

---

# Apple Help Reference

[Carbon > User Experience](#)



2006-07-12



Apple Inc.  
© 2006 Apple Computer, Inc.  
All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior written permission of Apple Inc., with the following exceptions: Any person is hereby authorized to store documentation on a single computer for personal use only and to print copies of documentation for personal use provided that the documentation contains Apple's copyright notice.

The Apple logo is a trademark of Apple Inc.

Use of the "keyboard" Apple logo (Option-Shift-K) for commercial purposes without the prior written consent of Apple may constitute trademark infringement and unfair competition in violation of federal and state laws.

No licenses, express or implied, are granted with respect to any of the technology described in this document. Apple retains all intellectual property rights associated with the technology described in this document. This document is intended to assist application developers to develop applications only for Apple-labeled computers.

Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is accurate. Apple is not responsible for typographical errors.

Apple Inc.  
1 Infinite Loop  
Cupertino, CA 95014  
408-996-1010

Apple, the Apple logo, Carbon, Cocoa, Mac, and Mac OS are trademarks of Apple Inc., registered in the United States and other countries.

Simultaneously published in the United States and Canada.

**Even though Apple has reviewed this document, APPLE MAKES NO WARRANTY OR REPRESENTATION, EITHER EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, WITH RESPECT TO THIS DOCUMENT, ITS QUALITY, ACCURACY, MERCHANTABILITY, OR FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE. AS A RESULT, THIS DOCUMENT IS PROVIDED "AS IS," AND YOU, THE READER, ARE ASSUMING THE ENTIRE RISK AS TO ITS QUALITY AND ACCURACY.**

**IN NO EVENT WILL APPLE BE LIABLE FOR DIRECT, INDIRECT, SPECIAL, INCIDENTAL, OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES RESULTING FROM ANY**

**DEFECT OR INACCURACY IN THIS DOCUMENT, even if advised of the possibility of such damages.**

**THE WARRANTY AND REMEDIES SET FORTH ABOVE ARE EXCLUSIVE AND IN LIEU OF ALL OTHERS, ORAL OR WRITTEN, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED. No Apple dealer, agent, or employee is authorized to make any modification, extension, or addition to this warranty.**

**Some states do not allow the exclusion or limitation of implied warranties or liability for incidental or consequential damages, so the above limitation or exclusion may not apply to you. This warranty gives you specific legal rights, and you may also have other rights which vary from state to state.**

# Contents

---

## **Apple Help Reference 5**

---

- Overview 5
- Functions 5
  - AHGotoPage 5
  - AHLookupAnchor 6
  - AHRegisterHelpBook 6
  - AHSearch 7
- Constants 8
  - TOC Specification Constants 8
- Result Codes 8

---

## **Appendix A      Deprecated Apple Help Functions 9**

---

- Deprecated in Mac OS X v10.4 9
  - AHGotoMainTOC 9

---

## **Document Revision History 11**

---

---

## **Index 13**

---



# Apple Help Reference

---

<b>Framework:</b>	Carbon/Carbon.h
<b>Declared in</b>	AppleHelp.h

## Overview

Apple Help is an update and enhancement to previous versions of the Mac OS help system. It is available in Mac OS 8.6 and later, including Mac OS X.

This reference describes the application programming interface (API) for registering help books and calling the Help Viewer application.

## Functions

### AHGotoPage

Tells the Help Viewer to load the specified HTML page.

```
OSStatus AHGotoPage (  
    CFStringRef bookname,  
    CFStringRef path,  
    CFStringRef anchor  
);
```

#### Parameters

*bookname*

A string specifying the name of the help book that contains the page to be loaded. If the name of the help book (as specified by the `AppleTitle` meta tag) is SurfWriter Help, for example, you pass a string containing the value `SurfWriter Help`. You may pass `NULL` in this parameter.

*path*

A string specifying a path for the page to be loaded. Specify the path relative to the help book given in the `bookname` parameter. If you pass `NULL` in this parameter, the Help Viewer opens to your help book's title page. If you pass `NULL` in the `bookname` parameter, you must specify the value passed in the `path` parameter as a full URL in the form `file:///`.

*anchor*

An optional string specifying an anchor to which the Help Viewer scrolls after loading the specified page. If you do not specify an anchor, the Help Viewer scrolls to the top of the page.

#### Return Value

A result code. See ["Apple Help Result Codes"](#) (page 8).

### Discussion

This function is synchronous. Calling this function opens the Help Viewer application, if required, and loads the specified HTML page.

### Availability

Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.

### Declared In

AppleHelp.h

## AHLookupAnchor

Tells the Help Viewer to search for a specified anchor and load it.

```
OSStatus AHLookupAnchor (
    CFStringRef bookname,
    CFStringRef anchor
);
```

### Parameters

*bookname*

A string specifying the name of the help book to search for the desired anchor. If the name of the help book (as specified by the `AppleTitle` meta tag) is SurfWriter Help, for example, you pass a string containing the value `SurfWriter Help`. If you do not specify a value in this parameter, the Help Viewer searches all available help books for the specified anchor.

