How to make your Library folder visible in the Finder in OS X 10.9 (Mavericks) or later

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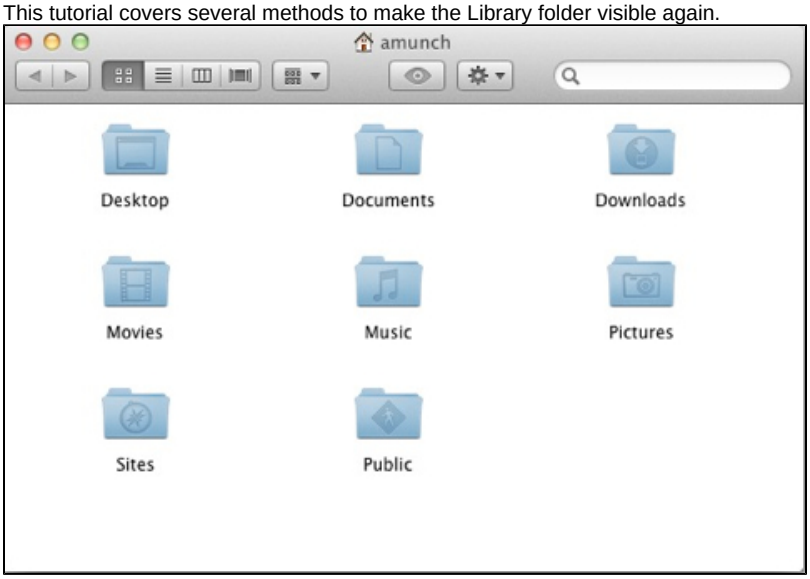
Context

- Beginning with Mac OS X 10.7 (Lion) or later, the Library folder located in a user's home folder `~/Library` is hidden by default.
- This tutorial covers several methods to make the Library folder visible again.



Instructions

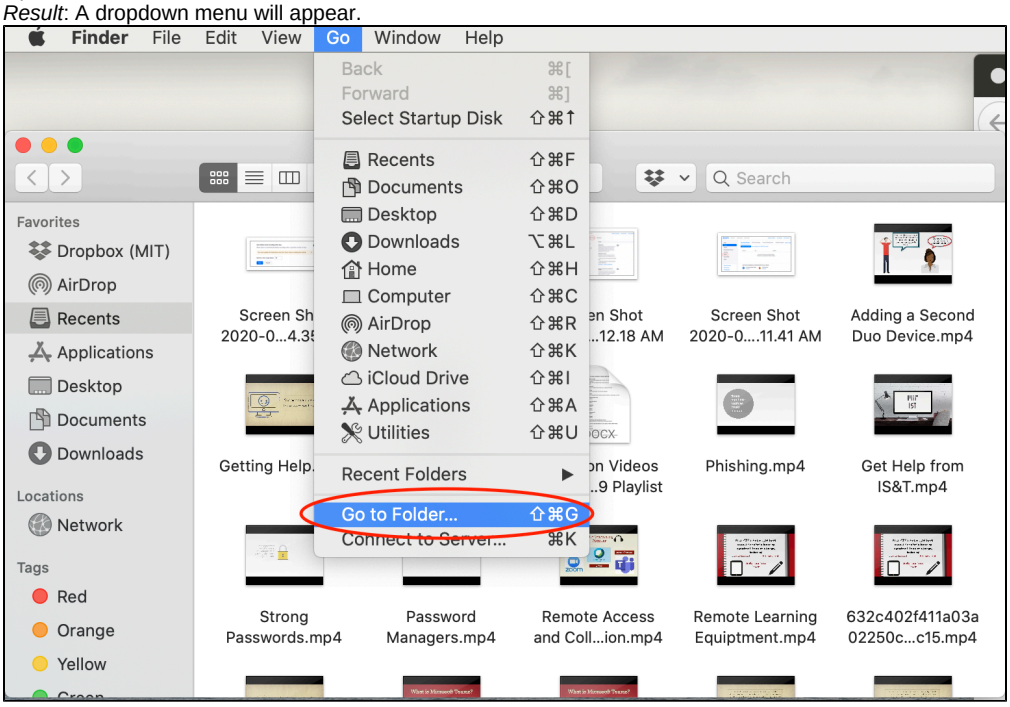
Method 1: Using the Finder's Go menu

1. Hold down the **Option** key and open the **Go** menu in the Finder.
   Result: A dropdown menu will appear.
2. Select **Library** from the list of places.
   Result: Your Library folder will open and you can use it as you normally would.

