



South Bay Apple MUG

Macintosh

April 2017

A Monthly CUPFUL for South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members

How to Turn Off Sierra's Optimized Storage, by *[Adam C. Engst](#)*

When first introducing macOS 10.12 Sierra, Apple made much of Optimized Storage, a marketing term that encompasses various settings and cloud-related technologies for moving data from a Mac's space-constrained local drive to the cloud. In "[Explaining Sierra's Optimized Storage](#)" (19 September 2016), I tried to lay out what Optimized Storage covers, explain the Storage Management window interface, and give suggestions about what you should or should not enable manually. Since Optimized Storage deletes data from your local drive such that it may not exist in your backups, you should be aware of the implications of turning it on.

Unfortunately, because Sierra prompts you to enable Desktop and Documents folder syncing during installation and may enable the associated Optimize Mac Storage checkbox by default as well, many Mac users are unwittingly enrolling important data in Optimized Storage. Worse, reports have started circulating that [Sierra may have enabled some previously disabled Optimized Storage features](#) during the 10.12.1 update. That's not OK.

For the record, I don't believe that Optimized Storage is inherently evil. Some of its options, such as deleting the local copies of watched movies and TV shows purchased from the iTunes Store, have few downsides. However, many people wish to maintain complete control over local storage, so I'll explain how to disable all of Optimized Storage's options in this article.

iCloud Drive & Desktop and Documents Folder Syncing -- Technically speaking, Desktop and Documents folder syncing isn't part of Optimized Storage. Its goal is to store your documents in iCloud Drive so you can access them from any of your Apple devices.

However, Optimized Storage can apply to all iCloud Drive-based documents and data, including the Desktop and Documents folders

March 29 Meeting **Mac OS Sierra, by Jim Pernal**

We will discuss the latest Mac Operating System Sierra (10.12) The presentation will include the requirements for using this system, how to upgrade, why you should upgrade, and finally a few of the new features in the system with some demos. One of the new features is Siri on the Mac OS for the first time.

Don't miss the meeting! See page 2 for details.

Chatroom

Steve Lacy, the Compton-based musician and member of the R&B band The Internet, has recorded his first solo album *Steve Lacy's Demo* entirely on his iPhone. He played guitar and bass, programmed the drum patterns, and sang his vocals straight into the built-in microphone.

IN THIS ISSUE

Page 2 - Meetings/Location/General
Page 3 - Wi-Fi Security, Right Call
Page 5 - Signal
Page 6 - Easy Pill



Welcome to the SBAMUG South Bay Apple Mac User Group

Meetings: Lomita Veteran's Hall,
1865 Lomita Blvd, Lomita
Mail: PO Box 432, Redondo Beach,
CA
90277-0432
Phone: (310) 644-3315
Email: info@sbamug.com

Members, friends and colleagues are invited to attend our monthly meetings (usually the last Wed of the month). The \$35 annual membership dues entitle you to receive this monthly newsletter by mail or online, plus many more benefits (page 8). To become a member or get more info please check our website.



Lomita Veteran's Hall,
1865 Lomita Blvd, Lomita

SBAMUG Meeting Format:

6:30—7:30 p.m. Questions & Answers and Sharing: *Everyone* is welcome, beginners encouraged

7:30—7:50 p.m. 'iSocial' – shoot the Mac breeze with others over a cookie*

7:50—8:00 p.m. Announcements

8:00—9:00 p.m. Program

**Refreshments provided; donations appreciated!*
Submit suggestions for topics or speakers, or articles, ideas & original artwork for this newsletter to pjmyerz@gmail.com by the last Wednesday of each month. Articles may be edited to fit space.

