FreezeText

User Manual

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Contents

Introduction

FreezeText is a free macOS utility for capturing text from anywhere on your screen. Press a single keyboard shortcut to freeze the display, select an area, and instantly recognize text using Apple's Vision framework. All processing happens locally on your Mac — no data is sent to the cloud.

Use Cases

- **Scanned documents** — extract text from PDFs without a text layer
- **Images and screenshots** — copy text from photos, diagrams, or screenshots
- **Video content** — freeze a frame and capture visible text
- **Hover elements** — capture tooltips, popups, and menus that disappear on click
- **Any application** — works system-wide with any app on your Mac

Getting Started

Installation

FreezeText is available as a free download. Download the DMG file and drag FreezeText to your Applications folder.

Screen Recording Permission

On first launch, FreezeText requests Screen Recording permission. This is required for the app to capture screen contents and recognize text.

1. macOS shows a permission dialog — click **Open System Settings**
2. Enable the toggle next to **FreezeText** under **Privacy & Security → Screen Recording**
3. Restart FreezeText for the permission to take effect

Your First Text Capture

1. Press ⌘⇧**7** (Command + Shift + 7) — the screen freezes
2. Drag a rectangle around the desired text area with your mouse
3. The recognized text is automatically copied to the clipboard

That's it! The captured text can now be pasted into any application with ⌘V.

Terms of Use

On the very first launch, FreezeText displays the terms of use and privacy policy. These must be accepted before the app can be used.

Text Capture

Global Hotkey

The default hotkey is ⌘⇧7 (Command + Shift + 7). It works system-wide in any application. The hotkey can be customized in settings under **General**.

Area Selection

After pressing the hotkey, the screen freezes and is slightly dimmed. A hint text appears briefly: "Select area · ESC to cancel".

- **Drag**: Hold the mouse button and drag a rectangle around the desired area
- **Size indicator**: While dragging, the current size of the selection rectangle is displayed
- **Cancel**: Press **ESC** to cancel the capture

OCR Processing

Once the area is selected, text recognition starts automatically. Processing typically takes less than 0.3 seconds. The recognized text is:

1. Cleaned up according to text processing settings (line breaks, whitespace, hyphenation)
2. Shown in the text editor (if enabled) or copied directly to the clipboard
3. Saved to history (if enabled)

Multi-Display Support

FreezeText supports multiple displays. When you press the hotkey, all connected monitors are frozen simultaneously. You can select an area for text recognition on any screen.

QR Code and Barcode Detection

In addition to text, FreezeText automatically detects QR codes and barcodes in the selected area. The contained text or link is copied to the clipboard along with the recognized text.

OCR Languages

Recognition languages can be configured in settings under **OCR**. By default, German and English as well as system languages are active. Additional languages improve recognition for foreign-language texts.

macOS Services Integration

FreezeText integrates into the macOS Services menu. In any application (e.g. Finder), you can select images and use **Services → FreezeText: Extract Text** to recognize the contained text via OCR. The recognized text is copied to the clipboard and optionally saved to history.

History

History Sidebar

The history sidebar shows all previous text captures. It can be opened in two ways:

- **Push mouse to the right screen edge** — the sidebar appears automatically
- **Menu bar icon → History** — via the FreezeText menu

History Entries

Each entry shows a text preview (maximum 2 lines) and a relative timestamp (e.g. "2 hours ago"). On hover, the following actions become available:

- **Screenshot** — shows the captured screen area
- **Copy** — copies the text to the clipboard
- **Edit** — opens the text in the editor
- **Delete** — removes the entry from history

Color Tags

History entries can be tagged with colors for categorization. Available colors: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Purple. Color tags can be assigned or removed via the context menu (right-click).

History Search

The sidebar contains a search field for full-text search across the history. The number of matches is displayed next to the search field.

Reorder Entries

History entries can be reordered via drag & drop. Drag an entry to the desired position in the list.

Export History

The complete history can be exported as **JSON** or **CSV**. Export functions are available in settings under **History**.

Auto-Delete

The history can be automatically cleaned up. In settings under **History** you can configure:

- **Maximum entries**: 10 to 100 (default: 50)
- **Auto-delete after**: 7, 14, 30, or 90 days — or never

Text Processing

Remove Line Breaks

OCR-recognized text often contains unwanted line breaks that interrupt the text flow. FreezeText can automatically remove them and provide the text as continuous flowing text.

This option can be enabled in settings under **Text Processing**.

Clean Up Whitespace

Double or superfluous spaces created by OCR recognition are automatically reduced to a single space.

Fix Hyphenation

FreezeText detects and corrects hyphenation at line endings (e.g. "key-board" → "keyboard"). The separated syllable and the following line are automatically joined.

