

# South Bay Apple MUG Macintosh

### vol 21, issue 7/8 July/August 2021

A Monthly CUPFUL for South Bay Apple Mac User Group Members

# Join us for our next SBAMUG Meeting via Zoom: Wednesday, August 25

Allison Sheridan, SBAMUG member and creator of NosillaCast Podcast and Chit Chat Across the Pond Podcast, will make a presentation on "Hidden Gems in System Preferences" at our next meeting. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. with a Q & A Session, followed by her presentation starting about 7:00 p.m. We hope you will join us for this topic! Learn something new!

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### WE MISS YOU!

## Join us for the monthly meetings on Zoom! Here is how to do it...

1) A Zoom meeting invitation will sent to everyone who is signed up on the club's email list (everybody@sbamug.com).

2) To be added to the mailing list, follow the instructions at <u>https://www.sbamug.com/our-sbamug-email-group/</u>

3) When you receive the Zoom invitation email, save the link to your calendar so that on the day of the meeting, you can find it more easily.

4) To join the Zoom meeting, click on the link provided in the invitation email. This will allow you to install the free Zoom app. The meeting invitation will also include a meeting ID and password, which you may need.

#### 5) DO YOU NEED HELP WITH ZOOM? Anyone having trouble logging on to the Zoom meeting online should call CW Mitchell at 310-644-3315 <u>before the next meeting</u> and he will help you get logged on.

Yes, we know you can't chit chat with each other at the Zoom meetings and there is no free coffee and cookies...but the **upside** of Zoom is you save money on gas, you can attend in your pajamas, and you can enjoy any drink and snack you want, too!

### Welcome to the SBAMUG!

#### (South Bay Apple Mac User Group)

Members, friends and colleagues are invited to attend our monthly meetings (usually the last Wednesday of the month). Annual membership entitles you to receive this online monthly newsletter, plus many more benefits (see page 8). The \$35 annual membership dues will not be charged for 2021. Visit <u>sbamug.com</u> to become a member or to get more information. **Meetings will be** held virtually via Zoom until further notice.

#### **SBAMUG Virtual Meeting Format:**

**6:30-7:00 p.m.** Question & Answer Session *Everyone welcome, beginners encouraged!* 

7:00-8:00 p.m. Main Presentation

#### SBAMUG Monthly Calendar - Save the dates!

August 25 - Hidden Gems in System Preferences by Allison Sheridan September

#### Membership Report: 73 members (as of 8/5/2021)

Welcome To Our New Member: Arthur Yahiku

**Thank You, Member Renewals:** Samuel Peters, Mary Lou Diete, Lenna Harnett, Larry Sidor, Don Barnes, Jan Chesne, R Kent McDonald, Carl Paquette, Nancie Silver, Nancy Wagoner

#### Membership-related Information/Questions:

Contact CW Mitchell at cwmitchell@sbamug.com

- for information about membership, dues and benefits
- if your name is misspelled or the expiration date is incorrect on your membership card

Two EASY Ways To Renew! Look for renewal letter

- 1 Sign and date the form and return using the enclosed self-addressed envelope; or
- 3 Bring form and payment to meeting (when inperson meetings resume\*)

\*At in-person meetings, please wear your membership card as a name tag. Your first name is larger so it's easier to read.



Virtual Meetings: Online via Zoom In-Person Meetings: Lomita VFW Hall 1865 Lomita Blvd., Lomita Mailing Address: C.W. Mitchell 4861 W. 136th St., Hawthorne CA 90250-5631 Phone: (310) 644-3315 Email: info@sbamug.com

Website: <u>http://www.sbamug.com</u>

#### Officers & Volunteers:

President: Kent McDonald Vice President: Jim Pernal Secretary: Nancie Silver Treasurer: C.W. Mitchell Directors at Large: Dave Nathanson, Arnold Silver, George Wilde, Joan King, Pete Myers PD Disk Editor: Jim Pernal Membership: C.W. Mitchell Member Development: Pete Myers Programming: Kent McDonald Server Director: Dave Nathanson Newsletter: Nancie Silver USPS Liaison: C.W. Mitchell Refreshments: Arnold Silver/Andy Paroczai Greeter: Position is open

