

Safari's "Hide Distracting Items," 12-15-2024

Note: This discussion is based on macOS 15.1.1 (Sequoia). Some illustrations may differ when using other versions of macOS. Credits are found at the end of this article.

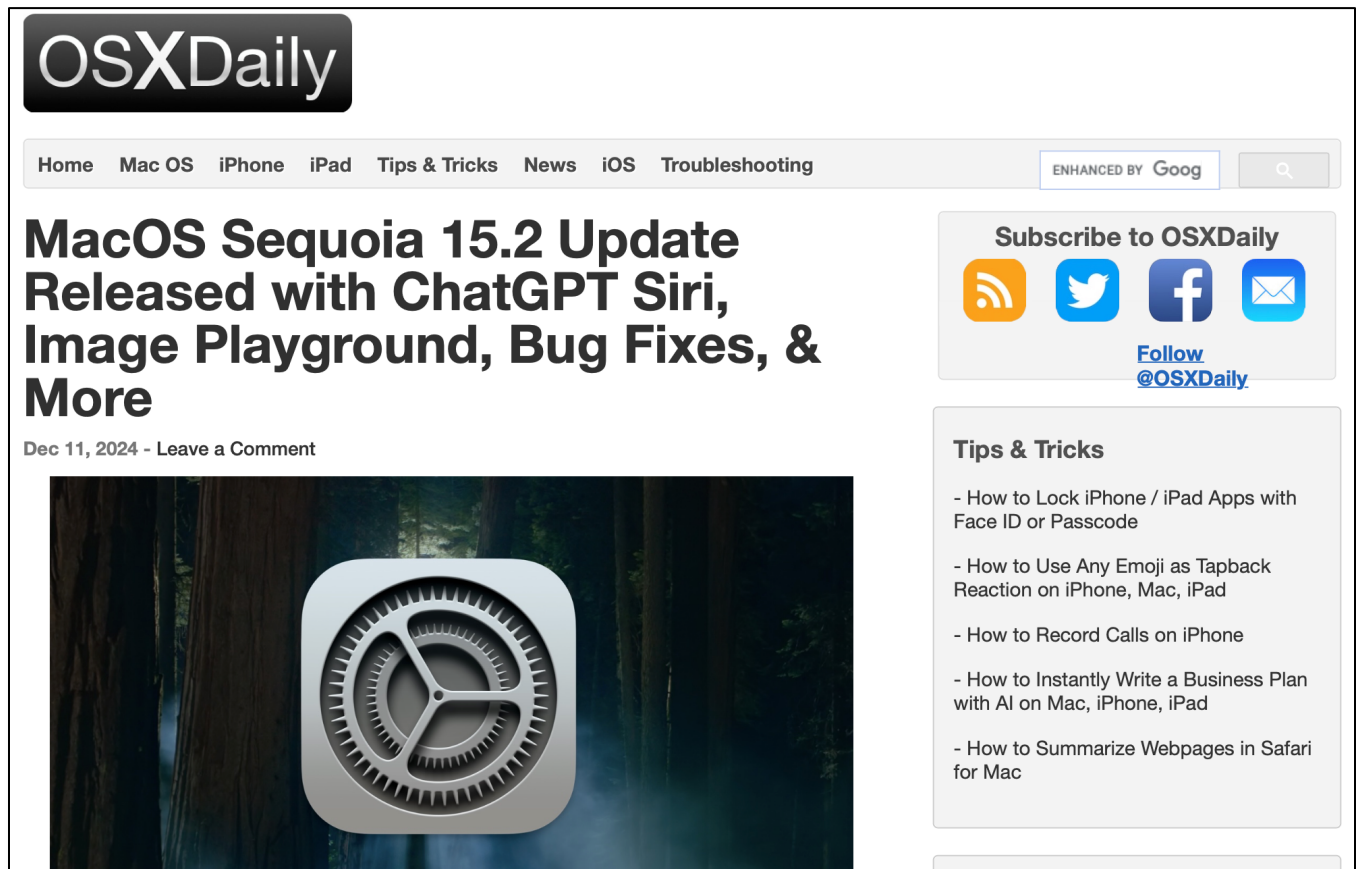
Apple's Safari is my web browser of choice. Among other things, I use it to view articles that I want to save for reference as PDF files. There are a couple of ways to do this as summarized below. Because webpages often contain extraneous items, especially ads, I've been using Safari's Reader View feature (when available) to show just the article content. However, sometimes web pages don't include all of the images when saving as a PDF. When this happens, my only choice was to save the webpage as a PDF with all the unwanted clutter. That was the case until I discovered the Hide Distracting Items feature in Safari, version 18.

