



Locamatic

What it does

Have you ever wished that your Mac would update its location automatically on the basis of the network that you're using? Perhaps you use your Mac at work, accessing the internet through a proxy server, and at home where you have none. It isn't difficult to select a new location from the Location menu in the Apple menu, but why should you have to? Locamatic will do all this for you!

Installing Locamatic

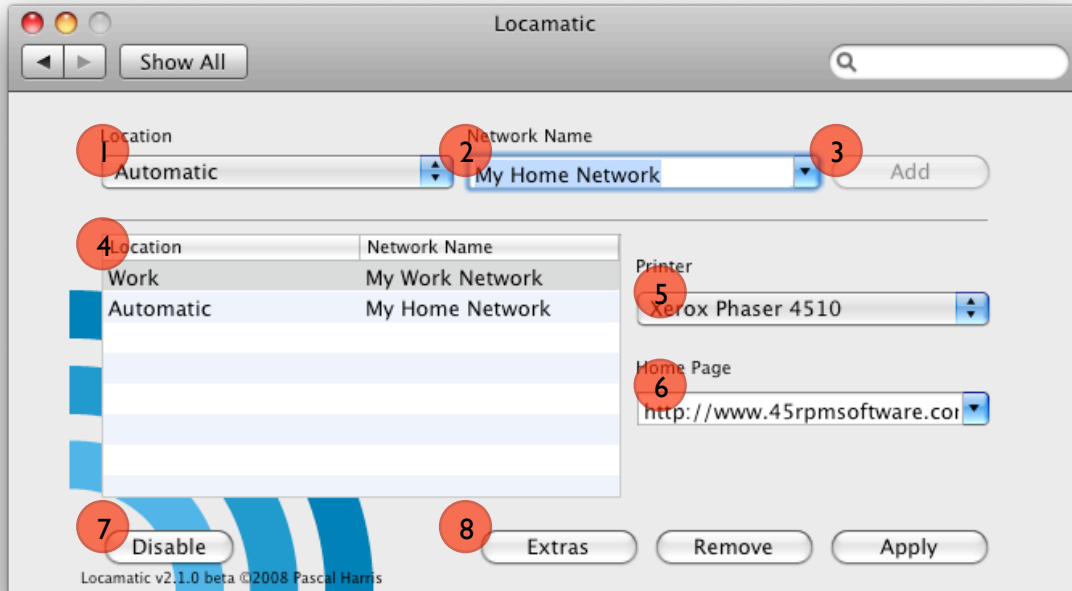
Double click on the Locamatic preference pane icon. If this is the first time that you are installing Locamatic, you will be asked whether you'd like to install it for all users or just for the current one. Make your choice, and the System Preferences application will load with Locamatic. If Locamatic is already installed, then reinstalling it will just update the current version.

n.b Upgrading Locamatic on Leopard

If you are upgrading from Locamatic 2.0.2 or earlier on Leopard, you needed to delete the old Locamatic before installing the new version. You can resolve this by loading the System Preferences application, right clicking on Locamatic and selecting 'Remove "Locamatic" Preference Pane'. If it doesn't disappear then delete `com.apple.systempreferences.plist` from your 'home' preferences (`/Users/<username>/Library/Preferences`).

How to use it

Locamatic is based around one window. It's a simple soul and it doesn't need any more. Close the window and Locamatic quits. Let's take a quick tour of the screen.



- 1 Location Your locations can be selected from the location drop down menu. You'll need to have set up your locations beforehand for Locamatic to be useful. Locations are set up in the Network Preferences pane in the System Preferences application. All your locations will appear here.

⚠ Don't know how to set up locations? Check the Help section of this document for a hint!
- 2 Network Name The identities of the networks that you connect to are selectable in the Network Name combo box.