#### **Other Meetings:**

- Tuesday (6 days after last Wednesday) -SBAMUG Core Group, 7:30 p.m. on Zoom.
   Contact CW Mitchell at <u>cwmitchell@sbamug.com</u> or send email to <u>info@sbamug.com</u> for core group Zoom meeting invite.
- 3rd Thursday every other month InDesign User Group, 7:00 p.m. at various locations in LA area, <u>laidug.com</u>
- Last Saturday each month Northrop Grumman -Ham Radio & Computer Swap Meet, 7:00-11:30 a.m. Meet at SE corner of Marine/Aviation Blvd, Redondo Beach (visit <u>w6trw.com</u> to see if swap meet is cancelled due to Covid-19)
- Los Angeles Portable Users Group: Mac OS X, iPhone, iPod, MacBook, etc. at <u>lapug.org/</u>
- Find more: http://www.apple.com/usergroups/

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#### July 2021 Shareware

Seven items in July. We've passed the first half of 2021.

Bookpedia, CDpedia, DVDpedia, Gamepedia 6.1.1: Four different apps to keep track of physical media. Big Sur interface improvements is the stated updates for these versions. I did a presentation on this back in December 2020. OS 10.12+ \$18.00 with bundle pricing https://www.bruji.com

eDrawings Viewer for Mac 6.4.1: Viewer for CAD files. Autocad DWG and DXF, and Solidworks file formats supported. These are mostly used in industry, but you may run across them for home use, say in your home renovations or mechanical parts drawings for vehicles or machinery. Can print out files. Mac OS 10.14+ Free

https://www.edrawingsviewer.com/product/ edrawings-viewer

**Muzzle for Mac1.9:** Silence embarrassing notifications while screen sharing. Menubar app automatically turns on do not disturb while you are screen sharing. Note website gives some examples of embarrassing notifications; I must live a boring life! Mac OS 10.14+ Free

https://muzzleapp.com

**Skim for Mac 1.6.4:** PDF reader and note taker for OS X. Aimed at readers of scientific papers but author notes it is useful for any PDF file. Highlighting tools. Mac OS 10.10+ Free

https://skim-app.sourceforge.io

#### August 2021 Shareware

Six items this month. We've been talking about Libre Office on our email group as a free alternative to Word. GIMP is a similar free app for image editing.

**GIMP for Mac 2.10.24:** Gimp is a multiplatform photo manipulation program. Handles

tiff, jpeg, pmg, psd, bmp and more. Free. Mac OS 10.9+ https://www.gimp.org

**GraphicConverter for Mac 11.5.1:** This is another image editing program. Been around forever and always seems to be updated. Imports over 200 graphics formats which is more than the above program. Batch editing and batch renaming. Now recognizes and displays QR/barcodes. Mac OS 10.9+ \$39.96

https://www.lemkesoft.de/en/products/ graphicconverter/

iStat Menus for Mac 6.60: Lets you monitor your system from the menubar. Internal temperatures, network usage, fan speeds, memory usage, CPU usage and more. Claims improved support for M1 macs. Mac OS 10.11+ \$9.99 https://biango.com/mac/istatmenus/

https://bjango.com/mac/istatmenus/

Mactracker 7.10.7: Database of all mac models ever produced, as well as monitors, displays, printers, etc. I've featured this many times, but Apple is always creating new models, and likewise Mactracker is updated. Mac OS 10.12+ Free https://mactracker.ca

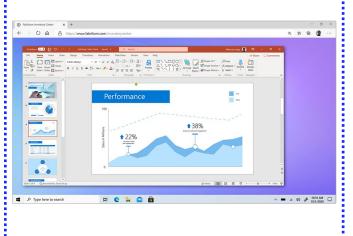
**Posterino for Mac 3.10.8:** Create posters, collages, calendars, and postcards. Variety of templates. New layout and workflow claimed for this version. \$19.99 Mac OS 10.9+ <u>https://www.zykloid.com/posterino</u>

**Winmail Reader for Mac 3.0:** Winmail.dat are attachment files that sometimes come along with mail from Microsoft Outlook users. This program lets you view and save the contents of these attachments. More importantly it will allow Outlook meeting and appointments to be added Mac OS calendar, and address cards to Mac OS contacts. Mac OS 10.10+ Free; Available in the Mac App store.

