

Reviews

Griffin PowerMate

Even if you only ever use it with iMovie to make editing easier, it will more than prove its worth



Pros *Solidly designed and made + Excellent for iMovie + Can be used as the power button*

Cons *Short USB cable + Power button function only works when connected directly to a Mac + Software needs work*

Maker *Griffin Technologies*

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The Griffin PowerMate is an USB controller that looks like the volume control from a silver hi-fi system. Griffin bills it as a universal audio controller, but it can be used for just

about any task that can be mapped to a key command.

The PowerMate is attractively designed with an aluminium finish, and is extremely smooth in use. The base of the controller is a layer of rubber about a centimetre thick, which enables the device to adhere to a desk and stay in position when it's being used. A neat finishing touch is a blue light that glows from the base when the PowerMate is connected.

The only negative aspect of its physical design is that the tethered USB cable is only three feet long, making it awkward to connect to the ports on the back of a Power Mac if you keep it under your desk.

The PowerMate doubles as a power on/off button. When the Mac is on, pushing down on the controller opens a dialog box, which asks you if you want to shut down, sleep or restart. Pushing the button when the Mac is off, starts your Mac, making it a useful replacement for the power button on your keyboard. However, this only works if the PowerMate is plugged directly into the Mac.

The PowerMate is controlled by System Preferences in Mac OS X and through a Control Panel in versions before OS X. By default it's set to control volume in iTunes, but you can set preferences for the button and for moving the controller while the button is pushed.

Utilities

[Acrobat 4.0](#)
[ACTION Files](#)
[ACTION Files 1.1](#)
[ACTION Files 1.5.1](#)
[ACTION Space Doctor](#)
[Action WYSIWYG 1.0](#)
[ADB I/O](#)
[Adobe Acrobat 4.0](#)
[Beta](#)
[Adobe Type Manager](#)
[4.6](#)
[Adobe Type Manager](#)
[Deluxe 4.0](#)
[Adobe Type Manager](#)
[Deluxe 4.5](#)
[Adobe Type Reunion](#)
[2.0](#)
[Adobe Type Reunion](#)
[2.6](#)
[Adobe Type Reunion](#)
[Deluxe 2.5](#)
[AG Author 1.0.7](#)
[Aladdin Transporter](#)
[1.0](#)
[Aladdin Tuner 3](#)
[Alsoft DiskWarrior](#)
[1.01](#)
[Anarchie Pro 3.5](#)
[Apple DOS](#)
[Compatibility Card](#)
[AppleWorks 6.0](#)
[AppleWorks 6.0](#)
[AudioCatalyst 2.0](#)
[Baldur's Gate](#)
[BetterHTMLExport](#)
[1.3.1](#)
[Blue Label](#)
[PowerEmulator 1.0](#)
[BookEndz](#)
[Brother MFC-860](#)
[Cameraid 1.0](#)
[CanOpener 4.0](#)
[Canto Cumulus 5](#)
[Single User](#)
[CARDport Swift Smart](#)
[Media](#)
[CARDport Swift](#)
[Synchro](#)
[CDFinder 2.8](#)

When it was set up this way, the volume changed as we would have expected, but this wasn't reflected visually in iTunes's volume controller. When we connected our USB audio amplifier, the controller ceased to work. Mapping the controller's functions to the key commands for controlling volume solved both of these problems.

The PowerMate worked well when used with the QuickTime Player, or video editing applications, such as iMovie. In these programs it provided a very smooth and convenient method of scrubbing through frames by mapping its controls to the forward and backward arrows on the keyboard.

The PowerMate is a unique USB controller that's eye-catchingly designed and very useful. It's not without its quirks, and will only be really useful as a power button if connected to an iMac. However, even if you only ever use it with iMovie to make editing easier, it will more than prove its worth.

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