Officers & Volunteers:

President: Kent McDonald VP: open
Secretary: Wayne Inman Treasurer: CW Mitchell
Directors at Large: Dave Nathanson, Margaret Wehbi, Arnold Silver, George Wilde, Joan King, Clarence Baisdon, Pete Myers
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Programming: Kent McDonald
Greeter: open
Server Director: Dave Nathanson
Newsletter: Pete Myers, Bill Berks
USPS Liaison: CW Mitchell
Refreshments: Arnold Silver/member contributions

SBAMUG Monthly Calendar

Mar 29: Mac OS Sierra

Apr 26: TBD

Other Meetings:

- 1st Wed each month – SBAMUG Core Group, 7:30 pm. Join Google+ SBAMUG community, or email: info@sbamug.com.
- 2nd Sat. each month - SMOG, 9AM in Costa Mesa, ocmug.org
- Last Sat. each month - Northrop Grumman-Ham Radio & Computer Swap Meet, 7--11:30 a.m. Meet at SE corner of Marine/Aviation Blvd, Redondo Beach
- Los Angeles Portable Users Group: Mac OS X, iPhone, iPod, MacBook, etc., lapug.org/
- Find more: <http://www.apple.com/usergroups/>

Membership Report – 105 members!

Please wear membership card as your name tag - you may notice your first name is in larger letters on your card - so it can be used as a name tag at the meetings.:

Welcome New Members: Gregory McCarthy, Richard Goo.

Renewals: Dave Moorhead, Ray Chikahisa, Don Burt, Treva Forister, Walt Fierberg, Philip Gruskin, Robert Goodman, Jim McGreevy, Victor Kosuda, Peter Myers, Allan Boodnick. If your name is not spelled right or your expiration date is wrong, contact cwmitchell@sbamug.com for correction. Or contact CW for everything membership, dues and benefits. Please watch for your renewal letter, then sign and date it and return it with \$35 check (in enclosed self-addressed envelope) or bring letter with payment to meeting.

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SBAMUG February 2017 Shareware

This is the March shareware article. Six items this month. Four are from the Mac App store.

Acorn 5.6.3 Latest version of this Bit Map editor. “Aimed at simplicity” is their quote. Has layers. OS X 10.10+ \$29.99 <http://flyingmeat.com/acorn/>

Coconut Battery 3.5.1 This freeware utility gives you lots of information about your battery. Hours of use, charge cycles, % of new capacity, etc. OS X 10.10+ <http://www.coconut-flavour.com/coconutbattery/>

EXIF App 1.1 Utility that looks like a camera viewfinder and displays all the exif data in your photos (shutter speed, F stop, Iso, etc). OS X 10.7+. Free download from the Mac App store.

MacFamilyTree 8.1.3 31 Create and explore your family tree. Touch bar capability added in this version. \$60.00 OS X 10.10+. Mac App store.

Nice Timer Version 2.8.4:
Timer and stopwatch application. Infinitely resizable. \$3.99 OS X 10.10+. Mac App Store.

Stamps 1.9 For stamp collectors. The stamp’s Description, catalog ID, purchase date, stamp grading, and much more can be recorded. OS X 10.10+. \$0.99 Mac App store.

See you at the March meeting. No physical PD CD will be available, and we are discontinuing physical CD’s from now on. However I will bring the box of older CD’s (2016 and earlier) to the meeting for the next few months.

Strengthen Your Wi-Fi Security, from an article by Brian X Chen

Your Wi-Fi network is the pulse of your smart home, thus it is a vulnerable attack point. The recommendation here is that you connect all your smart home accessories — for example, your Amazon Echo, Nest thermostat, Samsung smart refrigerator and Philips Hue smart lights — onto a Wi-Fi network that is separate from the one connected to your computing devices, like your smartphone, tablet and computer.

With two distinct Wi-Fi networks, it will be harder for a hacker to jump from infiltrating your smart accessory on one network to a personal computer on the other network.

The easiest way to create a second Wi-Fi network is to make a guest network. Many modern Wi-Fi routers, like [TP-Link’s Archer C7](#) (the top router recommended by The Wirecutter, a product recommendations site owned by The New York Times), include the ability to host a network for guests that uses a name and password different from that of your primary network. Quarantining your smart speakers, lights and TV onto a guest network will allow them all to interact with one another, while keeping your computing devices safer in the event that any of the smart accessories are hacked.