*anchor*

A string specifying an anchor to load. You should ensure that each anchor name in your help book is unique. If you specify an anchor name that is not unique, the Help Viewer displays a list of links to all the anchors with that name.

### Return Value

A result code. See [“Apple Help Result Codes”](#) (page 8).

### Discussion

This function is synchronous. Calling this function opens the Help Viewer application, if required, and loads the specified anchor or the list of links to multiple anchors, as appropriate. You must specify anchor indexing when you index your help book to perform anchor lookup.

### Availability

Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.

### Declared In

AppleHelp.h

## AHRegisterHelpBook

Registers a help book.

```
OSStatus AHRegisterHelpBook (
    const FSRef *appBundleRef
);
```

**Parameters**

*appBundleRef*

A file system reference for the bundle containing the help book you wish to register.

**Return Value**

A result code. See [“Apple Help Result Codes”](#) (page 8).

**Discussion**

Carbon applications must call this function in order to register a help book. If your Cocoa application provides appropriate key/value pairs specifying a single help book in your application’s property list, as described in *Providing User Assistance with Apple Help*, you only need to call `AHRegisterHelpBook` if you wish to call the Apple Help functions to access your help content yourself. If you install an additional help book that is not described in your property list, you must call the `AHRegisterHelpBook` function in order to have the new book appear in the Help Center. If you call this function and specify a help book that is already registered, the `AHRegisterHelpBook` function returns a result of `noErr`.

**Availability**

Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.

**Declared In**

AppleHelp.h

**AHSearch**

Tells the Help Viewer to search for a specified string in a given help book.

```
OSStatus AHSearch (
    CFStringRef bookname,
    CFStringRef query
);
```

**Parameters**

*bookname*

A string specifying the name of the help book to be searched. If the name of the help book (as specified by the `AppleTitle` meta tag) is `SurfWriter Help`, for example, you pass a string containing the value `SurfWriter Help`. If you pass `NULL` in this parameter, the Help Viewer searches all available help books.

*query*

A string containing the text to search for.

**Return Value**

A result code. See [“Apple Help Result Codes”](#) (page 8).

**Discussion**

This function is synchronous. Calling this function opens the Help Viewer application, if required, and displays the results of the search.

**Availability**

Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.

**Declared In**  
AppleHelp.h

## Constants

### TOC Specification Constants

Passed to the `AHGoToMainTOC` function to identify the table of contents page to open.

```
typedef Sint16 AHTOCType;
enum {
    kAHTOCTypeUser = 0,
    kAHTOCTypeDeveloper = 1
};
```

#### Constants

`kAHTOCTypeUser`  
 Opens the Help Center.  
 Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.  
 Declared in `AppleHelp.h`.

`kAHTOCTypeDeveloper`  
 Opens the Developer Help Center.  
 Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.  
 Declared in `AppleHelp.h`.

## Result Codes

The most common result codes returned by Apple Help are listed below.

Result Code	Value	Description
<code>kAHInternalErr</code>	-10790	The requested operation could not be completed. Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.
<code>kAHInternetConfigPrefErr</code>	-10791	There was an error while attempting to read Internet Config settings. Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.



# Deprecated Apple Help Functions

---

A function identified as deprecated has been superseded and may become unsupported in the future.

## Deprecated in Mac OS X v10.4

### AHGoToMainTOC

Tells the Help Viewer to load the specified main table-of-contents page. (Deprecated in Mac OS X v10.4. Use [AHGoToPage](#) (page 5) to jump to different books or anchors.)

```
OSStatus AHGoToMainTOC (  
    AHTOCType toctype  
);
```

#### Parameters

*toctype*

A value specifying which Help Center page should be loaded. If you pass the `kAHTOCTypeUser` constant, for example, the Help Viewer loads the Help Center page.

#### Return Value

A result code. See “[Apple Help Result Codes](#)” (page 8).

#### Discussion

This function is synchronous. Calling this function opens the Help Viewer application, if required, and loads the specified Help Center page.

#### Availability

Available in Mac OS X v10.0 and later.

Deprecated in Mac OS X v10.4.

#### Declared In

`AppleHelp.h`



# Document Revision History

---

This table describes the changes to *Apple Help Reference*.

Date	Notes
2006-07-12	Made minor formatting changes.
2006-07-24	Added deprecation information.
2003-01-02	Updated formatting.

**REVISION HISTORY**

Document Revision History

# Index

---

## A

---

AHGotoMainTOC **function** (Deprecated in Mac OS X v10.4)  
9  
AHGotoPage **function** 5  
AHLookupAnchor **function** 6  
AHRegisterHelpBook **function** 6  
AHSearch **function** 7

## K

---

kAHInternalErr **constant** 8  
kAHInternetConfigPrefErr **constant** 8  
kAHTOCTypeDeveloper **constant** 8  
kAHTOCTypeUser **constant** 8

## T

---

TOC Specification Constants 8