


About the screens you see when your Mac starts up

When you start your Mac from OS X, different screens are displayed to let you know how your Mac is starting up, or why it might not finish starting up.

Starting up your Mac

You might see slight differences in startup screens or sequences mentioned in this article, depending on the model of your Mac, the version of OS X and firmware your Mac has, and which startup options you've selected. For example:

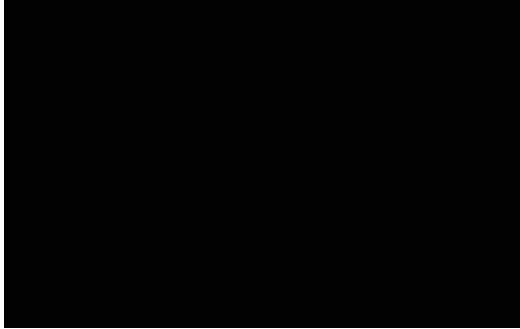
- The background at any stage of the startup process can be blue, black, or gray. It can also be a desktop picture.
- The progress indicator can be a progress bar or a spinning indicator .
- If you start from Windows using [Boot Camp](#), your Mac doesn't display an Apple logo or the other screens in this article.

Power On



When you first turn on your Mac, the screen is off (black) and you hear a startup chime. Your Mac initializes its BootROM and memory (RAM). It then performs a power-on self test (POST) and a BootROM test. If you hear additional beeps or chimes at this point, this indicates a [possible hardware issue](#) and startup halts. If you've added memory to your Mac, check to make sure it's installed properly.

Blank screen



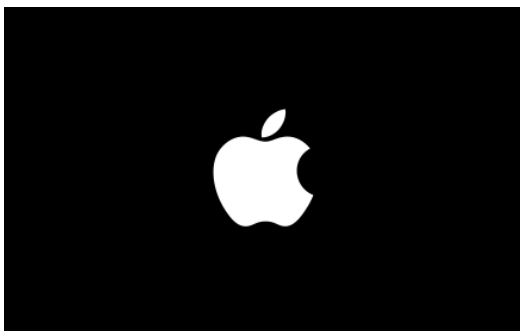
After the power-on self test is complete, your Mac sends a video signal to your connected displays. The display screen might appear black or gray at this point in the startup sequence and the display's backlight should turn on. If you don't see an image appear on your screen after a few moments, try turning up your display's brightness. If you're using an external display, make sure it's connected properly and turned on.

FileVault login



If you've enabled full disk encryption using [FileVault](#), you're prompted to enter your user account name and password to unlock your startup disk.

Apple logo



When you see the Apple logo appear, it means that the computer has found the startup file "boot.efi" on your startup disk. This tells your Mac where to locate the System folder on your

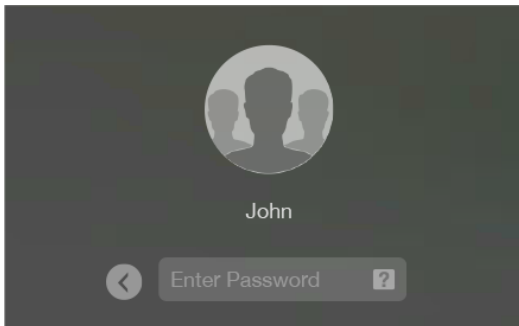
startup disk.

Progress indicator



After your Mac locates the System Folder on your startup disk, a progress bar or spinning wheel appears on the screen. This lets you know that your Mac is reading files from the OS X System folder.

Login Window



If your Mac doesn't have FileVault enabled, or you turned off automatic login in System Preferences, you see a screen showing the available user accounts on this Mac. Choose your user account name and enter your password to log in.

Desktop



After your Mac is finished starting up and you're logged in, you see your desktop picture and the Dock.

Other screens you might see

You might see one of these screens appear during startup if you've changed your startup options, or there's an issue starting up your Mac.

Folder with a question mark

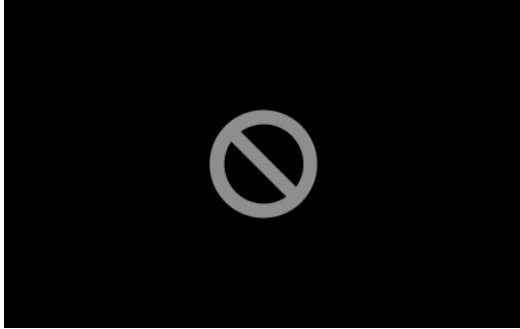


If you see a folder with a question mark appear instead of the Apple logo, it means your Mac couldn't find a local or network-based startup disk. This can happen if the disk selected in the Startup Disk pane of System Preferences isn't available. Wait a few seconds to see if your Mac is able to locate the startup disk you specified.