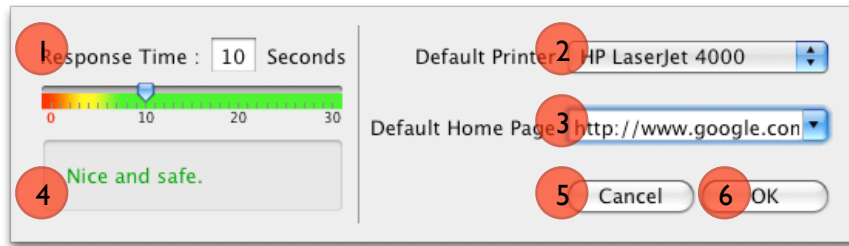
 - a Wireless If you are entering settings for a Wireless network you can select it by name. Since you may want to enter settings for a network that you haven't previously connected to, and since some wireless networks have their names hidden you also have the option to type the name in manually. Make sure that you get the capitalization correct.
 - b Wired If you are entering settings for a Wired Ethernet network you will need to know the IP address of the router or gateway that you use. You can find this information for the network that you are currently connected to by looking in the Network System Preference pane and selecting Ethernet.
- 3 Add Button The 'Add' button adds the contents of the Location and Network Name menus to the table.

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- ④ **Settings Table** The table contains the settings for Locamatic. In this example, the location will be set to Work when the computer connects to NETGEAR. Clicking the 'Add' button in this example will ensure that the location is set to Automatic when the computer connects to 'Dual G4'. In practice, you should never need to use the 'Automatic' location because Locamatic will automatically select this option whenever the computer connects to an unknown network.
- n.b.** You may not add the same Network Name more than once. If you have two devices with the same name (e.g. two wireless routers, both called NetGear), you can either:
- Make sure that all your wireless routers have unique names.
 - Use the IP address of the router or gateway instead.
- ⑤ **Printer Menu** Only printers that are currently set up on your computer will show up in the Default Printer menu. Since Locamatic gets printer information from CUPS, their names might differ from those shown in printer utility - but they will be close enough for you to work out which printer is which. If you want to have no default printer, select the 'empty' printer option from the menu.
- ⑥ **Homepage Menu** The Homepage menu allows you to set the homepage for the currently selected network. Be sure to enter it carefully, and don't forget the "http". If you leave this menu blank then Locamatic will select your default homepage instead or, if no default has been set, it will not change your selected homepage.
- ⑦ **Disable Button** The 'Disable' button will turn off Locamatic's functionality without deleting its settings. When you click it a second time, Locamatic will re-enable itself.
- ⑧ **Extras Button** The 'Extras' button will display the options to set the default printer and the default homepage if no configured networks can be found. It also sets the response time for Locamatic.
- ⑨ **Remove Button** The 'Remove' button will remove the selected row from the table.
- ⑩ **Apply Button** The 'Apply' button will save the settings and run the Locamatic task. The Locamatic task will launch automatically each time you restart the computer. If all rows have been removed from the table, then clicking the apply button will turn off Locamatic's functionality and delete the settings.

Extra Settings

When the Extras button has been clicked, the settings for default homepage, default printer and response time are displayed. The 'sheet' looks like this:



- 1 **Response Time** The response time setting should not normally need to be altered. It controls how rapidly Locamatic responds to a change in the network. 10 seconds seems to be a good compromise between functionality (too fast, and Locamatic won't work properly) and performance (too slow, and you'll get bored waiting for Locamatic to change). 10 seconds passed testing on a G3 iBook and a MacBook. If you're having problems with Locamatic not changing your location properly, you might want to consider lengthening the response time to, for example, 20 seconds. If you're a performance freak who's over-clocked the toaster, you could try decreasing the response time. And no, it is never possible to have a response time of Zero.
- 2 **Default Printer** The default printer is the printer that will be selected if no configured networks could be found. If you leave the default printer blank then Locamatic will not alter your printer selection.
- 3 **Default Homepage** The default homepage is the homepage that will be selected if no configured networks could be found. If you leave the default homepage blank then Locamatic will not alter your homepage selection.
- 4 **Advice Panel** The advice panel sagely indicates if your selected response time is wise, foolhardy or rather dull. It's just an indication - you may find that you can ignore it safely.
- 5 **Cancel** The cancel button ditches all your changes and returns you to the main Locamatic screen.
- 6 **OK** The OK button saves all your changes and returns you to the main Locamatic screen.

Deleting Locamatic

There are two ways of deleting Locamatic:

- 1 Load System Preferences and click on Locamatic. Remove all rows from the table, and click 'Apply'. Then quit System Preferences and drag the Locamatic preference pane icon to the trash. The preference pane icon can be found in the PreferencePanes folder in Library. Check the 'root' library (/Library) and also your 'home' library (/Users/<username>/Library).
- 2 Drag the Locamatic preference pane icon and its settings to the trash. The preference pane icon can be found in the PreferencePanes folder in Library. You will also need to remove Locamatic from the LaunchAgents folder in library, and delete the Locamatic folder (also in library). Check the 'root' library (/Library) and also your 'home' library (/Users/<username>/Library).

