

Printer Presets

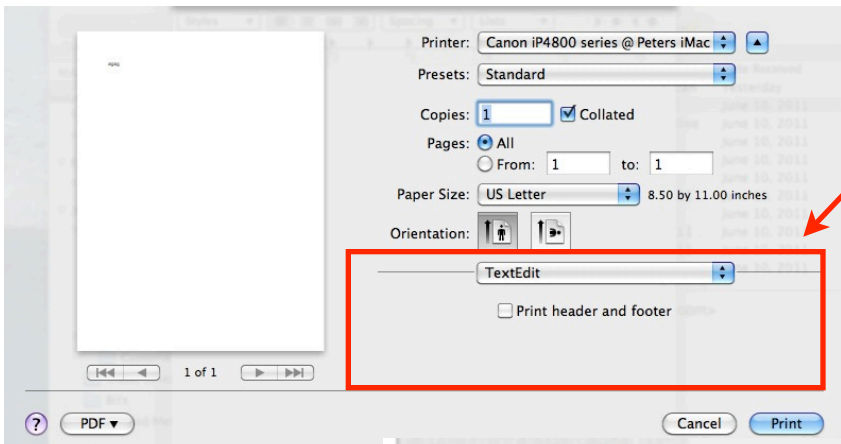
A printer preset is a saved group of printer settings. Presets can save a lot of time for frequent printing jobs that require something other than the default printer settings.

I'll show you how to create, save and use an example Preset, but first a little necessary background knowledge about the Print Dialog Window.

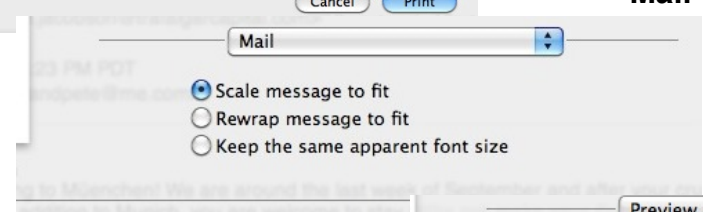
Unfortunately, the Print Dialog window is not highly standardized. Part of the Print Dialog window changes depending on which **application** you are printing from, and part of it changes depending on which **printer** you are using. That means finding the settings we want to include in our Preset will often require a little digging through the menus in the Print Dialog. Some examples:

Application Dependent Changes (different applications, same printer)