If you still see a question mark after waiting a few moments, [use Startup Manager](#) to start up your Mac, then re-select your startup disk [from System Preferences](#).

If a question mark appears after you install a software update, re-select your startup disk [using OS X Recovery](#).

Prohibitory symbol

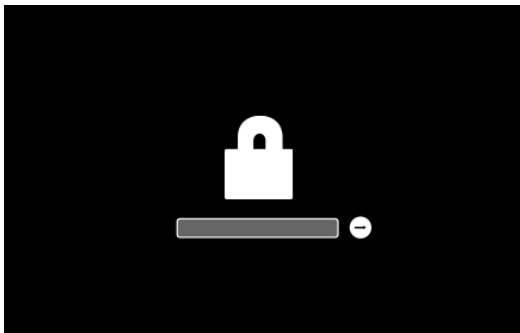


When you see a circle with a slash symbol instead of the Apple logo, it means your Mac couldn't find a valid System Folder to start up from.

If you're using your Mac at a school or business, it might be trying to start from the [wrong version of OS X](#). Contact your IT department for more help.

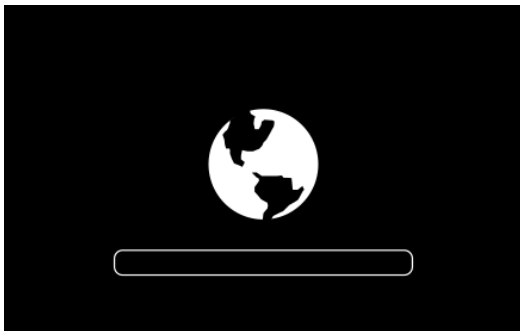
If this is your personal Mac, try reinstalling OS X by using [OS X Recovery](#).

Lock icon



If you set a [firmware password](#) on your Mac, you might see a lock icon at startup if you try to start your Mac from another volume like an external drive or OS X Recovery. Enter your firmware password to continue starting up.

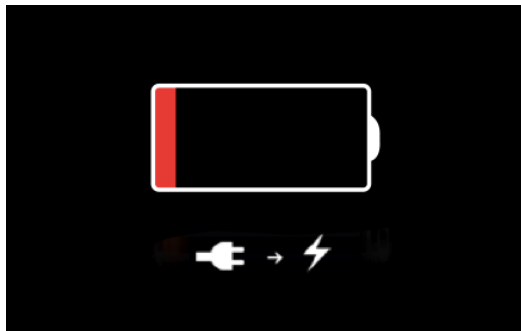
Spinning globe



If you see a spinning globe instead of an Apple logo, it means your Mac is starting from a network-based startup disk like Netboot or Internet Recovery instead of a connected or built-in startup disk. If you didn't mean for your Mac to start this way, press and hold the power key to turn off your Mac. Then, press the power key again to start up normally.

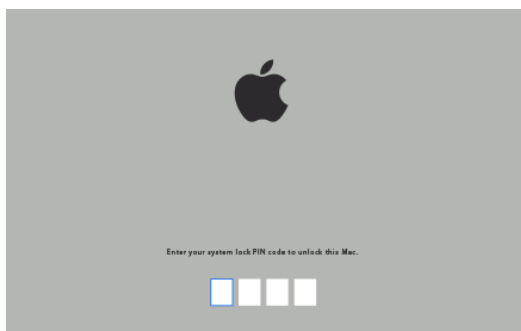
If your Mac always starts to a spinning globe and you're at a school or business, check with your IT department for more information. There may be a server on your network that your Mac is trying to start from. If this is your personal Mac, try [starting from OS X Recovery to check your startup disk and OS X](#).

Battery icon



If you see a battery icon appear on the screen instead of an Apple logo, it means the battery in your notebook Mac is too low to start up. Connect the power adapter to charge your Mac's battery, then try starting up again.

PIN code



If you lock your Mac using [Find My Mac](#), your screen shows a four or six digit lock screen at startup. Your Mac doesn't continue starting up until you enter the code that you set.