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Every major version of Mac OS X macOS has come with a new default wallpaper. As you can see, I have collected them all here.

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While great in their day, the early wallpapers are now quite small in the world of 5K displays.

Major props to the world-class designer who does all the art of Relay FM, the mysterious @forgottentowel, for upscaling some of these for modern screens.

If you want to see detailed screenshots of every release of OS X, [click here](#).

10.0 Cheetah & 10.1 Puma

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The first two releases of Mac OS X shared the same wallpaper. The sweeping blue arcs and curves helped set the tone of the new Aqua interface.

10.2 Jaguar

Jaguar took the same Aqua-inspired theme but added some depth and motion to things. In my head, the trails streaking across the screen were from a set of comets.

10.3 Panther

While Panther inflicted Macs everywhere with Brushed Metal, its wallpaper stayed on brand, refreshing the original 10.0 image.

10.4 Tiger

Many consider Tiger to be the best “classic” version of Mac OS X. While that may or may not be true, it has my favorite Aqua-inspired wallpaper.

10.5 Leopard

Complete with a revised, unified user interface and shiny new Dock, 10.5 broke the Aqua mold. As such, Leopard was the first version of OS X to break from the Aqua-themed wallpaper. It ushered in the “space era” of OS X wallpapers, which was used heavily in the new Time Machine interface as well.



10.6 Snow Leopard

The “no new features” mantra for Snow Leopard didn’t ban a new wallpaper, thankfully. This starscape is still one of my favorites.

10.7 Lion

Lion kept up the space theme, this time showing off the Andromeda galaxy. The space nerd in me likes the idea, but the execution of this one leaves dead-last on my list of favorites.

10.8 Mountain Lion

Just like Snow Leopard before it, with Mountain Lion, Apple opted to clean up and revise the existing theme as opposed to changing directions for what would be a less-impactful release of OS X.

10.9 Mavericks

Mavericks marked the beginning of Apple’s “California location” naming scheme for Mac releases. The wave depicted looks as intimidating as the ones in the famous surfing location.

10.10 Yosemite

Yosemite brought another UI refresh to the Mac, making things flatter and more modern. The wallpaper ushered in a new era based on ... well ... mountains.

10.11 El Capitan

Named after a breathtaking spot in Yosemite National Park, El Capitan was a clean-up year after 10.10.

10.12 Sierra

More mountains.

10.13 High Sierra

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Even more mountains.

10.14 Mojave

No more mountains! Mojave brought a new system-wide Dark Mode, and the OS shipped with two versions of its default wallpaper to match. Users could even have macOS slowly fade between the two background images over the course of the day.

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[10.15 Catalina](#)

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macOS Catalina brought big changes to the Mac, including the ability to run iPad apps natively, opening the platform up to a much larger number of developers than ever before. Catalina shipped with multiple variants of its default wallpaper, and the ability to shift between them as time progresses throughout the day:

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This version of macOS is such a big deal, Apple changed the version number to 11.0. It will be the OS that brings support for Apple Silicon-powered Macs, and features a brand new design.

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