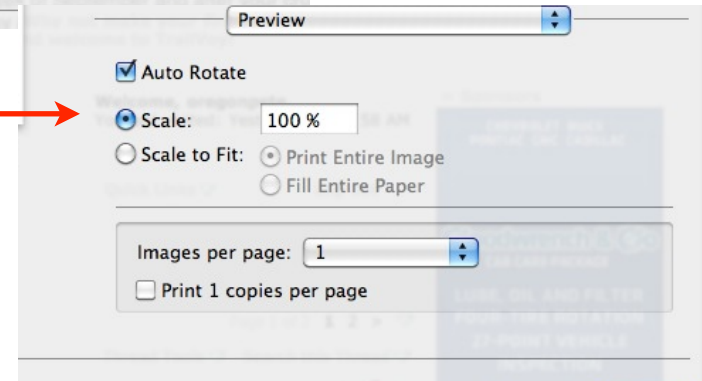
TextEdit



Mail



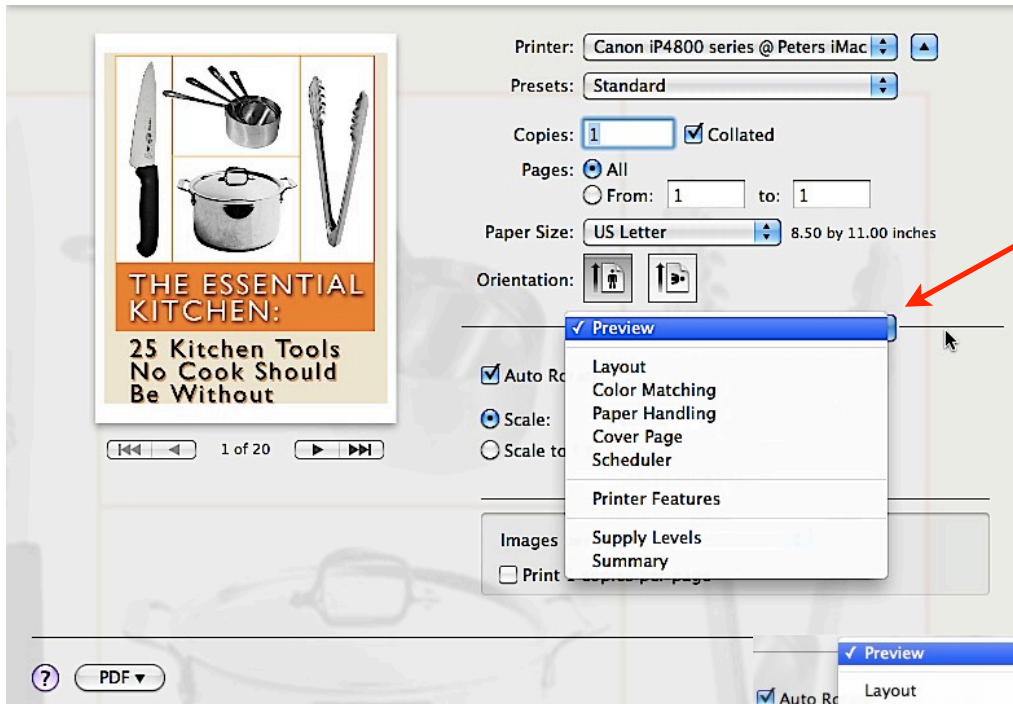
Preview



Note: With many applications you will not see the adjustable % Scale setting. Even when you do have it, there are some problems. First, you can forget about using it in presets. It does not get saved with the preset (but the Scale to Fit settings do get saved). Second, there is a bug in the Print Dialog that makes using it a little tricky. See [Community/ Peter's Posts](#) on the ashmug site. Scroll down to the post "I've Scaled Mt. Everest".

Printer Dependent Changes (same application, different printers)

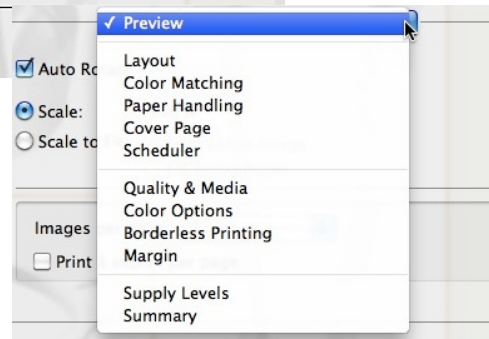
Canon IP4800



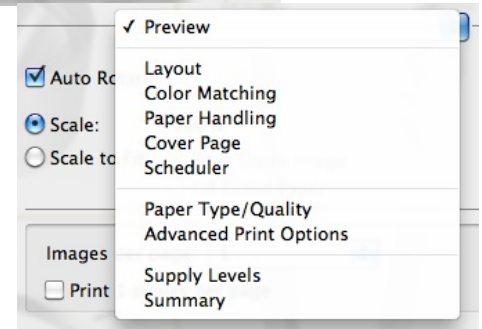
This Menu changes with different printers.

Note that even different models of the same brand of printer are different.

