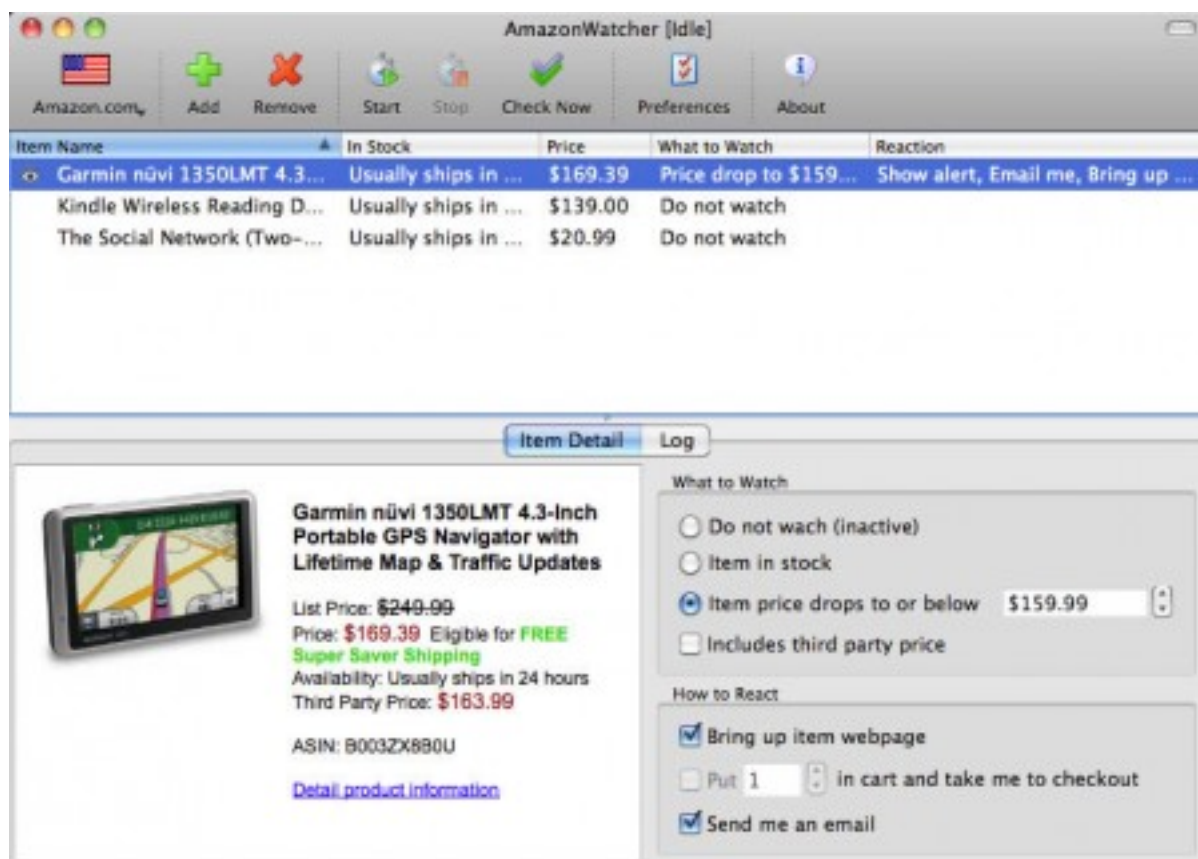


## Desktop Apps - 4/18/11

**Amazon Watcher.** Look, Alex. No hands, fingers, or waiting anxiously in front of my Mac's screen. Here's how to use Amazon Watcher. Find an item you want to watch. Check the price. Tell Amazon Watcher to watch the price. Then tell it what reaction to use.



Simple enough, right?

Click the big green Plus icon in the Toolbar to add a new item. The red X in the Toolbar removes an item.

Your selected item will show up in Amazon Watcher with some details including price and shipping.

Click What to Watch items (checks for availability, item price drops, even third party prices).

Then, select the How to React section. This is the only weak part of [Amazon Watcher](#). The email alert is handy, of course. Bringing up the web page and putting the item in the cart is OK.

