

OS X 10.7 Lion Gesture Cheat Sheet

Apple's OS X 10.7 Lion is the most gesture-reliant operating system yet shipped by any manufacturer.

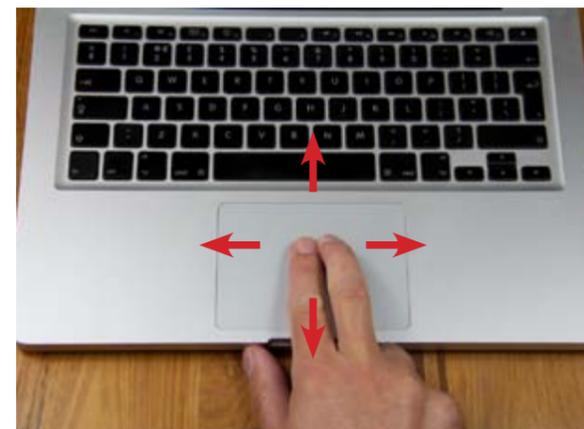
You can use a mouse as usual, but familiarity with 14 new gestures will greatly enhance your experience, and help you navigate the operating system more quickly and efficiently. Many of these gestures can be made using the touch-sensitive upper surface of the company's sleek [Magic Mouse](#), but it's best to use a [MacBook's](#) built-in trackpad or, in the case of [desktop machines](#), invest in a Bluetooth [Magic Trackpad](#).

Words, images and layout: Nik Rawlinson



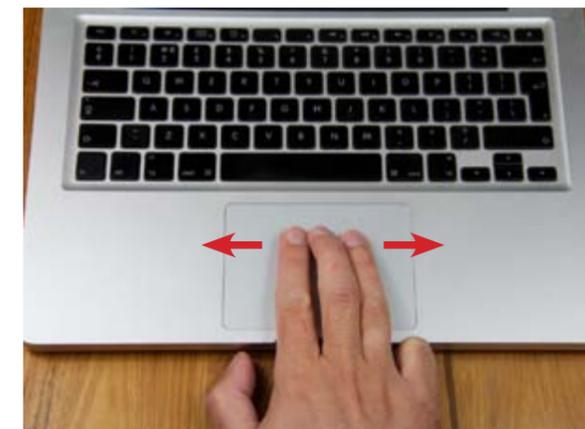
One-finger tap

Tap once to select an item on the screen, check a box, or click a button. While many gestures work equally well on the Magic Mouse and trackpad, tapping is a trackpad-only gesture. Like other actions, it can be disabled through System Preferences if you prefer to use a full manual click.



Scrolling

The two-finger scroll was one of the first gestures Apple introduced in OS X. If you've used Snow Leopard before coming to Lion, you'll almost certainly be familiar with this gesture already. You don't need to use the scroll bar, but, instead, position your pointer over the window you want to scroll through -- even if it's inactive or sitting slightly behind another window -- and drag two fingers up or down the trackpad. You can scroll left and right in the same way. Don't forget that scrolling works in the opposite direction with Lion to previous versions of OS X and Windows.



Dragging

Apple doesn't enable this feature by default, but, when enabled through System Preferences, it lets you drag an application window around the screen by positioning your pointer over its title bar and then sliding three fingers around your trackpad. Doing the same when the pointer's not on the title bar has no effect.



Two-finger tap

Apple has never been a fan of two buttons when one works just as well. That's why its mice have always been single-button affairs, and the trackpad doesn't have a split button beneath it. To right-click -- or secondary click, as Apple calls it -- and call up a context-sensitive menu, either tap while holding control, or tap once with two fingers anywhere on the trackpad while the pointer is positioned over the relevant element on the screen.



Three-finger tap

OS X has long had a built-in dictionary. It's even better integrated in Lion. As well as appearing in the Dashboard and as a full-blown application, you can use it to look up definitions in Spotlight and, with a three-finger tap, in active documents. Hover the pointer over any word on a website or in a document you're working on, and tap twice with three fingers. The word will be highlighted and an overlaid bubble will show both a dictionary definition and the start of the word's Wikipedia entry. You can then tap on either for more details.



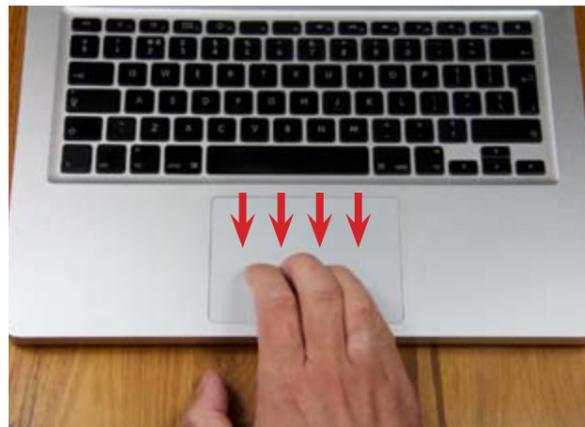
Zooming

First introduced on the [iPhone](#), and later rolled out to the [iPod touch](#) and [iPad](#), pinching and unpinching are now familiar gestures for zooming in and out of an image or document. This gesture is context-sensitive, so you can't use it to zoom in on an interface, for example, but it does let you zoom inside applications like Preview. To zoom in on anything else, use the OS X accessibility feature, which temporarily zooms in on your whole display, by holding control while sliding two fingers up and down the trackpad.



