

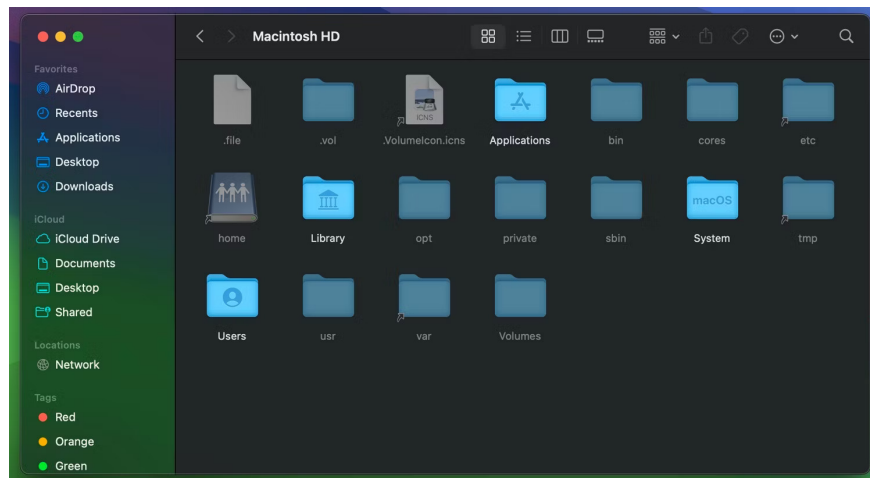
How to view hidden files on Mac

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macOS hides many system files by default, but how can you see if they are needed for troubleshooting purposes? Luckily, you can use any of the following methods to easily view all hidden files or folders on your Mac.

View hidden files with Mac shortcuts

The easiest way to view hidden files and folders on your Mac is to use keyboard shortcuts. Just go to the desired folder in Finder and press **Command + Shift + (.)** on the keyboard.



Now, you can see a bunch of blurred files or folders in this section. These are hidden in macOS. If you don't see anything, it means there are no hidden files in this folder.

You can press this shortcut again to hide those files from view again. This is just one of several useful Mac keyboard shortcuts that make your life easier.

This shortcut will also show hidden files and folders in other folders. So remember to press **Command + Shift + (.)** again to hide them.

Show all hidden Mac files using Terminal

Another way to see all hidden files on your Mac is to use Terminal commands. Open Terminal on your Mac from **Applications > Utilities** in Finder or by using Spotlight (**Command + Space**).

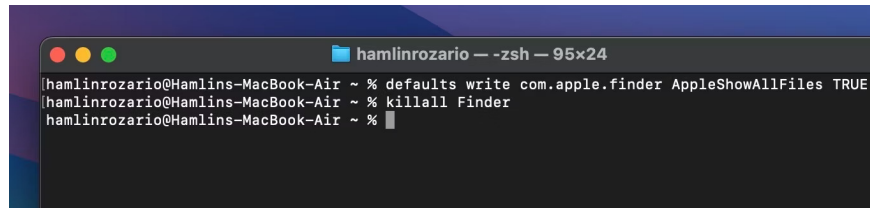
Enter the following command to view hidden files or folders and press **Return** to execute it:

```
defaults write com.apple.finder AppleShowAllFiles TRUE
```

You can also use the word **YES** at the end instead of TRUE.

Then enter the following command and press **Return** to restart Finder:

```
killall Finder
```

A screenshot of a macOS Terminal window. The title bar reads "hamlinrozario - zsh - 95x24". The terminal content shows three lines of text: "hamlinrozario@HamLins-MacBook-Air ~ % defaults write com.apple.finder AppleShowAllFiles TRUE", "hamlinrozario@HamLins-MacBook-Air ~ % killall Finder", and "hamlinrozario@HamLins-MacBook-Air ~ %". The cursor is at the end of the third line.

Now, all hidden files or folders on your Mac will be visible.

Note : If you don't enter the killall Finder command, you'll need to manually close and reopen Finder before you can see all the hidden files and folders on your Mac.