See you at the August meeting online. — Jim Pernal PD Editor

# Windows 365 Could Offer Apple Silicon Virtualization Alternative

One of the few downsides to Apple's M1 chip is its inability to run virtualization software that supports x86-based operating systems, particularly Microsoft Windows. Parallels Desktop supports the M1 chip, and it can run x86 64 apps in Windows on ARM Insider Preview (it really does work). There may be another option soon: the Windows 365 Cloud PC. It's a cloud-based subscription service that hosts the Windows operating system in Microsoft Cloud, "Securely streaming the full Windows experience-including all your apps, data, and settings-to your personal or corporate devices." Microsoft's announcement specifically said it would run on a Mac, iPad, Linux machine, or Android device-it runs within any modern Web browser or in Microsoft's Remote Desktop app. The announcement didn't discuss pricing other than to note that you can choose the size of the Cloud PC that best meets your needs with per-user, per-month pricing. It's only for businesses currently, but it's not clear what the difference is between a one-person business and a consumer. Various devils may be dancing in the details, but if you need occasional Windows access, Windows 365 could be worth a look when it ships next month.



Continued on the next column...

Read the original article here: <u>https://</u> www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/ blog/2021/07/14/introducing-a-new-era-ofhybrid-personal-computing-thewindows-365-cloud-pc/

Article written by Adam Engst on July 14, 2021.

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#### Wednesday, July 28 Meeting Recap

The July 28 meeting was held virtually via Zoom. Many members have been surveyed about returning to the VFW Hall. At this time, a majority of those surveyed do not want to return to indoor meetings. It was agreed that club meetings will continue on Zoom until the first of the year, at which time the issue will be discussed again.

At the July meeting Kent McDonald gave a presentation about the newest Apple hardware made available in the last six months. He said that this is what is expected in the fall of this year:

- Series 7 Apple Watch
- · iMac 27 inch with improved/faster M1 chip

MacBook Pro 14 & 16 inch with M1 chip and Mag-Safe feature
iPhone 13 with improved cameras on Pro models
iPad OS 15 with new multitasking controls

You can check out the club website for his presentation slides at <u>www.sbamug.com</u> and click on Presentations.

Did you know you can check out presentation slides for SBAMUG meetings all the way back to 2006? Not all presenters had slides but if they did, you will find them on the website.

#### Improve Your Home Wi-Fi with Mesh, Powerline, MoCA, or More Routers

If you've made it this far through the pandemic without cursing your home Wi-Fi, congratulations! You're a rare bird, and you don't need this article. Read on, however, if you're not getting the performance and coverage you want or you're not sure what steps to take to improve your networked life.

#### Pay Attention to the Internet Connection

Your Wi-Fi network performance for Internetbased tasks is, of course, dependent on the speed of your Internet connection. If you're stuck at low double-digit speeds from an incumbent carrier, it might be time to look at new local wired and wireless competitors, like T-Mobile's 4G/5G home broadband service in some markets. (See "<u>T-Mobile Offers</u> <u>Unlimited 5G Home Broadband Service</u>," 14 April 2021.)

You may also be able to call your provider and get a better plan or pricing by threatening to switch to a competitor. Over the last few years, I negotiated my 1 Gbps service from CenturyLink from its initial price of \$155 down to \$85 as the company lowered what it charged new customers and then was willing to drop my fees to match.

If your Internet connection is as souped-up as you're willing to pay for, let's look at options to extend your home network and boost performance and coverage.

#### Connect the Network Dots with Cables

Despite having focused much of my tech writing on wireless networking for over 20 years, I often find wired connections work best. That's true in nearly all cases except mesh wireless networking, which can sometimes benefit from a wired network, too! Most of the time, connecting a broadband modem and Wi-Fi base stations with wires provides the best throughput. It also gives you the option to plug in computers and streaming video boxes that need high throughput.