Canon IP100



HP F2400

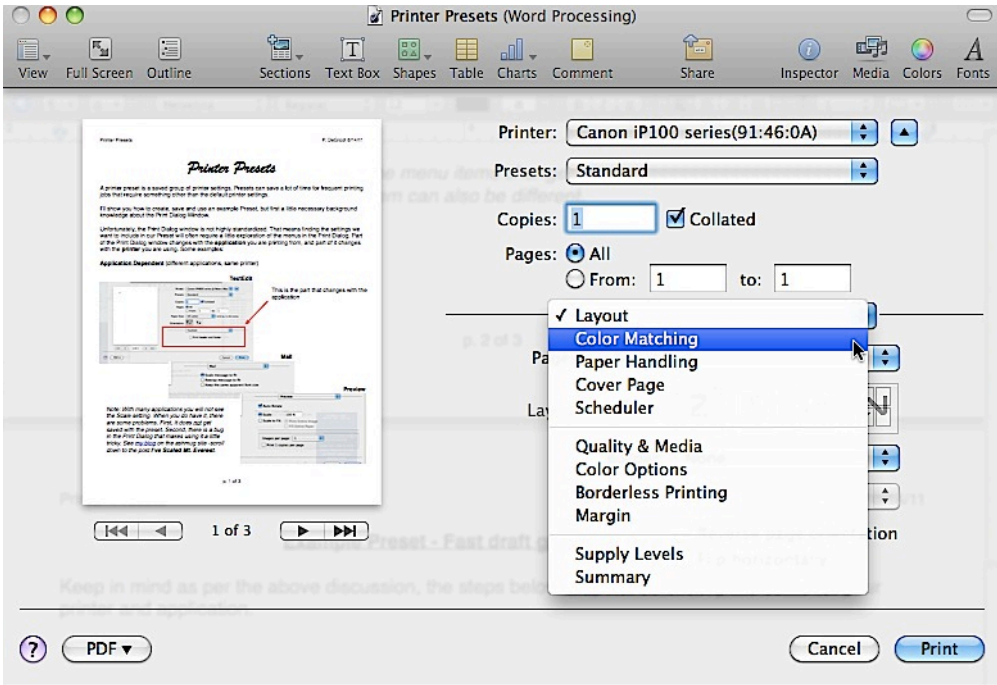


Not only do the menu items change, but what is within each menu item can also be different.

Example Preset - Fast draft grayscale printing

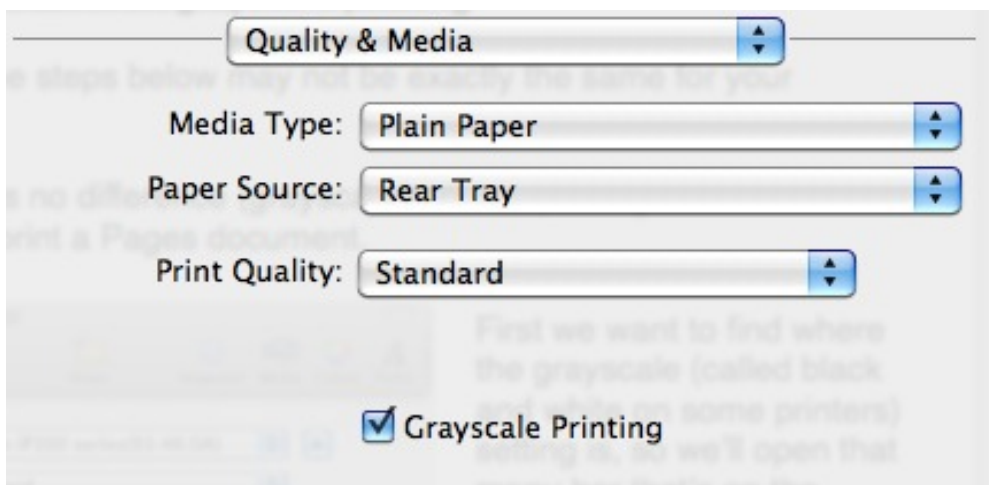
Keep in mind as per the above discussion, the steps below may not be exactly the same for your printer and application.

I use fast draft printing a lot. It saves expensive ink for things that don't have to be high quality. Actually, for this preset, the application makes no difference (grayscale and fast printing can be used for any document). We'll arbitrarily set up to print a Pages document.



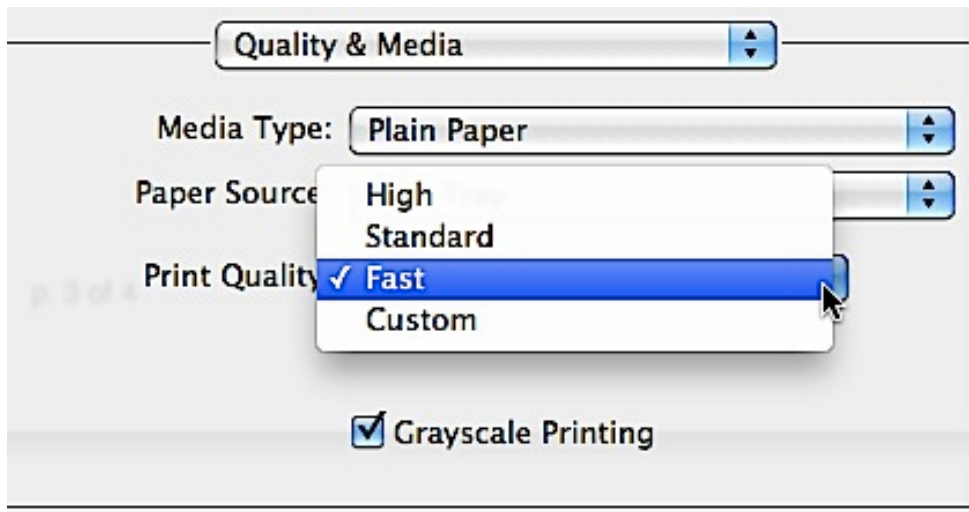
First we want to find where the Grayscale setting (called black and white on some printers) is, so we'll open that menu bar that's on the dividing line halfway down the window.

