

Macworld How to make your Mac text larger on a big display

With a big external display, you might find yourself unable to read the type.

Mac 911 By [Glenn Fleishman](#), Contributor, Macworld MAR 28, 2025 2:00 am PDT



Image: Thiago Trevisan

Some people use their Macs to drive enormous HDTVs, letting them access a wide range of audio and video apps on a Mac and streaming video services while also retaining the security of the Mac operating system. However, it's easy

to run into a problem: the interface elements on the external display can wind up so small that you have a hard time making them out.

You have a few ways to improve this situation, though readers have found that not all work in their circumstances.

Set the display size to Default or Larger Text

In **Apple** > *System Settings* > *Displays* with your large display selected, the default settings shown have a “Use as” section with at least four choices. Larger Text and Default cause macOS to act as if the display is lower resolution relative to the typeface and interface element used.

However, what's rendered on the screen, like typefaces, images, and video, continues to use the device's native resolution. This is often the easiest and best solution—if it works for your display.

You can choose among a greater range of sizes and demonstrate the effect of higher-resolution rendering to yourself by clicking the *Advanced* button in *Displays* and then enabling “Show resolutions as list.” This reveals all resolutions for which the native display density is retained even as the size of interface elements changes.

If you enable “Show all resolutions,” you will see some resolutions show with “(low resolution)” after them. If you select one of those and compare it to the same option without the label, you can see how the rendering differs—the “jaggies” are quite obvious at low resolution.

Work with Accessibility settings

In *System Settings* > *Accessibility* > *Display* under the *Text* and *Pointer* sections, you can adjust the size of type systemwide, increase the menu bar's size, and make the pointer easy to see or spot (when jiggled). Not all apps support the "Text size" setting, but it's likely you're using only a few—or just the TV and Safari apps—with your external display.

Turn to a third-party app, BetterDisplay Pro

Many readers suggest BetterDisplay Pro as a more complete set of options for scaling the Mac's user interface elements relative to the size of the display without causing other issues. This utility lets you unlock high-definition rendering (HiDPI) when the display doesn't meet Apple's more restrictive set of resolutions for which it lets you set bigger user interface elements.

The developer's wiki has a detailed page on how to customize this feature. However, it mostly involves installing the app, turning on "Edit the system configuration of this display model" and "Enable flexible scaling" and then clicking *Apply* for the display you want to control.

BetterDisplay has a free and a Pro version; the Pro version is required to unlock the HiDPI feature. However, the developer offers a 14-day free trial, which allows you to test whether the option solves your problem. To keep using it, the cost is \$19.99 or €19.99, depending on your region.

...

Author: Glenn Fleishman, Contributor, Macworld

Glenn Fleishman's most recent books include *Take Control of iOS and iPadOS Privacy and Security*, *Take Control of Calendar and Reminders*, and *Take Control of Securing Your Mac*. In his spare time, he writes about printing and type history. He's a senior contributor to Macworld, where he writes Mac 911.