

There are several ways to keep the elements on your Mac's screen from getting in the way of your work. Try these tips to free up some visual space.

Justin Pot Dec 7, 2024 7:30 AM



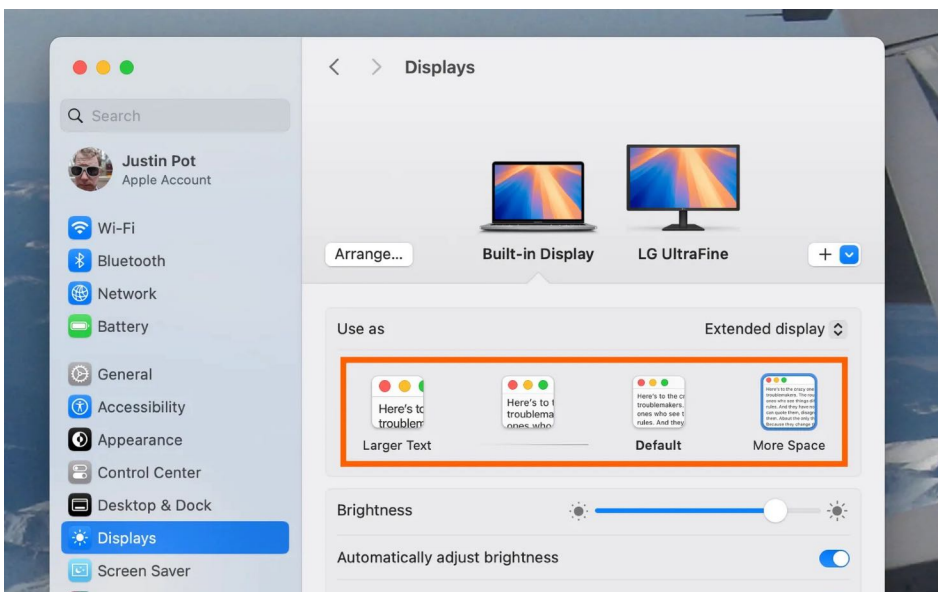
Photo-Illustration: Wired Staff/Getty

Does your Mac's desktop feel ... crowded? Is there not enough room on the screen for all the apps and tools you need to be productive?

You might think your only options are to get a MacBook model with a larger screen or buy an external display. Both of those tactics would certainly help, but before you spend a bunch of money know that you can give yourself quite a bit more screen real estate by tweaking your software

settings.

To get started, open the **System Settings** app on your Mac, which you can find by clicking the Apple logo in the top-right corner then clicking **System Settings**. Head to the **Displays** section in the left sidebar. You'll see a few size options, ranging from **Larger Text** to **More Space**.



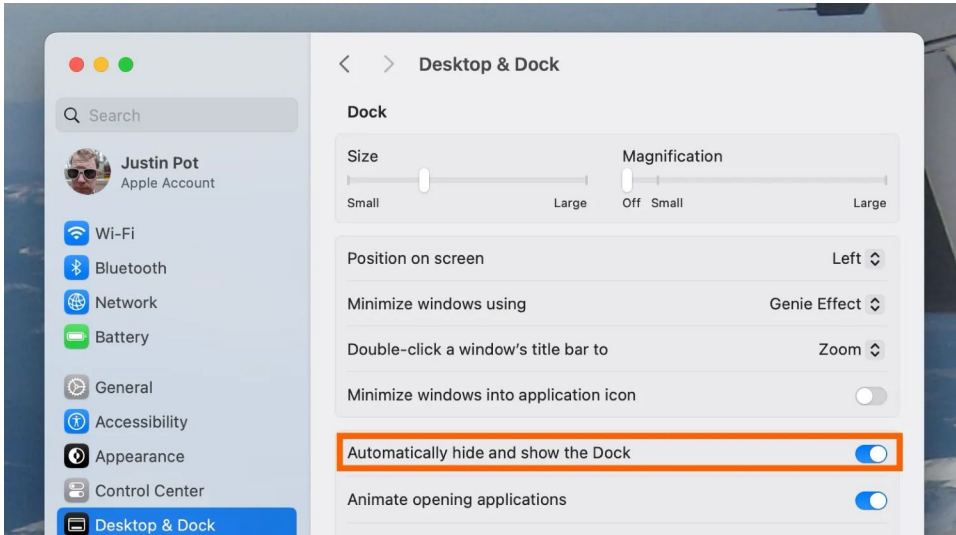
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Click the **More Space** option and everything on your Mac's screen will become a little smaller. It will suddenly feel like you have way more space to work with.

