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The Macintosh II and SE: Differences that aren't apparent

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TOPIC -----

There are a number of obvious differences between the Macintosh SE and the Macintosh II. The situations below describe differences that are not apparent.

DISCUSSION -----

Number of Supported Floppy Drives

The Macintosh SE has an external drive port, but the Macintosh II does not. If two floppies are installed internally, the Macintosh SE can support as many as three floppy drives. The Macintosh II can support no more than two floppy drives, and cannot support an Apple HD20 or external floppy drive.

SCSI Drive Interleave Scheme

The ROMs of the Macintosh SE and Macintosh II have different SCSI disk interleaving schemes. Although disks are interchangeable, they will work most efficiently on the system on which they were initialized. The Macintosh SE uses a 2-to-1 interleaving scheme, while the Macintosh II uses 1-to-1 interleaving.

Therefore, a SCSI disk initialized on a Macintosh SE and moved to a Macintosh II will not transfer data as quickly as a Macintosh II SCSI drive, since the Macintosh II will be forced to wait for every other block of data, rather than using them in sequence.

If a Macintosh II SCSI drive is taken to a Macintosh SE, the speed difference will be even more apparent. The Macintosh II drive will have blocks allocated in sequence on each track. But the Macintosh SE will not be able to accept the data that quickly, so the drive must make almost a full rotation before the second block again passes under the head, and the information can be read from the drive.

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