When it comes to wires, you have three options, each with varying costs, availability, and installation hassles: Ethernet, powerline, and MoCA.

#### Ethernet

All wired networking stems from Ethernet, a decades-old standard that's affordable even in its gigabit flavor. The wiring, switches, and other elements you need to build or extend an Ethernet network will likely cost only tens of dollars. If you have access to crawl spaces or an attic, or if you can drill through even a single wall, you can pull Ethernet cable.

I used to buy a box of Ethernet cable, cut it to length, and crimp RJ45 connectors onto the ends. But because finished and tested Ethernet cables cost so little now, I prefer buying pre-made cables that I know have been tested to work—unlike those I made from scratch. For installing plugs in walls, I like <u>double-sided wall plates</u> that have a jack on either side.



Look for <u>"Cat-6" cables</u>, where the "Cat" means "category" and the "6" refers to a set of electrical specifications designed to allow for certain kinds of performance. You can pay a little less for Cat-5e, but it's not worth the savings. Cat-6 has better insulation to protect against interference, and it's designed for the long haul. If you want to use 10 Gbps Ethernet when that becomes affordable for home use, you can with Cat-6 cabling.

Modern Ethernet switches, cards, and other hardware have auto-sensing, auto-switching ports: long gone is the need to have special

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patch cables or flip switches. You just plug it all in. 100 Mbps and 1 Gbps devices can work on the same network with no additional effort or slowdown.

If you can't easily access the innards of your home to run Ethernet cable, two other options have matured into great alternatives to or extensions of Ethernet.

#### Powerline Networking

Your home electrical wiring can carry both power and data by adding powerline networking adapters. A powerline adapter forms a network with other adapters plugged into the same leg of an electrical circuit in your home. The current generation of technology offers raw rates up to 2 Gbps.

Powerline adapters must plug directly into a wall socket and typically sport at least one gigabit Ethernet jack. Some also include a pass-through electrical plug, a built-in Wi-Fi router to extend a network, or a second Ethernet jack. Prices start at as little as \$50 for a set of two with a data rate up to 1 Gbps.



If you live in a shared home or in a building with electrical wiring that may extend beyond your domicile, you can press a button on each adapter to enable security, much like simple Bluetooth pairing.

Powerline technology may not work across any two outlets in a home depending on how the electrical panel is set up, but the current generation is far more tolerant of wiring issues than the earlier ones.

#### MoCA (Multimedia over Coax Alliance)

Over a period of several decades, many new and renovated homes were wired for cable TV with coaxial cable in every room and a central wiring panel that distributed services from a provider's incoming wire. MoCA takes advantage of this by encoding 1 Gbps or 2.5 Gbps over coax, with adapters offering one or more Ethernet jacks. It's more robust and reliable than powerline networking, but it's also more expensive. <u>A pair of 1 Gbps</u> <u>adapters</u> costs nearly \$140.



You may need to secure a network created via MoCA adapters if you have cable broadband or video service. A <u>point of entry</u> (<u>PoE</u>) filter prevents neighbors within a short distance from tapping into your network with their own MoCA gear. These filters are readily available and cost about \$5. You can also (or instead) <u>set a password on MoCA</u> <u>adapters</u> that encrypts traffic between them via a Web administration interface, much like setting a password for a Wi-Fi network. A Real-World Example

In my home, we hit the wall (almost literally) when my wife set up a new office space for her coaching business in our bedroom. Despite having an Ethernet-connected Wi-Fi router in a basement guest room directly beneath where she worked and a wireless extender in our bedroom, she could not get reliable throughput—critical for her video sessions with clients.

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After buying some Ethernet cabling and gear and tracing empty spots in the house, I realized adding more wire would be very involved and might require bringing in a cabling specialist. Our house has largely wood lath and brittle plaster walls from the 1920s that are difficult to drill through without causing a lot of damage. Since we have no coax in the house, I tested to see if powerline networking would work for our situation.

I purchased a pair of powerline adapters: the <u>TP-Link AV1000</u> (TL-PA7017P kit, \$52.99). They use the AV2 standard, which offers up to 1 Gbps, and each has one Ethernet port. (If you need higher throughput, the <u>TP-Link</u> <u>AV2000</u> units (TL-PA9020P kit, under \$100) have two Ethernet ports and a raw data rate of up to 2 Gbps.)