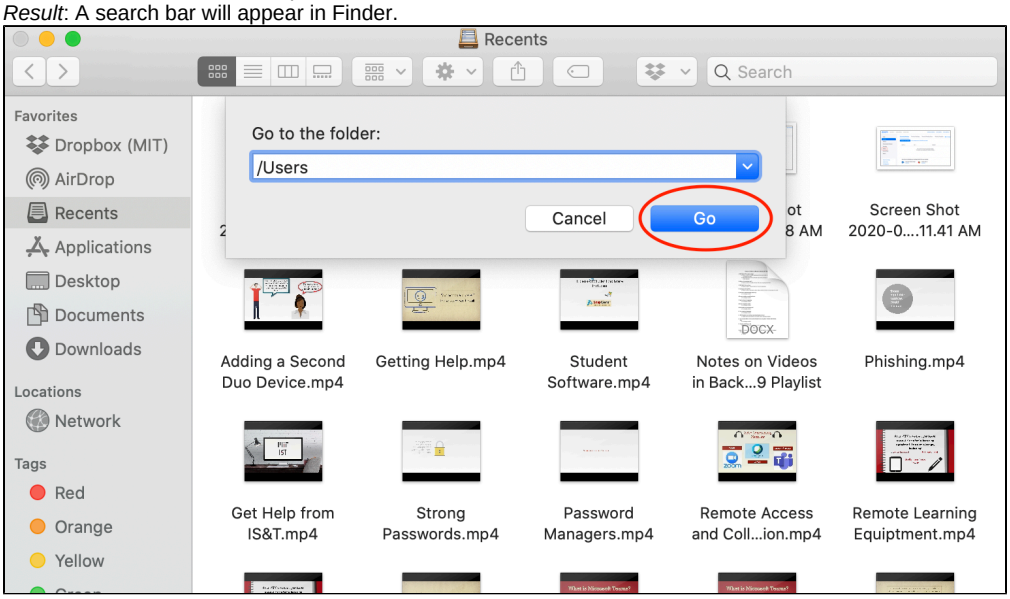
Note that it will not be visible when you close the folder window, but you can always get to it again using **Option-Go**. This method will always work and requires no system modification.

Method 2: Keep the Library Folder Visible

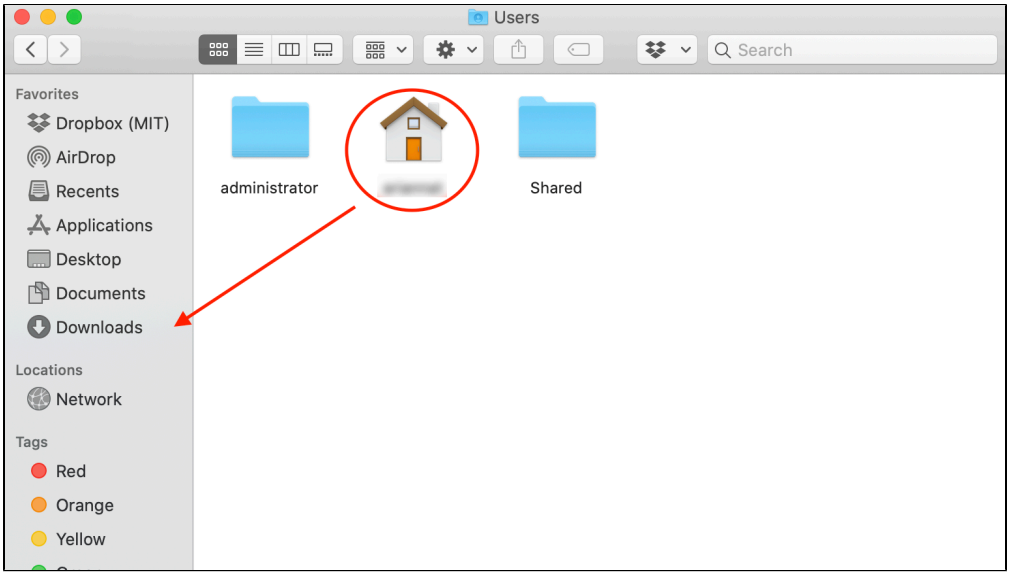
1. Open Finder, and Select **Go** in the menu bar.
   Result: A dropdown menu will appear.