Refresher: Save Webpage as PDF

As I discussed in my September 2024 presentation, there are a couple of ways to save a Safari webpage as a PDF:

- **File > Export as PDF...** (keyboard shortcut: **Command+E**, **⌘E**).
- **File > Print...** (keyboard shortcut: **Command+P**, **⌘P**). The Print dialog is displayed with a PDF button at the bottom.

As I noted earlier, this will save the entire webpage, including all the "clutter" (like ads, sidebars, maybe a video player, and other extraneous material) that you may not want. (I appreciate why websites include ads since this is a source of support which is fine, but I don't want this material in my reference PDF.)



The screenshot shows the OSXDaily website interface. At the top left is the OSXDaily logo. Below it is a navigation menu with links for Home, Mac OS, iPhone, iPad, Tips & Tricks, News, iOS, and Troubleshooting. To the right of the menu is a search bar and a 'Goog' logo. The main content area features a large article titled 'MacOS Sequoia 15.2 Update Released with ChatGPT Siri, Image Playground, Bug Fixes, & More' with a sub-date of 'Dec 11, 2024 - Leave a Comment' and a large image of the Settings app icon. To the right of the article is a sidebar with social media icons for RSS, Twitter, Facebook, and Email, and a 'Tips & Tricks' section listing several articles.

Save Webpage as PDF

Safari's "Hide Distracting Items," 12-15-2024

Safari Reader

Reader has been a feature of Safari for quite a while now. Apple introduced **Reader View** (keyboard shortcut: **Shift+Command+P**, ⌘⌘P) to minimize the webpage view of an article to just the main text and graphics (sometimes). The goal was to have a clean copy when viewing or printing/saving a webpage as a PDF.

Using Reader as a starting point to save a webpage as a PDF works well in most instances (but not always). In my experience, Reader View for some webpages doesn't always include all the graphics in an article or may exclude some of the webpage content. These two images show an original webpage view and as seen in Reader View:



Save Webpage as PDF (Original)



Save Webpage as PDF (Reader View)

As you can see, Reader View captured the main text as intended, but it eliminated the large cable graphic that I might have wanted to include when creating a PDF. Depending on the website, sometimes images are included in Reader View; sometimes not. This makes creating a PDF in Reader View problematic. In addition, I've found that even when Reader might include webpage images, they're still not always included when creating a PDF.

Hide Distracting Items

It appears that the **Hide Distracting Items** (sometimes called Distraction Control) feature was introduced in Safari, version 18. (It's also available in iOS 18.) As its name implies, the purpose is to hide those items on a webpage until you want to see them again.

After you've chosen what to hide on the webpage, you can then save it as a PDF for reference. It takes a little more effort to clean up a webpage before saving, but the results can be worth it. I often try the Reader View first, and if this doesn't work out, then I move to use Hide Distracting Items.

