

My Favorite Dashboard Widgets

by Phil Russell, CMUG Member

One of the interesting new features in Tiger is Dashboard. When you press the F12 key, your selected widgets appear. Click anywhere on the Dashboard (not on a widget) and you return to your desktop. When in Dashboard, there is a big plus sign (+) at lower left screen. Press this to see more widgets which are not currently show in your Dashboard.

One of the default widgets Apple supplies is named simply Widgets. This one lists all of your widgets, Fig. 1, and lets you turn them off or trash them. Also valuable is the More Widgets... button which takes you to Apple's page containing hundreds of additional widgets.

You can't eat just one potato chip. Brought up to date that reads you can't just select one Dashboard Widget as "the best one." So I will give you my top ten in alphabetical order.

Apple Logo • Just for fun, displays an Apple logo. You can select from 16 different versions, including Tiger Fur. No, it doesn't do anything else.



Fig. 2. Apple logo widget



Fig. 1. The Widgets widget

Capture • if you wanted Snapz Pro X and could not justify the price, Capture is free, Fig. 3. You can set it for full screen, object or selection copying. There is also a button to toggle Dashboard to stay on or not.



Fig. 3. Capture widget

FontSee or FontViewer • choose one of these to see sample text in any font. Font Viewer is shown, Fig. 4.

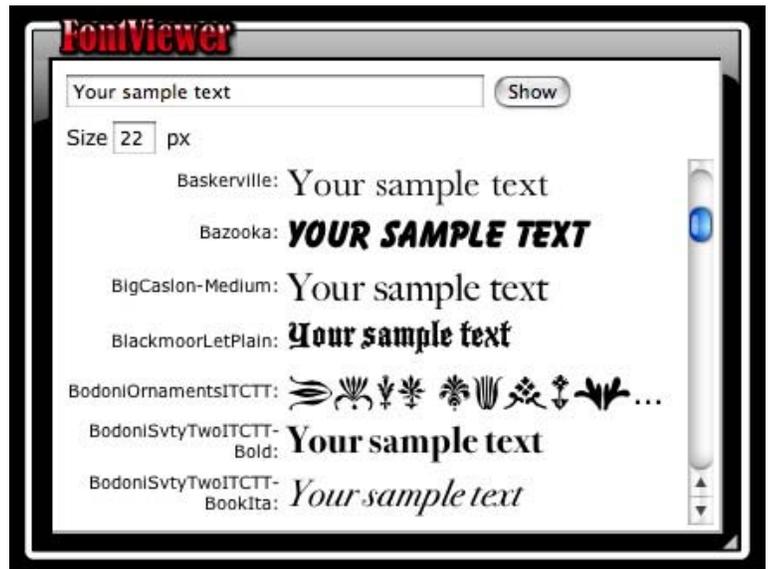


Fig. 4. Font Viewer widget

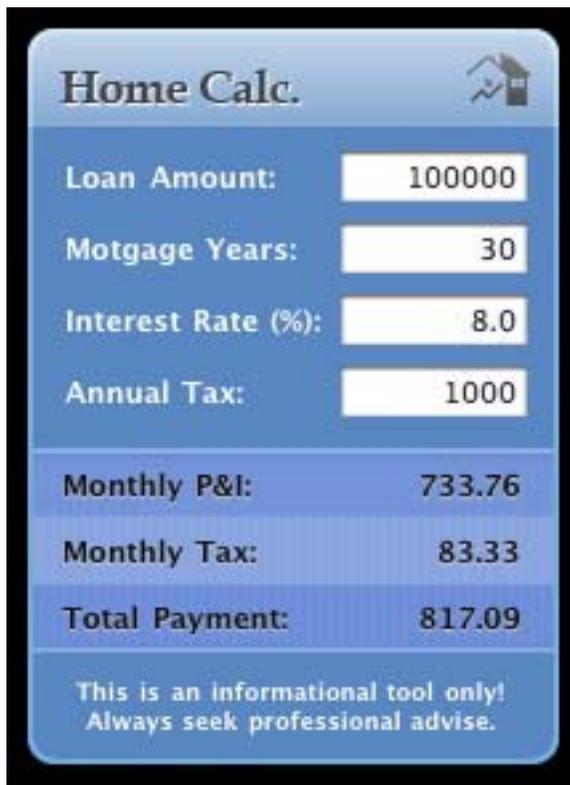


Fig. 5. HomeCalc widget

HomeCalc • a mortgage or loan calculator. You insert values (Loan Amount, Mortgage Years, Interest Rate and Annual Tax) and the Monthly P&I, Monthly Tax and Total Payment appear, Fig. 5.

Marquee • displays what movies are playing in he theaters in your area, Fig. 6.



Fig. 6. Marquee widget

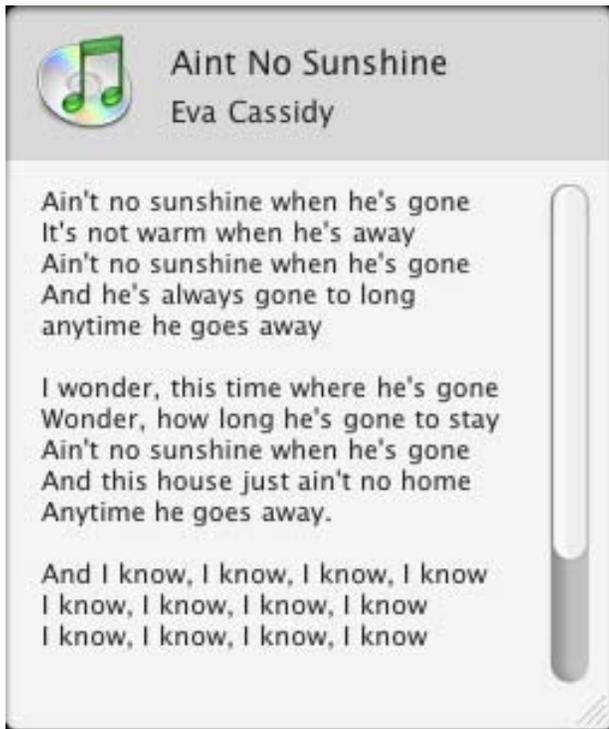


Fig. 7. Sing that iTunes widget

Snippet Composer • type an html phrase and the result is shown, then copy and paste the html where you need it.



