

Mac OS X Spotlight Searches:

Spotlight is the Mac OS X built-in search tool. The Spotlight icon looks like a handheld magnifying glass, because its predecessor was Sherlock, like in Sherlock Holmes. The Spotlight is located on the far right side of the Mac OS X menu bar.



Clicking the Spotlight icon opens the Spotlight window. Enter a search term in the Spotlight window and Spotlight will search files for that search term. Spotlight will search all mounted drives, so eject any Bellevue College network drives before a search.

Spotlight will search file names and the content of files, such as the content of Microsoft Office files (including Entourage e-mail), Adobe Acrobat files, saved Web files and many other application files.

Sample files were created for these instructions. Some files included the acronym **SID**. Another set of files included the phrase **Employee Development and Performance Plan**. Other significant search terms could be **SSN, Social Security Number, Eval, Grade, Roster, A894, Class Lists, Instructor Briefcase** and **Students**.

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate a search for files containing the search term **SID**. Type the acronym **SID** in the Spotlight window. As illustrated in Figure 1, a list of files is generated as mounted drives are searched. Clicking on the phrase **Show All** opens a window illustrated in Figure 2.

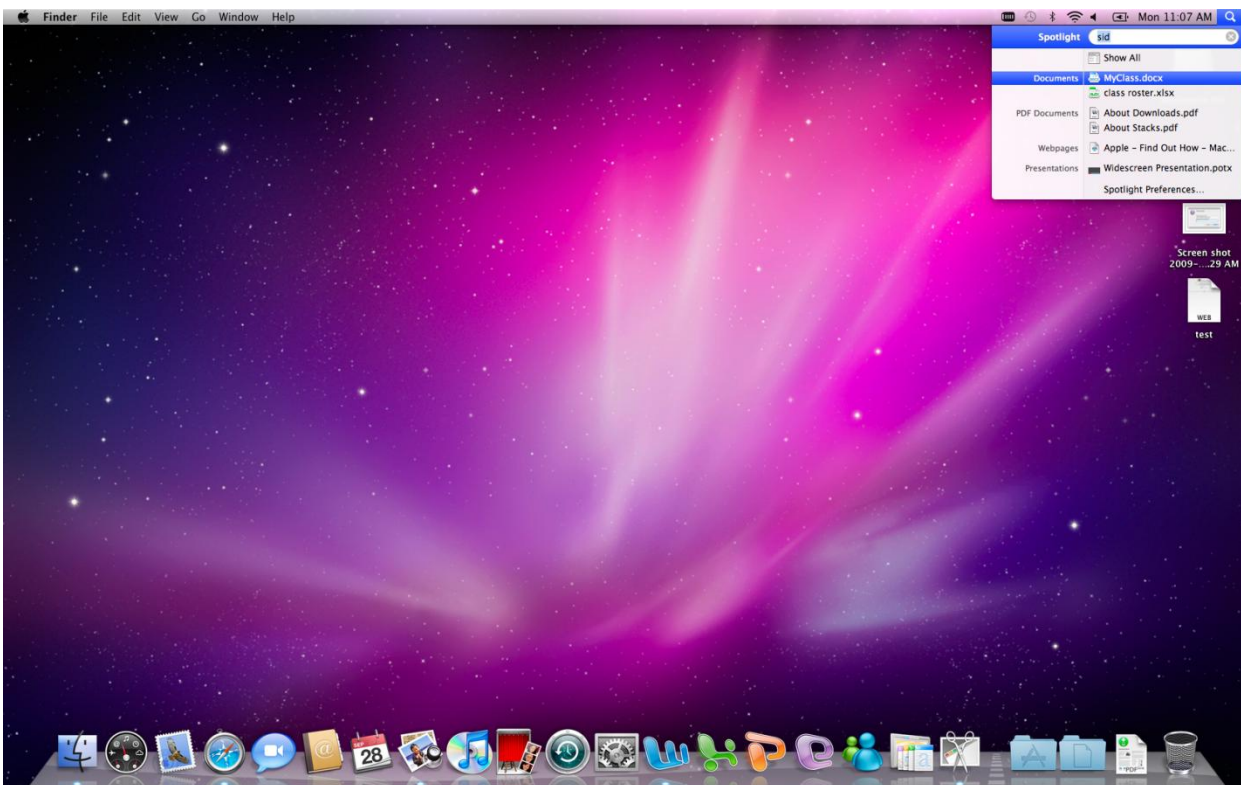


Figure 1

The window provides detailed information on all files that include the letters **SID** in their content. Now you can open the files and delete any sensitive information related to **SID** that may be present.