Given we already had a Wi-Fi range extender (the <u>TP-Link AC1750 WiFi Extender</u>, model RE450, \$59.99) in the bedroom that couldn't pump out more than 1 Gbps, we checked to make sure the TP-Link AV1000 could deliver the maximum data rate we needed. It did: that pair of plugs provided the wired extension, and our Wi-Fi range extender's Ethernet port took its incoming connection from one of the powerline adapters. Problem solved.

#### Upgrade Your Wi-Fi Router

Upgrading to current Wi-Fi gateways or switching to mesh networking can solve

problems of both low throughput and spotty coverage.

You may have outdated Wi-Fi gear. A lot of people do, including me, until the pandemic hit. Then I had to add into the mix the bandwidth demands of two kids requiring fulltime video-based remote learning. While most of my equipment supported at least the 802.11n wireless network standard (Wi-Fi 4), I upgraded everything to 802.11ac (Wi-Fi 5) that wasn't. (For an explanation of generations, see "<u>Wi-Fi Switches from</u> <u>Obscure Protocol Names to Simple</u> <u>Generation Numbers</u>" 5 October 2018.)

To give you an idea of how easy it is to fall behind the networking curve when everything is working fine, I wrote about Apple adding 802.11ac to the AirPort Extreme Base Station over 8 years ago (see <u>\*802.11ac Promises</u> <u>Better Coverage, but Won't Hit Advertised</u> <u>Speeds</u>," 13 June 2013).

A household with only 802.11n devices likely can't keep up with multiple family members using videoconferencing, streaming video services, or bandwidth- or latency-intensive Internet services and games. Upgrade to 802.11ac for a substantial difference or future-proof with the latest standard, 802.11ax, which now doesn't cost much more than 802.11ac.

If I were making the change today, I'd probably switch to 802.11ax (Wi-Fi 6), which offers more efficient use of the wireless spectrum and higher potential maximum throughput than any previous version. The techniques in 802.11ax include advanced strategies to avoid interference with other routers and nearby networks. It can also target individual devices by varying power across multiple antennas to "steer" or "beamform" signals to where they best overlap for reception.

As one example of a modern 802.11ax

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router, take a look at the <u>TP-Link Archer AX20</u>, which at \$99.99 can offer throughput that maxes out at 1.8 Gbps across 2.4 and 5 GHz bands and has four gigabit Ethernet LAN ports. (Neither I nor TidBITS have any relationship with TP-Link. I chose to standardize on TP-Link gear for cost, features, and management via its Tether app.)



#### Switch to Mesh Networking

Conventional routers like the TP-Link Archer AX20 still require wired connections to other routers to extend the network, using any of the techniques above for extending a network. Many people have instead opted into mesh networking, which can rely entirely on wireless communication among network components, called *nodes*.

As far as the client hardware is concerned—a computer, phone, tablet, or other device—the nodes act exactly like regular Wi-Fi access points. But when communicating among each other, nodes determine the most efficient way to send data packets between source and destination, whether to and from the Internet or among devices on the network.

Nodes don't require any wiring. You just set up two or more of them, often with iPhone app assistance about optimal placement, and they find each other and start routing data. The <u>NetGear Orbi and Blackhawk</u> and <u>Amazon</u> <u>Eero</u> (see "<u>Eero Provides Good Wi-Fi</u> <u>Coverage in a Handsome Package</u>," 25 June 2016) are three of the most popular hardware options, but D-Link, Cisco Linksys, TP-Link, and others also have mesh offerings. (The Linksys Velop is the only one approved for sale in Apple's stores. See "<u>Velop Provides</u> <u>First-Rate but Expensive Wi-Fi Mesh</u> <u>Networking</u>" 9 July 2018.)



Mesh networking has one drawback: it uses Wi-Fi frequencies to communicate with both client hardware and other nodes. That means every re-transmission of data between nodes reduces the overall network throughput. With a busy network full of streaming data, that approach can cut into your performance and result in lower throughput, choppy video, and slower downloads and uploads.