Now, this won't be ideal for everyone. If you have vision trouble, then making everything on the screen smaller is going to have some downsides. Others simply may not like it. But the trade-off is that you can

fit a lot more on the screen at once. I recommend giving this tweak a try.

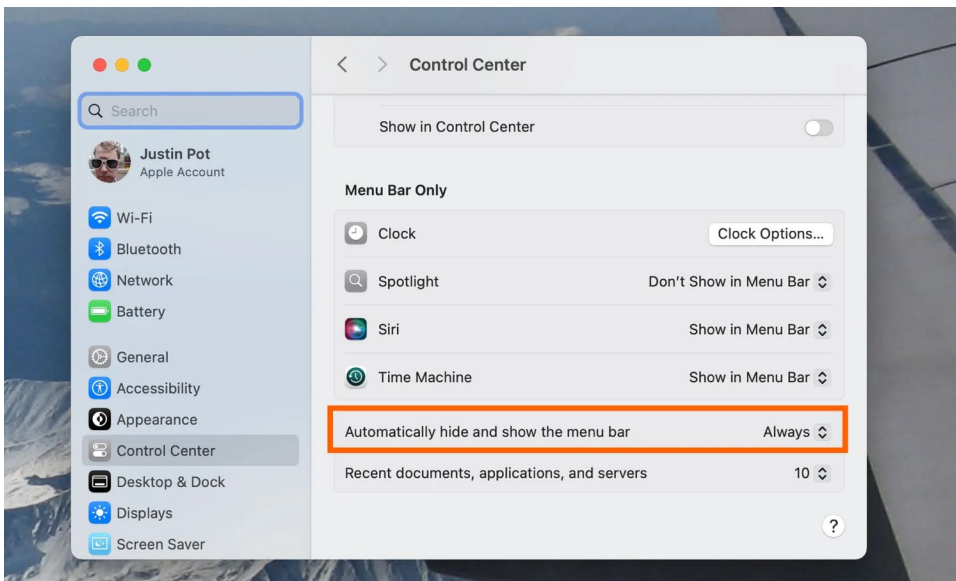
There are a few other things you can do to free up space. The Mac, by default, shows the dock on the screen at all times. This means that a little bit of space is taken up by the dock's string of app icons at all times. If you want that space back, you should consider hiding your dock. In **System Settings** head to the **Desktop & Dock** section and check the **Automatically hide and show the Dock** option.



After doing this the dock will disappear, allowing you to use that space for whatever you're working on. When you want to use the dock, you can just move your mouse pointer to the space on the screen where it used to be, and it will pop up.

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You can get a little more space by also hiding the menu bar. Within System Settings, go to the **Control Center** settings, then set the **Automatically hide and show the menu bar** option to **Always**.



This will hide the menu bar at the top of the screen the same way you hid the dock before. Now, obviously, this gives you less space than hiding the dock does, and some people aren't going to love not having a clock on their screen at all times. But it's a little bit more space, and I find that not seeing all of my menu bar icons makes it a little easier to focus.

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Need even more space? If you have an iPad you can use it as a second monitor for your Mac, as I explained here. Basically, if your iPad is nearby, you can head to **Displays** in System Settings, click the + button, and add your iPad as a display. I really like using this while on the road—it gives me a little bit of extra space to work with when I'm away from my desk and my external monitor.