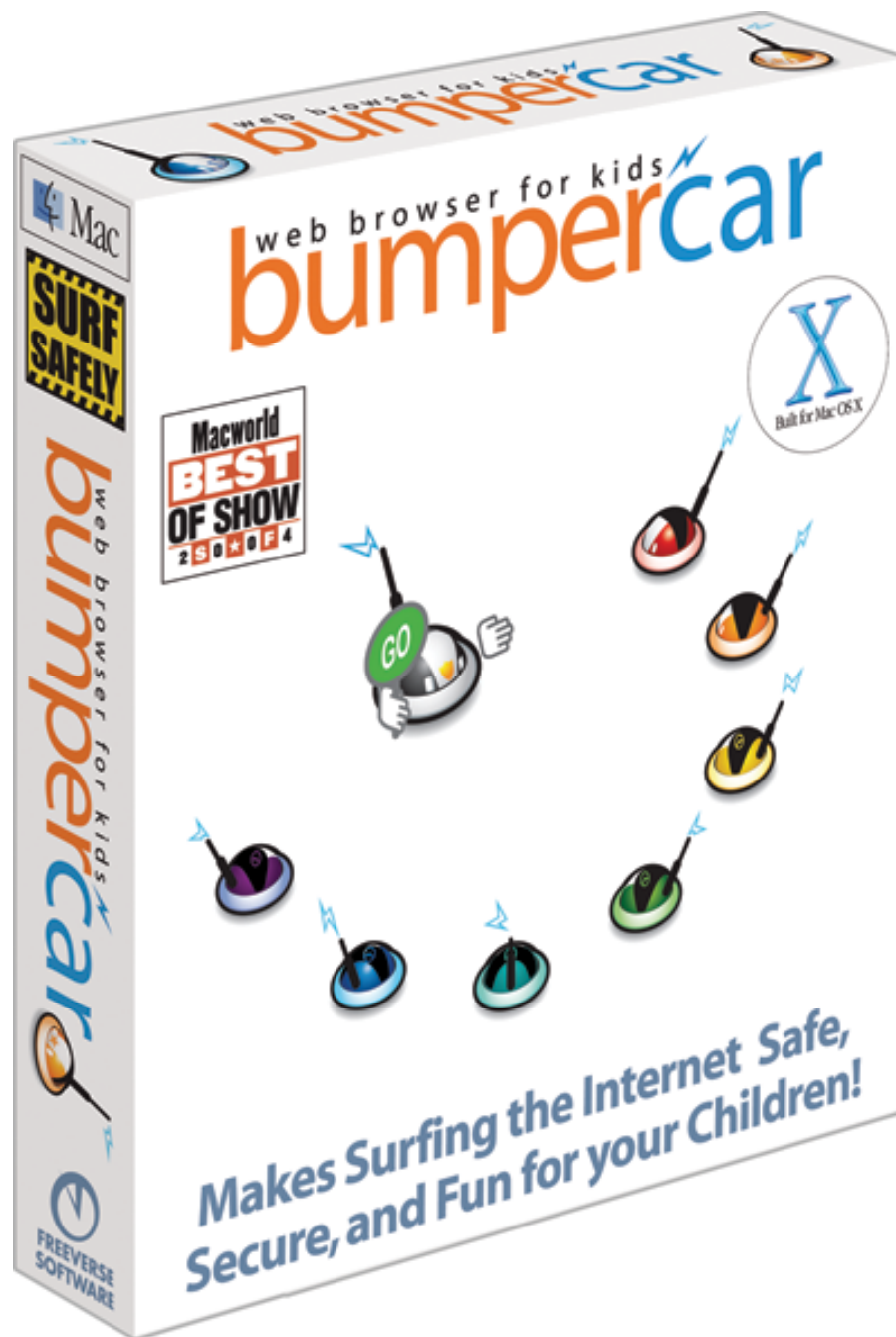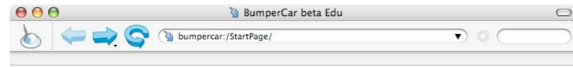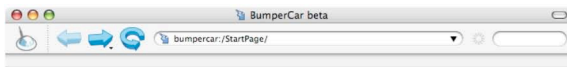# BumperCar: Web browser for kids

BumperCar is a Mac OS X Web browser for kids. It offers unparalleled content control and customization features, making it the most powerful Web browser for concerned educators and parents on the Macintosh. BumperCar earned a prestigious **Best of Show Award** at **MacWorld San Francisco 2004**.

