

Doing a Freshie Install with Yosemite

by Mike Sullivan | Cove Apple Club | October 8, 2014

If your Mac is more than a few years old, you have probably installed multiple versions of OS X “on top” of one another as each new version came along. Now that Yosemite is on the way, it might be time to consider investing in the time and effort to perform a “Freshie:” a “clean install” of Yosemite on your Mac, by wiping the hard disk clean, installing a factory-fresh copy of Yosemite, and then reinstalling all your apps and re-migrating your data to the new install.

This is not something you should attempt unless you are comfortable with it, and by all means, make sure you have a good, solid plan worked out ahead of time that you sourced from respected experts in the Mac community.

Most importantly, you need to make sure you have **at least THREE** redundant levels of data backup before you begin: a current, tested Time Machine backup; a current, tested “bootable clone” of your entire HD on an external drive; a current off-site backup of all your data (BackBlaze, Carbonite, Mozy or similar); and ideally, a second, external hard drive with a safety copy of the entire contents of your Home folder.

To begin, work through this checklist of steps on your Mac to make sure you’re ready to wipe the Mac’s hard drive clean in advance of the Freshie:

1. Make sure you have a complete Time Machine backup of your Mac. System Preferences → Time Machine.
2. Make sure you have a second, complete backup of your Home folder on an external disk.
3. Make sure you have a current, complete backup of your Mac on an off-site backup service, such as BackBlaze, Mozy or Carbonite. We recommend and endorse BackBlaze. Use this link to get a free month when you sign up for a year: <https://secure.backblaze.com/r/00j72i>
4. As an extra backup measure, create a bootable clone of your Mac on an external disk. We recommend Carbon Copy Cloner, but SuperDuper works well also. See the
5. Eject and physically disconnect all external drives from your Mac before you begin.
6. Make sure you know and have written down your Apple ID and your Apple ID password.
7. Make sure you have original install discs and/or license keys for all your purchased apps.
8. Sign out of the App Store: App Store → Store → Sign Out
9. Deauthorize your Mac in the iTunes Store: iTunes → Store → Deauthorize this Computer
10. Sign out of iTunes: iTunes → Store → Sign Out
11. If you use Dropbox and have it installed on your Mac, unlink the Mac from your Dropbox account:
 - 11.1. In Safari, go to dropbox.com
 - 11.2. Sign into your account
 - 11.3. Click on your name at the top right of the screen
 - 11.4. Click Settings
 - 11.5. Click Security
 - 11.6. Scroll down to the “Devices” section and find your Mac in the list of Linked Devices
 - 11.7. Click the gray ‘X’ at the right of the link listing for your Mac
 - 11.8. Confirm that you want to unlink the Mac from your Dropbox by clicking Unlink
12. Turn off Find My Mac: System Preferences → iCloud → Sign Out

13. Make sure you know your Apple ID and Apple ID password
14. Make sure you know your email server settings and your email password
15. Make sure your email provider is using IMAP protocol, and not POP or POP3 protocol. With IMAP protocol, your mail is stored on the provider's servers and your Mac shows you a *replica* of the server's master copy. With POP protocol, the **only copy** of your mail is kept on **your computer**, with no master copy on the provider's servers. **DO NOT do a Freshie if your email provider is using POP or POP3 protocol.** See Mike for more information and help with migrating off of the POP provider and onto a modern, high-performance IMAP provider like Apple's iCloud service.
16. If you are coming from Lion, Mountain Lion or Mavericks, follow the steps in this Apple Support article: <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT5943>
17. Install Yosemite on your Mac as usual from the Mac App Store.
18. Once Yosemite is up and running on your Mac, follow these instructions to create the bootable Yosemite installer on your external hard disk.
 - 18.1. To perform a Freshie, you will need to create a **bootable copy of the Yosemite Installer** on an external USB drive (a flash drive, SD card [if your Mac has an SD card slot] or an external USB hard disk). See the Macworld article linked at the bottom of this page on how to perform this step.
 - 18.2. Finally, follow the instructions in this article from OS X Daily. The article applies to Mountain Lion, but the same process will work moving from Mountain Lion to Mavericks, or from Mavericks to Yosemite. Article URL: <http://osxdaily.com/2012/07/25/how-to-clean-install-os-x-mountain-lion/>
19. Once you complete that process, you will have a factory-fresh, "clean install" of Yosemite running on your Mac. You will next need to re-install all of your apps, and re-establish your connection to your iCloud account.
 - 19.1. System Preferences → iCloud → Sign in, then sign-in with your Apple ID and password.
 - 19.2. Open Mac App Store
 - 19.3. Store → Sign in, then sign-in using your Apple ID and password.
 - 19.4. Click the Purchases tab, and re-install your apps as desired. You will not be charged.
 - 19.5. Visit dropbox.com; download, install and sign-in to Dropbox to re-establish your Dropbox folder.
20. Re-connect your external hard drive containing your backup copy of your Home folder. Drag the files and folders from the external hard drive to the corresponding folders in the new Home folder of your Mac to migrate your data back to your Mac. Pay special attention to the iPhoto Library and/or Aperture Library items in the Photos folders, as they contain your entire photo library and database for iPhoto and Aperture.
21. Open Mail. If you're using a modern IMAP Mail provider, your mail database should flow down from the server exactly as you left it prior to the Freshie.



For more information, check out these links:

Take Control of Upgrading to Yosemite: takecontrolbooks.com/yosemite-upgrading by Joe Kissell

How to make a bootable OS X 10.10 Yosemite install drive (MacWorld): <http://goo.gl/qjY3Ac>

Enjoy the sweet smell of your nice, new Freshie!