



# How to Wipe Your Mac Before Donating

*A simple step-by-step guide to erase your data and prepare your device for its next owner*

## Why This Matters

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Before donating your Mac, it's important to erase your personal data — including passwords, files, photos, and account information. This protects your privacy and ensures the next user receives a clean, ready-to-use device.

## Before You Begin

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Take a few minutes to complete these steps before erasing anything:

- Back up your files using Time Machine or iCloud so nothing important is lost.
- Sign out of iCloud: go to System Settings (or System Preferences) → [Your Name] → Sign Out.
- Sign out of iTunes / Music (if using macOS Catalina or earlier): open iTunes → Account → Authorizations → Deauthorize This Computer.
- Unpair any Bluetooth accessories like a Magic Mouse or keyboard.
- Make sure the Mac is plugged into power before you start.

**Tip:** Not sure which version of macOS you have? Click the Apple  menu in the top-left corner, then select About This Mac.

## Option A: Apple Silicon Macs (2020 and newer)

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Apple Silicon Macs (with M1, M2, M3, or M4 chips) use a different erase process. Follow these steps:

- 1. Shut down the Mac.**  
Go to the Apple  menu and choose Shut Down.
- 2. Enter Recovery Mode.**  
Press and hold the Power button until you see "Loading startup options," then click Options → Continue.
- 3. Open Erase Assistant.**

In the menu bar, click Utilities → Erase Mac.

**4. Erase and reinstall.**

Click Erase Mac, then Erase Mac again to confirm. The Mac will restart and guide you through reinstalling macOS automatically.

**5. Complete setup as new.**

When the Setup Assistant appears, press Command + Q to quit and leave the Mac ready for its new owner.

**Note:** If you don't see "Erase Mac" under Utilities, your Mac may not support Erase Assistant. Use Option B below instead.

## Option B: Intel Macs (2019 and earlier)

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Intel-based Macs use macOS Recovery to erase the drive. Here's how:

**1. Restart into Recovery Mode.**

Restart the Mac and immediately hold Command (⌘) + R until you see the Apple logo or a spinning globe.

**2. Open Disk Utility.**

Select Disk Utility from the macOS Utilities window, then click Continue.

**3. Erase the startup disk.**

In the sidebar, select Macintosh HD (or your startup volume). Click Erase, choose APFS or Mac OS Extended (Journaled) as the format, then click Erase.

**4. Reinstall macOS.**

Quit Disk Utility and return to the macOS Utilities screen. Select Reinstall macOS and follow the on-screen prompts. This requires an internet connection.

**5. Exit Setup Assistant.**

When setup completes, press Command + Q when the Setup Assistant appears so the next user can set it up fresh.

 **Important:** Make sure the Mac is connected to Wi-Fi during reinstallation — it will download macOS directly from Apple's servers.

## After Erasing

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Your Mac is now ready to donate! Here's a quick checklist before you hand it over:

- The screen should show the Setup Assistant (a "Hello" welcome screen) or a language selection prompt.
- Include the power adapter if you have it.
- Remove any stickers or labels with your personal information.
- If the Mac has a case, consider including it.

## Donating to AZ StRUT

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AZ StRUT (Arizona Students Recycling Used Technology) accepts computers, laptops, and peripherals — working or not — for refurbishment and redistribution to students and families in need across Arizona.

### Drop-off location and donation information:

- Website: [azstrut.org](http://azstrut.org)
- Phone: 480-222-4066
- Address: 3025 S 48th St, Ste 102, Tempe, AZ 85282
- Drop-off hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
- Drop-offs are also accepted at Data Doctors and select Batteries+ locations

Your donation helps bridge the digital divide — thank you for giving your device a second life!