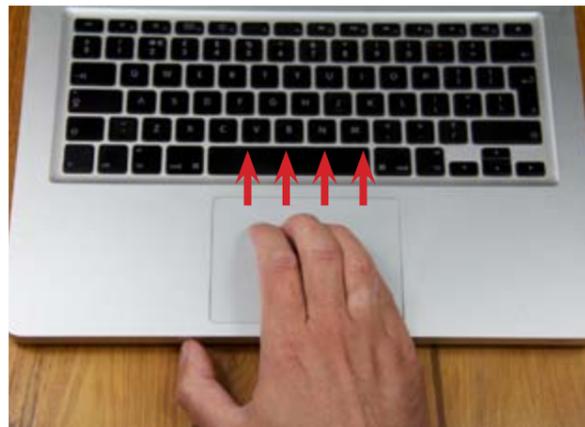
Smart zooming

Again drawing inspiration from iOS, Lion's smart-zoom feature mimics the iPhone and iPad's double-tap-to-zoom function. Smart zoom uses the dimensions of whichever element your pointer currently sits above to determine how far in you'll zoom, so that double tapping a column of text with two fingers will zoom into just the area between its margins, while double tapping an image will zoom in so that it fits across the width of the active window.



Exposé yourself

Exposé first appeared in OS X 10.3 Panther. Its powers have been significantly trimmed in Lion, thanks to the arrival of Mission Control and the four-finger unpinch gesture that reveals the desktop. But it's still used to line up all of the open windows belonging to your current application, with active windows displayed in the centre of the screen, and anything minimised to the dock shown in thumbnail form lower down. To switch to an alternative window within Exposé, click its thumbnail. Invoke Exposé by dragging four fingers down the trackpad.



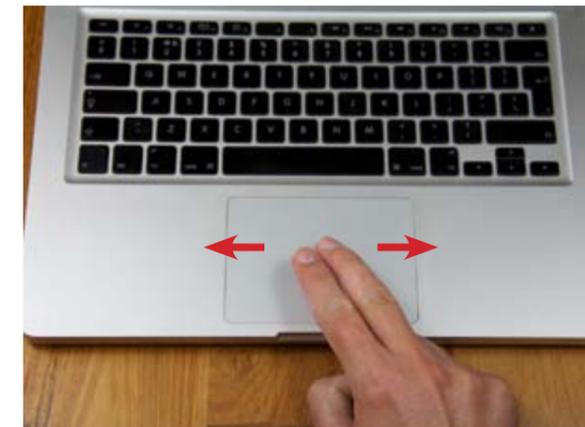
Launch Mission Control

Mission Control is a new feature in Lion, replacing the previous Spaces feature, which allowed you to run several applications on different virtual desktops. The virtual desktops are still there, but now they're supplemented by full-screen apps and organised within Mission Control, where the Dashboard finally has equal prominence. Push four fingers up the trackpad to shrink your active display, making room for live views of your other desktops. Click any of the desktop thumbnails to switch to them, or slide four fingers back down to return to your original work space.



Switching apps and desktops

There's very little difference between a full-screen app and a desktop in Lion. They each appear as a single entity in Mission Control, and they sit in a row with one another in your line-up of virtual work spaces. To switch between them without command-tabbing between each of your active applications, put four fingers on the trackpad and slide left or right.



Turning pages

Put two fingers on the trackpad with your pointer positioned over a multi-page PDF in Preview and swipe right to move to the next page, and left to go backwards. You can do the same in Safari to step forwards and backwards through your browsing history.



Visit the Launchpad

Launchpad is new in Lion. It presents all of the apps installed on your Mac in a grid, like the apps on an iPad home screen. It also shows folders in an iPad-like box which, when tapped, splits the screen to show its contents. Launchpad is summoned by placing your thumb and at least three fingers on the trackpad, initially spread out, and then pulling them all together, like a whole-hand pinch. To leave Launchpad, either open an application, press escape or unpinch your fingers and thumb.



Uncover the Desktop

Over the course of a working day, it's easy to open so many applications that they completely cover the desktop. While you could swipe through your screens until you get to an uncovered desktop, it's far easier and quicker to temporarily reveal it by sending your applications out to the edge of the screen. Put a thumb and three fingers on the trackpad and throw them apart without losing contact with the surface, and your application windows will be flung out of the way. You can now interact with the desktop and, when you've finished, reverse the action to get back to your applications.



Rotate

Depending on app support, placing two fingers, or a finger and a thumb, on the trackpad and turning them in either direction around an imaginary circle will rotate the selected on-screen element. This gesture will be relevant to fewer applications than some of the others detailed here, but it will be particularly useful when working with photos or laying out presentation slides.

Scrolling in Lion

When developing Lion, Apple made a brave decision to reverse the direction in which scrolling on the trackpad or mouse affects objects on your screen.

Previously you'd have dragged down to move up a page and left to move to the right, and so on. That system worked really well, so why has Apple changed it?

It all comes down to the iPad. When Apple realised what a runaway success it had on its hands, it decided to integrate some of the best features of its mobile operating system, iOS, into the next iteration of its desktop client and server editions.

That's why we now have Launchpad, which so closely apes the iPad home screen, a revamped email client and, crucially, scrolling that works in the same way on a full-scale Mac as it does on an iPad. When you understand this, it's far easier to get the new scrolling regime straight in your mind -- imagine pushing your content about the screen, rather than dragging it, and suddenly it all makes sense.