If you are paranoid about your Wi-Fi network being hacked, you can also change the Wi-Fi router’s network settings to disable broadcasting the network name entirely. That would make it difficult for a hacker driving by to detect and compromise your network, though it would also require house guests to manually type in your network name and password when they log on to your Wi-Fi.

How To Make the Right Call, from an article by Catherine Hamm

When traveling overseas, you can avoid costly mistakes in cellphone usage by keeping a few basics in mind.

- Cellphones come in two types: CDMA and GSM. Sprint generally uses CDMA; AT&T and T-Mobile generally use GSM. Most of the world uses GSM.
- A locked phone usually means you still owe money on your instrument. Even if you own your phone outright, it may still be locked. You must ask your service provider to unlock it. If you’re free of your provider, you can buy a SIM card in the country you’re in and use a local service provider to reduce your costs.
- If you take your phone and buy an international calling plan, buy a plan that offers enough data for your expected usage. (The average user consumes 1.4 GB of data per month.) Monitor your data usage so you don’t exceed your limit. (On an iPhone, it’s under Settings, then Cellular. Scroll down and then hit Reset Statistics.)

Turn Off Optimized Storage, from page 1

if they're being synced through iCloud. If Optimized Storage does decide to start deleting local files to free up space, those files are most likely to come from your Documents folder. To keep your Desktop and Documents folders out of iCloud, and to ensure that data that is in iCloud is always mirrored locally, open System Preferences > iCloud > iCloud Drive > Options, and deselect both Desktop & Documents Folders at the top of the list and the Optimize Mac Storage checkbox at the bottom.

Be aware that turning off Desktop and Documents folder syncing is stressful. When you do so, in System Preferences > iCloud > iCloud Drive > Options, Sierra tells you that all your files will be available only in iCloud, which seems wrong: if you're turning off syncing, you're doing so because you want them locally. However, that dialog is followed immediately by another that tells you that you can recover your files from iCloud Drive.

In fact, what happens when you turn off that feature is that Sierra recreates empty Desktop and Documents folders in your home folder. You can't replace those folders, so it's not possible to drag the old Desktop and Documents folders from iCloud Drive to your home folder. Instead, you must open each folder in iCloud Drive and move (Command-drag) its contents to the new local Desktop and Documents folders in your home folder. You can try to delete the now-empty Desktop and Documents folders from iCloud Drive, but in my experience, iCloud keeps recreating at least the Desktop folder.

Photos -- Given the ease of taking and storing photos and videos, your Photos library may occupy more space than anything else — I'm not a prolific photographer and mine is still over 110 GB. If you have multiple Apple devices, using iCloud Photo Library lets you access, edit, and manage your photos from any device, which is great, even if it almost always requires that you pay for additional iCloud Drive space.

iCloud Photo Library was one of the first places where Apple dipped its toes into optimizing storage because many Photos libraries are far too large to fit on iOS devices. Plus, it's not uncommon for someone to have an iMac at home but want to play with photos on a space-constrained MacBook Air while on vacation.

My recommendation is to keep Optimized Storage enabled for all iOS devices and secondary Mac notebooks

where space is at a premium, but to turn it off on your main Mac so your photos are always included in your backups. To do this, open Photos > Preferences > iCloud, and select "Download Originals to this Mac."

Mail -- If you work with people who send around presentations or videos on a regular basis, Mail is likely consuming a significant amount of drive space. Email messages themselves are small, so there's no win in deleting them, but attachments are another story.

In previous versions of Mail, you could either download all attachments or leave them all on your IMAP server. Sierra's version of Mail adds a third option to download only recent email attachments. When you open a message whose attachment hasn't been downloaded, you can click a button to get it. If you want to see how much space you'd save by downloading only recent attachments, launch System Information, choose Window > Storage Management, and click Mail in the sidebar.

Apple has bundled these features into Optimized Storage, so if you want to make sure that your local mail archive always contains both messages and attachments, so in Mail, go to Mail > Preferences > Accounts > accountName > Account Information and choose All from the Download Attachments pop-up menu. Make sure to do this for each of your accounts!

iTunes -- Video can consume massive amounts of drive space, but it's also slow to download. If you regularly purchase movies and TV shows from the iTunes Store, you can use Optimized Storage to remove watched videos from iTunes automatically. But what if you're buying content for a child who wants to watch things multiple times, or you want to ensure you can watch anything again without having to download again over a slow Internet connection?

