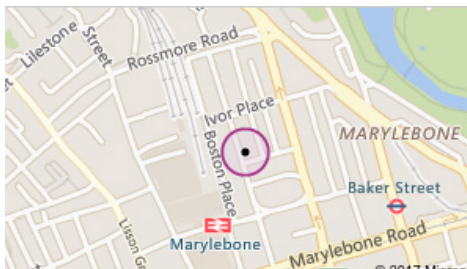


The meeting on Monday 12 March 2018 will be downstairs at the Sir John Balcombe Balcombe Street London NW1 6HE



## Members Only Special Offers

Current special offers

- Disk Drill PRO: 30% Discount
- Teams ID, a Password Manager for Teams: 33% Discount
- Eltima Software: Up to 60% Off OS X Apps
- EverWeb by RAGE Software: 50% Discount
- Take Control Books: 30% Discount on all eBooks
- Opus ][ Complete Collection: 25% Discount
- Joe On Tech Guides: 20% Discount on All Books
- AgileBits 1Password 5 and more: 25% Discount
- Eltima Software multimedia products: 20% Discount
- From the makers of TechTool Pro: 20% Discount
- Noteboom Tutorials: 33% Off Annual Memberships
- O'Reilly: 40-50% Discount
- Prosoft Engineering: 25% Off
- Que Publishing Products: 35-45% Discount
- SlideShark iPad PowerPoint Viewer: Free App plus Offer

This month's main event is Special Interest Groups

We start at 7pm with Newsbyte. Please contribute with your opinions as the News unfolds.

Join a small group around a table to discuss hardware, iOS, photos or tech. It's all member-led. Come along, grab a drink or meal from upstairs and have an enjoyable social evening with tech.

We have a repeat raffle prize this month. A wireless bridge between your Mac, iPhone and iPad. It's a 32GB SanDisk Wireless USB Memory Stick!

## Chairman's Announcement

LMUG's Annual General meeting will be held on April 16, 2018. Please find attached to this email, the minutes from last year's AGM. All members are invited to review the minutes and attend the AGM where we will review the year; our accounts and set the future direction for LMUG.

I strongly encourage any member willing to volunteer to join the committee. LMUG's longevity is due to its pro-active members. I look forwards to seeing you all next month!

*\*If the article on pages 3 & 4 are of particular interest, it is worth see the full article in MacFilos where there are illustrations and interesting videos*

## Rescue Blurry Photos with Live Photos in iOS 11

I love the idea behind the Live Photos feature baked into new iOS devices because it lets me capture short videos of my son doing something cute. But when it comes to snapping a photo of an expense receipt or a particularly attractive pot of butter chicken I've cooked, it's hard to justify the extra storage space a Live Photo consumes for the few seconds of extra video. Thankfully, iOS 11 introduced new features to help make it worthwhile to leave Live Photos on.

Apple advertised one such feature heavily in the WWDC keynote. Swipe up on a Live Photo and you see different effects you can apply to it: Live (the default), Loop, Bounce, and Long Exposure. Jeff Carlson wrote about the last one in "Using Long Exposure in iOS 11's Photos App" (12 October 2017). Long Exposure and the others are neat, but Apple didn't do much to tell people about what may be the most useful Live Photo feature of iOS 11: choosing a new key photo, which is the still image you see of a Live Photo in the Photos app.

If you tend to take pictures of fast-moving subjects, you have undoubtedly run into this problem: you line up a perfect shot, but before you can press the shutter button, your subject moves. That may result in a blurry photo or one that misses the moment you wanted.

But here's the thing! In iOS 11, with Live Photos enabled, the Camera app actually captures 1.5 seconds of video before you press the shutter button. So when you choose a new key photo, it's like editing your photo with a highly precise time machine that can show you every moment of the second and a half before the photo was taken. Here's how you do it in Photos for iOS, but it works exactly the same in Photos for Mac:

Choose a Live Photo in the Photos app and tap Edit in the upper-right corner.



At the bottom of the screen, you'll see a strip of images that Apple calls the frame viewer.

On the frame viewer, you'll see a white square that indicates the current key photo. Drag that square to move through the frames of the Live Photo until you find a better one. It's best to do this slowly.

When you let go of the square, a Make Key Photo popover appears. Tap that to change the key photo to the frame that you've selected.



Photos marks both the original key photo and the selected frame with a dot. If you have a 3D Touch-capable device, you'll feel a tap when you select one of those dotted images. If you tap Done to finish editing and decide you don't like the key photo you've chosen, you can always go back in and pick another one or tap Revert to undo all edits to that image.

Don't set your expectations too high. The alternative key photos may not be perfect either, but you can often make a dramatic improvement and rescue an otherwise terrible photo!

*I check this feature regularly with most of my photos, particularly of people to ensure I have the best portrait and avoid the one where they blinked! Ed*

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## Farrago: A Fun and Useful Soundboard for the Mac

Rogue Amoeba's new Farrago is a powerful soundboard application for the Mac. If you aren't familiar with the concept of a soundboard, it's a tool that lets you assign various sound files to buttons in a grid, after which you can play them with the press of a key or a click of the mouse. The idea is that you can trigger one or more sounds at any time, in any order, as needed while recording a podcast, performing live, or just for fun.

Farrago is a fresh new take, adding greater control and more options for each sound than previous soundboard tools for the Mac, such as Ambrosia's seemingly moribund Soundboard, Podcast Soundboard, and Black Cat Systems' Sound Byte. Farrago requires OS X 10.10 Yosemite or later and costs \$39. A fully featured free trial version lets you trigger 20 sounds per application launch.