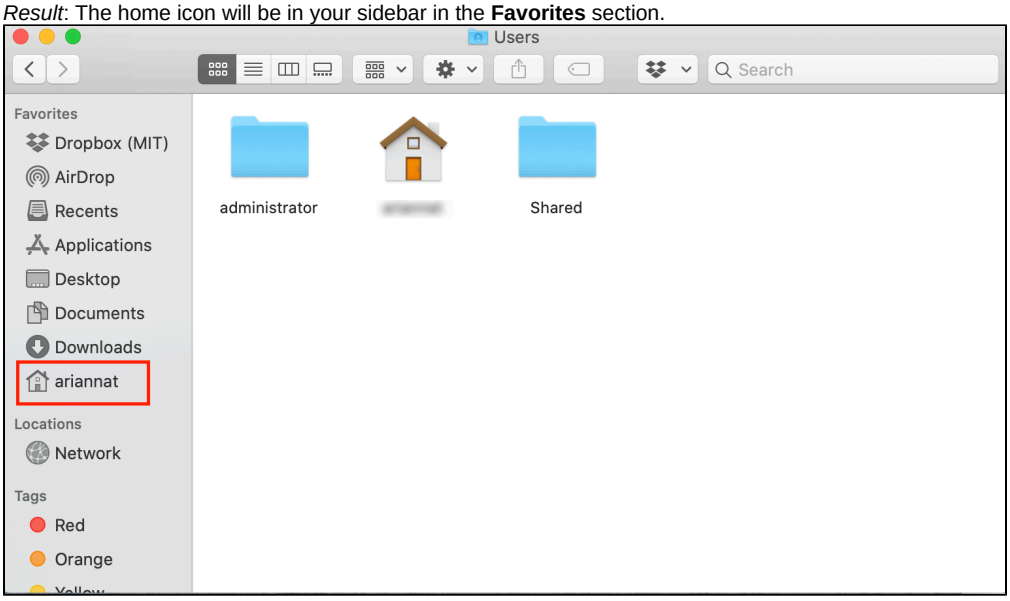
2. Select **Go to Folder** in the dropdown menu.
   Result: A search bar will appear in Finder.