You might guess that it is in Color Matching or Color Options, but you'd be wrong...

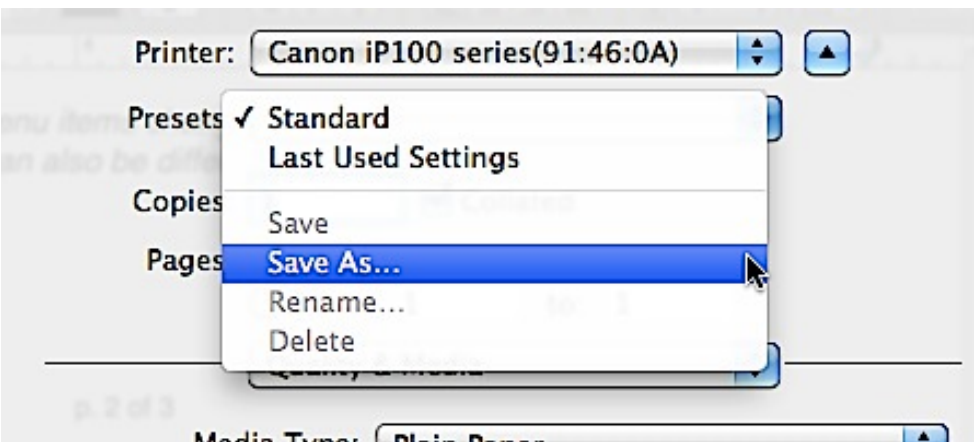


...It's actually under Quality & Media. I told you we would have to do some digging.

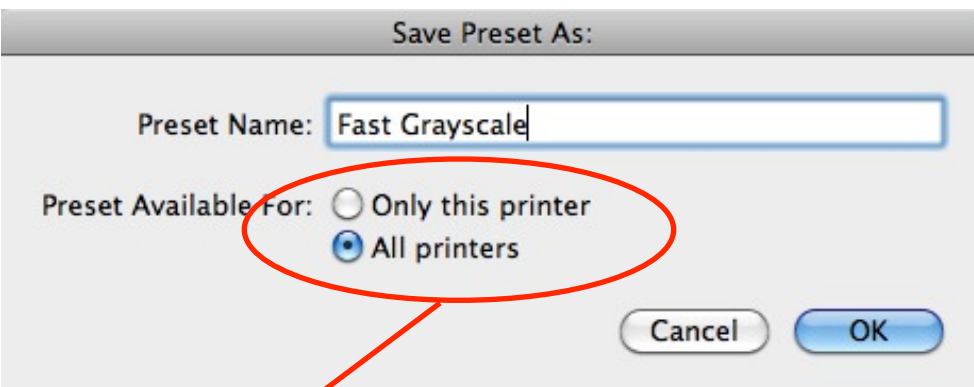
And we are in luck, the Fast setting (called Draft on some printers) is here too...



...in the Print Quality submenu.

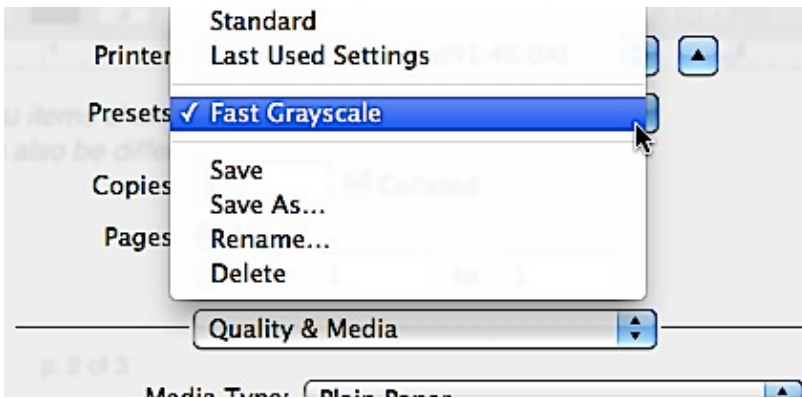


Now that we Fast and Grayscale set we can go back up to the Presets menu and select Save As...