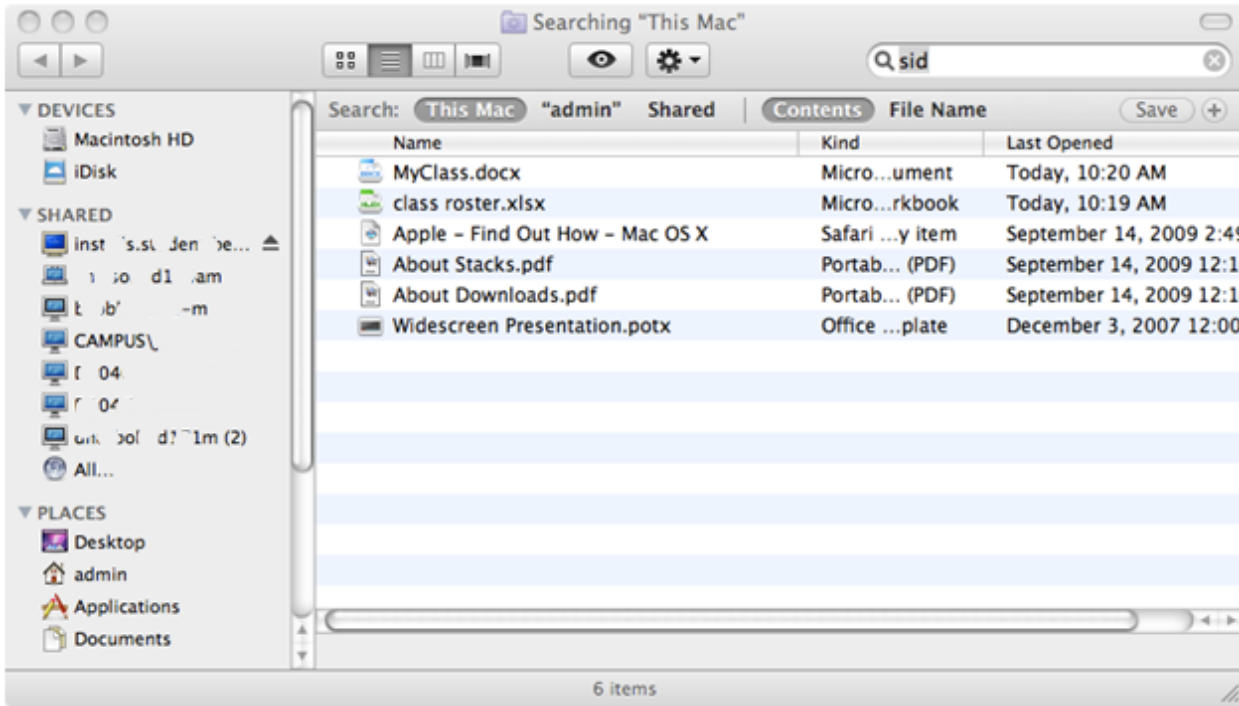


Figure 2

Figures 3 and 4 illustrate a search for the word **Performance**, a word often used in evaluations. Type the word **performance** into the Spotlight window. Then click **Show All** to bring up a window, illustrated in Figure 4, with more details about items found