### **Must. Have. Noise.**

What I'd like is some noise, a text message, a phone call, *something* that alerts me quickly (because products change in-stock status and price often). Still, email isn't bad (gets to my iPhone even while I'm in line at Walmart or chasing down a lost female offspring) and the price is free.

## PinPoint



Do you remember small Mac screens? The original Mac was a 9-inch black and white model. The iMac was a 15-inch color screen. It was rather easy to find the Mac's mouse pointer back in the day. My Mac today is 27-inches and it's attached to another Apple 27-inch display. Two screens. Lots of pixels. I love it. Where'd my mouse pointer go? Here's how to find it.

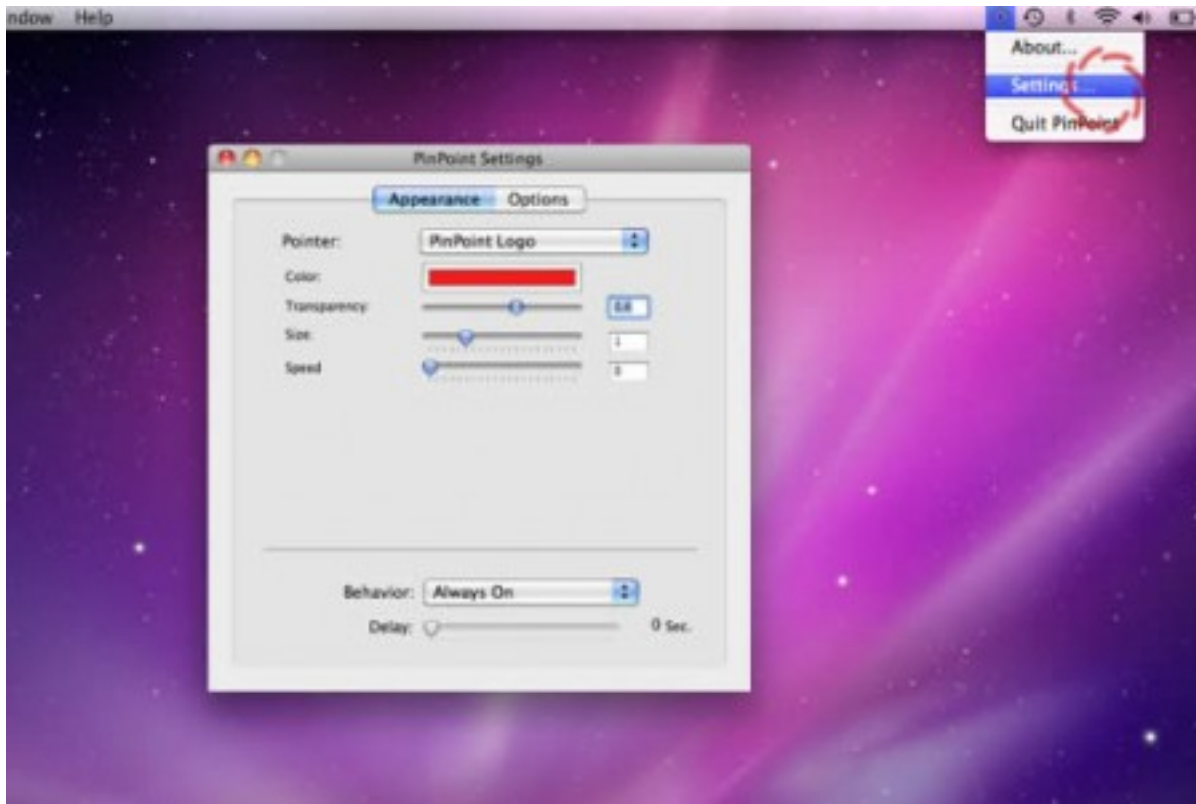
### **Big Screens Lose Mouse Pointers**

Unlike Windows PCs, it's not so simple or an elegant process to change the size of your Mac's mouse pointer to make it more visible on today's massively large screens.

