

# The South Bay Mug

# MACINTOSH

A Monthly Cupful For South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members, Feb. 2006

## MACHinations

A personal view from Bob

### More on iTunes music

Apple keeps adding features to iTunes, along with new iPod models, and I keep discovering new tricks. For the inside story I recommend the book "iTunes & iPod," part of the Missing Manual series.

To get music into your iTunes library:

- Download it from Apple's music store (\$\$)
- Rip (import) your own CDs
- Download legal, free stuff from the Internet
- Digitize your tapes and LPs

Storing music in AIFF or WAV format takes 600 MB per hour, so most people import it as AAC or MP3 files that are about 1/10 the size. Although AAC is used by Apple's music store and is claimed to be superior, MP3 is more widely supported. My tin ears can't tell any difference.

Insert a CD in your Mac and iTunes will automatically open so you can play it. If you are connected to the Internet, iTunes will access the Cddb database and assign track names and other information (tags) to the tunes. Click the Import button and the tracks will be ripped to your library along with the tags, according to your preferences. Easy as pie.

**Tags:** Along with the audio, MP3 and AAC files contain the tune name, artist, album name and cover art and a lot of other information. iTunes lets you add and modify much of this information, but to really to manipulate the tags efficiently get Media Rage (\$30) from chaoticsoftware.com. The program is particularly useful if you're getting tunes from the Internet where tags may be missing or confusing.

**Audio Books:** My favorite source is gutenburg.org and literalsystems.org which carry an large collection of

audio books, free of copyright. I particularly like the stories of Sherlock Holmes. Librivox.org is a volunteer organization that is recording a large number of books. These are available in MP3 format. I import them to iTunes and then put them on my iPod so I can listen in the airport or while relaxing at home. If I'm too relaxed I often go to sleep and then wake up wondering where I left off. It's a great insomnia killer as it takes your mind off the worries of the day.

Stanford University gives you access a wide range of music, lectures, speeches, debates and other university content through iTunes. (<http://itunes.stanford.edu/>). There's even a video of the Steve Jobs 2005 Commencement Speech at Stanford.

Get iTunes Publisher (free) to create and print a customized list of tunes in your iTunes playlists. These can be in tab-delimited text or HTML format.

**iPod to iTunes.** You can easily copy tunes in your iTunes library to an iPod. Going the other way is harder since the files on your iPod are in hidden folders, probably to prevent piracy. If your Mac's hard drive crashes you can restore your music from your iPod to the iTunes library with iPod2Mac (free) or the superior iPodRip (\$15).

If you have music on your iPod that isn't in the iTunes library, be careful NOT to synchronize the two or you'll lose the iPod music. Synchronization is the default, so change it in the preferences before you start.

**Internet Radio:** Clicking the "Radio" icon in the source folder of iTunes lets you listen to hundreds of radio stations? It's satellite radio without the satellite.

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