Safari's "Hide Distracting Items," 12-15-2024

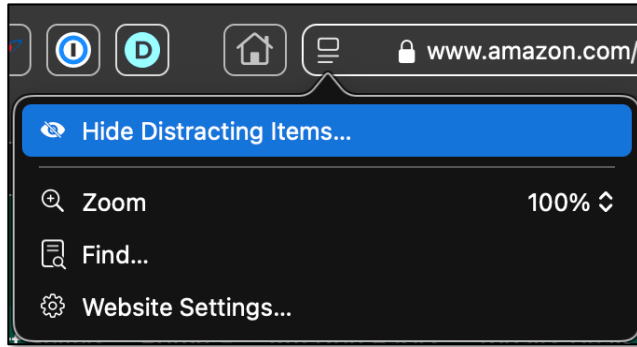
How to Hide Distracting Items

1. Go to the **Search** field in Safari, and click the **Page Menu** button:



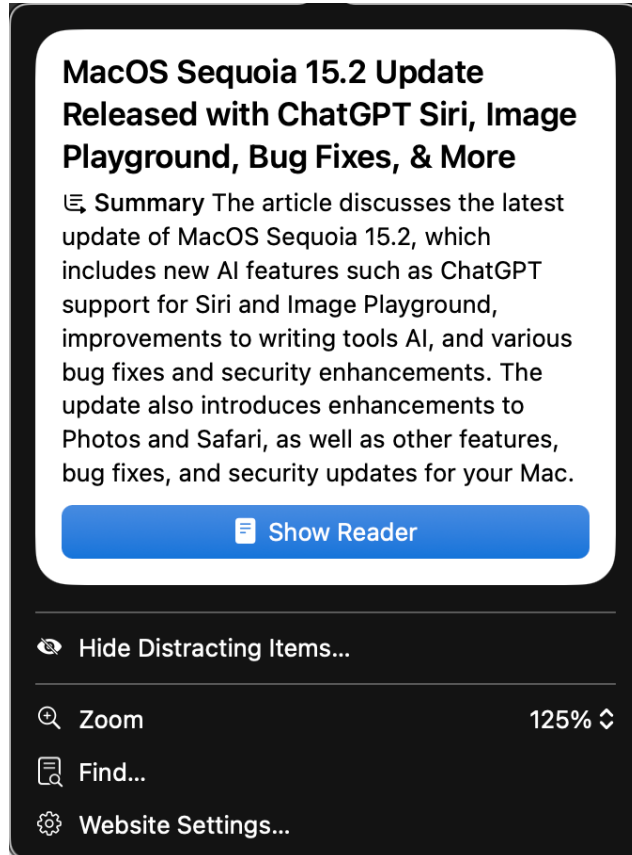
Page Menu Button

2. Choose **Hide Distracting Items...** from the popup menu:



Page Menu Button > Popup Menu > Hide Distracting Items...

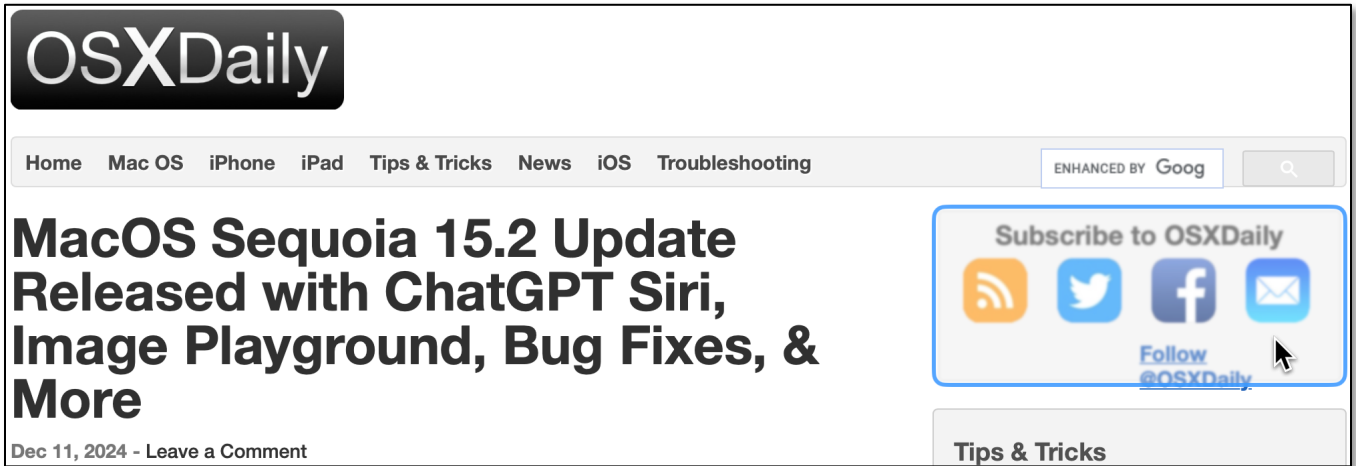
Note: Sometimes the popup menu also includes a highlight of what's on the page (sometimes a **Page Summary**). If so, the Page Menu Button will have a tiny (hard to see) purple "sparkle" at its upper right-hand corner. In addition, there is a **Show Reader** option.