If you need high and consistent throughput, I recommend purchasing either so-called "triband" mesh nodes *or* nodes that have wired backhaul:

- **Tri-band:** A tri-band node has three separate radio systems. One is devoted to the lower-throughput, backward-compatible, and betterpenetrating 2.4 GHz band, while the other two work over the highthroughput 5 GHz band. One of the 5 GHz radios is dedicated to intra-node communication, dramatically improving overall throughput.
- Wired backhaul: It might seem ironic to get a mesh node and then rely on Ethernet for backhaul, but it's a good alternative. By purchasing nodes with Ethernet ports designed for intranode communication, you can opt for a cheaper dual-band mesh model

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 and use Ethernet (or powerline or MoCA) to get the highest throughput. You still get most of the benefits of mesh networking: intelligent and dynamic routing, minimal configuration, and flexibility.

Mesh networking nodes that meet my highthroughput recommendations cost about the same as the comparable number of traditional Wi-Fi gateways.

The <u>original dual-band Eero</u> with Ethernet backhaul costs \$199 for a three-pack; <u>the Eero</u> <u>6 Pro</u> with both Ethernet and a tri-band radio system runs \$599 for its three-pack. The difference? The plain Eero promises coverage with three nodes over a smaller area than the Eero 6 Pro (5000 square feet/465 square meters versus 6000 square feet/557 square meters) and up to 500 Mbps of throughput compared to 1 Gbps.

A similar price split exists at NetGear, even comparing two sets of nodes that all have triband radio systems and Ethernet. The <u>three-</u> <u>pack Orbi AC2200 Mesh WiFi System</u> (bundle number RBK23) costs \$299.99 and promises a maximum speed of about 1.3 Gbps over 6000 square feet. The three-pack <u>Orbi AX4200 WiFi</u> <u>Mesh System</u> (bundle number RBK753) is \$449.99 (that's \$100 off its list price) and claims up to 4.2 Gbps across 7500 square feet/697 square meters.



#### Speed Up!

If you've been suffering with a Wi-Fi network that doesn't provide the coverage and throughput you need for Zoom calls, Apple TV streaming, and everything else you want to do, there's no reason to live with it any longer. Just spend a few minutes evaluating your needs, how much you're willing to spend, and the physical constraints of your home. Then decide whether it makes sense to jump to a modern mesh network or rely on one of the wired solutions with additional traditional Wi-Fi routers.

Article written by Glenn Fleishman on August 19, 2021.

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#### How To Block Spam Calls, Texts, And Emails On An iPhone

Sick of all the unwanted phone calls, texts, and emails on your iPhone? There is some relief available. You need to change some settings but it's not too difficult. Check out the information at this link: <u>https://appletoolbox.com/block-spam-</u>

iphone/

#### How to Block Spam On Your Mac

And...Here's how to deal with spam email on your Mac:

https://us.norton.com/internetsecurity-howto-spam-spam-go-away.html

#### Take A Selfie On Mars!

Nasa's newest online interactive feature is a virtual photo booth. Read this article for the details. It's easy and fun!

https://www.makeuseof.com/nasa-marsphoto-booth/



### Join, Renew or Give a Gift of a SBAMUG Membership!

#### For only \$35 per year\*, you get:

- Monthly meeting presentations
- Get help from our experts via our Email Group
- Monthly newsletter (We publish 11 issues per year!)
- Use our Wiki
- Free web space & e-mail on our server
- Build your own website
- Create your own blog
- Special merchant discounts \$\$\$
- Occasional swaps, free software, opportunity drawings

#### http://www.sbamug.com/join.html

or contact Membership Chair CW Mitchell at

#### cwmitchell@sbamug.com

\*(\$35 membership fee waived for 2021)

#### **SBAMUG Membership Application**

South Bay Apple Macintosh User Group provides you with a local source of shared knowledge & experience through monthly meetings, trainings and monthly newsletter.

#### Individual & Family Memberships: \$35 per year\* (\*membership fee is waived for 2021)

Member Renewal

□ New Member(s)

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Member Cell: ()
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Member: Beginner IntermediateAdvanced
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