Introduction to the EMS Quadra

The Electronic Music Studios (EMS) computer is a Macintosh Quadra 840 AV with 16 megabytes (MB) of memory (RAM), a 230 MB internal hard drive, a 730 MB external drive, and a ZIP drive which holds 100 MB floppies (@$20 each). It is currently configured as a digital audio workstation which can generate, record, and edit digital sound.

Basic Operations of the EMS Quadra

1. Mac Skills

If you are not already comfortable on a Macintosh, you should read the Macintosh User's Guide in Studio Two and do the Macintosh Basics tutorials which are found on the Macintosh computers in the ITC lab.

2. Keyboard Commands

Because working with sound files entails doing a number of quick, repetitive actions, you should learn as soon as possible the keyboard commands that replace mouse actions. Keyboard commands (also called "hotkeys") will be described as follows:

   cmd + S

   • Hold down the command key (labeled **†** on the keyboard) while typing the letter S.
   • The letters of a command are case-insensitive, so do not hold down the shift key unless it is part of
a   command key sequence.

3. The Finder

At any given moment, a Macintosh computer is in one of two modes: it is either in the **Finder** (this obscure term is Apple's) or it is running an **application**. The Finder lets you perform general tasks, like copying or moving files, creating or moving folders, etc.

When an application is running, an **Application Menu Bar** will be shown at the top of the screen, such as the one show below for Microsoft Word.
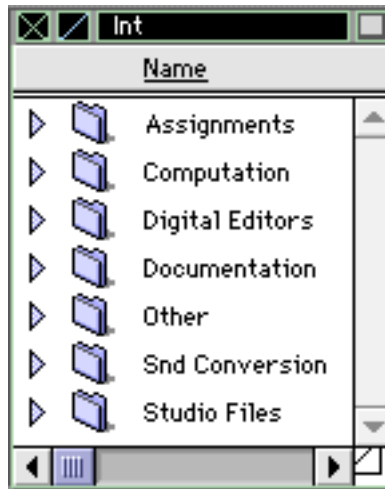

Notice that the Finder icon in the upper right corner has been replaced by the application icon. To return to the Finder, either:

   • click anywhere on the desktop
   • pull down the application icon and select "Finder", or
   • quit the application. To do this either:

• pull down the application's "File" menu and select "Quit", or
• type **cmd + Q**

4. Finder Windows

Double-clicking on the EMS drive icon in the upper right corner of the desktop will open the internal drive Finder Window, shown below.
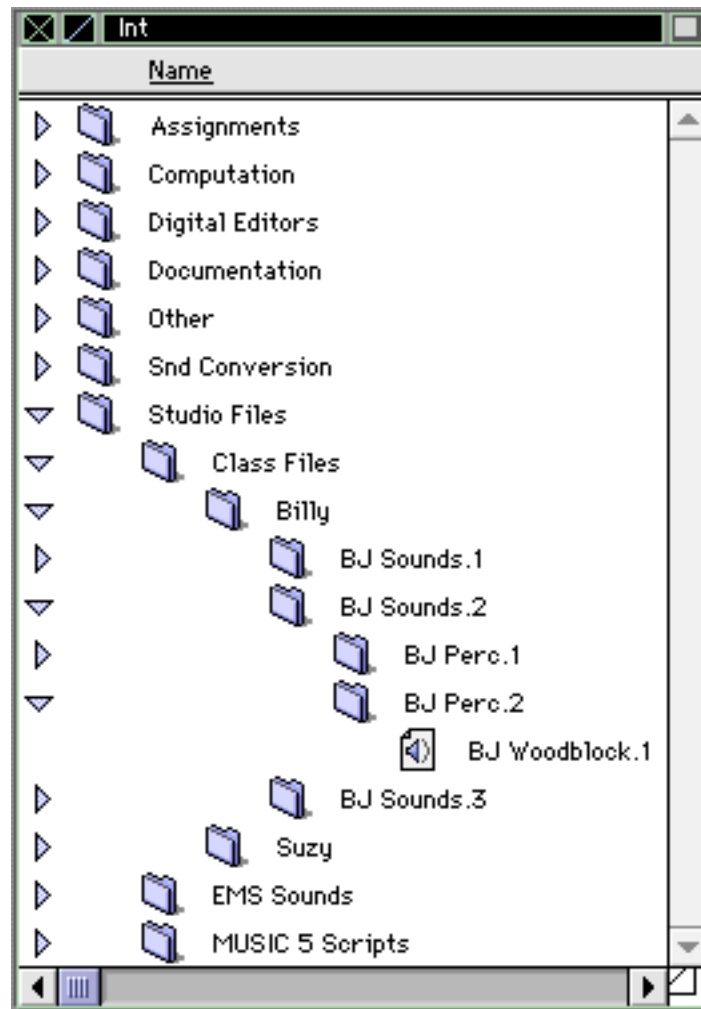

A Finder Window can be closed either by:

• clicking in the box in the upper left corner, or
• typing **cmd + W**.

