

Shutdown Items 2.3 User's Guide

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General Description

Shutdown Items is an application which will allow a system running system 7.0 or later to have a folder which is analogous to the Startup Items folder (inside the System Folder). Any item placed within the "Shutdown Items" folder will be launched or played during shutdown just as if you double-clicked the item from the Finder. You may use this feature to perform automatic backups, or just to play some shutdown sounds. You may choose to automatically empty your trash during shutdown, as well.

In addition, you can program your computer to automatically shut itself down at a predetermined time. This may be a one-time only shutdown, or may be done on a daily or weekly basis. You can schedule Shutdown Items to launch some shutdown applications, and then wait for a certain period of time before shutting down the computer.

Shutdown Items can even shut down a remote macintosh on your network! If you have the proper network privileges, you can send a message to another copy of Shutdown Items which is running on a different computer, and tell it to shut down the other computer. If Shutdown Items is not already running on the other computer, you can copy it over and then remotely launch Shutdown Items on the other computer (you can remotely launch *any* application this way).

Installation and Setup

Installation is quite simple. Copy the Shutdown Items application anywhere on your hard disk. Usually, you want it to run all the time, so most people put it inside their Startup Items folder (which is inside the System Folder). You can just put an alias in the Startup Items folder, and put the application anywhere you want (perhaps stored with the documentation).

If Shutdown Items cannot find the Shutdown Items folder, a message will appear for 3 seconds that informs you of this. If you see this message, make sure that the Shutdown Items folder is within the System Folder, and is spelled correctly (check for spaces or other hidden characters in the name).

Since Shutdown Items is a small application, you do not have to add yet another extension to your System Folder, and wonder what incompatibility you will discover. You also have control over how much memory is used. Shutdown Items will run in as little as 65K of RAM, and the default of 110K should be more than enough. Playing Quicktime movies may require more memory.

Since this application uses AppleEvents to do its work, system 7.0 or later is required. Theoretically, Shutdown Items should work on any Macintosh model running system 7.

When You Shut Down

When a manual shutdown (or restart) takes place and Shutdown Items is running, any item you have in the Shutdown Items folder will be launched. The effect will be the same as if you double-clicked the file from the Finder. If you are doing a manual restart, and don't want to launch your shutdown items, then just hold down the OPTION key until your macintosh restarts. There may be a delay after shutdown items are

launched, before actual shutdown occurs. You can set this delay in the "Automatic Shutdown Options" dialog.

If a file of type "TEXT" is found in the Shutdown Items folder, the first 255 characters will be displayed as sort of a farewell message, without launching the application which created the text file. You may want to remind novice users of something in this manner ("Don't forget to turn off the power strip" or "Last one out of the lab should turn off lights").

A Quicktime movie file (file type "MooV") will be played if it is in your Shutdown Items folder, assuming you have Quicktime installed. Some movies require alot of memory, so you may have to increase the memory allocation to the Shutdown Items application. Likewise, files of type "PICT" will be displayed if they are in your Shutdown Items folder (this process is very memory efficient, however, even with large pictures). To keep your shutdown picture on the screen longer before shutting down, you can adjust the "Delay between launching and shut down" option (see below).

By putting a sound file in the Startup Items folder and the Shutdown Items folder, you can have a welcome and goodbye sound without using any system extensions!

When you program your computer to automatically shut itself down with the Shutdown Items application, the automatic shut down behaves just as if the user chose "Shut Down" from the "Special" menu in the Finder. Any applications currently running with unsaved work will put up their usual warning message (like "Do you want to save changes before quitting?"), which can prevent the system from shutting down until the message is answered.

Options Menu

Empty Trash on Shut Down

If this option is checked, then the trash will be emptied just before shutting down.

Automatically Shut Down

If this option is checked, then the macintosh will automatically shut itself down according to the conditions set in the Auto Shut Down Options dialog box. When checking this item, a message will appear which will remind you exactly when the shutdown will take place. Review this carefully to make sure the correct time and date are shown.

