

# Finale, the Mac, File Locations and Preferences

## Preference file

Finale stores a preference file in your user account, which contains the settings in Program Options, the configuration of your tool palettes, window size and position, and other settings. Sometimes, the data in this file can become corrupted, causing crashes or other strange behaviour. If a random “bug” suddenly affects things within Finale, when it used to work perfectly before, then it is worthwhile checking whether the pref file is at fault. The easy way to do this is to remove the pref file, and see if the problem persists.

The preference file is located in your user’s Library, in the Preferences subfolder.

**~/Library/Preferences**

(NB: ~ is the Unix shorthand for the user home. Note that this is a different location from the Library folder at the top level of your hard drive, **/Library**, which also has a Preferences folder).

*In OS X Lion 10.7, the user Library is hidden by default. You can navigate to it in the Finder by clicking on the Go menu and holding down the <alt> key. You will see the Library listed in the menu, and you can select it there. For more ways of revealing the Library folder, see the section below “How to access the user Library”.*

Having navigated to the Preference folder, you need to find the Finale pref file. The preference file is named “Finale 20xx Preferences”, where xx is the year of the version of Finale. Make sure you quit Finale. Then you can rename the preference file (with a suffix such as “old”), or move it to the Desktop. Then restart Finale. If the problem is fixed, you can trash the old pref file. You will need to re-set your Program Options and other preferences held by this file, of course. If the problem is not fixed, then you can quit Finale and restore the old pref file, thus avoiding re-setting all the prefs by hand.

Alternatively, you can use Time Machine to restore an earlier version of your pref file, made before the problem started.

If you experience regular repeated problems caused by the pref file, you can maintain a good “clean” preference file, with all your settings, which you can swap in when problems arise. You could even automate the swap with an AppleScript or Terminal shell script.

## How to access the user Library folder

a) Select it from the Go menu, whilst holding down <alt>

b) Type <command><shift> G (Go to Folder in the Go menu), and then type the path:

**~/Library**

Note that if you type “~/Li” and press <tab>, the folder name will auto-complete, if unique.

c) You can reveal the Library folder permanently within the Finder by typing the following Terminal command:

**chflags nohidden ~/Library**

d) You can make an alias of Finale's component folders and place it somewhere else, like your Finder's sidebar, or in your Documents folder.

You can toggle hidden files on and off in any File Dialog (Open, Save, etc) by pressing <command><shift> <dot>

## **Other Component files**

At installation, Finale creates a series of folders and files in:

**/Library/Application Support/MakeMusic/Finale 20xx/**

These include plug-ins, Default Music files, Document Styles, other Templates, Libraries, Font Notation Files, Sound Maps and others.

When you first launch a version of Finale, it copies [some of] this series of files to an equivalent folder inside your user account's Library.

**~/Library/Application Support/MakeMusic/Finale 20xx/**

It is these user copies that Finale's Program Options > Folders point to by default, and it is these that you should modify and add to. You are most likely to use the Music Files/ Document Styles folder (for saving templates that can be used as the basis of documents in the Setup Wizard); and the Libraries folder (for saving expressions, articulations, staff styles and document options).

Note that the Plug-ins folder and one or two others remains at the top level Library. There are good reasons for keeping the distinction between the two Library folders: the one at the top, which you and the system generally read from; and the user one, where files can be read to more frequently and easily. Storing your personalised versions of files within the user space also makes backing up and migration to other computers easier.

New versions of Finale will create new sets of folders, without overwriting the old ones.