

## Chapter 3; MailFetch Scheduling and New Mail Notification:

MailFetch's scheduling options allow you to perform scheduled Auto AOL sessions with more precision and flexibility than is possible with AOL's built-in scheduling options. Furthermore, by using MailFetch to schedule Auto AOL sessions, you get MailFetch's notification if you have new mail, and you prevent AOL from making itself the front-most application on your Mac when the Auto AOL session starts.

With the scheduling settings you can do the following:

- Have Auto AOL sessions executed at particular times of day
- Have Auto AOL sessions run at regular intervals ranging from every 30 minutes to every 8 hours
- Run an Auto AOL session whenever MailFetch is launched
- Have MailFetch notify you when you have received new e-mail on AOL
- And, as they say, "much more!"

Note that Auto AOL sessions scheduled with MailFetch will only occur if and when MailFetch is running. MailFetch can be running in the background, and its window can be closed if you like. If America Online isn't running when it's time for a scheduled session, MailFetch will launch it.

All of MailFetch's scheduling options are set in the "Scheduling" dialog, accessible under the Special menu. I'll begin with an illustration of this dialog, and then describe each of its settings from top to bottom.

cheduling:

First are three “Run Auto AOL at this time” items. As the name suggests, by turning on one or more of these items and setting a particular time of day, you can have an Auto AOL session executed at that time. You set the time for these items by first clicking in the box that displays the time, and then adjusting the time with the arrow control that appears, or by typing in a number.

Next is the item that controls running Auto AOL sessions at regular intervals. Use the checkbox to turn on this option, and the popup menu to select the interval between sessions. Your choices are every half hour, hour, two hours, four hours or eight hours. Beneath this setting, another item appears, which varies according to the interval you have selected in the popup menu. If the interval is every half hour, the item below reads “At xx past the half-hour”, where “xx” is an adjustable number of minutes between 0 and 29. Likewise, if the interval is every hour, the item below allows you to set the number of minutes (0 to 59) past the hour. For the other intervals (2, 4 or 8 hours), the item reads “Counting from xx:xx”, where “xx:xx” is a time of day.

This can best be explained with an example: If you have MailFetch set to run an Auto AOL session every 4 hours, and you set the “Counting from” time to 12:05, then Auto AOL sessions will be executed at 12:05 AM, 4:05 AM, 8:05 AM, 12:05 PM, and so on. If you don’t launch MailFetch until 9:00 AM, the first session will happen at 12:05 PM, the next at 4:05 PM, and so on.

(With all types of scheduled Auto AOL sessions, it is probably best to avoid times exactly on the hour or half-hour, as AOL may have heavier traffic at these times. Also, there seems to be particularly heavy traffic around 5:00 PM, and at those hours that are 5:00 for U.S. time zones other than your own.)

The next item in the scheduling dialog is fairly obvious: “Run Auto AOL whenever MailFetch is launched”. Turn this on and that’s what it does. By turning this option on and putting an alias of MailFetch in your Startup Items folder, you can have an Auto AOL session run immediately each time you start up your Mac. Note: Because an unregistered copy of MailFetch displays a “please register” dialog when it is launched, running an Auto AOL session at launch doesn’t work until MailFetch has been registered.

**New Mail Notification:**

Note: The new mail notification options are disabled until you register MailFetch. See the chapter “Paying for MailFetch” to see how to register.

The rest of the scheduling settings control whether and how MailFetch informs you when new mail has been put in your “Offline Mail” mailbox by an Auto AOL session. When “Notify when there is new mail” is checked, you have two options as to how MailFetch will notify you: with a flashing icon in the menu bar, or with a floating window. MailFetch determines if you have new mail by checking the number of e-mails in your “Incoming/Saved Mail” box. If the number has increased after an Auto AOL session, you have new mail. Whenever you make AOL your front application, MailFetch assumes that you know about your new mail and turns off the notification.

With the “flashing icon” option, MailFetch will put a modified version of its small icon in the menu bar. As noted above, if you switch to OL, the flashing icon will be turned off. If you switch to MailFetch, (or if MailFetch is already your front application) a dialog will be displayed telling you you have new mail. If you click the “AOL Mailbox” button in this dialog, you will be sent to America Online, and your “Offline Mail” window will be opened.

The “floating window” notification option causes a new window to appear on your screen when you have

ew mail. This window “floats” above the windows of all other applications, so it is always visible. You can dismiss this window by clicking its close box, or you can click in the content area of the window (where the message is) and you will be sent to America Online and your “Offline Mail” window will be opened.

There is a small “catch” to the floating window: You may find that clicks in this window sometimes don’t have any effect; you may have to click a few times over before it works. This is due to a weakness in the way the Mac system deals with floating windows. You can fix this by installing a small extension called “TSM Fix”, which is provided with the MailFetch package. TSM Fix is a free extension written by another programmer; it is widely used and to the best of my knowledge it causes no conflicts or other problems.