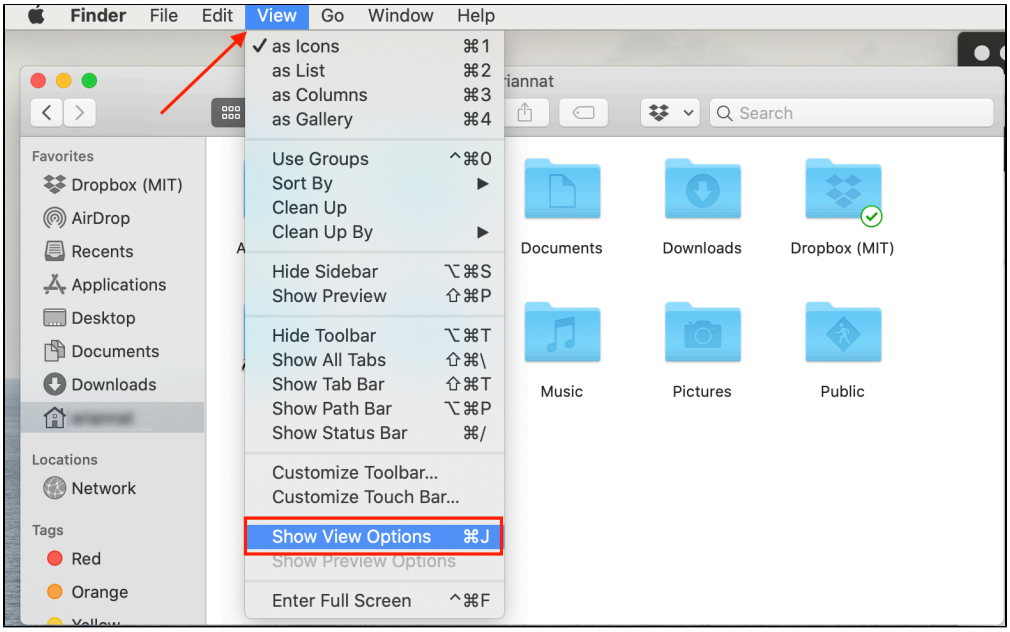
3. Type in **/Users** in the search bar, and click **Go**.
   Result: The Users window will open in Finder.



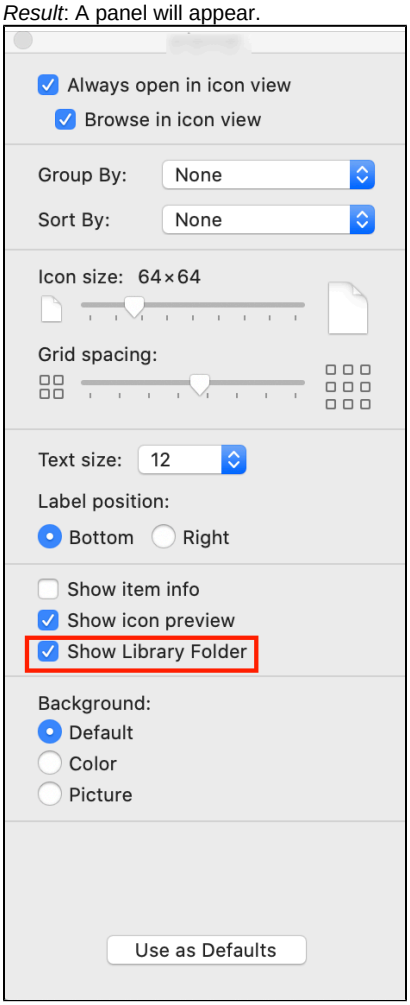
4. Drag the home user icon with your name into the **Favorites** section in the Finder window's sidebar.
   Result: The home icon will be in your sidebar in the **Favorites** section.



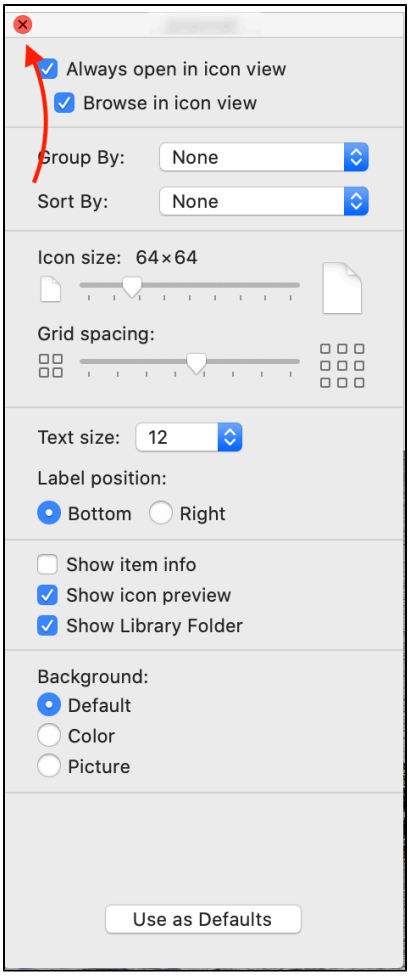
5. Select the home user icon in the sidebar.
   Result: You will be brought to your user screen in Finder.



