

Lesson 2-7: Switching Between Windows

Figure 2-12

You can only work in one window at a time. Notice that the active Calculator window appears in front and that its title bar buttons (close, minimize, zoom) are colored.

Figure 2-13

Pressing <Command> + <Tab> lists all the applications that are currently open.

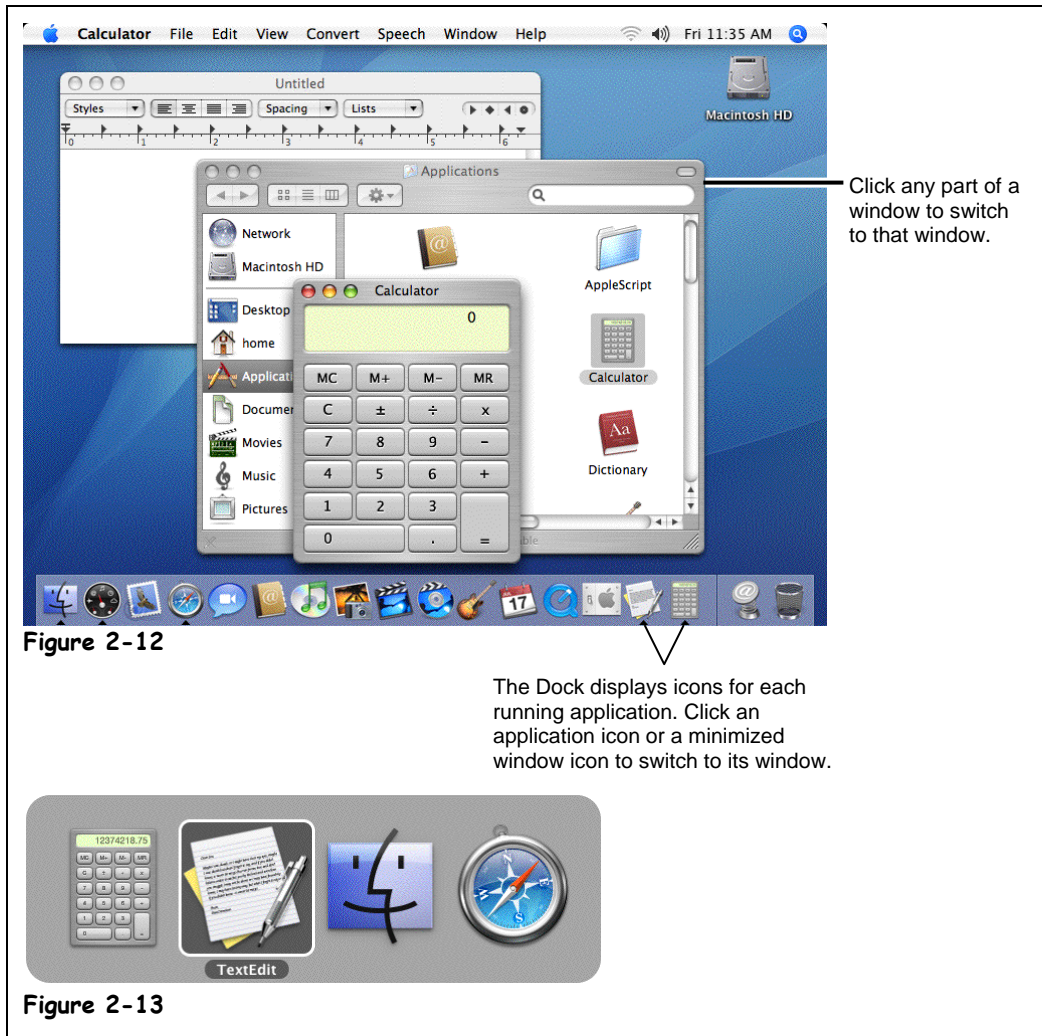


Figure 2-12

The Dock displays icons for each running application. Click an application icon or a minimized window icon to switch to its window.

Figure 2-13

You can have several applications or windows open and running simultaneously, but you can only *work* in one window at a time. The window you're working in is called the *active window* and always appears on top of any other windows that you have open. If you think about it, you do the same thing at your desk. When you want to work on a piece of paper, you place it on top of everything else.

This lesson explains how to switch between open windows and applications. There are actually a couple ways to do this, and we'll cover them in this lesson. First, make sure you have more than one window open.

1. Make sure the TextEdit window is still open.

If it isn't open, click the Finder icon in the Dock, select Applications, and double-click the TextEdit icon.

Next, open another application that comes with Mac OS X—the Calculator.

2. Click the **Finder** icon, select **Applications** from the Sidebar, and double-click the **Calculator** icon.

The Calculator application window becomes active, as shown in Figure 2-12, appearing in front of the Applications and TextEdit windows. An icon for the Calculator application also appears in the Dock, next to the TextEdit application icon. You can make the TextEdit document the active window by clicking its icon in the Dock.

3. Click the **TextEdit** icon in the Dock.

The TextEdit document window now appears in front, and the Minimize, Zoom and Close buttons appear in color (they are grayed out in the inactive windows).

You can also make a window the active window by clicking the window. If the window you want to make active isn't visible, you first need to move the other windows out of the way, or else click the window's application icon in the Dock to make it active.

4. Click any part of the **Calculator** window.

The Calculator window is active again.

Yet another way to switch between windows is using the Application Switcher.

5. Press and hold down the **<Command>** key. Press and release the **<Tab>** key, but don't release the **<Command>** key.

The Application Switcher appears, as shown in Figure 2-13. The Application Switcher lists all the applications that are currently running.

Move on to the next step to see how you can activate an application using the Application Switcher.

6. While still holding down the **<Command>** key, press and release the **<Tab>** key until the TextEdit application is selected, then release the **<Command>** key.

When you release the **<Command>** key, the selected application is activated and displayed in front of all other windows.

NOTE: **<Command>** + **<Tab>** is especially useful when you use programs that fill the entire computer screen. When you can't see the Dock or any part of another window, **<Command>** + **<Tab>** might be the only way you can switch between applications.

Think you have a handle on switching between windows and applications? Good, because when you work with Mac OS X, you'll find yourself switching between applications and windows a great deal throughout the day.



TextEdit

TextEdit icon

Quick Reference

To Switch Between Open Windows:

- Click the window's application **icon** in the Dock.
- Or...
- Click any part of the window you want to make active.
- Or...
- Press and hold down the **<Command>** key and press the **<Tab>** key to display the Application Switcher. Press the **<Tab>** key until the application you want is selected, then release the **<Command>** key.