To turn off Optimized Storage in iTunes and ensure that all the videos you purchase from the iTunes Store stick around even after you've watched them, navigate to iTunes > Preferences > Advanced and deselect the "Automatically delete watched movies and TV shows" checkbox.

Empty Trash Automatically -- All the previously mentioned features of Optimized Storage involve deleting the local copy of a file under the assumption that it can be retrieved from the cloud if necessary. The final aspect of Optimized Storage that you might want to turn off is different — it's an option in the Finder that automatically deletes files in the Trash after they have been there for 30 days.

Turn Off Optimized Storage, from page 4

Frankly, there should be no downside to enabling this option. You should never depend on being able to go into the Trash to bring back a file that you deleted more than a month before. Just don't delete any file that you might want again. That said, if you want more control over when your Trash is emptied, go to Finder > Preferences > Advanced and deselect "Remove items from the Trash after 30 days."

Manage Storage Manually -- If you're uncomfortable with Optimized Storage but are still running out of space on your Mac's drive, you can use the new Storage Management window to identify and delete large files. Open the System Information app, choose Window > Storage Management, and look at all the sidebar categories underneath Recommendations. With a little attention paid to the old versions of apps, unnecessary downloads, and unexpectedly large documents scattered around your drive, you can often clear a surprising amount of space in just a few minutes while retaining complete control over your local storage.

<http://tidbits.com/e/16894>

Worried About the Privacy of Your Messages? Download Signal, by Brian X Chen

Signal is a free encrypted messaging service has won the acclaim of security researchers and privacy advocates, including Edward J. Snowden. All have said that Signal goes above and beyond other chat tools in keeping electronic communications private. And now more than ever, we may need it. That's because hacks are on the rise — look at how the activist group [WikiLeaks posted a trove of emails](#) from Hillary Clinton's campaign chairman, John D. Podesta, for all to see. Many are also watching for how government surveillance may grow under Donald J. Trump, who has chosen [Mike Pompeo](#), who advocates greater surveillance, to lead the Central Intelligence Agency. Signal is one of many encrypted messaging services, but it stands out for its uncompromising security and ease of use. The chat service retains virtually no information from users, including messages and address books, on its servers. What's more, messages remain encrypted when passing through Signal's servers, meaning that the app's creators can't read them.

"The default recommendation you'll get from most security researchers for a messaging app is Signal," said Joseph Bonneau, a postdoctoral researcher at the [Applied Crypto Group](#) at Stanford University. "It's still the best in

the field."

That said, [Signal](#) is not perfect. It lacks some features of other messaging apps, like the ability to send stickers. And during my tests, the service had some glitches. But adding Signal to your folder of messaging apps is a must in an era when technology companies are collecting more personal information and government surveillance may expand.

How Signal Stands Out

Signal offers end-to-end encryption, meaning a message is scrambled so that it becomes indecipherable to anyone but its intended recipient when it is sent from your device, and it remains so when it passes through the app's server and reaches the recipient. When you initiate a conversation with someone on Signal, you and the recipient exchange so-called cryptographic keys. Only the person who receives your message holds the key to decrypt and read it. That means that if a government agency had a wiretapping order for your Signal messages, Open Whisper Systems would not have the key to decipher the messages and would be unable to comply.

Signal's technology sets the standard for other messaging services, with its protocol being an open-source system that other companies can freely use. WhatsApp, Facebook's Messenger and Google embedded Signal's encrypted messaging system into their own apps this year.

Even so, security researchers said they preferred Signal over other messaging apps because it was more thorough in protecting users' privacy. The only information Signal stores about users in its database is the last time someone connected to its server and when a person signed up for Signal. Other messaging apps maintain pieces of personal data on their servers.

