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# Tech Tips: A Few Things To Do Before Upgrading to High Sierra

Thursday, September 7th, 2017 | Author: [Steve Sande](#)



I recently upgraded my [2017 MacBook Pro with Touch Bar](#) to macOS 10.13 High Sierra, thinking that by the ninth beta version every little bug had been worked out. I'm glad to say that I haven't found any bugs, but the upgrade was far from pleasant. Rather than have our readers suffer through some of the same things I did, I thought it might be helpful to pass along some helpful tips on some things to do before upgrading to High Sierra.

## 1) Have A Bootable Backup Available

We love to remind our readers about [the importance of keeping up-to-date backups](#), and the big upgrades once a year to a new version of macOS are reason enough to make sure that your backups are up to date. Even more important? Having a bootable backup including the macOS recovery partition.

If your High Sierra upgrade goes awry, you may get to the point that the only thing available for you to do is boot off of your backup drive in recovery mode, erase your Mac's boot drive, and then install a clean version of macOS Sierra or macOS High Sierra onto the boot drive.

Some of our favorite backup utilities for getting those bootable backups ready to go is [Prosoft Data Backup 3](#) (now available from [MacSales.com](#) for only \$19) and Carbon Copy

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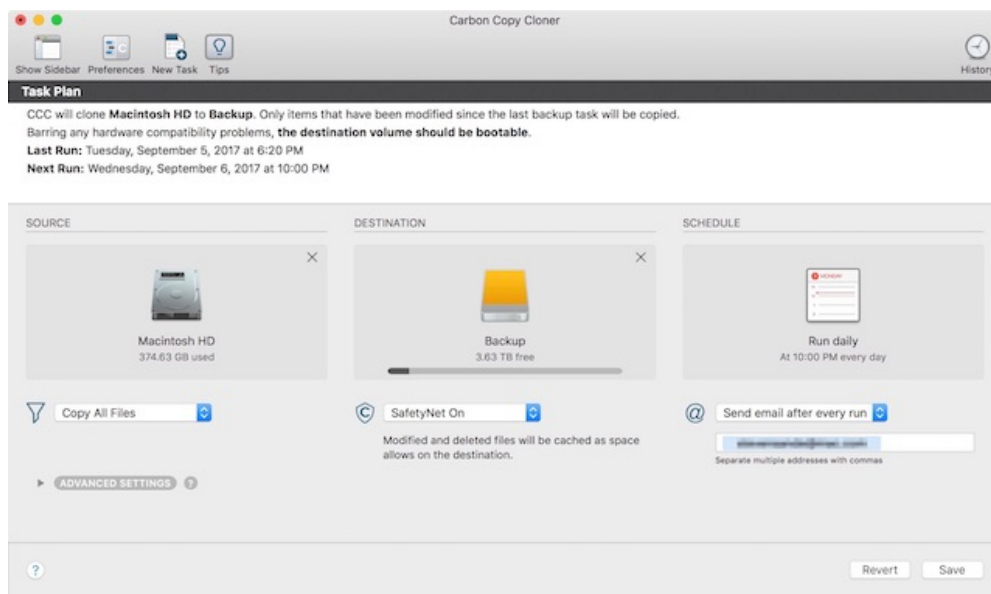
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Cloner (\$39.99) from Bombich Software. The latter app has just been upgraded to version 5, with faster operation and a new user interface. It's also the only backup utility that can back up the important recovery partition (see screenshot below).

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(Carbon Copy Cloner 5's new user interface.)

## 2) Make Sure macOS 10.12 Sierra Is Up-To-Date

Hopefully you've been updating macOS 10.12 Sierra every time a new update comes along. If not, it's a good time to click the Mac App Store icon in your dock, click the Updates tab, and see if there is an update ready to install. The latest version as of September 6, 2017 is 10.12.6. You can check the version number by selecting About This Mac from the Apple menu (see image below).



(About This Mac shows that this iMac is running 10.12.6.)

## 3) Update Your Mac Apps

It's also important to make sure that your Mac apps have been kept up-to-date. Many developers use the time between the Apple Worldwide Developers Conference in June and the release of the new macOS version in September or October to ensure complete compatibility with the new OS version.

Of course, it's much more difficult to keep those Mac apps updated than it is for iOS apps, as there are not only apps that are sold directly from the Mac App Store but also those that can be purchased from a developer's website. Most apps have a way of checking for updates: for example, the popular TextExpander app has a Check for Update item under the TextExpander menu, while others check every time you start up the app. Some apps, like Google Chrome browser, will not only check for updates but can update automatically.