Page Menu Button > Popup Menu (With Show Reader Option & a Summary)

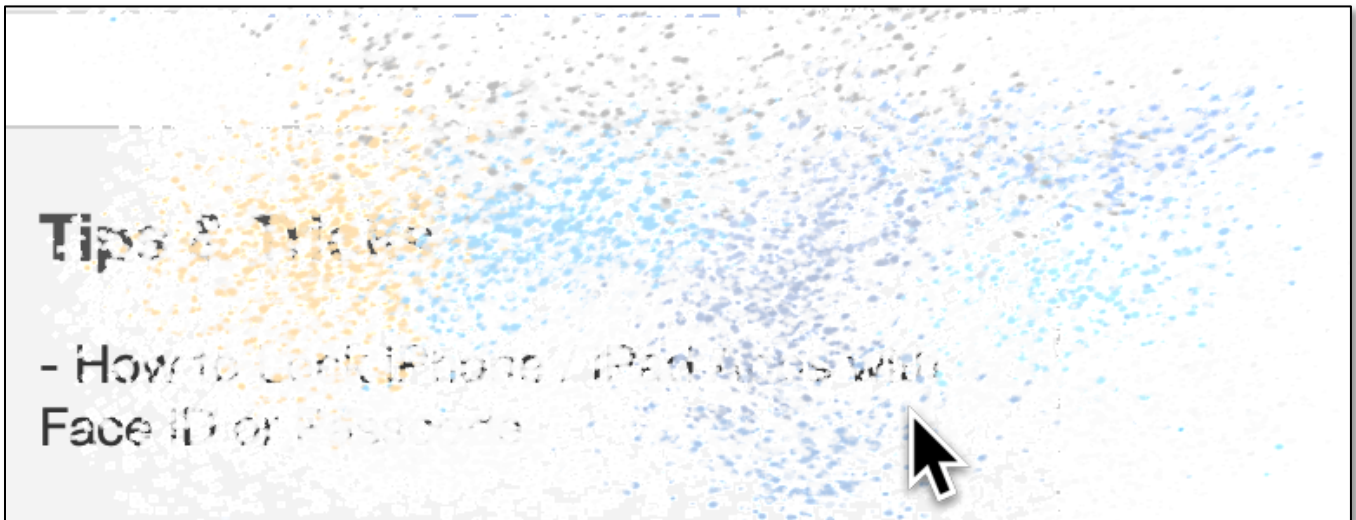
Safari's "Hide Distracting Items," 12-15-2024

3. Move your pointer around on the page. As you do, Safari will show a border around each item that you can hide.



Hide Distracting Items > Item Selected (Blue Border)

4. Click an item to hide it. It will disappear in a flurry of pixels:



Hide Distracting Items > Pixel Flurry

You can continue to click additional items until the webpage is cleaned up to your satisfaction. Depending on how the webpage is organized, other items may move up to the space where a distraction item was removed. Eventually, the page will be as clear as you want it to be. (See the image on the next page.)

MacOS Sequoia 15.2 Update Released with ChatGPT Siri, Image Playground, Bug Fixes, & More

