

The default button

The Default Option in an Attention Panel

When a user action brings up an attention panel with a variety of choices, the default button is marked with a return sign arrow which indicates that the return key will carry through with the default action. The default button is always in the lower right corner of the panel. It should allow the user to easily carry through with the action. It should not contradict what the user set out to do. Specifically, it should not be the Cancel button.

The default button should not perform any additional action not implied by the user request that brought up the panel. In general, it should be the safest of the alternatives (e.g., Open Copy rather than Open Anyway in WriteNow).

The default button in an attention panel should normally be operable by pressing the Return key on the keyboard (when the panel is the key window). However, if the button has dangerous side effects, it should not be facilitated by the Return key. For example, since it's easy to mistakenly press the Power key, and since unintentionally powering off can have dire consequences, none of the buttons in the Power Off panel is tied to the Return key.