

# Running Maintenance Scripts in Mac OS X

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## Running the maintenance scripts

Using your Admin account, you can run all three maintenance scripts at once:

1. Open Terminal, located in the Macintosh HD -> Applications -> Utilities folder.
2. At the Terminal prompt, type the following, exactly as written:

```
sudo periodic daily weekly monthly
```
3. Press Return.
4. Type your Admin password when prompted, then press Return.

All three scripts will run in sequence. There is no visual feedback while the scripts execute. You will know they are completed when the Terminal prompt returns.

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## The maintenance performed by the scripts

Each maintenance script — daily, weekly, and monthly — has a specific function. Their functions have varied over different versions of Mac OS X.

The **daily** script removes old log files, "scratch" and "junk" files, backs-up the NetInfo database (Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger and earlier), reports a variety of system and network statistics, and rotates the system.log file. Under Tiger, the daily script also cleans up scratch fax files and prunes asl.log, the log file for the then-new Apple System Logging facility. Under Mac OS X 10.5 Leopard®, the daily script also prunes the asl.db file that replaced the asl.log file for Apple System Logging.

The output from the daily script is written to the `/var/log/daily.out` file, which can be viewed in Console. By default, the daily script is scheduled to run daily at 03:15 hours local time.

The **weekly** script rebuilds the locate and whatis databases. Depending on the version of Mac OS X, it also rotates the following log files: ftp.log, lookupd.log, lpr.log, mail.log, netinfo.log, ipfw.log, ppp.log, and secure.log

The output from the weekly script is written to the `/var/log/weekly.out` file, which can be viewed in Console. By default, the weekly script is scheduled to run every Saturday at a specific time. Under Tiger and later, it runs at 03:15 hours local time. Under Mac OS X 10.3 Panther and Mac OS X 10.2 Jaguar it runs at 04:30 hours local time.

The **monthly** script reports per-user usage accounting and rotates - depending on the version of Mac OS X - the wtmp, install.log, and cu.modem.log files.

The output from the monthly script is written to the `/var/log/monthly.out` file, which can be viewed in Console. By default, the monthly script is scheduled to run on the first of the month at 05:30 hours local time.

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