

Brightness Control & Caffeine



I love the iMac but an issue I have with it is that it doesn't have a screen-off button. This is a problem for me as I use the iMac in the bedroom and many times I've been woken up during the night when a application such as EyeTV has woken the iMac from sleep to start recording a TV show.

While I have set the screen to go to sleep after one minute and know the keyboard shortcut to immediately put the screen to sleep (Control-Shift-Eject), it doesn't help when the iMac wakes from sleep and the screen wakes up along with it.

Fortunately, I've found a little application, called [Brightness Control](#), that allows you to dim the screen.

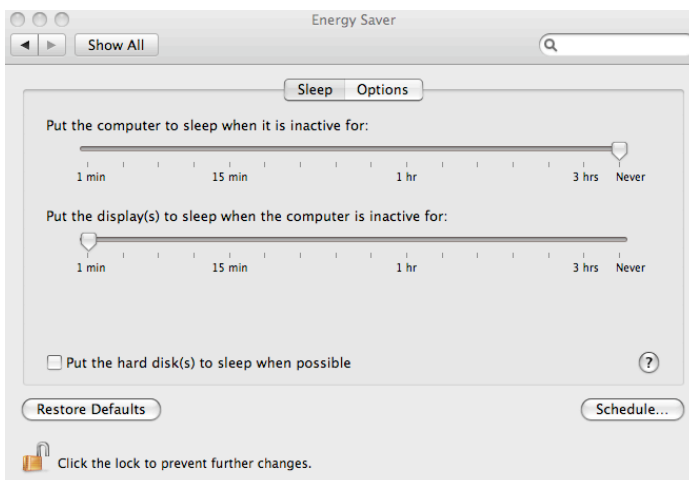
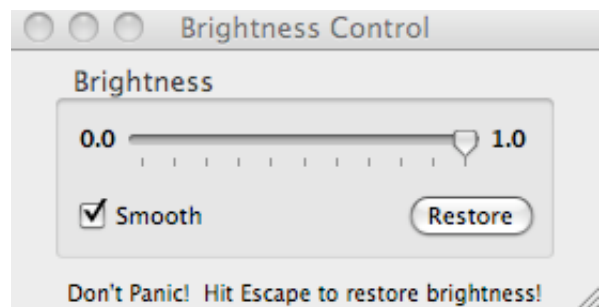
I love how the developer puts it...

"Spending the wee hours burning the midnight Mac oil? Has your Mac taken up permanent residence in your master bedroom? Does your significant other grumble and moan about trying to sleep in broad daylight?"

Give your honey a break already. Get Brightness Control, a nifty tool for dimming all your Mac's displays with one slider. Now, you can go to bed and still keep an eye out for that oh-so-important instant message or email you've been waiting on. Without throwing a pillow over your partner's head. Your mate will positively love this gadget.

And don't panic! The effects of Brightness Control are completely reversible by quitting the application, hitting the escape key, or using its handy 'Restore' button!

Best of all, this nuptial (or pre-nuptial, as the case may be) karma can be yours for free! That's right, Brightness Control is freeware.



I find the app doesn't make the screen completely black (there's still some light emitted), so it's still useful to have the display go to sleep after one minute so that I'm not disturbed at night by the screen. The setting is in System Preferences > Energy Saver (see screenshot to the left).

An application I use in conjunction with the display settings and Brightness Control app is [Caffeine](#). Like Brightness Control, Caffeine is another small program.

This one puts an icon in the menu bar. Click the icon to turn on Caffeine and prevent your Mac from automatically going to sleep, dimming the screen or starting screen savers.

Click the icon again to turn off Caffeine and revert to your normal settings.

Holding down the Command key while clicking the icon in the menu bar brings up Caffeine's options.

I find the app useful because I don't need to go into the Energy Saver preferences during the day to adjust the display sleep option - I can leave it at one minute and just run Caffeine during the day when using the iMac. Then, when stepping away from the iMac or going to bed, I simply click on the Caffeine icon to disable Caffeine.