Help! It's all gone wrong. Those FAQ's in full:

Sometimes nothing seems to go right. Hopefully this FAQ will smooth things out.

What are 'Locations', and how do I add them?

Locations are saved settings for your computer's network services (i.e. Ethernet, AirPort, Bluetooth etc). Rather than reconfiguring your network settings each time you connect to a different network, you can set up new locations so that your saved settings can be reloaded at the click of a button (or by letting Locamatic do it for you!) You could, for example, have a Location for your home network settings, and a location for your work network settings.

To add a location, load System Preferences and click on the Network icon. If you are running Leopard, click on the Location pop-up menu and select Edit Locations. From here you can add, copy, rename or delete Locations. Now enter settings for the network services that you want to use in your selected location.

If you're still stuck, click on the 'Help' menu in the Finder (or in System Preferences) and search for Location.

I was using Locamatic and I decided that I needed to add a few Locations. Without leaving the system preferences application I used the Network panel to add my Locations, but when I returned to Locamatic my new Locations were nowhere to be seen.

That's not a bug! I like to think of it as correct functionality (although I may need to get out more). You need to quit System Preferences, reload it and then click on the Locamatic preference pane in order for your new Locations to show up.

Locamatic picks up my Locations correctly, but it doesn't seem to apply the settings correctly - it just defaults to another network - usually Automatic. I use a space at the beginning of some of my Location names so that they are ordered correctly.

Locamatic trims spaces from Location names when it parses them. Use another character for the first letter of your Location name.

Locamatic is behaving very weirdly. When I click 'Apply', my new settings don't seem to do anything.

It's possible that the LaunchAgent for Locamatic is corrupted. I recommend that you delete all your Locamatic settings. Remove Locamatic from the LaunchAgents folder in library, and delete the Locamatic folder (also in library). Check the 'root' library (/Library) and also your 'home' library (/Users/<username>/Library). All your Locamatic settings will be lost.

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I just installed Leopard and now Locamatic doesn't appear in my preferences.

The problem isn't with Locamatic. Nor is the problem with Leopard. I'm guessing that you previously installed Locamatic on your Tiger system and then imported your account into Leopard from a Tiger partition on another drive. You'll need to fix your permissions - they're all screwed up. Esoteric, perhaps - but this happened to me.

I've got two Locamatic icons in the System Preferences window - and one of them doesn't work.

If you were upgrading from Locamatic 2.0.2 or earlier, you needed to delete the old Locamatic before installing the new version. You can resolve this by loading the System Preferences application, right clicking on both Locamatics and selecting 'Remove "Locamatic" Preference Pane'. If one doesn't disappear then delete com.apple.systempreferences.plist from your 'home' preferences (/Users/<username>/Library/Preferences).

Locamatic seems to be quite slow about switching networks.

The reason for the delay is that Locamatic deliberately pauses for ten seconds before switching networks. If it didn't then the network settings wouldn't have time to settle down before Locamatic worked its mojo - the upshot of which would likely be a failed Location switch. Which would be pointless. I could probably adjust a few things to work a bit faster, at the possible expense of reliability. Or I could make it configurable. What do you reckon?

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Conditions of use

This software has been tested on two MacBooks, two PowerMacs, a G3 iBook and an Intel iMac. It's hardly representative of the Mac community at large - which is why I need your help. Naturally, I hope that this software will be useful to you - which is why I didn't release it until the basic functionality was completed - but it may be that some small bugs have escaped detection. You may use this software freely on the condition that:

1. If you discover a bug, other than one documented here, you send me an e-mail documenting exactly what happened and the impact (screen-shot, console output etc. to be included if relevant).
2. If you think of useful missing functionality, other than functionality documented here, you send me an e-mail describing the function and exactly how you think it should work.
3. You let me know the configuration of your computer - the OS version and processor (speed and type). No willy-waving please - I'm sure your computer is very impressive, but if you run this successfully on a 233MHz G3 with Mac OS X 10.2, I need to know.
4. You understand that you use this software at your own risk. I believe that there are no serious bugs in this program, but I don't guarantee that there aren't any. I do promise that I will fix any serious bugs that you find - or withdraw this software in the event of a real show-stopper.

