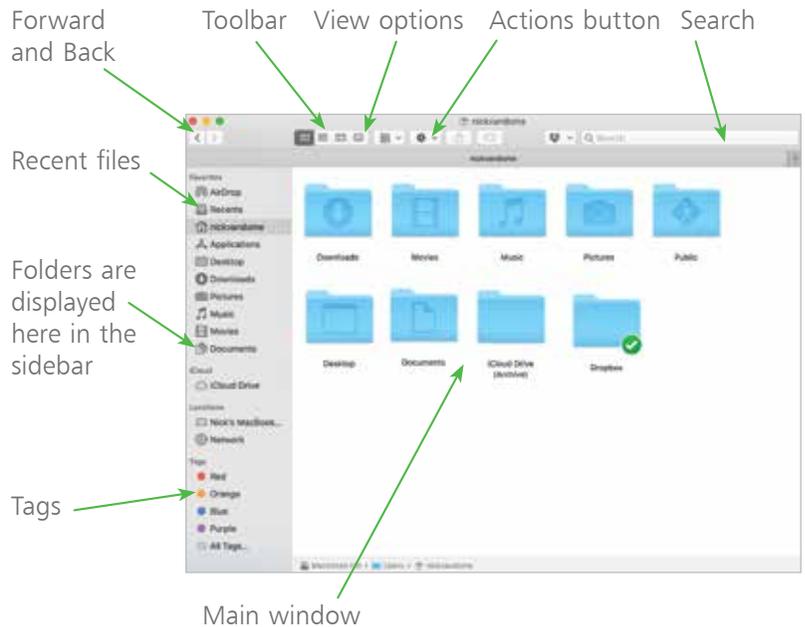# Working with the Finder

If you were only able to use one item on the Dock it would be the Finder. This is the gateway to all of the elements of your Mac. While it is possible to get to selected items through other routes, the Finder is the only location where you can gain access to everything on your system. If you ever feel that you are getting lost within macOS, click on the Finder and then you should begin to feel more at home. To access the Finder:

1 Click once on this icon on the Dock

Overview

The Finder has its own toolbar; a sidebar from which items can be accessed; and a main window, where the contents of selected items can be viewed:

Don't forget

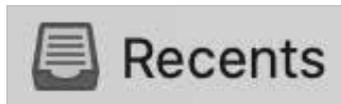A link to the iCloud Drive is also included in the Finder sidebar.

Don't forget

The Actions button has options for displaying information about a selected item and also options for how it is displayed within the Finder.

Forward and Back   Toolbar   View options   Actions button   Search

Recent files

Folders are displayed here in the sidebar

Tags

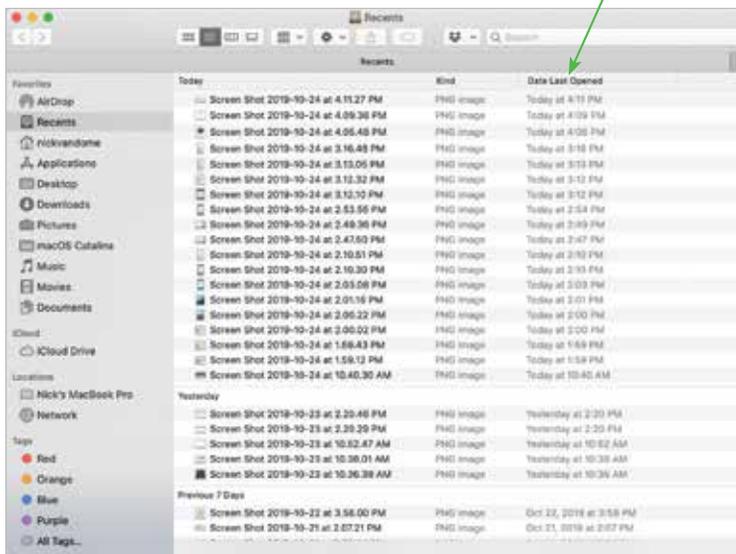Main window

Finder Folders

Recents

This contains all of the latest files in which you have been working. They are sorted into categories according to file type so that you can search through them quickly. This is an excellent way to locate items without having to look through a lot of folders. To access this:

1 Click on this link in the Finder sidebar to access the contents of your **Recents** folder

2 All of your files are displayed in individual categories. Click on the headings at the top of each category to sort items by those criteria

3 Double-click an item to open it from the Finder

Don't forget

The Finder is always open (as denoted by the black dot underneath its icon on the Dock) and it cannot readily be closed down or removed.

Don't forget

The Finder sidebar has the macOS Catalina transparency feature, so that you can see some of the open window, or Desktop, behind it.

Hot tip

To change the display of folders in the sidebar, click on the **Finder** menu on the top toolbar. Select **Preferences...** and click on the **Sidebar** tab. Under **Show these items in the sidebar** select the items you want included.

...cont'd

Home folder

This contains the contents of your own Home directory, containing your personal folders and files. macOS inserts some pre-named folders that it thinks will be useful, but it is possible to rearrange or delete these as you please. It is also possible to add as many more folders as you want.

Don't forget

△ Applications

This folder contains all of the applications on your Mac. They can also be accessed from the Launchpad.

📄 Documents

This is part of your Home folder but is put on the Finder sidebar for ease of access. New folders can be created for different types of documents.
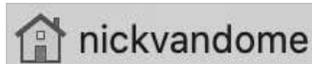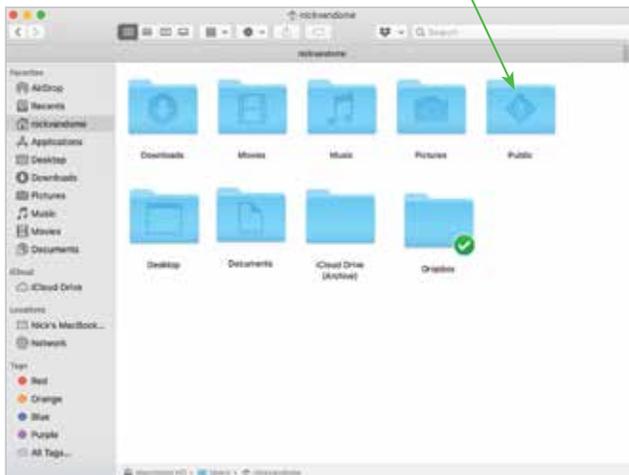
Hot tip

When you are creating documents, macOS by default recognizes their type, and then when you save them, suggests the most applicable folder in which to save them.

> **1** Click on your Apple ID account name in the sidebar to access the contents of your **Home** folder

🏠 nickvandome

> **2** The Home folder contains the **Public** folder, which can be used to share files with other users if the computer is part of a network

> **3** To add a new folder, click the **Actions** button, then **New Folder** (or **Ctrl** + **click** in the window and select **New Folder**). The new folder will open in the main window, named "untitled folder". Overtype the name with one of your choice

> **4** To delete a folder from the Finder sidebar, **Ctrl** + **click** on it and select **Remove from Sidebar**