Auto Shut Down Options

This is how you set the conditions under which an automatic shut down (or restart) will occur, if that feature is enabled (by checking "Automatically Shut Down"). You can also set up one-time or repeating shutdowns, and choose what type of warning to display.

"Time of Day" button

Click this radio button and type in a time of day if you want your computer to shut itself down at a certain time of day. If you check the "Shutdown weekly on" checkbox, you can select a day of the week as well, for a weekly shutdown.

"Minutes after startup" button

Click this radio button to program your mac to shutdown after a certain number of minutes from startup time. Startup time is the time that the Shutdown Items application is launched, which will coincide with actual system boot time only if Shutdown Items is in the Startup Items folder.

"Minutes from now" button

Click this radio button to program your mac to shutdown after a certain number of minutes from now. The timer begins when you click the OK button.

"Must confirm before shutdown" button

Click this radio button if you want the computer to display a warning before shut down, to which the user *must* respond. Shutdown will not take place unless the user clicks the OK button in response to the warning. Of course, the user may choose to cancel the shutdown. Note that this option will prevent an unattended mac from automatically shutting down.

"Just warn before shutdown" button

Click this radio button if you want to display a warning several seconds before shutdown *which does not require a response*. This option allows an unattended mac to shut itself down. A user may cancel the shutdown when he/she sees the warning, but if nothing is done, the shutdown will proceed.

"Delay between launching and shut down" option

If you want to launch some applications during an automatic shutdown, and wait for a period of time before actually shutting down the computer (giving those applications some time to "do their thing"), you can. Just type in the desired delay. Note that this delay only applies to both automatic and manual shutdowns. If the delay is zero, your shutdown items will be launched and the computer will shut itself down immediately (this is just fine if you just want to play some sounds, or launch nothing during shutdown). If delay is greater than zero, the "shutdown time" referred to elsewhere is actually the "launch time" of your shutdown items, and actual shutdown will take place after the delay. (It is possible to launch your shutdown items several times before actually shutting down, if you set your mac to shutdown at a certain time of day but set the delay to greater than 24 hours.)

"Restart instead of Shut Down" button

Check this checkbox if you want your mac to Restart, instead of Shut Down, at the appropriate time.

"Auto Shut Down one time only" button

If you check this checkbox, then the automatic shutdown will happen only once, and "Automatic Shutdown" will not be enabled the next time you launch Shutdown Items. Otherwise, the automatic shutdown will happen over and over, so if you set the mac to shutdown at a certain time of the day, it will shut down at that time *every* day.

Disable menus

If you want to install Shutdown Items on a mac and ensure that somebody else won't quit from the application and defeat its purpose, you can choose the "Disable Menus" option. This will disable the "File" and "Options" menu, so that there is no way to quit from the application, or change the settings. This option is immediately saved in the preferences file ("Shutdown prefs", in the Preferences folder), and will remain in effect until the menus are enabled by another copy of Shutdown Items (see below), or the preferences file is removed (that causes default settings to be used).

You may disable or enable the menus of another copy of Shutdown Items by holding down the OPTION key as you select "Disable menus". You will be asked to select the other copy, and an AppleEvent will be sent to the other copy which will enable or disable its menus.

Remote Shutdown

You may shut down (or restart) another macintosh on your network with the Remote Shutdown option. This requires that the other macintosh be running a copy of Shutdown Items. If another copy of Shutdown Items is not running on the mac you want to shut down, then you can use the Remote Launch feature first (see below).

When you choose this option, you will see a dialog box which shows other macintoshes on your network, and the AppleEvent-aware programs running on these machines. If you only see your own macintosh, see the note below concerning "program linking". You must choose a "Shutdown Items" program on some macintosh; choosing a different application will not have the desired effect. You may choose to restart or shut down the other macintosh. The appropriate command will be sent (via AppleEvents) to the remote copy of Shutdown Items, and that application will shut down or restart its own computer.