The BumperCar Start Page

BumperCar's start page is attractive, and encourages children to explore a collection of kid-friendly sites. Browse the Internet by clicking on any of the categories, or type a destination in the Address or Search fields. Children may also guide the bumper car into the Tunnel of Mystery to be teleported to a kid-safe site. BumperCar can be configured to be in either a Home, School or Pre-School setting, with personalized features appropriate for each location.
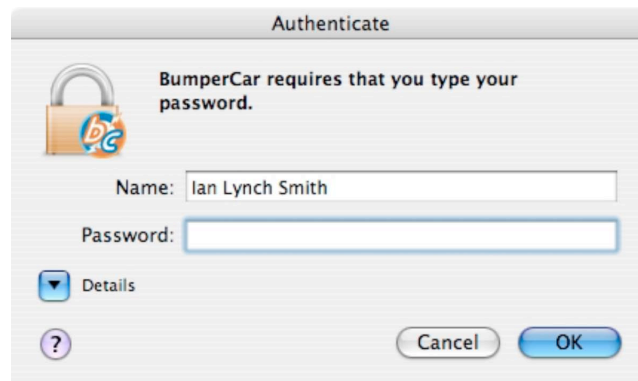
The colorful interface artwork also appears on custom error pages, such as when BumperCar blocks a page.

You have been on the web the maximum time allowed.
If you'd like to continue surfing, talk to your parents!

Grown-Ups Menu

The Grown-Ups Menu contains the features of BumperCar that set it apart from other browsers. In addition to the browser's preset preferences, the Safety Settings item allows you to individualize your kids Internet experience. Only someone with an administrator password can adjust the Safety Settings. This prevents children without administrator access from bypassing or changing the selected restrictions. Mac OS X makes multi-user computing easy, but just in case you don't use multiple accounts, or an administrator forgets to logout, the password must be entered every time.
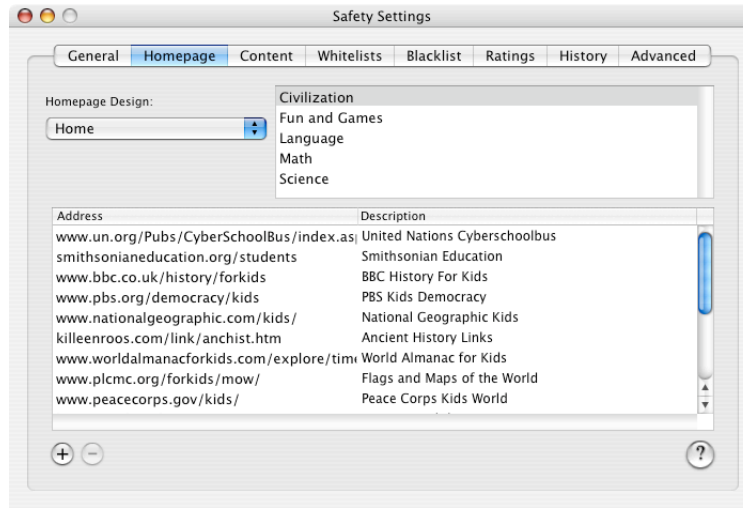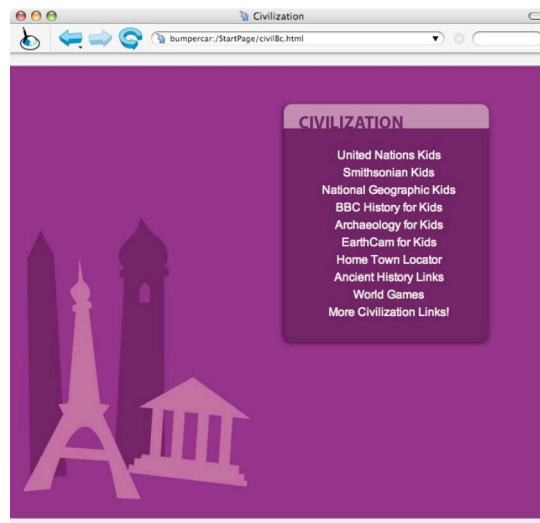

