

peed Beep 2.0, Copyright ©1991 Robert L Mathews

[Using Speed Beep Online Help](#)

This information is intended to be a brief, handy reference guide. For more information, you can read the "Speed Beep 2.0 Info" TeachText document that should be included with this copy of Speed Beep.

If you are using System version 7.0 or greater, you can use Balloon Help in the Speed Beep control panel - however, this feature may not work if you have renamed the "Speed Beep" file.

[About Speed Beep](#)

Speed Beep is a System Extension that changes a number of things about the way your Macintosh beeps. Despite its relatively large size on your disk, it takes up very little precious memory (less than 16k) compared to other utilities such as SoundMaster, and it's actually useful (!) in addition to being another entertaining Mac novelty.

Speed Beep's main purpose is to allow you to continue working while a beep sound is playing. This is obviously useful if you like to use longer beep sounds, but it also comes in handy if your Mac beeps a number of times in a row, even with a short beep sound set.

If you wish, you can also use the Speed Beep control panel to choose a group of sounds from which Speed Beep will choose a random beep; you can specify the relative chance that a given beep will be played. If you like random beep sounds, you'll love this feature: it ensures that only the sounds you like will ever be played, and lets you set that 10 second long "Skid & Crash" beep sound to be played only once in a blue moon.

Another option that you can turn on (if your Mac supports it) is multiple simultaneous sound playing. With this feature, two or more beeps can play at the same time. It's a great deal of fun, and you'll want to turn it off after a little while because it can drive you insane.

[Installing Speed Beep](#)

To install Speed Beep, put it in the System Folder (or "Control Panels" folder for users of System 7 or greater) and restart your Macintosh. You should see the Speed Beep icon as it loads into memory. If you want to turn Speed Beep off for a single computing session, hold down the mouse button to prevent it from loading (you'll see the Speed Beep icon with an X through it). If you want to turn Speed Beep off for longer than that, it's probably more convenient to simply remove it from your System Folder (or Control Panels folder).

Once you've installed it, you'll want to open up the Speed Beep control panel and configure it for your machine. There's a complete description below of the major items in the control panel, but here's an overview: You'll turn on the sound or sounds you want to hear when your Macintosh beeps by checking the box to the left of a sound name. If you want random sounds, you can cause some of them to be played more often than others by moving the "Random Weight" slider control to a higher setting. And if you want to hear more than one beep at once, you can set the "Maximum Simultaneous Beeps" control to a higher number (not all Macintoshes support this feature - see below).

[The Sound List](#)

The Sound List shows the names of all the sounds currently available for use as system beeps, and has a check box to the left of each name to allow you to turn sounds on or off. When you click on a sound name, the sound will play and the "Random Weight" slider control will show the weight setting for that sound (see below for more info). If the checkbox to the left of a sound name has an X through it, that sound is turned on. More than one sound can be on at once. If only one sound is on, that sound will always play as your System Beep. If more than one sound is on, Speed Beep will select a random beep sound from among the sounds that are turned on (again, read the weight control section below). If no sounds are on, Speed Beep is completely disabled - the sound specified in Apple's Sound control panel will be your System Beep.

You can move through the sound list by typing the name of a sound, or by pressing the up or down arrow keys on the keyboard. Pressing RETURN or ENTER "toggles" the sound on or off.

The Weight Control

The weight control slider allows you to set the random weight of the currently selected sound from 1 to 10. Simply put, a sound with a high weight value is more likely to be randomly selected to play than a sound with a lower weight value.

For example, let's say you have two beep sounds turned on. The first sound has a weight setting of 9 and the second has a weight setting of 1. When your Macintosh beeps, the first sound will play 90% of the time and the second will play 10% of the time (on average).

Note that the weight control only has an effect if more than one sound is turned on (you are using random beeps).

You can change the weight value of the currently selected sound by pressing the left or right arrow keys.

Maximum Simultaneous Beeps Control

The MSBC allows some Macintoshes to play more than one beep sound at the same time - if your Macintosh beeps three times and this control is set to 3 or higher (and there's enough computer processing power and memory available), you'll hear all three beeps at once. It sure is a time saver(!), but it's possible to have so many beeps going at once that your Mac slows to a crawl, thus defeating the whole purpose of Speed Beep. If this happens, you should turn this control down to a more reasonable level.

For this feature to work, your Macintosh needs to be running System software 6.0.7 or greater and (as of this writing) also needs to have a piece of hardware called the Apple Sound Chip, which is standard equipment on most Macintoshes since the original Mac II. The best way to tell if your machine is capable of playing more than one sound at once is to try it; turn on one long sound and then do something that makes your Mac beep twice in quick succession, such as choosing "Page Setup" and clicking outside the box twice. You'll be able to tell if it's working. If it doesn't work on your machine, you should set the "Maximum Simultaneous Beeps" slider to 1 to avoid slowing down your Macintosh. Unfortunately Apple currently provides no acceptable way for Speed Beep to check whether your Macintosh can do this without possibly getting the wrong answer on a future Macintosh model.

"Where can I get sounds from?"

Speed Beep uses the same sounds that appear in the standard 'Sound' control panel that comes with your Macintosh. These are often referred to as sound resources (you might see them called snds or snd resources). If you are satisfied with the sounds that show up in Apple's 'Sound' and the Speed Beep control panels, you need do nothing more (and you can skip the rest of this section). If, however, you yearn for a little variety, there's a wide collection of sounds available that people have recorded for the Macintosh. They are almost certainly available from the same service or person that you got Speed Beep from; all you'll need to know is how to put them into your System file.

