

## Editing: Paste and Match Style, 04-18-2021

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*Note: This discussion is based on macOS, 10.14.6 (Mojave). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS or OS X. Most illustrations are from screenshots on my iMac.*

I do a lot of document editing to create reference material (and also these Beginners/Mac Basics articles) using information from a variety of sources found on the web. One problem that I run into consistently is that the font and formatting found in source material is rarely the one (Verdana, 12 pt.) that I prefer to use in my documents. So, if I copy some text from a web article, and the font is different than what I prefer (and it almost always is), I have to change the font formatting after I paste the text.

**First, Some Background.** We're all familiar with the **Cut**, **Copy** and **Paste** options found under the **Edit menu** on any word-processing app and their keyboard shortcuts:

Cut: Command + X (⌘X)

Copy: Command + C (⌘C)

Paste: Command + V (⌘V)

The Copy command copies the selection to the Clipboard with all the formatting of the selection such as the font, font size and style (*italics*, for example). So, when using the Paste command, the formatted material is pasted into your document (even when you wanted just the *unformatted* text to be pasted).

**Editing Solution.** For a long time now, there's been a way around this situation. It's known as **Paste and Match Style**. This command is also found under the Edit menu, usually just beneath the Paste command. This command does exactly what it says. It removes the formatting from the text that was copied to the clipboard and pastes the text into a document while matching the style to that being used in the document.

**Keyboard Shortcut.** For most apps, especially those from Apple, it has the following keyboard shortcut: **Option + Shift + Command + V** (⇧⇧⌘V).

*Note: Most, but not all apps offer the Paste and Match Style command. Some may use different wording. For example, Microsoft Word calls the command Paste and Match Formatting.*

**One Problem.** Compared to the Command-V keyboard shortcut for the Paste command, which is easy, this grouping of keys is awkward to use, especially with one hand, when you add the Option and Shift keys.

**The Solution: Change the Keyboard Shortcut.** Back in May 2020, I posted a brief message on the talk-double-click discussion group about how to use a feature in the Keyboard system preference to change the keyboard shortcut that's assigned to a menu command.

Using this capability, we can change Option + Shift + Command + V to something easier to use. In fact, since all we want to do is to paste something without all the formatting, why not just change this awkward combination of keys to just Command + V, the old designation for "Paste"?

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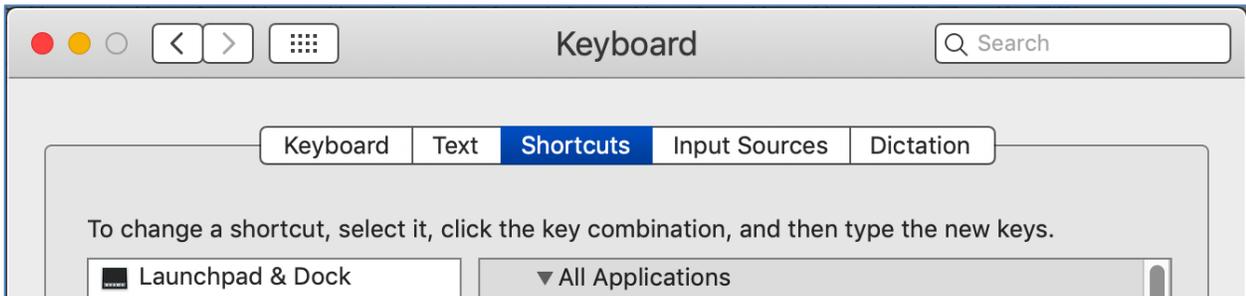
**Change the Keyboard Shortcut.** Here's how to do it:

1. Open the **System Preferences** app by selecting **System Preferences...** under the Apple menu (left-most menu, ) . (Alternatively, the System Preferences app is also found in the Applications folder.)
2. Locate the **Keyboard** system preference and open it:



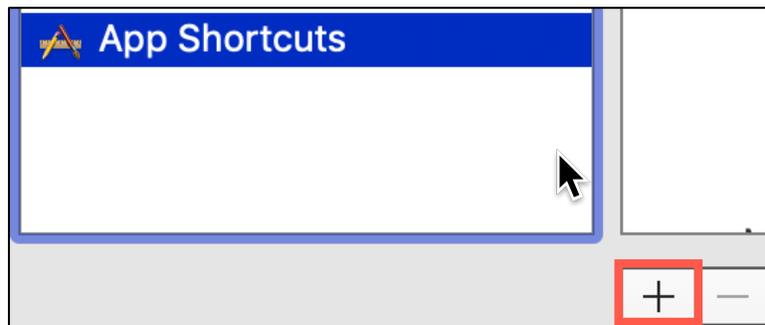
### System Preferences > Keyboard

3. When the Keyboard system preference is open, click on the **Shortcuts** tab:



### Keyboard System Preference > Shortcuts Tab

4. In the left-hand pane, select **App Shortcuts** (bottom of the pane).  
Then click the **Plus (+)** button under the right-hand pane to add a shortcut:

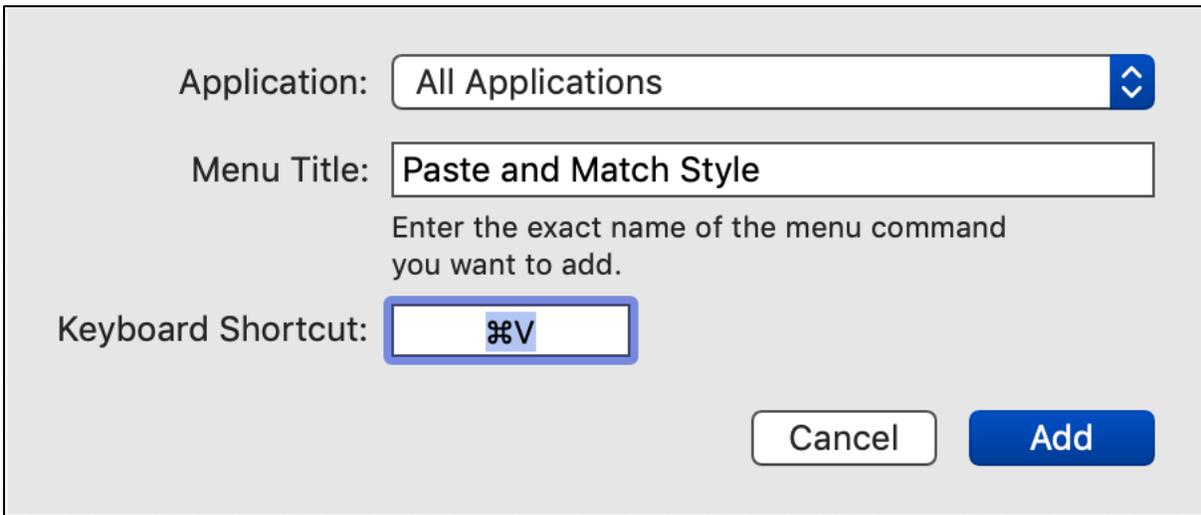


### Keyboard System Preference > Shortcuts Tab Select App Shortcuts > Press "+" Button

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5. After pressing the **+** button, a dialog appears, (See the image below.)

- Leave the **Application:** menu set to **All Applications**. This will add your keyboard shortcut to all apps. (Alternatively, if you want to add a keyboard shortcut to just one app, click the **Application:** menu, and select the desired app from the dropdown apps listing.)
- In the **Menu Title:** field, type **Paste and Match Style**.
- Click **Keyboard Shortcut:** field and press **⌘V**.



**Keyboard System Preference > App Shortcuts Dialog Box**

6. Finally, click the **Add** button.

7. You can now verify that your menu item change has taken place. Click the **File** menu in your preferred app, such as Pages. (Make sure that it isn't already open. If so, then open it again to make sure that the keyboard shortcut changes have been added.)

You should see that the **Paste and Match Style** now has the keyboard shortcut of **Command + V (⌘V)**. Also, notice that the Paste command no longer has any keyboard shortcut assigned to it (blank):

Edit	Insert	Format	Arrange	View
Undo				⌘Z
Redo				⇧⌘Z
Cut				⌘X
Copy				⌘C
Paste				
<b>Paste and Match Style</b>				<b>⌘V</b>
Paste Formula Results				

**Pages App – New Keyboard Shortcut for “Paste and Match Style”**

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**What About Apps That Don't Conform?** As mentioned earlier, some apps may use different wording for Paste and Match Style command (such as Paste & Match Style or in the case of Microsoft Word, Paste and Match Formatting). For such apps, you will need to change the keyboard shortcut for each one.

### Summary

If you do document editing (say, for a newsletter or to create some reference material) you've probably noticed that the font found in source material for your project is rarely the one that you prefer to use in your document. For example, if you copy some text from a web article (maybe a headline), the font is quite different than what you want to use. One solution is to change the font after pasting the text into your document.

What you really want to happen is for the pasted text to match the formatting that you're using in your document. Many apps have a command under the Edit menu known as **Paste and Match Style**, usually located just under the well-known **Paste** command (**⌘V**). (Some use a slightly different wording.)

If you like to use the keyboard shortcut, you may find it awkward to use (**⌘⇧⌘V**), especially with one hand. Compare this to easily-used the Paste command (**⌘V**).

In order to use an easier keyboard shortcut, use the **Keyboard** system preference (**Shortcuts** tab) and pick a different shortcut. Most anything could be used, but why not use the one assigned to the Paste command? If you choose this route, then the keyboard shortcut for Paste and Match Style (**⌘⇧⌘V**) becomes simply (**⌘V**). The keyboard shortcut for the Paste command is removed and left blank.

You can still use the Paste command under the Edit menu by selecting it. As an option, you could use the same keyboard shortcut renaming method to assign a new one to the Paste command.

### Next Presentation

For the next presentation, we'll explore another Mac Basics topic.

Have a favorite Mac Tip or utility? Please feel free to pass it along, and I'll see if I can work it into a future presentation.

If you have any suggestions for presentation topics, including macOS utilities, please contact me at [slp4668@gmail.com](mailto:slp4668@gmail.com).

*-Steve Parker*