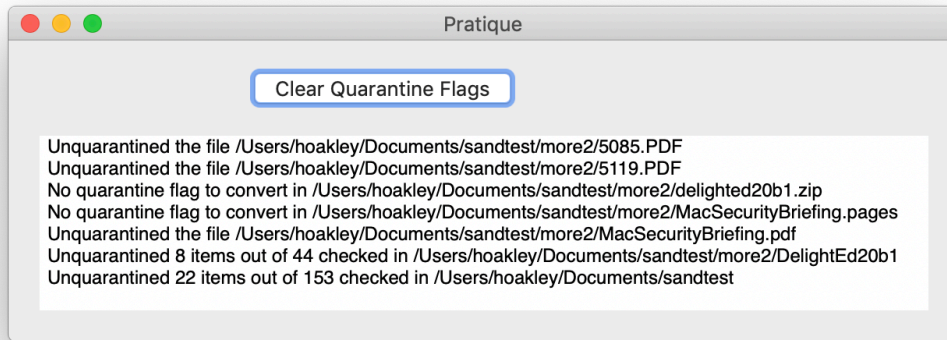


# Start



Pratique is a simple utility which changes quarantine flags attached to documents to indicate that they have cleared quarantine. You can then use those documents more freely, in particular you can set them to be opened by apps other than the default for their type in Finder's **Get Info** dialog, without running into security errors. This is the same procedure as the Finder can perform if you select the **Open** command in its contextual menu to bypass the security error on an individual document.

macOS started adding quarantine flags to a lot of documents some time ago, and currently this is standard for all apps which run in a sandbox. Unfortunately, macOS never removes them, and if you try to open a quarantined document using a non-default app set in **Get Info**, in the Finder, this results in a security error and refusal.

There are two workarounds: setting the flags to indicate that the document has passed quarantine is one; the other is to strip its quarantine flag altogether, made easy in my free utility Sandstrip.

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# Details

Quarantine flags are added to documents for two reasons: they have either been downloaded from the Internet, or they have been opened by an app which runs in a sandbox, including all the bundled apps in macOS, any you have bought from the App Store, and some others too.

macOS uses these flags in conjunction with the OpenWith extended attribute which you set if you change the default app with which to open that particular document. If that app differs from the general default app for that document type and the quarantine flag is set, any attempt to open that document using LaunchServices, such as double-clicking the document or dropping it on an app, will be blocked by XProtect and you will see a security alert.

Pratique checks files and folder contents you select after clicking its **Clear Quarantine Flags** button. For the **files** you select, it checks that they aren't a code bundle (which includes apps) or an archive (UTI `public.archive`). If they aren't either of those, it sets the bit in the quarantine flag to indicate that they have successfully passed XProtect's checks. For **folders** you select, it is more particular, and will only do this on items which are known to be documents (rather than apps, etc.), and which aren't archives. This is to ensure that it doesn't mistakenly clear quarantine for apps and other executable code, or downloaded archives like Zip files, which may still need to be checked for malware by XProtect.

Pratique supports multiple file and folder selection in its Open File dialog. It doesn't support drag and drop, and has only a single window. Closing its window quits the app. If you want to keep a record of its activity, select all the text in its text view and copy it, for pasting into another app. Errors are detailed in red in the text view. You can resize text between 4 and 24 points using ⌘+ to enlarge and ⌘- to reduce the size.

In Mojave, if you wish Pratique to have access to files in folder whose privacy is protected, add the Pratique app to the **Full Disk Access** list in the **Privacy** tab of the **Security & Privacy** pane, or macOS will block it from doing so.

Further information about and support for Pratique is available from its product page, which is easily accessed through the **Pratique Support** command in the **Help** menu, which opens that page in your default browser.

→ [Technical information](#)

# Technical Information

Pratique uses FileManager to iterate through folders and the files within them, testing whether have a quarantine flag using `try theNSURL.getResourceValue(&theQuarFlag, forKey: kCFURLQuarantinePropertiesKey as URLResourceKey)`. If it finds that flag, it then checks the UTI of the item using `UTTypeConformsTo()`. For files selected in the Open File dialog, Pratique only changes quarantine flags on those which conform to *neither* `kUTTypeBundle` nor `public.archive`; for items found when iterating through folders, it requires that they are of type `kUTTypeContent` but *not* `public.archive`. These checks intend to leave apps, executable code, bundles, and archives which could contain any of those unchanged, so that their contents still go through normal XProtect app checks as required by macOS. The `com.apple.quarantine` xattr is then written back with the third of its characters as `E`, which indicates that has passed quarantine checks.

⚠ Unfortunately, these changes are readily undone if the document is opened again using a sandboxed app, which may well write yet another quarantine flag to the file, reverting its behaviour. However, as most apps which don't run in a sandbox don't adopt that behaviour, careful choice can avoid the flag reappearing.

*Pratique* is the term used for clearance from quarantine in a port. The app icon is flag *Lima* in the International Code, flown by a vessel to indicate that it's still in quarantine.

## Change list

1.1:

- checks code integrity after launching
- supports sizing of text
- improved window size and position.

1.0:

- first full release
- changed 'cleared' byte from C to E, in accordance with Finder practice.

1.0b1:

- initial release.

6 August 2019.