how to accomplish what you want to do. Part II describes the use of applications, and how Classic mode fits into the picture. Pogue also describes AppleScript in this section, with a bit more emphasis than might be warranted. Part IV discusses System Preferences, and touches on the assortment of software that comes with OS X, such as iTunes, iPhoto and Mail. Most of these full-fledged programs are not described in detail since they aren't the focus of the book. You can read "iMovie: The Missing Manual" and others for that information. Using OS X on the Internet is covered in Part V, and includes iTools and the operating system's web-serving abilities. One of the appendices is noteworthy. "Where'd it Go?" is a cleverly conceived reference for OS 9 users. It isn't just some skimpy table that tells you which menu now contains a given command. It's a reasonably good translation dictionary for work habits that includes

explanations of the new way to think about the task (and the number of the page on which it's described).

TMM is consistent with O'Reilly publishing's well-known quality. Like many of their books, TMM's table of contents, a sample chapter and other info is available at [www.oreilly.com](http://www.oreilly.com). The [www.missingmanual.com](http://www.missingmanual.com) site has links to download all the non-included software the book mentions.

Rating: Five out of Five stars

+touches on important topics, "Where'd it Go" section, good organization

-too much emphasis on some topics