#### **4) Disable Login/Startup Items Before The Upgrade**

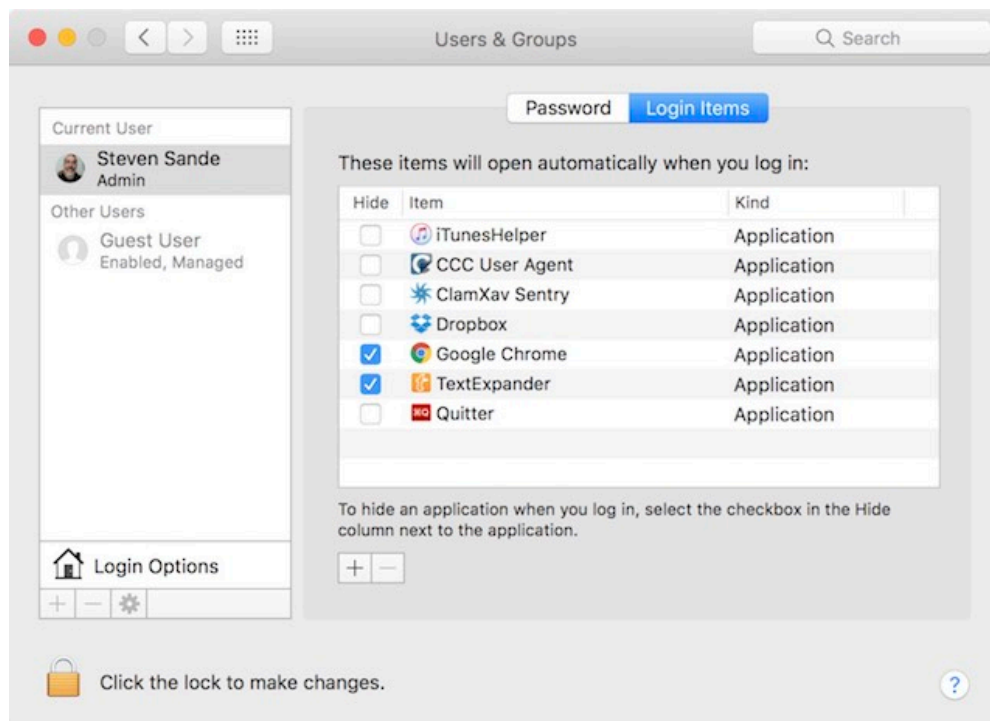
Many of us have apps that we use constantly, so we have them automatically start up whenever we log into our Macs. That can be a problem...

About a week ago I decided that the eighth beta version of macOS 10.13 High Sierra was probably safe enough to install on my "backup" MacBook Pro with Touch Bar. The installation seemed to go alright, although there were some dramatic pauses during the process that had me wondering if I had just "bricked" the MacBook Pro. Finally, after powering down the MacBook Pro and restarting it, I was greeted with the usual login screen and entered my password.

That's when things started going badly. I could see my startup items coming up on the MacBook's display, but then I'd get to a point where two things happened — the screen was obscured by a dark translucency and I could not use the keyboard or trackpad to do anything.

It occurred to me then that the culprit was a screenshot utility that I've used for years. The developer hasn't been exactly religious about updating the app, and it was obvious that something was happening during login that would start up the app in a "full-screen" screenshot mode, meaning that it grayed out the display and seemingly locked out the keyboard and trackpad.

I tried a number of things to keep it from loading during startup, and finally the most obvious command — using Command-Q to quit the app — worked. I immediately deleted the app and I'm now using another screenshot app to capture images for articles.



Some apps, like the utility I was using, have options built into them to start up at login. Others can be found under System Preferences > Users & Groups > Login Items (see screenshot above). Take note of which apps are loading automatically at login, then delete each of the items listed (except for those provided by Apple, such as iTunesHelper) prior to your install of High Sierra. Afterwards, start adding them back one at a time, rebooting each time to make sure that the app doesn't conflict with your startup or login process.

##### 5) Consider Waiting A Little While Before Installing macOS High Sierra

One more thing... unless you have an overriding desire or need to install macOS High Sierra the first day it's available, consider waiting for at least a few days before you do the update.

Apple does a pretty good job of thoroughly beta-testing its operating systems, both through developer and public betas. But occasionally an upgrade may sneak through that starts causing issues for a sizable percentage of users. I recall one such iOS update about five years ago that I jumped onto, only to find that it rendered my iPhone unusable. Fortunately, there were a lot of issues immediately and Apple had a revised update available hours later.

So think about it before you make the upgrade. Can you wait a day or two to see if others are having issues? If so, then you may save yourself a lot of frustration and work by holding off. If it appears that very few Mac users are having issues with the upgrade after a few days, then it's probably safe to give your Mac an upgrade.

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