

# TextExpander Workshop

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## What is TextExpander?

TextExpander is a typing shortcut utility program for your Mac or PC. In order to use TextExpander on your Mac, you must be running OS X 10.10 Yosemite or later. TextExpander stores all your snippets (keyboard shortcuts) and syncs them to your devices. You can also access your snippets on [TextExpander.com](http://TextExpander.com).

## What is a snippet?

A snippet is a bit of text that uses a shortcut to type it. For example, I use the letters "xma" instead of typing Marilyn. I use "xem" instead of typing [marilynkennedy2@mac.com](mailto:marilynkennedy2@mac.com).

## How do I get TextExpander?

Go to the website [TextExpander.com](http://TextExpander.com).

View the short movie introduction to show how it works.

Download the program to your computer.

Sign up and create an account.

When you launch the program, you can either use the trial version for 30 days or buy a license right away.

A Snippet Creation Assistant will help you get started by creating a basic set of snippets.

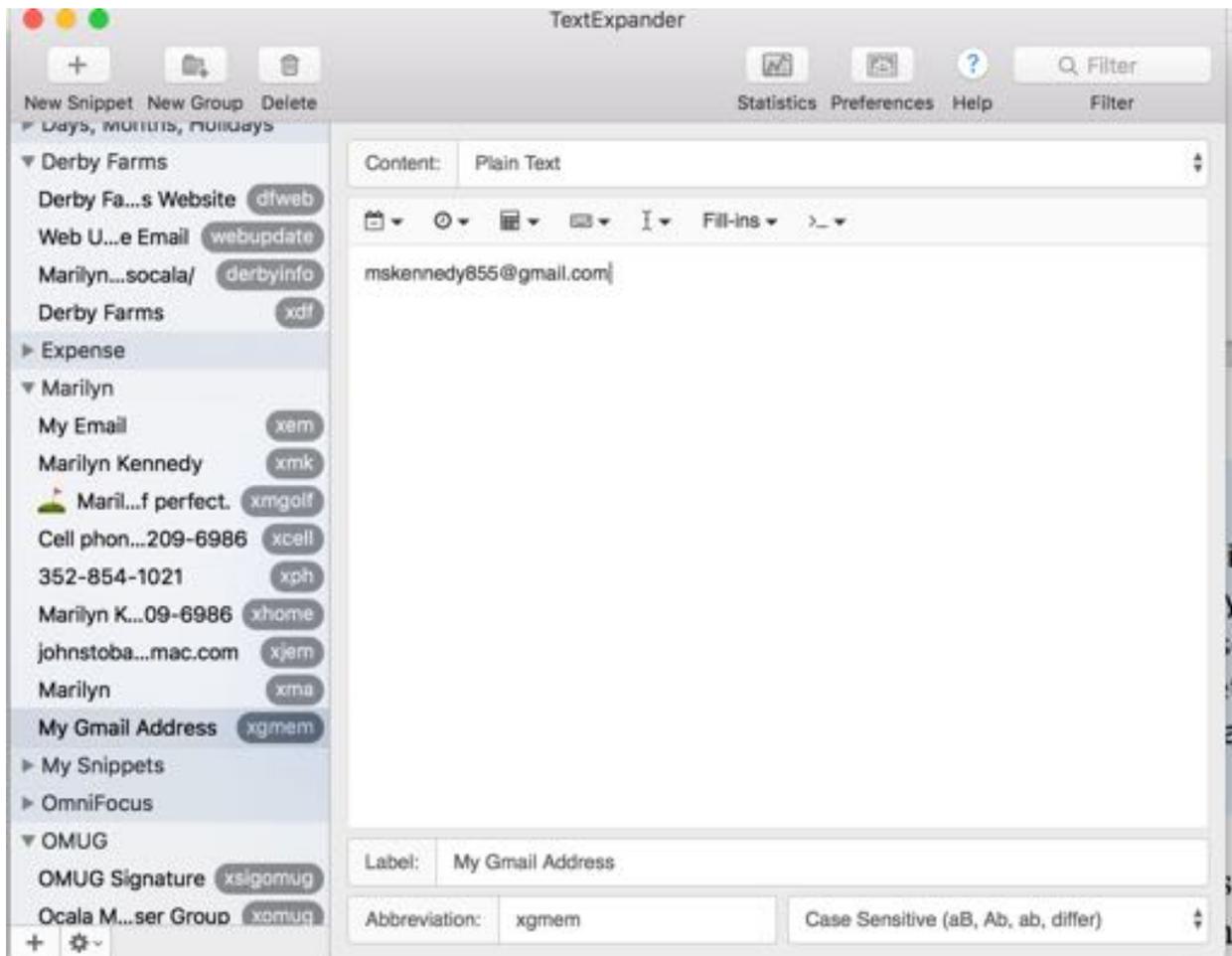
## How much does it cost?