For Version 2.5 (maybe!)

1. Update so that Locamatic can configure the active e-mail client. That'd be nice, wouldn't it?
2. AppleScript / Shell Script support. Then you could add your own functionality to Locamatic.

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Document History

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| 11 April 2007 | First version |
| 12 April 2007 | Updates to incorporate changes for v0.3 release. Additional information regarding disabling Locamatic. |
| 19 April 2007 | Updates regarding Locamatic's new preference pane status. |
| 6 Nov 2007 | Updated to cover the new functionality for Version 2.0 beta. I also added a FAQ section. |
| 8 March 2008 | Updates concerning installation of Locamatic on Leopard. |
| 11 April 2008 | Updates concerning adding wired ethernet networks to Locamatic settings. |
| 24 April 2008 | Updates to improve the clarity of the document. It seems that I may have been a bit obscure. My apologies - I hope that this helps. Thanks to my wife for proof reading this version! |
| 2 June 2008 | Updates to the Extras panel have now been documented. |

Version History

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| 11 April 2007 | Locamatic 0.2 First public release for testing. |
| 12 April 2007 | Locamatic 0.3 Buttons should enable and disable correctly. Bug fixed which prevents Locamatic from running immediately at startup. Disable/Enable button added. Locamatic now reloads previous state. |
| 17 April 2007 | Locamatic 0.3a Minor update so that locations with an apostrophe in them are correctly handled. |
| 18 April 2007 | Locamatic 0.4 (not released). Locamatic is now a preference pane. The code has been substantially optimized (although, no doubt, further improvements are possible!). |

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- 19 April 2007 Final version 1. Normally we'd do the whole release candidate thing, but I only have a few testers and we've been talking about this the whole way. It works ergo it's released. There are ideas for additional functionality ergo there will be a version 2.
- 20 April 2007 Version 1.0a Oops. I found a bug that I really should have caught earlier. Under certain circumstances, it was possible to add two networks with the same SSID. This fault has now been rectified, and I apologise for any inconvenience caused. I also further optimized the code and brought the file format into line with standard XML (alas breaking compatibility with the Locamatic v1.0 and earlier format). I really, really apologise for the inconvenience and I promise not to do this to you again (well, not until version 2, anyway!)
- 4 May 2007 Version 1.1 Remember the annoying combo-box problem? Well I fixed it. Nothing else to report except that I am ploughing ahead with version 2.
- 6 Nov 2007 Version 2.0 beta. More changes than you could shake a stick at. It does printer settings, it does home pages settings and a bunch of bugs have been fixed too (who else noticed that the Remove button sometimes (usually) only allowed one removal before giving up?). Some changes are merely cosmetic - the Networks menu no longer shows a load of white space, for example.
- 11 Nov 2007 Version 2.0.1 beta. Fixed a bug which prevented Locamatic from working if Extras were selected but not set up for some locations. That could have been embarrassing!
- 23 Nov 2007 Version 2.0.2 beta. Fixed a bug which prevented the Disabled button from working. Also made an improvement where so that the 'Add' button is disabled if the selected network has already been added.
- 25 Nov 2007 Version 2.0.3 beta. Fixed a bug which prevented Locamatic from installing on systems running Leopard.
- 1 Dec 2007 Version 2.0.4 beta. Fixed a bug which prevented the network list being populated correctly on systems running Leopard.
- 8 March 2008 Version 2.0.5 beta. Fixed a bug which prevented Locamatic from being disabled.
- 11 April 2008 Version 2.0.6 beta. I tidied up the code a bit more and then added support for wired networks. Actually, it would be more accurate to say that I did them both at more or less the same time. But you don't need to know that, do you?
- 20 April 2008 Version 2.0.7 beta. Changes the way wired networks are handled. Much neater now.
- 24 April 2008 Version 2.0.8 beta. Further corrections to the functionality of wired network configuration. It seems that previous versions worked for me, but not for anyone else!
- 2 June 2008 Version 2.1 beta. Following suggestions and requests, I've rejigged the UI a little and added new functionality. I hope that this ticks some of your boxes.