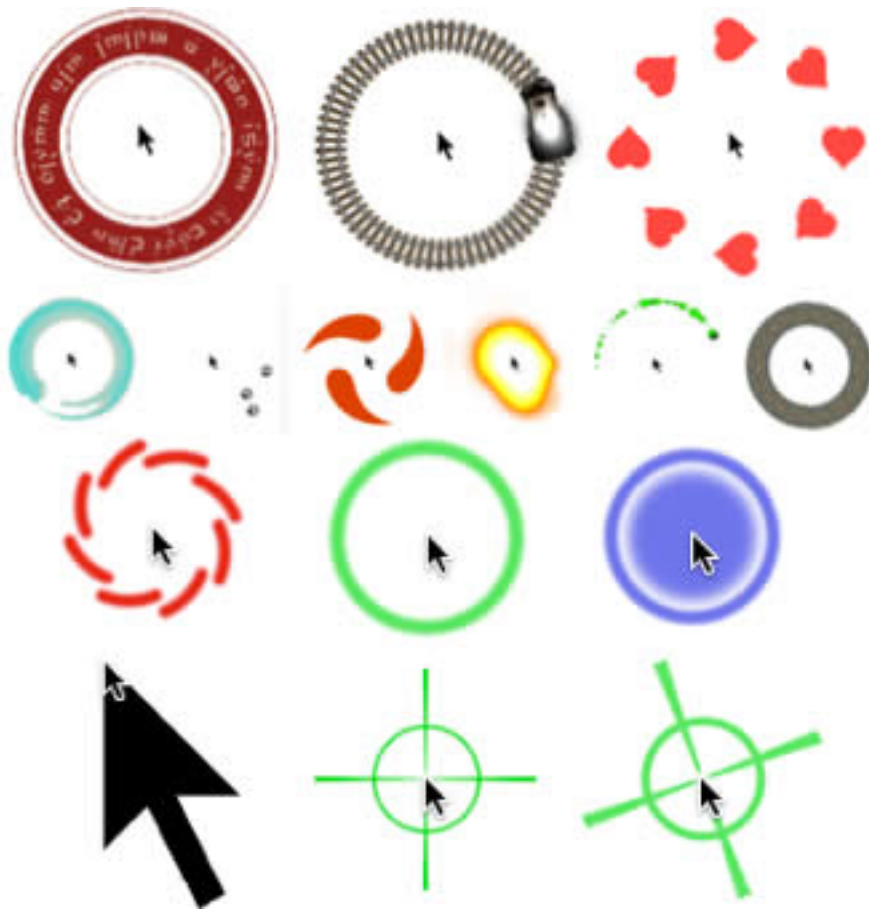
Even the MacBook Pro models have plenty of pixels to push around.

What's your tried and true method to find your Mac's mouse pointer when you come back to your Mac and the screen comes alive?

I cheat. Instead of swishing the mouse back and forth (or whipping fingers across the Mac's trackpad), I use a neat Mac app that locates the pointer on the screen in a jiffy. [PinPoint](#) is useful, inexpensive, and entertaining. Setup is a breeze.



Start by selecting a pointer which will appear onscreen when you tap the magic key combo.



You can choose the color and transparency, the size (very important option on multiple screen Macs) and the behavior (I prefer *Always On*).

There are also options for Show Icon in Menu Bar, but that's rather moot since you'd need the mouse pointer to get there.

And, of course, there's an option to center the mouse pointer on screen so it's much easier to find.

PinPoint remains out of the way, completely unobtrusive while you're working on your Mac.

When you're back and need to find the mouse pointer, the magic key combo brings it front and center with one of a variety of entertaining, animated pointers.

# Calendar

## The Menubar Is Your Friend

Apple might have a practical limit to the number of Mac Menubar apps but I don't know what it is. For me, half the time I can't remember what the app's icon is supposed to tell me.

If you're an iCal user then you know the benefits and the quirks.

It's a decent calendar, of course, but it requires effort to open, scan, and review the day, month, week events.

Is there an easier, faster, cheaper way? It's called [Calendar](#), a Menubar app that gives you—drum roll, please—iCal with a click.

It's yet another way to use iCal.



One click to the Calendar icon in the Menubar on your Mac and you get a quick look at your schedule.

Simply hover your mouse pointer over a specific day and see more details of scheduled events

Edits are a snap. Or, rather, a click.

To edit an item in iCal from Calendar's pop-down menu, simply click on a day or month, and iCal fires up, ready to be edited.