If you are using System 7.0 or greater, it is likely that any sounds you acquire will already be in a suitable sound resource format (the file icon looks like a document with a loudspeaker on it). You can just drag this type of sound into your System file, and it will appear in the Speed Beep control panel sound list.

If the sound file is not in this format or you are not yet using System 7.0, you will need a utility to convert the sound file into the right format and to install it. An excellent shareware program (written by Riccardo Éttore) for this very purpose exists; it is called SoundMover and is very likely available from the same services or person you obtained the sounds from. SoundMover comes with documentation that can tell you far more about moving the various types of old-style sound resources than I can in this limited space.

A couple of other options that exist for those a little more familiar with sound on the Macintosh are to use a sound program (like SoundEdit) to convert the sound into a snd resource, and then to use ResEdit to install the sound directly into your 'System' file, or use Suitcase to open it. Any method

that would normally make sounds appear in Apple's Sound control panel will work for Speed Beep. Make sure that all of the sounds have resource names.

Troubleshooting

If you're having any type of trouble with Speed Beep, the first thing you should do is press the "Status" button. You'll see a display that should let you know what the problem is. Below are slightly more detailed descriptions of the types of problems you might encounter.

If you hear a beep sound that you weren't expecting or Speed Beep only works intermittently, it could be a memory problem. If Speed Beep doesn't have enough memory to load and play the sound you choose, it will instead allow the Macintosh to play beeps the old way: the beep set in Apple's 'Sound' control panel is played, and you can't use your Mac until it's finished playing. To stop this from happening in the first place, you might want to try turning on shorter sounds in the Speed Beep sound list, which require less memory. (Stereo or Compressed sounds also use extra memory or processing power.) Sometimes, however, it's going to happen no matter what: it's a good idea to select your shortest sound in Apple's Sound control panel to minimize the inconvenience. Pressing the "Status" button will tell you if you have a memory problem.

If Speed Beep doesn't ever seem to work, it could be because another system extension which loads after Speed Beep is changing the way your Macintosh beeps. For technical reasons, if you have a number of system extensions which completely replace the program code your Macintosh uses to beep, only the one which loads last will work (system extensions usually load in alphabetical order). Speed Beep is one such utility that completely replaces the standard beep code; SoundMaster and ClickChange are other examples. If you think you might be having this type of problem, rename Speed Beep so that it is alphabetically last (perhaps to "zzz Speed Beep") and restart your computer. Pressing the "Status" button will tell you if this is a problem.

If Speed Beep doesn't ever work with a certain few applications (but works with most), it's because Speed Beep has detected that the application in question changes the way the Macintosh beeps, and Speed Beep has disabled itself. This may seem annoying, but it's to your advantage: it helps make sure that your machine won't crash because an application is taking liberties with the standard sound generating program code. Two applications that cause this to happen are HyperCard version 1.2.5 and SoundEdit version 2.03. Let me point out that these types of applications aren't harmful by themselves - it's just that they assume that system beeps don't play asynchronously, and this assumption can cause strange things to happen. When you quit the application that disabled Speed Beep, everything will return to normal. Once again, the "Status" button will report this type of problem.

If Speed Beep is slowing down your machine while a beep is playing, try setting the "Maximum Simultaneous Beeps" slider to 1.

If you can't solve the problem, or you think that you might have discovered a bug, feel free to contact me by either of the methods listed below - I'll be happy to help you, whether or not you've sent in your shareware payment yet.

Shareware Information

Speed Beep is not free! It's commercial software being distributed through the shareware system (it's not necessarily a contradiction, honest). Here's how it works: please try it out free for 15 days. If you don't like it, just erase it from your disk - or even better, give it (along with the documentation file) to someone else who might be interested. If you do like it and want to keep using it, send me a check or money order for \$9.95 and you'll receive a disk containing the latest version of Speed Beep and a fun collection of beep sounds, along with a secret code that will make the shareware payment request messages stop.

If you honestly swear you can't afford the \$9.95 (for example, let's say you're a starving student), send what you can afford, even if you can only afford a kind comment and a Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope (so that I can send the code back to you) - but you'll have to send at least \$5.00 if you want a disk back, so I can cover my expenses.

Paying for Speed Beep isn't just a good idea - it's the law. But seriously folks, I have invested a lot of time in it, and your support will guarantee that I continue to update it and to develop new products. Please note that if you paid any fee to get hold of a copy of Speed Beep, including downloading charges or a fee for a disk of shareware, I don't get any money from that - you're still required to pay the shareware fee.

By the way, if you pay for this version, you're automatically registered for all future releases. However, if the "secret code" becomes widely known, the code scheme may change, and this would require you to send me another SASE or electronic mail to obtain the new code. The moral of this story is that you shouldn't tell others the code if you register...

Please make your check or money order payable to "Robert L Mathews". Here's where to send your hard earned money:

Robert L Mathews
Box 204
15 Oakland Avenue
Oakland, CA 94611-4519

You can also contact me on America Online by sending mail to "L Products" if you'd just like to talk about Speed Beep.

[Extra Credit](#)

Special thanks to Sandy for putting up with "that damn computer," and to Andrew Wynn Rouse for the Sound List checkbox interface suggestion.