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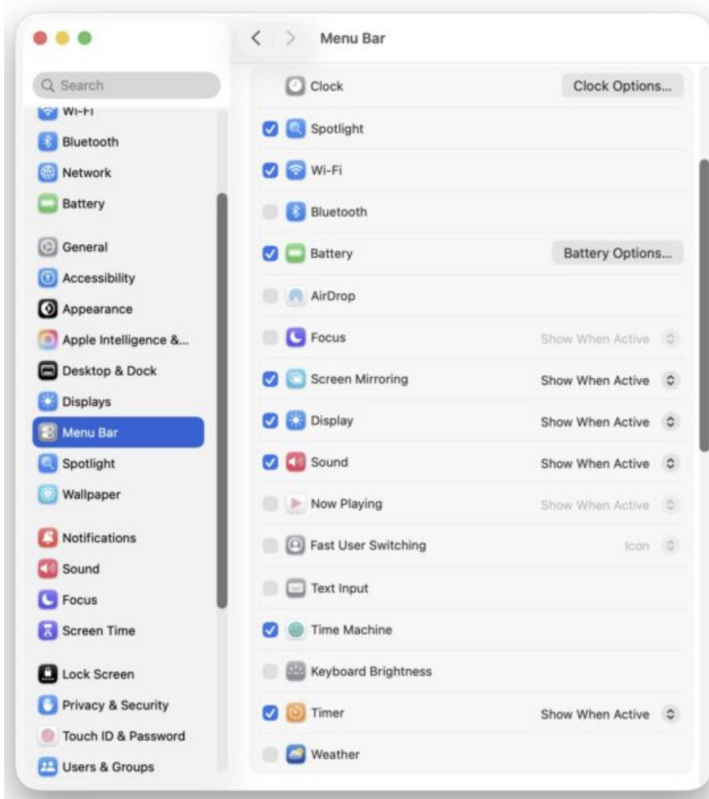


The menu bar on a Mac tends to fill up with clutter and icons over time. Between system icons like Spotlight, the date and clock, wi-fi, third party apps, various utilities, and popular tools, it's quite easy for the menu bar to become a crowded strip of icons that's distracting and harder to interact with.

The cluttering of the Mac menu bar is particularly a nuisance on modern Mac laptops with the annoying display Notch that cuts directly into the menu bar, because not only does the Notch cut down into the screen, it also ends up obstructing menu bar icons that end up hidden behind it and completely inaccessible.

Fortunately the latest versions of MacOS give the user some options to declutter the menu bar and remove and hide icons easily, allowing you to quickly improve your menu bar experience.

How to Declutter Mac Menu Bar with System Settings



On modern MacOS versions like Tahoe, there's now a dedicated "Menu Bar" section of System Settings where you can manage visibility of menu bar items and tools:

1. Go to **Apple** menu and choose **"System Settings"**
2. Go to **"Menu Bar"**
3. Scroll down and look below Menu Bar Controls, and toggle the checkbox off for any menu bar items you do not use, do not need, or might otherwise not find useful

Removing items from the menu bar is the best possible way to declutter and improve the menu bar experience on the Mac, and again this becomes extra valuable on the Mac laptops with the display notch that cuts down into the screen.

A good rule of thumb for managing the Mac menu bar is to hide anything you don't need constant or quick access to, especially if you can access it from the Control Center (which in itself, is yet another menu bar item). So things like Bluetooth toggles, sound levels, Time Machine, screen mirroring, Focus mode, you might consider hiding, and instead relying on accessing those items through Control Center instead. I also hide the majority of unnecessary third party tools from my menu bar, since it seems like just about every tool and app nowadays wants to install a menu bar item.

Be selective, disable and remove anything you don't use frequently, and if you rarely use it, you'll almost certainly want to hide it.

Another tip to remember for MacBook models with the obnoxious display notch is that [you can run apps to scale down below the camera](#) which basically shrinks the screen resolution to get rid of the notch, and this can be essential for some apps that have many menu items in general, which then vanish behind the pox of the display notch.

Re-ordering Mac Menu Bar Items

Another helpful trick for managing the Mac menu bar [is an old one](#) that goes back to early versions of MacOS, and that is arranging and reordering the menu bar icons to your preference.

To rearrange menu bar icons, simply hold down the Command key, then click and drag on them to their new location. This is pretty straightforward.

You can also use Command+Drag to pull items out of the menu bar if you'd like.

Still overwhelmed? 3rd party tools can hide and show menu bar items on Mac

Another option is to use third party utilities that can hide menu bar items, usually that place them behind an expandable icon. The idea is pretty simple; all the icons you don't always want visible will tuck behind an arrow, to which you click and then the icons temporarily expand out of.

There are a variety of options available to perform this function, including the [free tool like Vanilla to hide and show menu bar icons](#), or paid apps [like Bartender](#) that offer similar features.

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A cleaner menu bar on the Mac helps focus, makes it easier to scan other menu bar items quickly, offers less visual clutter, and makes it less likely for important menu

items and icons to get lost behind the weird display notch that somehow still persists on the high-end Mac laptops.

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