Safety Settings Tabs: General

For adults who do not wish to set specific restraints, there are three levels of protection from low to high which provide set-and-forget convenience. You can also customize all the features in the other panes of the dialog. We recommend starting at the lowest setting and only increasing the level, or customizing as need warrants.
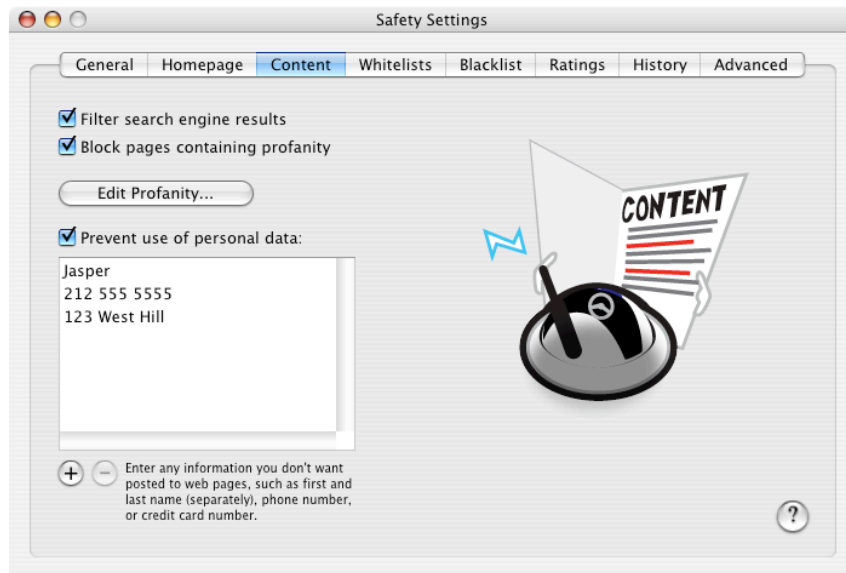
Homepage

The homepage pane allows for dynamic customization of all of the links in the sub pages of BumperCar's internal website. Rather then dictate a set of links under each category, BumperCar allows the school or parent to customize the included kid-friendly links in a simple consistent interface.

This customization, along with all the other features, makes BumperCar appropriate for the widest possible audience.

In Educational mode, you can add an institution's name to the homepage; in Pre-School mode the program runs appropriately in full screen mode to keep toddlers from clicking where they shouldn't.
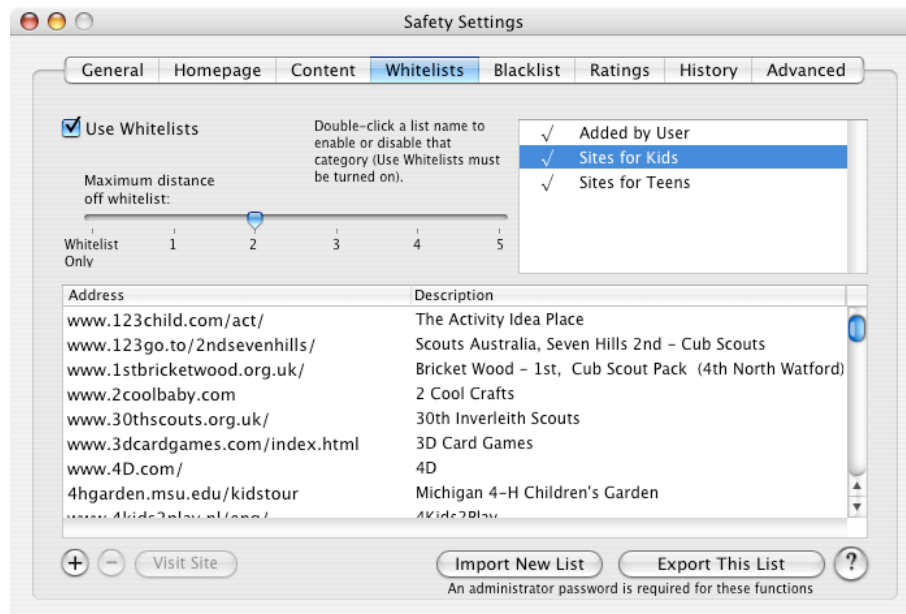
Content

The Content pane provides several powerful options that help to protect children from objectionable content, and can prevent them from giving personal information to others.

The **Filter search engine results** checkbox forces Google (and other popular search engines) to use their Safesearch features. This reduces objectionable content when a child visits these necessary sites.

The **Block profanity** checkbox activates BumperCar's curse word blocking capabilities. If a page contains a curse word, BumperCar will detect it and redirect to an internal error page. The profanity list is completely customizable.

The **Prevent use of personal data** checkbox allows parents to specify the information that children should not be allowed to type in a Web browser window. If any of this content is typed, each character will be replaced with an asterix when the data is sent.

Whitelist

Whitelisting is the most effective form of content blocking. With the whitelist on, children can only access the sites that are listed on the whitelist (or are a specified number of clicks away from the whitelisted site).

