

macOS Catalina and 32-Bit Software

August 31, 2019

Introduction:

When macOS Catalina is deployed, 32-bit software will (probably?) not work with Catalina. Catalina is expected to be released in September or October 2019; September 23rd is the most likely date. Catalina was announced at the WWDC conference in June (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psL_5RIBqnY)¹.

Users of Apple computers should identify 32-bit applications and update to 64-bit versions if possible, particularly for critical applications. If a critical 32-bit application cannot be updated, it may be judicious to replace it with 64-bit alternative software.

It may be prudent to delay updating to Catalina until a plan of action can be developed to deal with 32-bit software.

Identifying 32-Bit Applications:

Apple provides information to identify 32-bit applications. See <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT208436> [July 22, 2019]. “From the Apple menu, choose About This Mac, then click the System Report button. From the system report, scroll down to Software in the sidebar, then select Applications. When you select an individual application, you will see a field titled 64-bit (Intel). “Yes” indicates 64-bit; “No” indicates 32-bit. If you're using macOS Mojave, select Legacy Software in the sidebar to see all applications that have not been updated to use 64-bit processes.”

Also see <https://appleinsider.com/articles/19/08/13/how-to-check-which-mac-apps-are-32-bit-and-wont-work-in-macos-catalina>. [August 13, 2019]

Go64:

Go64² is a utility (app) to check for 32-bit software on Mac computers. Go64 can be downloaded from <https://www.stclairsoft.com/Go64/index.html?sourcePath=go64>. This software is positively reviewed, but no endorsement is given or implied in this document.

References:

- See <https://appletoolbox.com/psa-macos-catalina-will-kill-your-32-bit-apps-heres-what-you-should-know/> for “PSA: macOS Catalina will kill your 32-bit apps—here’s what you should know”. [July 24, 2019]
- See <https://www.macworld.com/article/3409097/go64-review.html> for “Go-64 review: Free utility preps Mac users for 64-bit Catalina app-ocalypse”. This is a positive review. [July 15, 2019]
- See <https://www.pro-tools-expert.com/production-expert-1/2019/7/25/getting-ready-for-macos-catalina-rooting-out-all-your-32-bit-applications> for “Getting Ready For macOS Catalina—Rooting Out All Your 32 Bit Applications” [July 29, 2019]

1 Discussion of macOS Catalina begins at 1 hour and 42 minutes into this video. The video is 2 hours and 17 minutes long.

2 As of August 31, 2019, the current version of Go64 is 1.0.3.

- See <https://www.macobserver.com/columns-opinions/dr-macs-rants-raves/help-with-your-64-bit-transition-to-macos-catalina/> for “Help with Your 64-Bit Transition to macOS Catalina. [July 19, 2019]
- See <https://www.houstonchronicle.com/business/article/Help-with-your-64-bit-transition-to-macos-10-15-14092137.php> for “Help with your 64-bit transition to macOS 10.15 Catalina”. [July 19, 2019]