

Firewire Networking Your Macs

What is the benefit of networking my Mac computers?

With Firewire networking, you can transfer files quickly and easily to any computer in your studio. The files can be anything from music, video, Photoshop graphics, and even FCP, iMovie, and Premiere project files.

Is it difficult to setup and maintain?

Some people find that setting up the machines to be a little difficult, while to some others it can be a breeze. This Configuration/Usage guide will guide you through the process of configuring and maintaining your Mac FW network.

There is almost no maintaining involved with the FW Network except to switch back and forth from internet capabilities. (We will discuss this later).

Setting up the FW Network

Part 1: Firewire Network Requirements

- The computers that will be networked need to be within a 15 foot radius of each other (the closer the better).
- If the machines cannot physically be closer than 15 feet to each other, a Firewire hub is required to boost the Firewire signal.
- Each computer will be connected via a 6-6 Firewire cord (rectangular connector on both ends).
- All the computers must have Mac Operating System version 10.3 or later.

Part 2: Configuring the First Computer

This step-by-step will guide you through the process of setting up a single computer to begin Firewire Networking.

1. Click the Blue Apple at the top left of your screen and select System Preferences.
2. Click the "Network" icon.
3. Under the Location pull-down box, select "New Location".
4. Click the New button and use "Firewire Network" as the name, hit OK. (The default location changes from "Automatic" to "Firewire Network". If it doesn't, you need to select "Firewire Network" before moving to step 5).

5. In the Show pull-down box, select “Network Port Configurations”.
6. You will see a list of the network ports that are enabled on your machine. Deselect all of the items by click the blue check mark.
7. Click the New button and type “Firewire” as the name.
8. Under the Port pull-down box, select “Built-in Firewire”.
9. After hitting OK, the Firewire port appears at the bottom of the port listing. Click and drag on the Firewire port so that it is listed first, or on top of the other ports.
10. Click Apply Now.
11. At the top of the window, under the Show pull-down box, select “Firewire”. Make sure Configure IPv4 has “Using DHCP” selected.
12. Click Show All at the top left of the System Preferences window, and select the Sharing icon.
13. The Computer’s Name field needs to be something that easily identifies the computer. For instance, if you have two G4 computers, and one G5. Name the G4’s accordingly, like: G4 #1 and G4 #2. The G5 name would simply be “G5”.
14. In the list at the bottom of the window, turn on “Personal File Sharing” by clicking the empty box to the left of the words.
15. Close System Preferences.

That’s it! Your first computer is configured correctly for Firewire Networking. However, you cannot start transferring files just yet. Since it takes two to tango, you need to configure *every* computer that will be networked with this same procedure. Repeat Part 2 for all computers, then proceed onto Part 3.

Part 3: Organizing Your Hard Drives

Before diving in to connecting to the computers to start transferring files, we need to give the hard drives a distinct name that will play a huge factor later on. To do this is simple.

***Situation:** You have two G4 computers. Both computers have a Hard Drive, and a Media Drive where you place all your files. This is how you should name the drives accordingly.*

1. On the first G4 (Computer Name G4 #1) click once on the hard drive to rename it.
2. Give it the name “G4 #1 Hard Drive”.
3. Single click on the media drive to rename it.
4. Give it the name “G4 #1 Media Drive”
5. Go to the second G4 (Computer Name G4 #2) and click once on the hard drive to rename it.
6. Give it the name “G4 #2 Hard Drive”
7. Single click on the media drive to rename it.
8. Give it the name “G4 #2 Media Drive”

This makes it easier to identify which computer's hard drive you are looking at when transferring files.

Part 4: Connecting to the Computers

Now that we have the Firewire Network running, all we have left to do is connect to the computer hard drives so we can start to transfer files back and forth.

1. Go to the Blue Apple and click System Preferences.
2. Click the "Network" icon.
3. Make sure in the Location pull-down box that "Firewire Network" is selected. Close System Preferences.
4. Double click your main Hard Drive.
5. Click the "Network" icon on the left toolbar. (If you don't see a toolbar to the left, go to View > Show Toolbar).
6. You will see all of the computers, assorted by Computer Name, that are connected via Firewire to one another (This is why it is important to name the computers G4 #1, G4 #2, G5 #1, etc).
7. Double click on one of the computers and a window pops up asking for a login and password. **Note:** The login required is the login of the computer you are connecting to, NOT the computer you are currently working on.
8. Enter the correct login and password and hit OK.
9. A window will pop up that will list all of the computer's hard drives that can be mounted on your desktop. Double click one to mount it. (If the computer has more than one drive that you wish to mount, connect back to that computer and select the 2nd drive).

You now go through the process of mounting all the drives you wish to transfer files from/to. Do this for every computer.

Part 5: Internet Connectivity

You may or may not notice that you cannot connect to the internet while you are transferring files via Firewire. This is because Firewire uses a self-assigned IP address (like Ethernet) to connect to multiple computers. There is a simple trick to accessing internet and leaving your Firewire Network intact.

1. The computers that you connected to and mounted the hard drives are just like the external Lacie Firewire Drives, you *NEED* to eject/disconnect

them before proceeding onto step 2. If you fail to do so, your computer will often freeze, requiring a reboot, and losing all transferred files.

2. Click the Blue Apple at the top left of the screen and select “System Preferences”.
3. Click the “Network” icon.
4. In the Location pull-down box, select “Automatic”.
5. In the Show pull-down box, select “Network Status” and click the “Apply Now” button.
6. If your internet is configured correctly (see our Troubleshooting Your Internet guide for more info) the Built-in Ethernet status will turn green when the computer has successfully obtained an IP address.
7. Close System Preferences. You can not connect to the internet.
8. To transfer files via the Firewire Network, all you have to do is go back into Network settings and select the “Firewire Network” Location.