...and name our Preset.

If you use more than one printer, the other choice you have to make is whether this preset will be available for all printers or just this printer. If the preset involves features (automatic 2-sided printing, for example) that are not on your other printers, then choose Only this printer. For our Fast Grayscale preset, I'm going choose All printers because all my printers have a Fast or Draft function and Grayscale printing.



After your preset is saved, it will appear in the Preset menu. To use it to print any document, all you have to do is select it.

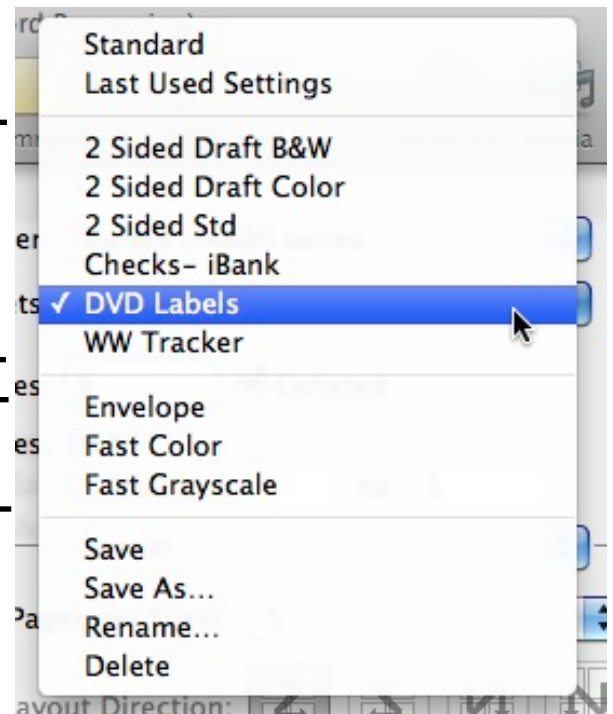
You can edit a preset simply by selecting it, changing or adding settings, and clicking on Save

More Examples

I have quite few presets for special tasks.

This first group is "This printer only"

and the second group is "All printers"



Some Final Notes

Settings not saved. I've already mentioned on page 1 that Scale by % is not saved with the preset. One other setting that is not saved is Pages: From: to:. However, Copies *is* saved.

Presets on a single computer. The presets exist only on the computer on which they were created. Even for printers shared over the network, the presets aren't shared. (Some printers have a few "built-in" presets that do show up in any computer.) You have to set them up separately on each machine. If you only have a few presets, this is probably the easiest method.

If you have a lot of them, the following is a way around having to do that. *Use at your own risk. It works on my machines all running the same version of OSX, but no guarantees.*

The “**All printers**” presets are stored in
<home>/Library/Preferences/com.apple.print.custompresets.plist.

On the “target” machine, find this file and move it to the desktop (so you can put it back if things go wrong). Make a copy the same file from the “source” machine, and put it in <home>/Library/Preferences/ on the target machine. That’s all you need to do for the “All printers” presets.

It gets more complicated for the “**This printer only**” preference files. They are in the same location, with a similar name with the name of the printer added, and if it is a shared printer some extra stuff tacked on the end. There is one for each printer for which you have set up any “This printer only” presets. These files are computer-specific as well as printer specific, so you have to jump through some additional hoops rather than just copying them.

First, each of these files on the source machine that you want to copy to the target machine must have a corresponding file already in <home>/Library/Preferences/ on the target machine. If there isn’t one, create a “This printer only” preset. It doesn’t matter what it is, you can just save the default settings to an arbitrarily-named preset. This will create a .plist file for that printer on the target machine.

Now on the target machine move the file for the specific printer to the desktop. On the source machine, copy the corresponding file and put it in <home>/Library/Preferences/ on the target machine. Now go to the file you moved to the desktop and select and copy the entire file name. Finally, go to the copy you placed in <home>/Library/Preferences/ on the target machine, select its entire file name and Paste the name you copied from the desktop file in its place.

As I said, if you just have a few presets, it is probably just as easy to re-create them on the other machine.