Dec 11, 2024 - Leave a Comment

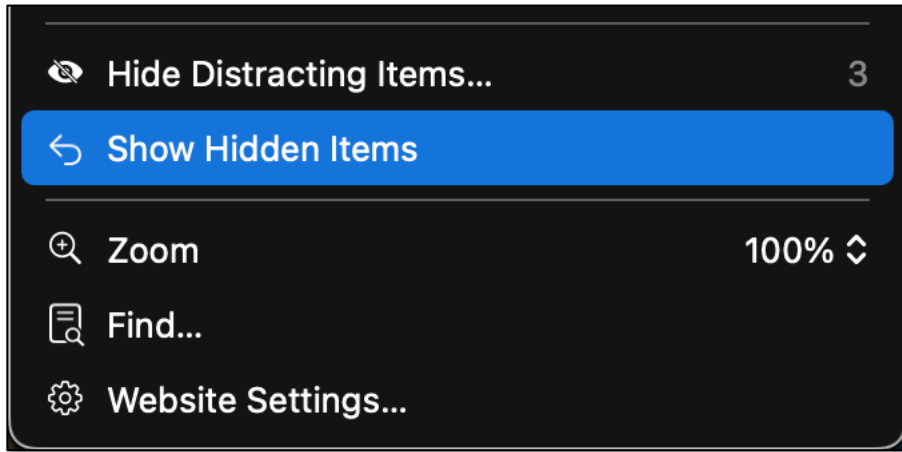


Apple has released MacOS Sequoia 15.2 as an update for Mac users running the Sequoia operating system. The software update includes new Apple Intelligence features including ChatGPT support for Siri, Image Playground image generation tools, along with some

Distracting Items Hidden

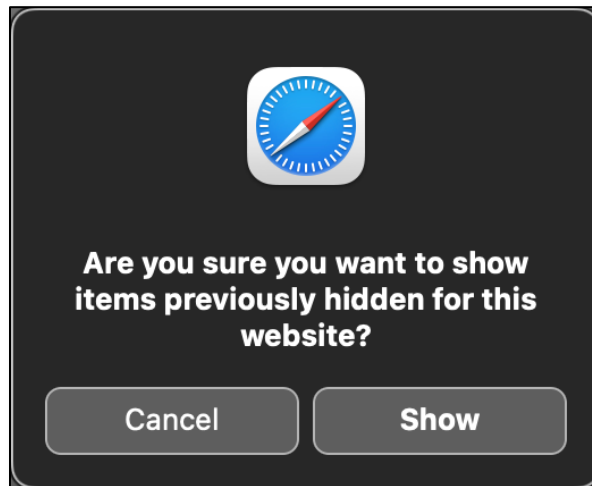
Safari's "Hide Distracting Items," 12-15-2024

Hiding distracting items isn't a permanent change unless you want it to be. Once at least one item has been hidden and you've clicked the **Done** button (discussed below), the Page Menu button popup menu changes to add a **Show Hidden Items** menu option:



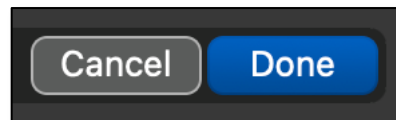
Page Menu Button > Popup Menu > Show Hidden Items

When selecting this option, you're presented with a confirmation request:



Confirmation Request

Finally, once one or more items have been hidden, two buttons are added to the Search field (**Cancel** and **Done**):



Search Field > Cancel & Done Buttons

- While hiding items, click **Cancel** to return the webpage view to its original state.
- Once you've hidden all the items you want, click **Done** to finish the process.

You're now free to save the page as a PDF.

Safari's "Hide Distracting Items," 12-15-2024

Summary

When saving a webpage as a PDF (or simply just want to view the content you prefer), the options to (1) export as a PDF or (2) first using Safari Reader & then saving as a PDF don't always produce a satisfactory result. Either unwanted material like an ad, sidebar, or other "clutter" might get included, or desired material like an image might be excluded. Most of this depends on how the webpage was constructed and how the macOS deals with it.

Safari, version 18, introduced the Hide Distracting Items feature. It enables you to remove the material you don't want from a webpage to clean it up, with just for viewing or for saving as a PDF. Use this option to see a distracting item disappear in a flurry of pixels. However, the change isn't necessarily permanent as you can show all the hidden material again.

Next Presentation

For the next presentation, I'll take a look at a couple of other Safari features.

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.

--*Steve Parker*

Credits (Product Website and Information)

Apple Support

<https://support.apple.com/en-la/120682>

Kibbles & Bytes (Web Version)

<https://smalldog.biz/newsletter/kibbles-bytes-2131/>