To get started with Farrago, you create a new sound set, which can contain up to 80 individual tiles. Each tile consists of an individual audio file, as well as related controls for playback. Then you import sounds by dragging their files into Farrago's main window, which adds them to whichever set you have selected at the moment. Farrago supports the expected formats like MP3, AAC, Apple Lossless, and WAV, as well as less-common ones like OggVorbis and Real Audio. In short, it should handle whatever sound files you throw at it.

Farrago stores its own copy of your sound files, so you won't lose your sounds if you move the original file to another Mac or share it with a friend. You can color-code sounds for organization and assign each sound 1 of 80 possible trigger keys on your keyboard (40 keys by themselves and those same 40 with the Option key). That lets you trigger all your sounds simply by typing letters, numbers, or punctuation. Since Farrago can hold as many sets as you like, if you were using Farrago to manage audio effects for a play, you could create a different set for each scene.

Each sound has its own settings, including two different volume levels you can toggle between, fade in and fade out times, and a start and stop point in the sound in case you want only a small portion of a larger clip. You can configure whether a sound should loop until you stop it, whether a paused sound should resume from the paused point or start over from the beginning, and whether the sound should be played solo, stopping all

other playing sounds when triggered. Finally, you can configure a sound to play only while the trigger key is held down.

In addition to the grid layout, Farrago provides a list view that's handy when you need to play your audio clips in order. It doesn't change how the application performs but it makes it easy to play each sound in turn, as you might need to do as a play progresses.

Farrago comes with a small set of fun sample sounds. You can record your own or add sounds from public online libraries such as FreeSound.org or ZapSplat. Just be sure that you either have or do not need a license for any sounds you use in any audio you publish or perform.

Rogue Amoeba says Farrago is designed for podcasters and those managing live performances, and I can see the utility to both audiences. I participate in a community theater, and when I am not on stage, I like to work in various technical capacities including running sound for shows. I immediately saw how I could put Farrago to use when triggering sound effects. It responds instantly to key presses, which is essential if you need to match, say, a gunshot sound with an actor's movements on stage.

As for podcasts, Farrago enables a freeform style of podcasting where you insert intro/outro music, sound effects, and even interview clips on the fly while you record yourself speaking live. That might require some practice, but it would likely be faster and easier than arranging everything carefully in an audio editor like GarageBand.

I can imagine other uses for Farrago too. You could use it to play ambient sounds and music to add mood and tension to role-playing games like Dungeons and Dragons. Or you could increase the scary quotient of your next Halloween with appropriately spooky sound effects, triggered manually at just the right time for approaching trick-or-treaters. Or, if you host a bar trivia event (such as Geeks Who Drink), you could use it for any number of fun and silly sound effects during the game.

Farrago is the nicest soundboard implementation I have seen, and I encourage you to think about how you might be able to use it to enhance your world with sound effects.

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**SoundByte is the newsletter of the London Mac User Group.  
It is produced solely by, and for, LMUG members.  
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## The HomePod May Damage Your Wooden Furniture

If you have nice wooden furniture that you want to preserve, you know to use a coaster when you set a cold drink down on it. Otherwise, the condensation from the glass seeps into the wood, creating unsightly rings. Some unsuspecting HomePod owners quickly discovered that Apple's new speaker can also leave rings on wooden furniture. After an online outcry, Apple published a support article explaining the situation and the remedies:

It is not unusual for any speaker with a vibration-damping silicone base to leave mild marks when placed on some wooden surfaces. The marks can be caused by oils diffusing between the silicone base and the table surface, and will often go away after several days when the speaker is removed from the wooden surface. If not, wiping the surface gently with a soft damp or dry cloth may remove the marks. If marks persist, clean the surface with the furniture manufacturer's recommended cleaning process. If you're concerned about this, we recommend placing your HomePod on a different surface.

In essence, the rings are caused by a chemical reaction between the silicone and wood oil, and so should affect only wooden furniture with oiled finishes (as opposed to polyurethane, varnish, shellac, paint, or other nonporous finishes). The rings may disappear on their own, but if not, you may be able to reduce or eliminate them with a bit of wiping. If that doesn't work, This Old House has some advice for fixing furniture finishes, but in my experience, a little Murphy's Oil Soap on an oil

finish can do wonders. Oil finishes are easy to touch up, since you just need to fill the pores of the wood. I've heard some people suggest mayonnaise as a fix for this issue, but that's a bad idea, since it will eventually break down and probably smell terrible.

If your wooden table or desk hasn't yet suffered any HomePod-based damage, you'd be smart to place something between the speaker and the surface: a coaster, trivet, plate, tax return, lace doily, or HomePod Sock. What? Apple's not selling HomePod Socks yet?

To be fair, the HomePod isn't the only speaker to suffer this issue — the Sonos One can do the same thing. And Google already works around this problem with the Google Home in the form of the \$20 Google Home Base.

Nonetheless, Apple shouldn't get a bye on this given how much the company brags about its materials expertise and expensive testing, the HomePod's delay in hitting the market, and the high price the HomePod commands. Fine wooden furniture, especially if it's an heirloom, usually means a lot to the owner. At the very least, Apple should have warned people up front in the HomePod's included documentation, which sets new standards for minimalism and tiny type, even for Apple (USB power adapter included in the photo below for scale).