BumperCar includes three whitelists. **Added by User** contains the sites that the administrator adds, which is useful for adding specific sites such as school and community web pages that children can visit. **Sites for Kids** and **Sites for Teens** are large lists of sites appropriate to various age groups derived from the Open Directory project (dmoz.org) and edited by Freeverse.
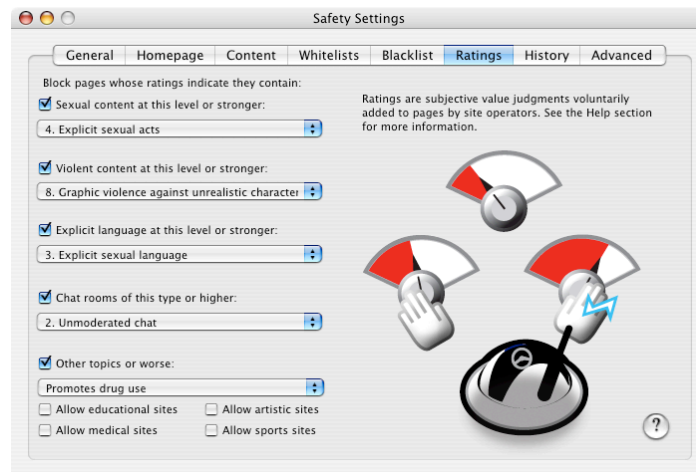
Administrators can import or export, as well as customize the whitelists, and schools and other interested parties will easily be able to share and merge whitelists.

The **Maximum distance off whitelist** enables the administrator to set how many sites away from the whitelist a child can travel. At its strictest setting, children can only access the sites on the Whitelist. Any sites that are linked from that site, but are not on the whitelist, will be blocked. Increasing the distance allows children to travel to sites that are linked from the whitelisted site.
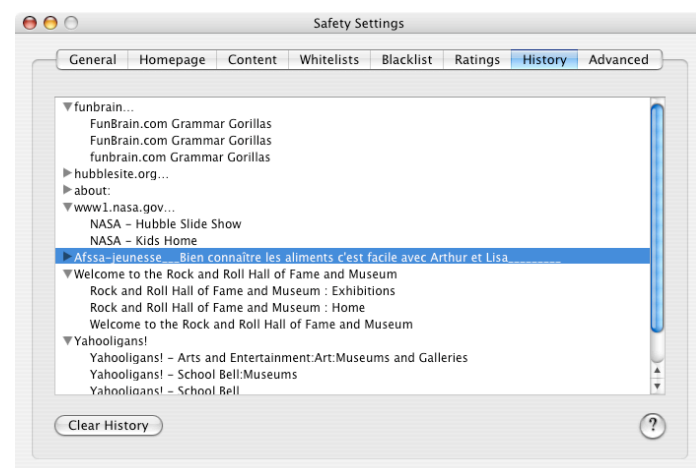
Blacklists

A blacklist (which prevents the user from visiting a specific, named site), while not as effective as a whitelist, is provided because in some instances it is simpler just to block a specific objectionable site.
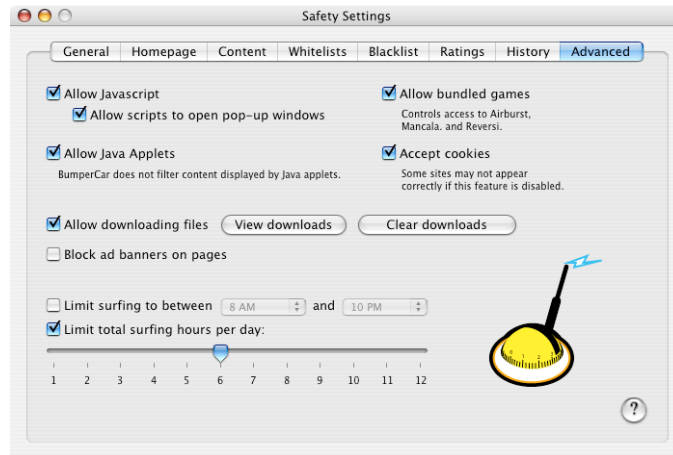
Ratings

BumperCar is the first browser for Mac OS X that offers full support for filtering pages whose publishers have self-rated their content using the *ICRA* (Internet Content Rating Authority) guidelines.

History

Enables adults to easily review what sites their kids have visited.

Advanced

The **Allow** options let parents specify whether children may access Javascript, pop-up windows, Java Applets, downloads, cookies, and the games bundled with BumperCar.

The **Block ad banners on pages** option will look for graphics loaded from certain banner ad companies and also standard banner sized graphics and instead of loading, replace them with a small caution logo to signify that they have not been loaded.

The **Limit Surfing** options are powerful tools that let adults set time limits on browser usage, and prevent use during certain hours, such as bedtime.

Under the Hood

BumperCar uses OmniWeb technology from The Omni Group, providing the stable cocoa foundation necessary for any modern Mac Web browser. It also uses Apple's WebCore and JavaCore frameworks that are built into Mac OS X, just like Apple's Safari. WebCore is one of the most standards-compliant page renderers available on any platform. As these frameworks improve, BumperCar inherits their improvements.

BumperCar handles the following technologies elegantly, without the need for installing extra plug-ins: HTML, XML, XHTML, DOM, CSS, Java, JavaScript, QuickTime, Flash, and Shockwave.

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