Fig. 8. Snippet Composer widget



Fig 9. ToDo Tracker

Sing that iTunes • whatever song is playing in iTunes, its lyrics are shown here, Fig. 7.

ToDo Tracker • A convenient place to make several to do lists.

TV Tracker • See what is on TV. You select the stations you wish to see. cable and satellite DISH and DVR lists are also available.

VersionTracker • shows the available upgrade apps. You can select from 6 lists,



Fig. 10. TV Tracker widget



Fig. 11. VersionTracker widget

including Top Downloads. You can also do a search from within this widget.

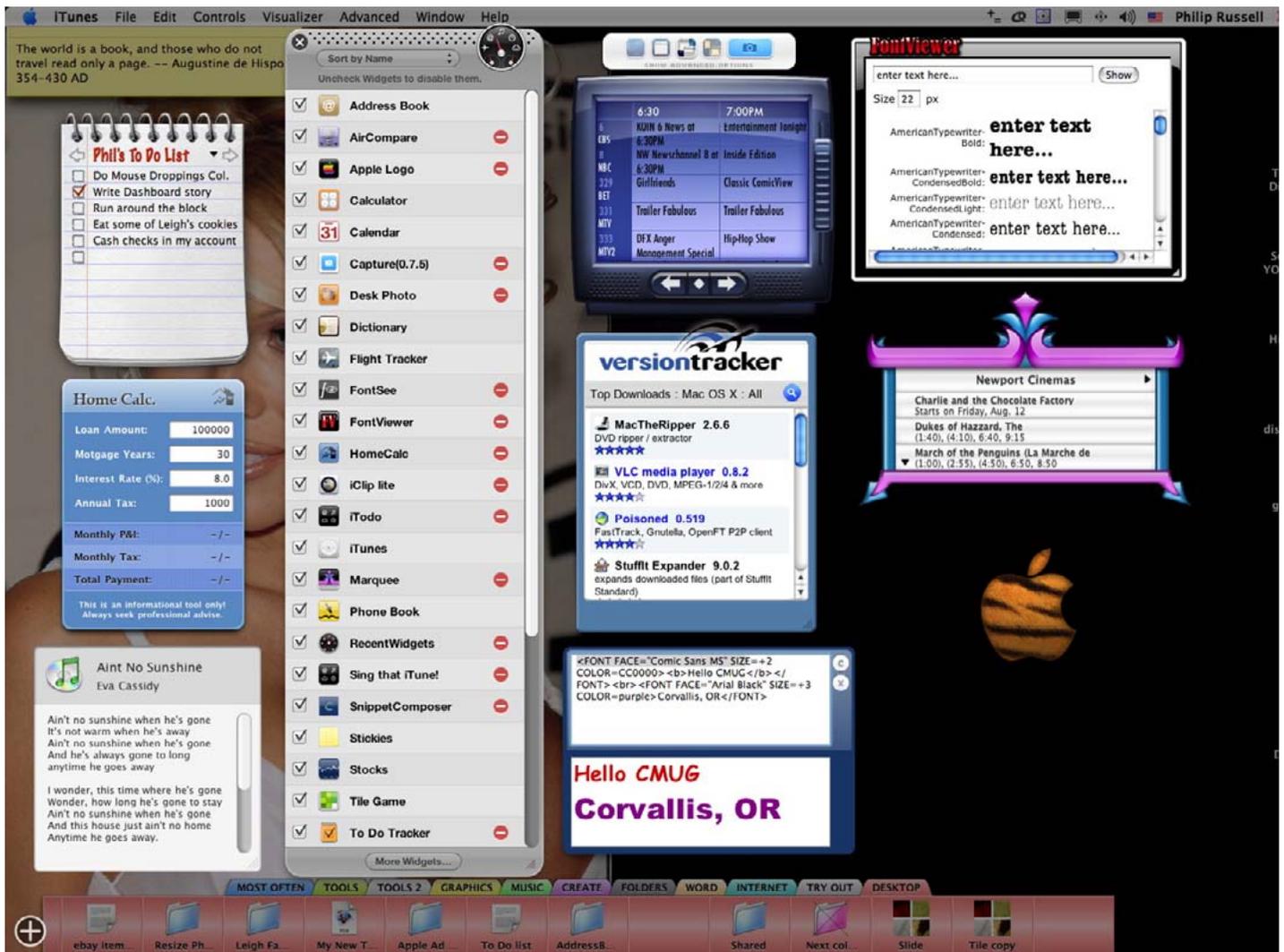


Fig 12. My Dashboard

When I press F12 this is what my desktop looks like when using the ten widgets I downloaded for this article, plus the default Widgets widget. Direct from Doctor Mac: Quick, easy fixes

Safe Boot is a simple way to solve, diagnose troubles

By Bob LeVitus, June 1, 2005 Macworld