As an unsupported feature(?), you may choose the "Finder" (instead of "Shutdown Items") of your own macintosh, and you can restart or shut down your own computer this way. This was supposed to work across the network, but this feature currently only works locally (which is not very useful). For now, you must have a copy of Shutdown Items running on the remote macintosh, since remote Finder's do not seem to respond to the Shut Down or Restart AppleEvent.

In order for this remote shut down to work, the remote macintosh must have "Program Linking" turned on, and the remote Shutdown Items application itself must have the linking option enabled. Program Linking is turned on/off via the Sharing Setup control panel (if you are confused by these terms, consult your network manager). In addition, you must have the appropriate privileges for such an operation (you may be asked to give a password). Now you can see that even though this remote shut down capability sounds dangerous, it really isn't -- everything must be set up properly ahead of time.

Since Remote Shut Down is equivalent to selecting Shut Down or Restart from the Special menu, any applications currently running with unsaved work will stop the shut down process, like you would expect.

Remote Launch

In order to shut down another macintosh, a copy of Shutdown Items must be running on it. If a copy of Shutdown Items is on the other mac, but not currently running, you may launch it remotely with the Remote Launch feature. Once it is running, you may then choose Remote Shutdown.

Just as with the Remote Shutdown feature, described above, "Program Linking" must be turned on for this to work.

You may Remote Launch any application, not just shutdown Items. If you have the proper network privileges, you may first mount a volume of a remote macintosh, copy an application to the other mac's volume, and then remotely launch the application. This allows you to remotely shut down any macintosh, without "preparing" it ahead of time, as long as you have the proper network privileges.

Do not confuse this Remote Launch with launching an application over the network with the program linking feature of system 7. If you mount a remote volume, and double-click an application on that volume, you can launch that application on your macintosh even though you do not have it on your local hard disk. It will reside in *your* mac's memory. The Remote Launch feature of Shutdown Items allows you to launch an application on a *different* macintosh, and have the application reside in the memory of the remote computer.

Launch Shutdown Items Now

This option is normally used to test your application, without requiring you to actually shutdown or restart your computer. If items are launched as you expect, you may have to increase the memory allocated to Shutdown Items, or double-check the location and spelling of the Shutdown Items folder.

Applications

You may be wondering how you can fully utilize this program. You can use it to play your favorite welcome and goodbye sounds by placing the sound files in the Startup Items and Shutdown Items folders. A goodbye Quicktime movie can be very entertaining after a long day, also. This may allow you to eliminate some other system extension which you use for this purpose (one less extension is one less possible conflict).

If you want to have your trash automatically emptied when you shut down, this may also allow you to do this (or eliminate another extension you already use for this purpose). You can fill up the trash can all you want, and then just choose "Shut Down" from the Finder and walk away while the trash empties and your computer shuts itself down.

You may want to initiate a very long process (backups or downloading) before you go to bed, and program your mac to shut down in the middle of the night.

Those of you with unattended file servers, or with a public lab full of macs for students or coworkers, may want to program each mac to shut itself down at the end of the day. You can disable menus so that the Shutdown Items application can't be quit from prematurely.

The Remote Launch feature could be useful for remotely launching any application on another macintosh (imagine remotely launching a script or macro to perform some predefined action).

You can launch any application at a certain time of the day or week, without actually shutting down, by placing the applications you want to launch in the Shutdown Items folder and setting up an automatic shutdown with a very long delay (see the Auto shut Down options" section above).

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I worked very hard to write this program and make it so that everyone could use it (not just on my own system). You can't get much for \$10.00 in a commercial software store, so send in your registration fee and encourage people like me to produce useful software for next to nothing.

Registered users will get some of their wishes implemented in the next version, receive minor intermediate releases as required/desired, and receive printed documentation (if requested). If you find any bugs, rest assured they will be fixed if you tell me and send in your fee.

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