By contrast, while WhatsApp enables Signal's full encryption by default in messages, there are caveats. WhatsApp may retain some so-called meta data on conversations, including the phone numbers used in an exchange and the times that the messages were sent, according to the company's [privacy policy](#). WhatsApp also regularly [accesses your phone number and contacts list](#), so the app can provide an up-to-date list of your contacts who use its service to make it easier to message them.

Google Allo, Google's [new messaging app](#) that leverages artificial intelligence, does not enable Signal's end-to-end encryption in all its messages by default. Google offers full encrypted messaging only in so-called Incognito sessions, a private mode that must be turned on manually. When you're not chatting in Incognito mode, Google stores your

Easy Pill Medication Tracker and Reminder, Guest Blog Post (podfeet) by Mark Pouley

Hello Allison and fellow castaways, this is Mark Pouley with a review of an iOS app that I discovered last year and have been using ever since. The app is called [Easy Pill for iOS by BirdsCorp.com](#). Until recently I didn't regularly take medications so tracking when to take a pill was never an issue, but that changed last year when I was prescribed a number of medications and supplements. Being a geeky castaway I took this as an opportunity to find a technological solution, hopefully one that involved my iPhone and AppleWatch.

Easy Pill is an iOS app that tracks all of your medications and sends you reminders when it's time to take a pill. This was exactly what I was looking for. The obvious first step to using Easy Pill is to input your medications into the app. While it works on an iPad or iPhone, for simplicity I'll just be referring to the phone. You can create your list of medications either on the phone or the Easy Pill web page. I chose NOT to use the web page because I'm not comfortable uploading this information to the web.

If I had, I would have created a list of all my medications, doses, and schedule, and the page would give me a QR code to scan with the app and all the information transfers to the app. I tested this method and it works well, but as I said, I didn't want to upload all my meds to the web. Instead, I chose to input my information directly into the app on the phone. I wouldn't call this process "intuitive", but it didn't take long for me to get the hang of it.

Honestly, I think part of my issue is a good thing, because there are a lot of options available. How often do you take the pill? Do you take the pill the same time every day? What is the duration of time taking this pill? Easy Pill really offers a lot of flexibility to tailor the schedule exactly the way you need it for each medication. So it took me a while to get everything in the way I wanted, but I really appreciated that I was able to create a schedule that was accurate and useful. It's also pretty easy to edit a schedule if you make a mistake or change something. Again, this process wasn't exactly intuitive, but once I learned the process it was easy to accomplish and remember.

There are two views for your medication. In one view, your pills are listed alphabetically with all the vital information. The more useful view, and the one I use most of the time, is the daily view. It shows a

chronological list of all the pills to take that day. An icon next to each pill tells you the time to take the pill and the color of the icon gives a visual cue if a pill is overdue or to be taken in the future.

The most useful feature of Easy Pill is that it reminds you to take your medication. This is accomplished with simple alerts that appear on the phone and a tap on your wrist from the watch with a visual reminder. The app gives options for setting up the type and frequency of the reminders so the app can nag as much or as little as you like. When the pill is taken a single touch on the phone or watch logs the dose as taken.

Easy Pill records the exact time the medication was taken and the icon for the pill changes to alert you that the status has changed. You can also skip a dose or pause a medication from the reminders. When you finish a course of medication Easy Pill will remember it for you, by automatically moving the medication to the archives. You can pull up the archives to look at the history of the medication, or move it back into your active schedule if you start taking the medication again.

Another handy feature of Easy Pill, though I haven't used it much, is a direct Google link for each medication that obviously connects to Google for information and images about each pill. This is a nice way to remember what a pill looks like, learn about common side-effects and the like.

Easy Pill not only reminds you to take your medications, but it tracks your progress in a number of ways. Easy Pill reports how many doses and how consistently the medication was taken. If you input the quantity of pills you start with, Easy Pill will tell you how many you have left and when it's time to refill the prescription. Easy Pill will also export a med list that includes pills that are currently taken or archived, detailed medication information and a dose log. This could be really useful to have a complete history of all the medications being taken. Having such easy access to a complete med list is really useful to share with doctors and nurses. If you've ever had to fill out a medication list in a waiting room you know how helpful this would be.