After the 30-day trial, TextExpander will cost \$40 a year for the Life Hacker plan. This plan should suffice for most of you.

More advanced users or those in business might decide to buy the Team plan for \$96 a year.

## How do I make and use a simple snippet?

First create the text snippet to insert whenever you type the abbreviation that stands for it.



Your snippets can be short or long. You can type directly, or copy and paste text into the snippet box.

Once the snippet is created, you need to give it a label and then a unique abbreviation. The abbreviation should be short, memorable, and one that doesn't normally appear in words. I start many of my abbreviations with an x or a combination of letters like dd.

Note: TextExpander doesn't work when you use it in a secure text field, such as a password field. It has a Secure Event Input feature.

## How do I organize my snippets?

Once you've created a large number of snippets, you'll want to organize them into groups. Groups can be renamed, rearranged, and organized by date, frequency of use, date modified, etc.

## Should I start slowly?

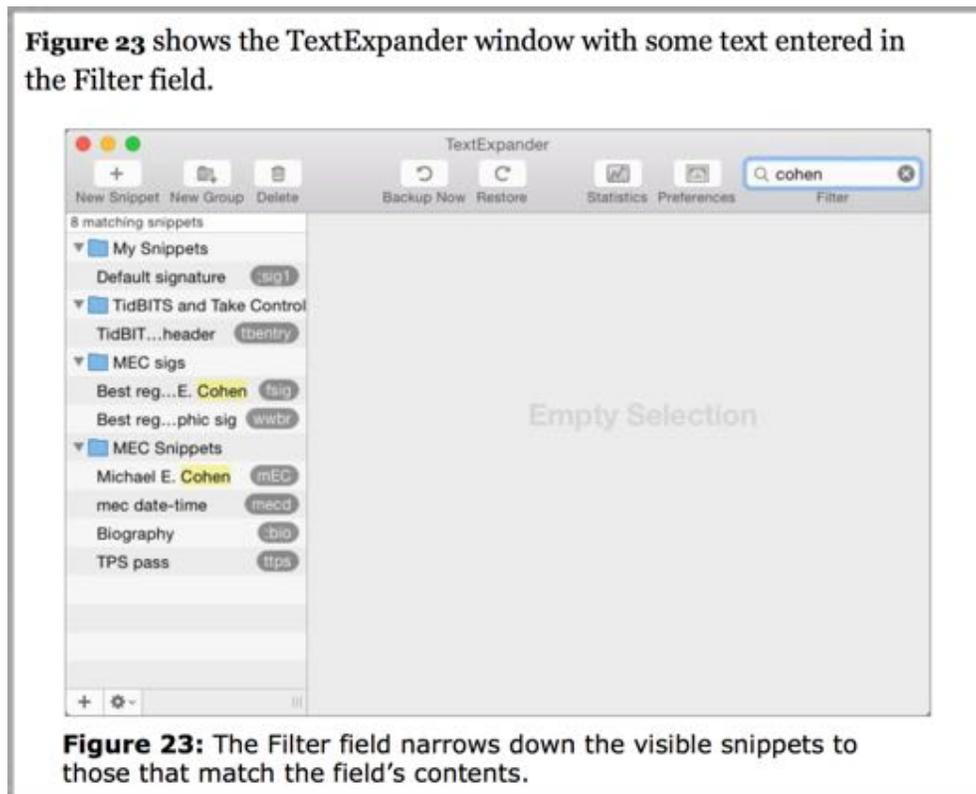
My advice is to start slowly with a few snippets. The more you get used to the program, the more snippets you'll want to add. You will begin to notice that the TextExpander program is saving you a good amount of typing.