6. Select **View**, and then **Show View Options** in the menu bar at the top of the screen.
   Result: A panel will appear.



7. In the panel that appears, tick the checkbox next to **Show Library Folder**.
   Result: The Library folder will now be set to appear in Finder.



8. Click the red traffic light to close the **View Options** panel.
   Result: The Library folder will now remain visible in your Mac's directory structure, even if you restart the computer.

Method 3: Using the Favorites section in the Sidebar

Finder windows have a sidebar with a list of Favorites, Devices, and other items. (Hint: if the Sidebar is not visible for you in Finder windows, select **Show Sidebar** from the **View** menu in the Finder.) If you use the Library folder frequently you can add it to your Sidebar like this:

1. Hold down the **Option** key and open the **Go** menu in the Finder
2. Select **Library** from the list of places
3. Click-and-hold on the title bar of the open **Library** window and drag it to the **Favorites** section in the Sidebar

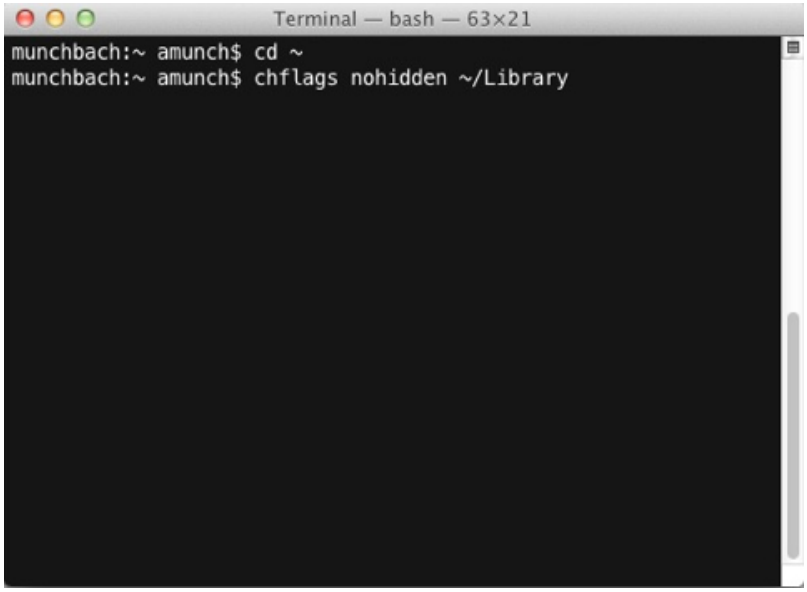
It will stay there even if you close the Library folder, and you can quickly jump to it by clicking on the favorite. If you ever need to remove it, you can Ctrl-Click on the icon in the Sidebar and select **Remove from Sidebar**.

