Introduction

Y ou made the right choice twice: macOS Catalina (version 10.15) and this book. Take a deep breath and get ready to have a rollicking good time. That's right. This is a computer book, but it's fun. What a concept! Whether you're brand spanking new to the Mac or a grizzled Mac vet, I guarantee that reading this book to discover the ins and outs of macOS Catalina will make learning easy. If it weren't true, I couldn't say it right on the cover!

About This Book

This book's roots lie with my international best seller *Macintosh System 7.5 For Dummies,* an award-winning book so good that long-deceased Mac clone-maker Power Computing gave away a copy with every Mac clone it sold.

macOS Catalina For Dummies is the latest revision and has been, once again, completely and thoroughly updated to include all the tasty goodness in macOS Catalina. In other words, this edition combines all the old, familiar features of dozens of previous editions — but is once again updated to reflect the latest and greatest offering from Apple as well as feedback from readers.

Why write a *For Dummies* book about Catalina? Well, Catalina is a big, somewhat complicated personal-computer operating system. So, I made *macOS Catalina For Dummies* a not-so-big, not-too-complicated book that shows you what Catalina is all about without boring you to tears, confusing you, or poking you with sharp objects.

In fact, I think you'll be so darned comfortable that I wanted the title to be *macOS Catalina Made Easy,* but the publishers wouldn't let me. Apparently, we *Dummies* authors have to follow some rules, and using *Dummies* in this book's title is one of them.

And speaking of dummies — remember, that's just a word. I don't think you're a dummy at all — quite the opposite! My second choice for this book's title was *macOS Catalina For People Smart Enough to Know They Need This Book,* but you can just imagine what Wiley thought of that.

The book is chock-full of information and advice, explaining everything you need to know about macOS Catalina in language you can understand — along with time-saving tips, tricks, techniques, and step-by-step instructions, all served up in generous quantities.

Another rule we *Dummies* authors must follow is that our books cannot exceed a certain number of pages. (Brevity is the soul of wit, and all that.) So, while I wish I could have included some things that didn't fit, I feel confident you'll find what you need to know about macOS Catalina in this book.

Still, a few things bear further looking into, such as these:

» **Information about many of the applications (programs) that come with macOS Catalina:** An installation of macOS Catalina includes more than 50 applications, mostly located in the Applications and Utilities folders. I'd love to walk you through each one of them, but that would have required a book a whole lot bigger, heavier, and more expensive than this one.

I brief you on the handful of bundled applications essential to using macOS Catalina — namely, Calendar, Contacts, Messages, Mail, Safari, Siri, TextEdit, and the like — as well as several important utilities you may need to know how to use someday.

» **Information about Microsoft Office, Apple lifestyle and productivity apps (iMovie, Numbers, Pages, and so on), Adobe Photoshop, Quicken, and other third-party applications:** Okay, if all the gory details of all the bundled (read: *free)* macOS Catalina applications don't fit here, I think you'll understand why digging into third-party applications that cost extra was out of the question.

» **Information about programming for the Mac:** This book is about using macOS Catalina, not writing code for it. Dozens of books — most of which are two or three times the size of this book — cover programming on the Mac; this one does not.

Within this book, you may note that some web addresses break across two lines of text. If you're reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply key in the web address exactly as it's noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn't exist. If you're reading this as an e-book, you've got it easy — just click the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

Foolish Assumptions

Although I know what happens when you make assumptions, I've made a few anyway.

First, I assume that you, gentle reader, know nothing about using macOS — beyond knowing what a Mac is, that you want to use macOS, that you want to understand macOS without having to digest an incomprehensible technical manual, and that you made the right choice by selecting this particular book. And so I do my best to explain each new concept in full and loving detail. Maybe that's foolish, but . . . that's how I roll.

Oh, and I also assume that you can read. If you can't, ignore this paragraph.

Icons Used in This Book

Little pictures (icons) appear off to the left side of the text throughout this book. Consider these icons miniature road signs, telling you a little something extra about the topic at hand. Here's what the different icons look like and what they all mean.

Look for Tip icons to find the juiciest morsels: shortcuts, tips, and undocumented secrets about Catalina. Try them all; impress your friends!

When you see this icon, it means that this particular morsel is something that I think you should memorize (or at least write on your shirt cuff).

Put on your propeller-beanie hat and pocket protector; these parts include the truly geeky stuff. It's certainly not required reading, but it must be interesting or informative, or I wouldn't have wasted your time with it.

Read these notes very, very, very carefully. (Did I say *very?*) Warning icons flag important cautionary information. The author and publisher won't be responsible if your Mac explodes or spews flaming parts because you ignored a Warning icon. Just kidding. Macs don't explode or spew (with the exception of a few choice PowerBook 5300s, which won't run Catalina anyway). But I got your attention, didn't I?