Adding Local and Network Printers on a Macintosh

How to add a USB printer

If your printer does not appear in the Printer pop-up menu, find and install the appropriate driver. Check any CD-ROM discs included with the printer, or the website of your printer's manufacturer. Only users with an administrator account can install software.

Tip: You can also open the Printer List window from Printer Center (Mac OS X v10.2.8 or earlier) or the Printer Setup Utility (Mac OS X v10.3 Panther, or later).

Check the Printer menu again after installing the software. If the printer does not appear, you may need to do this:

1. Make sure the printer is connected to your computer, plugged in, and turned on.
2. For Mac OS X v10.2.8 or earlier, from the Printer menu in the print dialog choose Edit Printer List. The Printer List window appears.
3. For Mac OS X v10.3 or later, choose Show Printer List from the View menu. The Printer List window appears.
4. Click the Add Printer button.
5. Choose USB from the first pop-up menu.
6. Select your printer from the list.
7. Click Add.
8. Close the Printer List window.

How to add a network printer (AppleTalk or LPR)

Adding an AppleTalk or LPR network printer is very similar to adding a USB printer. In Step 4 above, you would choose AppleTalk or "LPR Printers using IP" from the pop-up menu. From there, the setup differs slightly.

AppleTalk printer

- AppleTalk must be enabled in Network preferences.
- If your network uses AppleTalk zones, choose one from a second pop-up menu that appears.
- Make sure to avoid potential issues with AppleTalk multi-homing.
LPR printer

- You must enter the printer's IP address or DNS name.
- If you're printing to a queue, deselect the checkbox for "Use Default Queue on Server", then type the queue's name. If not, leave the checkbox selected.
- You can select your printer from the Printer Model menu or leave it at Generic. In essence, are selecting a PPD file.

Question mark appears, or trouble finding a printer?

If you can't find the printer you want to add in the list of connection methods, make sure you're choosing the right connection type for your printer. Some printers may use custom input-output modules, such as "Epson AppleTalk". You may need to select one of these custom options in order to add your printer. If there's a question mark on the printer's icon, or Print Center or Print Setup Utility lists it as unsupported, check for an updated software version at the manufacturer's website, or the Mac OS X downloads page.

Tip for software installation

Your printer may appear in the printer list before manufacturer-required software is installed. If you have such a printer, remove the printer from your printer list before installing the software. Add the printer back to the list after you've installed the software.