Clicking on the second box to the left will create a Folder window icon. Items in the window may be viewed by using the horizontal or vertical scrollbars or by selecting view options from the Finder Menu Bar "View" menu. For convenience, the EMS Quadra Finder windows are set to view "by name".

5. Folders, Applications, Files

The internal drive Finder Window contains seven **folders**. These folders contain other folders (and other folders within those), applications, and files. An **application** is a computer program which allows the user to create text files, graphics files, sound files, etc. A **file** is a user-created document which may be opened and altered not only by the application that created it, but sometimes by other applications as well. Due to the large number of sound files that composers work with, it is usually convenient to organize these into folders and sub-folders, as shown below.

By clicking on the arrow to the left of a folder, we can see its contents. We can see deeper into the sub-folders by likewise clicking on their arrows. In the window above, we see that the file "BJ Woodblock.1" is contained in the folder "BJ Perc. 2", which itself is contained in the folder "BJ Sounds.2", and so on. We can easily represent the organization of folders by using the following notation:

EMS/Studio Files/Class Files/Billy/BJ Sounds.2/BJ Perc.2/BJ Woodblock.1

6. Naming files and folders

You should always name your files and folders "YI.whatever," where "YI" represents **Y**our **I**nitials if you and "whatever" is any title that you choose.

7. Using the "Find..." command

If you accidentally misplace a file and cannot remember its exact name, either:

- in the Finder, pull down the "File" menu and select "Find...",
- in the Finder, type **cmd + F**.

When prompted, type your initials and all files beginning with those initials will be displayed.

8. Copying Folders and Files

Since you should NEVER edit or make changes to your only version of a sound file, you should get in the habit of first making a copy of it and then working on this version. This means you will always have a good copy of the file in case the computer crashes while you editing (it <u>will</u> happen). Also, most sound editing progams do "destructive" edits, which means that any changes you make to your file are undoable.

To make a copy of a folder (and its contents) or a single file, first click on the folder or file icon in a Finder Window and either:

- • pull down the "File" menu and select "Duplicate", or
- • type **cmd + D**

A new folder or file previously named "YI Honk" will appear as "YI Honk Copy". If you duplicate "YI Honk Copy", the copy will appear as "YI Honk Copy 2". To save space in naming files, it is a good practice to type ".1", ".2", etc. at the end of each version, so that various versions of a file are named "YI Honk.1", "YI Honk.2", etc. You can delete old versions of files by dragging them to the trash.

If you are working on a file in an application, you can make a copy of it by pulling down the application's "File" menu and selecting "Save As...". You will be prompted to rename this file.
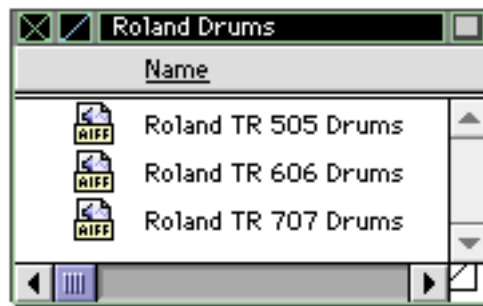
It is VERY IMPORTANT to make frequent copies of your work. Except for being late for class, the worst thing in the world is losing your data.

9. Launching Applications in the Finder

Pull down the **Apple Menu** and select the desired application.

10. Opening files from Finder windows

A file may be opened in a **Finder Window** by clicking on the "Int" icon and the arrows found on the left of the appropiate folder and subfolders until the desired file icon is visible. Alternatively, clicking on a folder itself will open its own Finder Window, such as the one shown below.

In either case, once the file icon is visible, you may click on it and get one of the following results:

  • the application that created the file will be launched and the file will automatically open
  • if it is a certain type of sound file, a sound may be played and no application will be launched
  • an Alert Window may open saying that the file is unreadable

11. Opening files from within an application

It is often more convenient to open files while an application is running. To do this, select one of the options from the application's "File" menu:

  Open
  Open any...
  Import...

After selecting one of these options, an **Open Dialogue Window** will appear. You may either select an item displayed in the list of files or you may search for another folder by pulling down the **folder bar**, such as the one shown indicating the folder "Roland Drums" below.