TappyType

TappyType is a Control Panel which causes your Macintosh to make typewriter noises in response to your keystrokes. It requires System 7 (or later), but runs on both the new Power Macs as well as the older machines. TappyType has a variety of features:

- TappyType makes a "tap" noise in response to ordinary keys, a spacebar noise in response to Space or Tab, and scrolling noises in response to Page Up or Page Down.

- In reponse to Return or Enter, TappyType makes a bell sound followed by a carriage return sound. There are some choices for the bell sound, including "off" if it becomes a nuisance.

- TappyType can be turned on and off, either from the Control Panel dialog box, or at any time by invoking a special "toggle" keystroke. This keystroke can be configured in the Control Panel.

- TappyType operates only when the foreground application is on a list of special applications that you choose via the Control Panel. You probably will want to hear typewriter noises only when you're using a word processor or text editor, and not, for example, when you're playing Tetris or Marathon. You can specify up to ten applications in which TappyType will make its noises.

The TappyType distribution package consists of two files — this documentation that you're now reading ("About TappyType"), and the Control Panel file ("TappyType"). To install TappyType, simply drag "TappyType" into the "Control Panels" folder inside your System folder, or drag it onto the icon of the System folder for the same effect. After you restart your Macintosh, TappyType will attempt to install itself, and will display one of the following icons near the bottom of your screen:

 Your Macintosh lacks capabilities that TappyType uses. Probably, your System version is older than 7.0.

 TappyType needed more memory than was available.

 The TappyType file has become corrupted, and TappyType cannot get resources that it needs.

 There were no problems. TappyType installed itself successfully.

Although TappyType can be turned on or off, it cannot be purged from memory once it is installed during startup. To remove TappyType, move it outside your System folder and restart, or hold down the Shift key during startup to temporarily disable all Control Panels and Extensions. You can also use Apple's Extensions Manager (or its third- party cousins) to disable any combination of extensions you choose.

That's all there is to this introduction. Consult the other chapters for details about usage, history, etc. Happy tapping...

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TappyType is a Control Panel, which means that it should be accessible via the Apple menu under "Control Panels". After opening TappyType, you should see a window similar to the following:

The "Applications" section contains the list of applications within which TappyType is allowed to make noises. You may specify up to ten such applications. Clicking the Add button will put up a dialog box by which you can choose an application to add to the list. Clicking on the names of the applications will select them for removal; use the Command or Shift keys as you click to select a group of applications. After selecting one or more applications, click the Remove button to remove them from the list.

Applications are stored internally by their "signature" — a four character identification code unique to each major application — and by the name of the application file you selected when adding the application to the list. It is the signature that matters when TappyType checks the current foreground application. The name is retained purely for display in the Control Panel interface. This has a number of consequences:

(1) Renaming the application file makes no difference to TappyType. If you rename "Microsoft Word 6.0" to "MS Word", you don't have to correct TappyType's list of applications, although it is the old name that TappyType will display.

(2) Other copies of TappyType's applications are recognized just like the originals, usually even if the versions are different. If you've added ClarisWorks 2.1 to your list, then TappyType will also recognize copies of ClarisWorks 2.1 on another disk, or on the same disk, or even copies of ClarisWorks 2.0.

(3) Some less "professional" applications are not given a unique signature if the author lacks the enthusiasm to imagine one. But all Macintosh files must have a signature of some kind, so these applications often get the default signature of "????". TappyType refuses to even recognize such applications, since they would all look alike anyway. Mainstream commercial applications, and most popular shareware applications (such as BBEdit Lite), will have a unique signature, so this shouldn't

be a common difficulty.

(4) A few applications will share the same signature. This isn't supposed to ever happen, but some authors don't officially register their signatures with Apple. A notable legitimate exception is the pair "TeachText" and its successor "SimpleText", which both have the signature "ttxt". Thus, if you've added "SimpleText" to TappyType's list, you've implicitly added "TeachText" as well.

The "Toggle Key" section shows the current keystroke that will toggle TappyType on and off. To change this, click on the Change button and follow the instructions in the dialog box. If you are using another system extension or control panel that intercepts keystrokes, such as Quickeys or KeyQuencer, you should avoid choosing a toggle key that is already in use.

Names for keystrokes use these abbreviations:

"cmd" means the Command key
"shf" means the Shift key
"opt" means the Option key
"ctl" means the Control key
"NK" means the numeric keypad (thus "NK1", "NK2", etc.)
"del" means the forward delete key
"delete" means the backward delete key

The "Bell" section lets you choose the carrage return's bell sound, or to disable the bell completely. The carrage return sound itself is always played the same.

The "State" section contains miscellaneous options for controlling TappyType's behavior. The "On" checkbox turns TappyType on and off, as one might suppose. Clicking this checkbox is equivalent to invoking the toggle key; either one will do.

When TappyType is off, no noises will be made under any circumstances; when it is on, keystrokes will make noises if the foreground application is on the Applications list, or if the active window is the TappyType Control Panel.

Check or uncheck the "Startup Icon" checkbox to specify whether TappyType's icon will appear at the bottom of the screen during your Macintosh's startup process. If TappyType encounters an error, like those described in the Introduction, the appropriate error icon will appear regardless of the state of this checkbox.

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To think it all started so innocently in Al's quaint hotel room back in, oh, it must have been the summer of 1988, I reckon. We were all so young and foolish then, Steve, Al, Tim, Bill, Matt, Chris, and myself. The Macintosh wasn't very old either, and Al's black & white Mac SE sat there, on the desk, whirring to itself as the microseconds flew by uneventfully. Then Steve came in and said, "Hey, come look at this!" He had some new Hypercard stacks that played sounds when you clicked on the buttons — sounds of an office, of animals, of objects breaking, and of people screaming. And buried among the office sounds were three sounds of a typewriter. "Wouldn't it be cool", said Steve, "if these sounds played as you typed on the keyboard?" We all mused on this briefly, stroking our chins, and then went on with our lives.

Over a year later, after I'd learned Macintosh programming, and had spent many frivolous hours at the Indiana University Mac lab with a cheap shareware assembler, I had crafted the incarnation of Steve's dream, a dream which he himself had undoubtedly long abandoned. "Steve", I said to him when I was back in Knoxville, "I've written that Mac program you thought of last year. It's on the InterNet and everything, and I'm getting e-mail from people all over the world who are using it. I've called it TappyType, and I dedicated it to you because it was your vision that inspired me." He looked at me distantly for a moment, the enormity of it all sinking in, and then said, "What?"
Moments like that stay with you over the years.

TappyType was written in C++, using Metrowerks CodeWarrior 5, on a Power Macintosh 7100. Version 2.0 is a complete rewrite of the original. Although I still had the old assembly language source code, I referred to it only when I needed a good laugh. The new version should be much cleaner and easier to use than its adolescent predecessor.

Future versions might include some more sounds if I can find them: the sounds of the carriage jerking up and down in reaction to the Shift keys, a true Tab sound, etc...