After accessing these hidden files, you can hide them again by entering the following command and pressing **Return** :

```
defaults write com.apple.finder AppleShowAllFiles FALSE
```

You can also use the word **NO** at the end instead of **FALSE** . But remember to enter the killall Finder command afterwards.

View hidden files in folders using Terminal

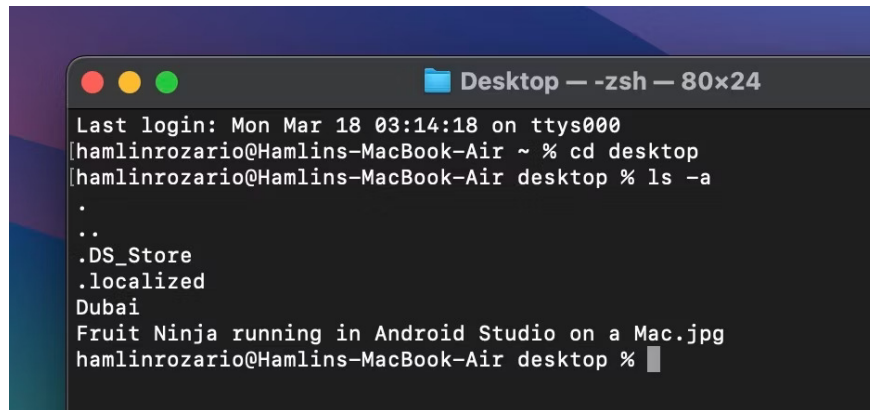
Maybe you don't want to show all the files and folders on your Mac. Instead, you want to see hidden files in a specific folder. In that case, you need to access the folder in Terminal using the cd command.

For example, if you want to see hidden files on your desktop, enter the following into Terminal and press **Return** :

```
cd desktop
```

Then, enter the following Terminal command to list all hidden Mac files in that folder:

```
ls -a
```

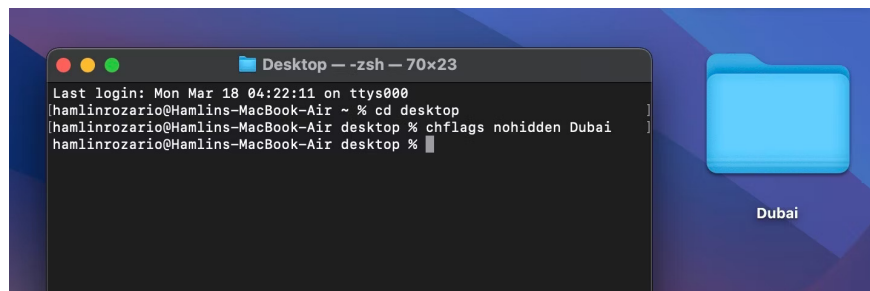


```
Desktop -- -zsh -- 80x24
Last login: Mon Mar 18 03:14:18 on ttys000
[hamlinrozario@Hamlins-MacBook-Air ~ % cd desktop
[hamlinrozario@Hamlins-MacBook-Air desktop % ls -a
.
..
.DS_Store
.localized
Dubai
Fruit Ninja running in Android Studio on a Mac.jpg
hamlinrozario@Hamlins-MacBook-Air desktop %
```

Hidden files will be listed in Terminal, but they remain hidden on the Mac. To actually show one of these files, type the command below, followed by the file or directory name, and press **Return** :

```
chflags nohidden [FILE NAME]
```

Replace [FILE NAME] with any file or folder you want to show. In the example, the article author chose to show a folder named "Dubai" by entering **chflags nohidden Dubai** .



To hide this file again, type the following command, add a space, then drag and drop the file into the Terminal window. Then, press the **Return** key :

```
chflags hidden
```

The Terminal command above is just one of many ways to hide files on your Mac. Additionally, you can use FileVault to create hidden folders or rename files with a period (.) before the name to make them disappear from view.

Note : Hiding a folder on your Mac does not hide the files inside it. Even if others cannot see your hidden folder, you should consider hiding these files for added security.

Remember that many files and folders are hidden on your Mac for some reason. So make sure you know what you're doing when accessing hidden files needed for macOS to work.

You finished reading the article "**How to view hidden files on Mac**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.