

Configuring and using MacLife—KeySaver:

This chapter assumes that MacLife—KeySaver has been installed into your Control Panels Folder. (Installation instructions can be found under the Chapters menu.)

Configuring MacLife—KeySaver:

To configure MacLife—KeySaver, select Control Panels from the Apple Menu. Then, double-click on MacLife—KeySaver. (You might want to view the Finder window by name to make it easier to find the KeySaver Control Panel.)

To turn MacLife—KeySaver on or off, click on the appropriate on or off radio button.

To set MacLife—KeySaver to automatically delete the key stroke files that it creates, check the Delete saved files after check box. Then type the number of days to keep files in the edit text field. Whenever you start your machine, MacLife—KeySaver will check to see if there are any “Strokes” files older than the number of days you specified inside the MacLifeInsurance Files Folder. It checks the date that the file was created, and not the last modification date. Since most key strokes files are probably updated every day, the last modification date will always change. But the creation date never changes. The disadvantage to automatically deleting your files is that you’ll then lose the data in the files when they are automatically deleted.

To set the application that will automatically open the MacLifeInsurance key stroke files when you double-click on them from the Finder, click on the “Select application...” button. Then, select the text editor or word processor that you’d like to use. The files are stored as text files with the creator of the application you choose. If you’re an advanced user, you can simply type in the creator of the application in this box without clicking the button. The default file type is ttxt, the creator of TeachText. If you do not change this setting, double-clicking on the key stroke files will open TeachText.

Setting your Hot Key:

You can set a toggle hot key to turn MacLife—KeySaver on and off at anytime. To set your hot key, click on the Select Toggle Hot Key button. When the dialog box comes up, just type the key combination of your choice. You can use the shift, option, control, and command keys along with any key on your keyboard--including the function keys, escape, arrows, help, home, page up, page down, forward delete, end, and the numeric keypad. When you are finished, click on the OK button. The toggle hot key is very useful for those times when you’d rather not have your key strokes saved to disk. (I realized the need for this when one of my college friends started typing a letter to his girlfriend. When I told him I was testing this utility, we had to restart the machine. A light bulb went off—wouldn’t it be great to have a toggle hot key! :))

When you are finished configuring MacLife—KeySaver, close the Control Panel. Changes to all your settings will take effect immediately, so there’s no need to reboot for them take effect. If MacLife—KeySaver was not loaded at startup however (perhaps you held down the shift key at startup to turn off all extensions and control panels), you will have to reboot to activate it.

Using MacLife—KeySaver:

Using MacLife—KeySaver is easy. After setting it up, it will automatically work in the background, saving your keystrokes in case of system crashes, power outs, file corruptions, or accidental deletions. Your key stroke files are stored in the MacLifeInsurance Files folder inside the System Folder.

If you want to retrieve text after such an event, or simply want to retrieve that paragraph you wish you hadn't deleted a half hour ago, just go to the MacLifeInsurance Files folder inside the System Folder. (You might also want to make an alias of this folder if you're using System 7 for easier access.) Then, double-click on the folder named after the application that you were using. Inside that folder, you'll find file names with the names of the documents you were working on. Double-click on the file you were working on to open it. (If you didn't name the file, most likely it has a name like Untitled, Untitled 1, Untitled 2, or something similar. MacLife—KeySaver will grab the file name from the name of the window you were working on.) The files will automatically run TeachText, or whatever application you set in the MacLife—KeySaver Control Panel. If they are over 32k in size, you'll need to open them with a program other than TeachText by launching your word processor and choosing the Open... menu item from its File menu.

Then, just look for that paragraph you were missing and cut and paste it back into the document that you were working on. You'll need to clean up the text, as MacLife—KeySaver saves every key stroke—including all your typos. But you're guaranteed never to lose any idea this way. No matter how sure you were a half hour ago (or a week ago) that you didn't need that paragraph!

Cleaning up the text is the one downside to key stroke saving. This is both intentional as well as necessary. Since it saves every key, you'll be able to recover everything you type. Since no program can make value judgments on what is worth keeping, we play it safe by keeping everything. The other reason is that MacLifeInsurance does not know what you are deleting. So, if you press the delete key, it cannot simply delete the last character typed. You may have moved the cursor to a different location in the document. The end result is that you'll be protected completely, but that you'll need to edit (the amount depending on your typing skills) the key stroke files when you replace your files. We believe that it's a small compromise to make for this powerful level of protection.