Mac Tune-Up Checklist

Mac: _____ macOS version: _____ Date: _____

1. Before You Start

- ☐ **Back up first.** Confirm a current Time Machine backup before changing anything.
- ☐ **Plug in power** and know your Apple Account password.

2. macOS Update or Upgrade

- ☐ **Check:** System Settings › General › Software Update.
- ☐ **Minor updates** (e.g., 27.2.x): install promptly — they carry security fixes.
- ☐ **Major upgrade:** macOS 27 Golden Gate runs only on Apple silicon (M1 or later); Intel Macs stay on macOS 26 Tahoe.
- ☐ **Before upgrading,** confirm key apps are compatible; Intel-only (Rosetta) apps are nearing end of support.
- ☐ **Automatic Updates:** turn on Security Responses & system files.

3. App Upgrades

- ☐ **App Store › Updates:** install all.
- ☐ **Other apps:** use each app's "Check for Updates" (Office, Adobe, Zoom, etc.).
- ☐ **Homebrew users:** brew update && brew upgrade && brew cleanup.
- ☐ **Remove** apps not used in months.

4. Login Items & Background Tasks

- ☐ **Open** System Settings › General › Login Items & Extensions.
- ☐ **Open at Login:** remove anything not needed at startup.
- ☐ **Allow in the Background:** switch off unknown or unneeded items.
- ☐ **Advanced:** inspect ~/Library/LaunchAgents, /Library/LaunchAgents, and /Library/LaunchDaemons for unfamiliar .plist files.

5. Suspect Software Removal

- ☐ **Applications folder:** sort by Date Added; investigate anything unfamiliar.
- ☐ **Red flags:** "cleaner," "optimizer," "antivirus" pop-up apps, search hijackers.
- ☐ **Profiles:** System Settings › General › Device Management — delete unknown profiles (keep employer/school ones).
- ☐ **Privacy & Security:** review Full Disk Access, Accessibility, Screen Recording.
- ☐ **Uninstall properly:** use the vendor's uninstaller, then empty Trash.
- ☐ **Optional:** second-opinion scan (e.g., Malwarebytes for Mac).

6. Disk Utility & Storage

- ☐ **Disk Utility:** View › Show All Devices; run First Aid on each volume, then container, then disk.
- ☐ **Errors on startup disk?** Rerun First Aid from macOS Recovery.
- ☐ **Storage:** System Settings › General › Storage; keep 15–20% free.
- ☐ **Clean** Downloads, large old files, and empty the Trash.

7. iCloud Status

- ☐ **Check** System Settings › [your name] › iCloud: storage used vs. plan.
- ☐ **iCloud Drive:** confirm sync is current (Finder sidebar status).
- ☐ **Find My Mac** on; two-factor authentication on.
- ☐ **Optional:** Optimize Mac Storage; Advanced Data Protection.

8. Time Machine Backups

- ☐ **Verify** System Settings › General › Time Machine: last backup date is recent.
- ☐ **Backup disk** has ample free space; encryption on.
- ☐ **Test restore:** recover one file to prove backups work.
- ☐ **Note:** macOS 27 drops AirPort Time Capsule/AFP drives — use a USB disk or SMB NAS.

9. Browser Cleanup

- ☐ **Update** Safari, Chrome, Firefox, Edge.
- ☐ **Extensions:** remove unknown or unused ones in every browser.
- ☐ **Defaults:** confirm homepage and search engine weren't hijacked.
- ☐ **Website notifications:** revoke spammy sites.
- ☐ **Clear** cache/history if sluggish; uninstall unused browsers.

10. Security & Final Checks

- ☐ **FileVault** and Firewall on (Privacy & Security / Network).
- ☐ **Activity Monitor:** look for CPU or memory hogs.
- ☐ **Laptops:** check Battery › Battery Health.
- ☐ **Restart** and confirm a clean startup; note date of tune-up.