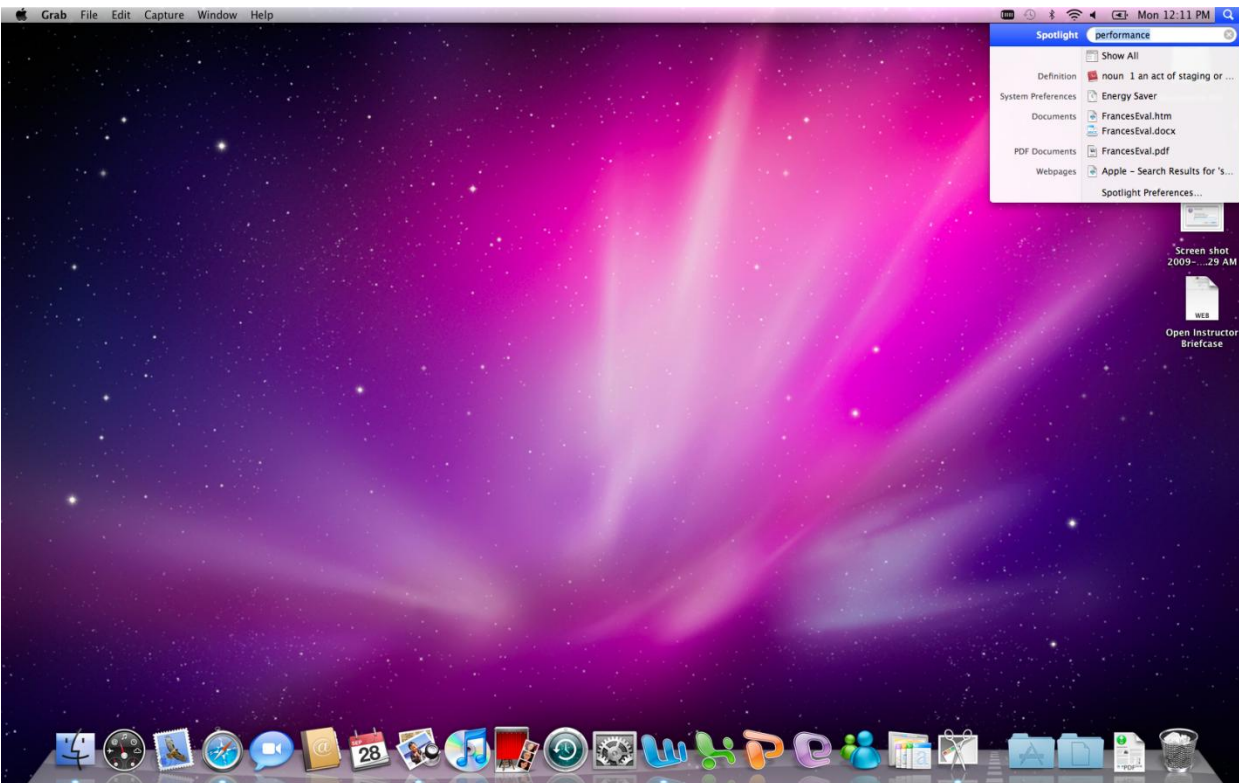


Figure 3

Notice that the word performance is included in a Word document (.docx), an Adobe Acrobat document (.pdf) and a Web page (.htm). These files can be reviewed for sensitive information such as Social Security Numbers or SID.

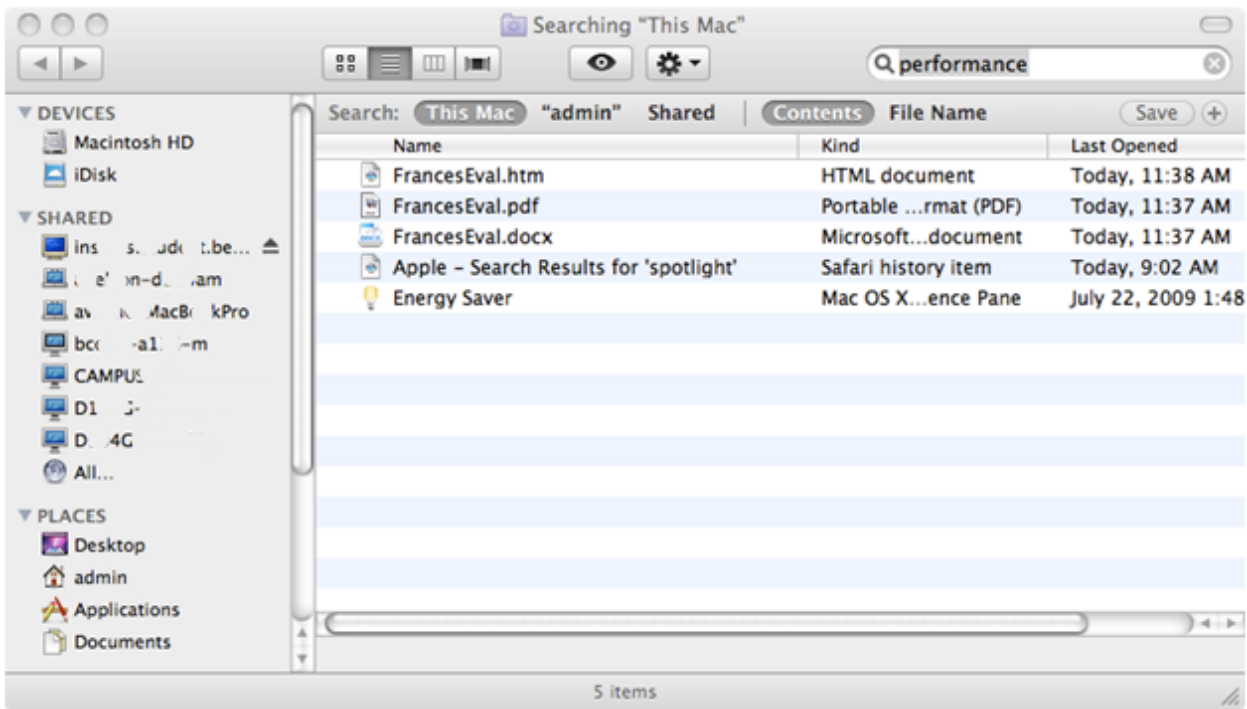


Figure 4

Spotlight is a powerful tool built-in to Mac OS X!

Searching for data with Spotlight is not difficult, but you need to know your data well in order to search it effectively. Many separate searches may be needed to find all of the data you are looking for on your computer, particularly when searching for potentially sensitive and confidential data, such as Social Security numbers, addresses, phone numbers and others. Ultimately, you know best what names you have used for file names or content and what you expect to find on your computer.

If you have any questions about these directions,
please contact the Help Desk at 425.564.4357 (x4357).