

Instructions for using your USB Flash-Drive

by Mark Arnold

A flash-drive is meant to be used to for transporting files between computers. It is not a good solution for back-up storage of important files/documents. If you are backing up files, we recommend you burn those files to a CD RW (RW stands for read/write... which allows you to save and edit the contents on the disk repeatedly - a CD R will only let you burn files onto it a single time). Then store your backed up files in a safe place (dry and out of the sun - protect them from scratching). A flash-drive is meant to be portable and a temporary storage for transfer between computers for your files. They are small and not very durable... which means they can easily be lost, stolen or damaged. Today's flash-drives can hold more word processing documents than most people create in a life-time. This has tempted people to use them as a backup system, but we encourage you not to make this a habit.

There are many different names for this style of digital storage device (USB flash-drive, jump-drive, thumb-drive, etc.). You probably notice the similar part in all these names... It is called a "drive" because it appears to the computer operating system (and the user) in a manner identical to a disk drive (ex. Hard Drive), and is accessed in the same way. There are hundreds of flash-drives available, offering various amounts of storage space. If you are planning to buy a one, I wouldn't recommend wasting money on one that is larger than 512MB unless you are planning to transfer lots of audio files or large video files.

Using a flash-drive is pretty easy...

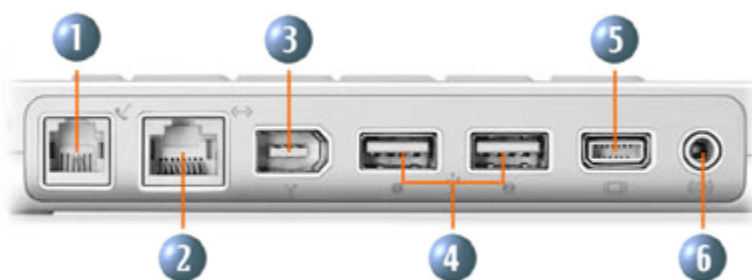
The first thing is getting it connected to your computer. You might have to take its cap off or if it is a retractable model, you will have to slide out the USB connector (USB stands for Universal Serial Bus... don't ask me what that means ;o). Anyway... the USB connector is sort of like the "prongs" that allow you to connect your toaster to a wall socket.





USB "trident" symbol

Then you have to figure out which one of the connection ports on your computer will fit the USB connector. There are two USB ports on your iBook. Below is a diagram showing the different ports on your iBook (This is a diagram of the older, first generation MLTI laptops - the process on current MLTI MS laptop or the HS MLTI MacBooks is practically identical).



1. Internal 56 Kbps modem (This is to connect to the Internet if you have dial-up Internet service... not found on the HS MacBooks)
2. 10/100 Base-T Ethernet (This is what you use to connect the blue cables we use in the school to connect to the internet... faster connection than wireless.)
3. FireWire 400 port (This is used to transfer large files... like video. Firewire refers to its blazing speed.)
4. two USB ports (Many things can be connected via USB... such as our new school cameras.)
5. Video output port (This is what you use to connect to the LCD projectors).
6. Sound output port (This is where you plug in the speakers when using the projector or headphones. The HS MacBooks have a similar port for an external microphone or sound input device, located right next to the sound output port. *All MITI laptops have built-in or "internal" speakers and a microphone.)

Once you have connected your flash-drive, after a few seconds, you should see a new icon on the desktop for your flash-drive. It should look something like the icon shown below. (*The flash-drives DISES has provided to you will have the name "Kingston" below the icon).



To copy files to the flash-drive, all you need to do is drag the files onto this icon or you can double-click on the icon to open up the drive window and drag your files into it. If your flash-drive is connected, you should also be able to save a file you are working on directly to it.

*When you are done copying files into your flash-drive you need to eject it before you disconnect the flash-drive from the computer. To do this, simply drag the flash-drive icon to the trash or you can use the eject button... highlight the flash-drive icon by clicking on it (once) and press the eject button (located to the right of the F12 key - the upper-right most key on the laptop keyboard).



Eject Key

Since the flash-drive is intended to be used to transfer files between different computers, you will need to repeat this process on the computer you are transferring the files to. Depending on the type of computer you are moving the files to, the process may be slightly different.

Find the USB connection port, put your flash-drive in it, and look for the flash-drive icon on that computer's desktop.

Double click on the icon... this should open the drive window and you can drag the files you want to transfer onto the desktop of the other computer. If you are transferring files onto a PC, you can right click on the flash-drive icon and the "properties box" will pop-up. In the properties box you should see "eject" or "remove drive" in the list-menu of the properties box.

*** If you are going to be using a flash-drive in both Macs and PCs... always put the flash-drive into the Mac first. The explanation for why is complicated... but just trust that this will avoid problems ;o)

If you want to know more (almost everything known to man/woman about USB Flash Drives) go to the following link http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USB_flash_drive