Easy Pill includes the ability to sync the app between devices using iCloud. In theory, this could be useful to have your medication information on an iPhone and iPad. I say "in theory" because I didn't have the best experience with it. I thought the extra screen real estate on the iPad would make entry of the medication information a lot easier. I learned the hard way that this function is unreliable.

Continued on page 7

Signal, from page 5

Allo messages on its server. Similarly, Facebook's Messenger enables end-to-end encryption inside a private chat mode called [Secret Conversations](#). But by default, normal Messenger chats lack that encryption.

Even though Signal doesn't record your information, the app still works across devices, like a desktop computer and a mobile device. Messages and contacts' data are stored directly on users' devices and synchronized between them.

Let's say you already use Signal on your [iPhone](#) and want to use it to chat on a Mac (Signal is available as a web app for Google's Chrome browser for desktop computers). To link the desktop app with your iPhone, you would use the iPhone's camera to scan a bar code on the Mac web app, which links the two devices together. Then, to get your contacts list and conversations to appear on the Mac, the Mac app pulls your contacts list and messages directly from the iPhone via an encrypted channel.

Bugs and Missing Features

Signal occasionally runs into glitches, such as when it comes to synchronizing data between computers and smartphones. In my tests, there were several occasions when Signal messages that were sent or received on my smartphone did not immediately show up inside the desktop app — though the messages eventually synchronized minutes later. A spokesman for Signal says users are encouraged to report bugs so the group can continue to improve the service.

Another downside is that your Signal account can work on only one mobile device at a time; I could not, for instance, use Signal on both my iPhone and [iPad](#). The spokesman says it would support multiple mobile devices eventually.

One last caveat is that Signal isn't as fun to use as apps like Facebook Messenger, which lets you send stickers and animated GIFs to add color and personality to conversations. Open Whisper Systems said it planned to add these features, noting that GIFs are already supported in the [Android version of Signal](#). Still, this is a trivial issue. I'd choose stronger privacy over sending stickers and animations any day.

The Bottom Line

There is no logical reason to skip using Signal. The app is free for [Android](#) and [iOS](#), and for computers it is a free [add-on for the Google Chrome](#) browser. Plus, it's easy to install and so architecturally secure that you can have the

confidence to say whatever you want without fear of being spied on.

Another benefit is that Open Whisper Systems is a nonprofit that relies on donations and grants, not a business that might eventually have an incentive to share your information with third parties like advertisers.

That's not to say Signal should be your only messaging app. You could use it exclusively for sensitive matters, like work-related conversations. Then for casual chats like making plans with friends and loved ones, you could switch to more "fun" apps like Facebook Messenger and send all the stickers you want.

Probably the biggest thing missing from Signal will be many of your friends. The app isn't as popular among consumers as other mainstream messaging apps, so hanging out on Signal can feel lonely. So if you care about your privacy, other than installing Signal today, you should nag everyone you know to join the service, too.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/07/technology/personaltech/worried-about-the-privacy-of-your-messages-download-signal.html?hpw&rref=technology&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=well-region®ion=bottom-well&WT.nav=bottom-well>

Easy Pill, from page 6

I had a few medications already entered in the app on my phone and wanted to update and add a few more. I activated the sync function and entered the new information on my iPad. Easy Pill proceeded to delete the old information and move only some of the new information. I contacted the developer who suggested I needed to start over and, oh by the way, this function really isn't working very well. I turned it off and haven't turned it back on.

I would normally condemn an application for this sort of thing, but I really don't need the sync function and the application works well for the things I need. So while Easy Pill isn't perfect, it meets my needs and I would recommend it. Easy Pill is \$2.99 and works on the iPhone and iPad. Oh look, its time to take another pill... until next time.

Easy Pill website: [easypilltracker.com/...](http://easypilltracker.com/)

You can find Mark on Twitter at [@TLI_Mark](#) and at his website twinlakesimages.com

PERIODICALS

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Or, contact Membership Chair
CW Mitchell at
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SBAMUG Membership Application

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