Method 4: Using a Terminal command to "unhide" the Library folder

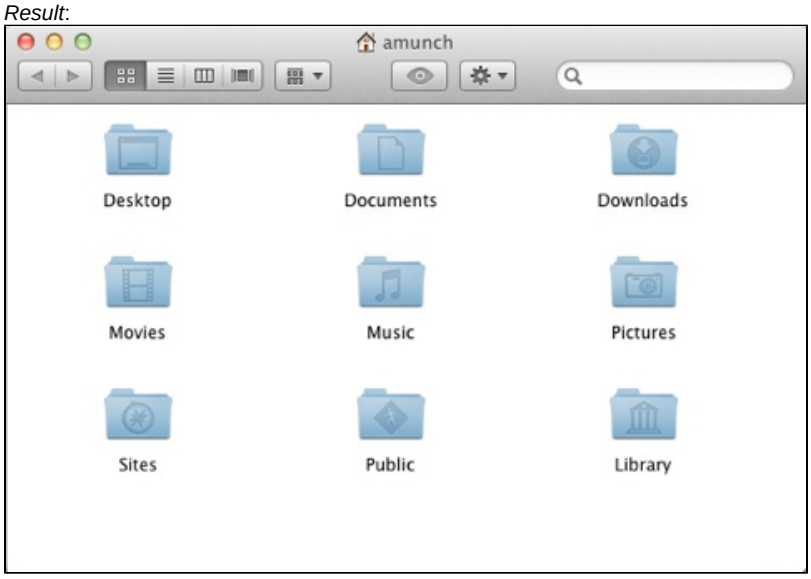
1. Open **Terminal.app**. It is located in `/Applications/Utilities/`. You can quickly open it by selecting **Utilities** from the **Go** menu in the Finder, or by searching for `Terminal` using Spotlight search.
2. Unhide the Library folder using a Terminal command. At the command prompt (usually $) enter

   ```
   chflags nohidden ~/Library
   ```

   and press the **Return** key. You should get the command prompt back, and your Library folder will now be visible in the Finder.



Result:



Caveat to the Terminal command method

While it quickly restores the Library folder to its pre-Lion behavior, Apple's system updates will revert the folder to "hidden" and you will have to run the command after a system update to unhide it again. This can be quite cumbersome. To avoid this and to fully embrace the Apple lifestyle, we recommend you stick with the **Go menu** or **Sidebar** methods described previously.

Method 5: Using a Terminal command to make a persistant alias

There is another option that is persistent after OS X updates. Launch Terminal and run the following command:

```
ln -s ~/Library ~/LibrarE
```

This will make an alias in your home directory titled "LibrarE" that will take you to the ~/Library folder. Note the intentional butchering of the word "LibrarE"; you can change "LibrarE" to anything other than "Library".

Advanced tip: make it permanent

If you are a rebel at heart and refuse to play by Apple's rules, you can save command to a file and add it to your login items, so it will be run whenever you log in. A system update usually requires a logout and log in, so the Library folder will be automatically unhidden again after a system update. **Note that this requires some familiarity with the command line and editing text files using a text editor such as BBEdit, TextWrangler, or `emacs`; or at least knowing how to save as plain text from Word or Notepad.**

1. **Create the command script**
   Open your text editor and create a file that contains the line `chflags nohidden ~/Library`. Save it with the file name `unhideLibrary.command`. The file name is not important, but the `.command` extension is, as that will default to being interpreted as a command script that opens with the Terminal program.
2. **Change permissions to make it executable**
   Open **Terminal.app** and go into the folder you saved your script to. Run the command

   ```
   chmod 744 unhideLibrary.command
   ```

   This will make the file executable. You can test the script by double-clicking on it in the Finder. It should briefly open a Terminal window and run the command. The Library folder should be unhidden if it was hidden before.

3. **If your Terminal window stayed open...**
   By default "Terminal.app" will leave its window open even after the command shell exits. You will want to change this behavior, or you'll always be left with an open but unusable Terminal window after login. Open **Terminal.app** and select **Preferences** from the **Terminal** menu. Then click on the **Settings** button and go to the **Shell** tab. Change the setting for **When the shell exits:** to **Close if the shell exited cleanly**. Close Settings.
4. **Add it to your login items**
   Go to **System Preferences > Users & Groups**. Go to the **Login Items** tab and click **+** to add a new item. Find your script, select it, and click **Add**. Optionally check the **Hide** box next to it in the list to keep it hidden during login.
5. **Done**
   That's it. The script will now run every time you log into your account. It is very quick and there's no harm in running it even if it is not necessary (because the Library folder is still unhidden) and it will keep you from having to remember to run it manually after a system update.

Exercise to the reader: there may be a better way to run a shell command at user level at the time of graphical login. If you know of one, please do mention it in the comments!