I'm still using basic snippets. If you own a business, there are more complicated snippets with fill-in fields to help with orders and thank you forms.

## What do I do if I forget my snippets?

Use the filter in the TextExpander window.

1



<sup>1</sup> [Take Control of TextExpander \(2.0\)](#) by Michael E. Colen, page 61

Search in TextExpander's quick-access menu.

2

When the TextExpander window is not visible, you can still search for snippets: the first item on the TextExpander  quick-access menu is a Search Snippets field. **Figure 24** shows a search from that menu.



**Figure 24:** Searching from the quick-access menu.

When you enter text into the TextExpander  quick-access menu's Search Snippets field, it lists every snippet that matches the field's contents. What's more, it assigns a shortcut Command-key to the first nine matches, so you can quickly type that key combination to insert the snippet into the current text-editing environment.

Use Inline Search by using a hotkey combination as you type. A pop-up window appears where you can search for a snippet. Hotkeys can be set up in preferences.

## What is TextExpander Touch?

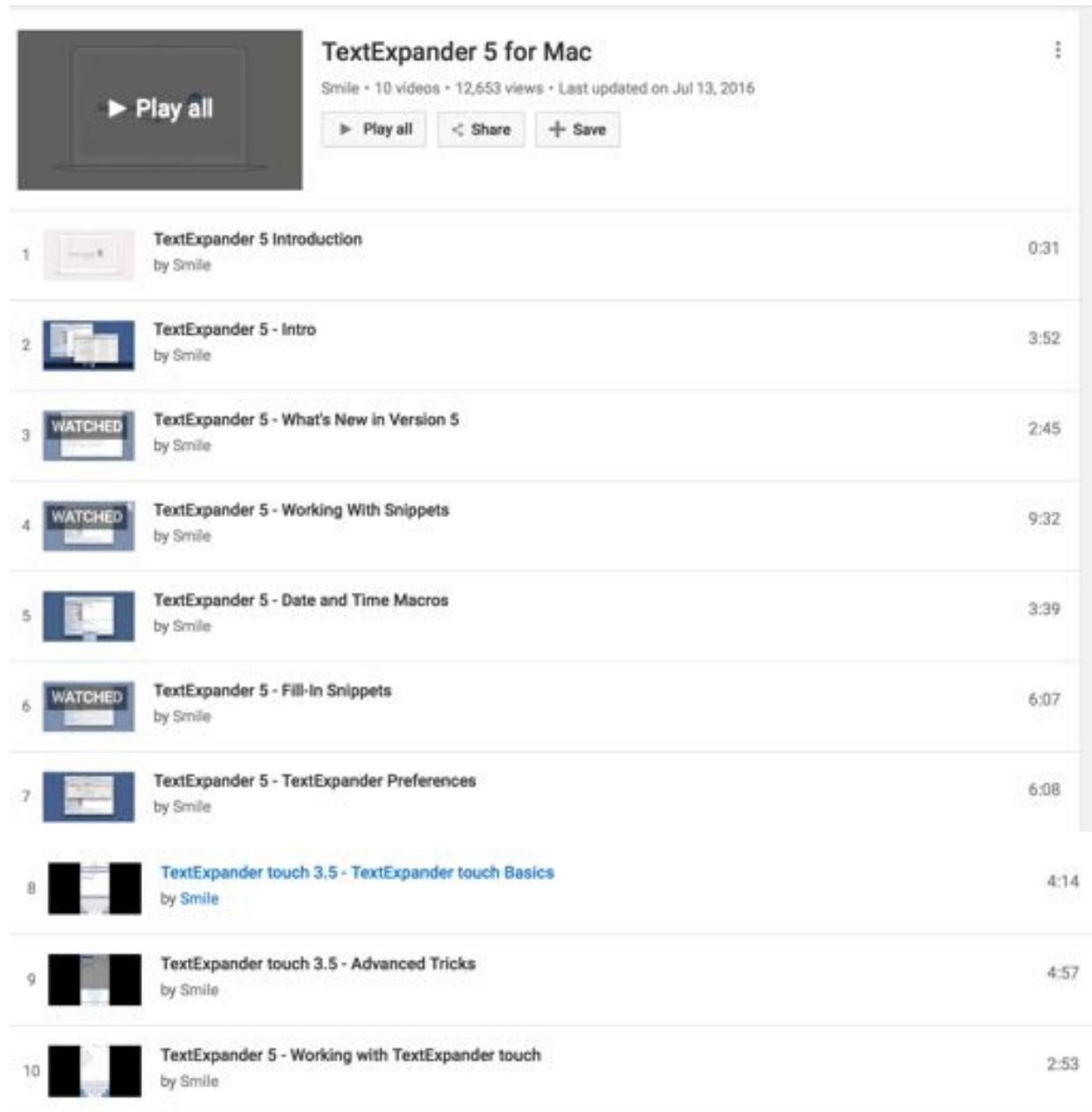
TextExpander has a 3rd party keyboard that allows you to expand your snippets on your phone or iPad. It can be purchased from the App Store for \$4.99. If you do a lot of correspondence and other work on these devices, the \$4.99 is well worth the price for the convenience.