User Interface

Menu Bar

FreezeText runs as a menu bar app. The icon in the macOS menu bar provides quick access to:

- **Start capture** — equivalent to the hotkey
- **History** — opens the history sidebar
- **Settings** — opens the settings window
- **Quit** — quits FreezeText

Capture Overlay

After pressing the hotkey, a fullscreen overlay appears with the frozen screen content. The overlay shows:

- Slightly dimmed screen contents
- Crosshair cursor for area selection
- Hint text with instructions
- Size indicator during selection

Text Editor

The integrated text editor shows the recognized text for editing before copying. Features:

- **Translucent window** — stays always on top
- **Auto-save** — changes are saved immediately
- **Resizable** — the window can be freely scaled

- **Copy** — transfers the (optionally edited) text to the clipboard

History Sidebar

The sidebar appears at the right screen edge and displays the capture history. Features:

- Text preview of captures
- Search across history
- Color tags for categorization
- Drag & drop for reordering
- Actions on hover (Copy, Edit, Delete, Screenshot)

Settings

General

- **Configure hotkey** — change the global capture hotkey (default: ⌘⇧7)
- **Launch at login** — start FreezeText automatically at macOS login
- **Show text editor** — show recognized text in the editor instead of copying directly

OCR

- **Recognition languages** — select languages for text recognition
- **Automatic language** — automatically use macOS system languages

Text Processing

- **Remove line breaks** — remove unwanted line breaks from recognized text
- **Clean up whitespace** — reduce double spaces to a single space
- **Fix hyphenation** — join separated words at line endings

History

- **Enable history** — save captures to history
- **Maximum entries** — number of stored entries (10–100)
- **Auto-delete** — automatically remove entries after a time period

- **Export** — export history as JSON or CSV

API Server

- **Enable HTTP API** — start the local API server
- **Port** — API server port (default: 52788)
- **Localhost only** — restrict access to local connections

Keyboard Shortcuts

Function	Shortcut
Freeze screen & capture text	⌘⇧7 (configurable)
Cancel capture	ESC
Copy text (in editor)	⌘C
Select all (in editor)	⌘A
Undo (in editor)	⌘Z
Redo (in editor)	⌘⇧Z
Open settings	⌘,
Quit FreezeText	⌘Q

HTTP API

FreezeText provides a local HTTP API with over 40 endpoints for automation. The API server can be enabled in settings under **API Server**.

Base URL

```
http://localhost:52788
```

The port is configurable in settings.

Key Endpoints

Text Capture

Method	Path	Description
POST	`/capture`	Freeze screen and capture text
POST	`/capture/area`	Capture a defined area
GET	`/capture/last`	Get last capture

History

Method	Path	Description
GET	`/history`	Get all history entries
GET	`/history/:id`	Get a single entry
DELETE	`/history/:id`	Delete an entry
DELETE	`/history`	Clear entire history
GET	`/history/export/json`	Export history as JSON
GET	`/history/export/csv`	Export history as CSV

OCR

Method	Path	Description
POST	`/ocr/image`	Recognize text from image file
POST	`/ocr/base64`	Recognize text from Base64 image
POST	`/ocr/url`	Recognize text from image URL

Mouse and Keyboard Control

Method	Path	Description
POST	`/mouse/click`	Mouse click at position
POST	`/mouse/move`	Move mouse
POST	`/keyboard/type`	Type text
POST	`/keyboard/key`	Press key

System

Method	Path	Description
GET	`/status`	Get API status
GET	`/settings`	Get settings
PUT	`/settings`	Update settings

Example

```
# Capture text from screen
curl -X POST http://localhost:52788/capture

# Get last capture
curl http://localhost:52788/capture/last

# Export history as JSON
curl http://localhost:52788/history/export/json > history.json
```

Technical Details

OCR Engine

FreezeText uses Apple's Vision framework at the highest accuracy level (`accurate`). This works entirely locally — no data is sent to external servers.

Processing typically takes less than 0.3 seconds and supports all languages supported by Apple Vision.

QR Code and Barcode Detection

In addition to text recognition, FreezeText uses Apple's Vision framework for QR code and barcode detection. Supported formats:

- QR Code
- EAN-8 / EAN-13
- Code 128
- Data Matrix
- PDF417

macOS Services

FreezeText registers as a macOS Service. In any app that supports the Services menu (e.g. Finder, Safari), you can select images and trigger OCR recognition via **Services → FreezeText: Extract Text**.

Privacy

- All processing happens locally on your Mac
- No data is transmitted to external servers
- No account or registration required
- No analytics or tracking data
- History is stored locally at `~/Library/Application Support/FreezeText/`

System Requirements

- **macOS**: 13.0 (Ventura) or later
- **Processor**: Apple Silicon (M1 or later) or Intel
- **Storage**: approx. 30 MB
- **Permission**: Screen Recording (mandatory)

FAQ

Why does FreezeText ask for Screen Recording permission?

FreezeText needs to capture the screen contents to recognize displayed text via OCR. Without this permission the app cannot function. The capture is processed entirely locally — no data is transmitted.

Can I change the global hotkey?

Yes. Open settings via the menu bar icon and click the hotkey button under "General". Press your desired key combination. Use "Reset" to return to the default (⌘⇧7) at any time.

Does FreezeText work with multiple displays?

Yes. When you press the hotkey, all connected displays are frozen simultaneously. You can select an area on any monitor.

Where is the history data stored?

History is stored locally at `~/Library/Application Support/FreezeText/` . This data is removed when you uninstall the app.

Is my data sent to the cloud?

No. FreezeText works 100% locally. OCR processing uses Apple's Vision framework directly on your Mac. No data is sent to external servers.

What can I do if the hotkey doesn't work?

Check if another app is using the same hotkey. Change the hotkey in FreezeText settings. Also make sure Screen Recording permission is granted in System Settings.

Contact & Support

For questions or issues, please contact support at: info@juergenkoller.software

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