<sup>2</sup> [Take Control of TextExpander \(2.0\)](#) by Michael E. Colen, page 62

## Video Tutorials

I subscribe to Smile on YouTube. Smile has excellent videos to explain the workings of TextExpander. There's a link to these YouTube videos in my list of resources.

The videos can also be found on the TextExpander website.



**TextExpander 5 for Mac**  
Smile • 10 videos • 12,653 views • Last updated on Jul 13, 2016

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Number	Video Title	Duration
1	TextExpander 5 Introduction by Smile	0:31
2	TextExpander 5 - Intro by Smile	3:52
3	TextExpander 5 - What's New in Version 5 by Smile	2:45
4	TextExpander 5 - Working With Snippets by Smile	9:32
5	TextExpander 5 - Date and Time Macros by Smile	3:39
6	TextExpander 5 - Fill-in Snippets by Smile	6:07
7	TextExpander 5 - TextExpander Preferences by Smile	6:08
8	TextExpander touch 3,5 - TextExpander touch Basics by Smile	4:14
9	TextExpander touch 3.5 - Advanced Tricks by Smile	4:57
10	TextExpander 5 - Working with TextExpander touch by Smile	2:53

## Resources

### Take Control of TextExpander

by Michael E. Cohen, Version 2.0

Covers TextExpander 5 and TextExpander Touch 3 for iOS

### Traveling Up the Snippet Collection Path

Maia Olson, May 26, 2016, Blog

<https://smilesoftware.com/textexpander/entry/traveling-up-the-snippet-collection-path>

### Access Tons of Snippets Easily Using Inline Search

Greg Scown, May 12, 2016

<https://smilesoftware.com/textexpander/entry/easy-access-with-inline-search>

### Type Less: How Text Expansion Apps Help You Write Long Phrases With Fewer Keystrokes

Joe Sktych, April 19, 2016

<https://zapier.com/blog/text-expander-how-to/>

### Link to TextExpander 5 YouTube Videos

<http://smle.us/te5ytplist>