

# Mac OS X Snow Leopard Features for Middle Eastern Users

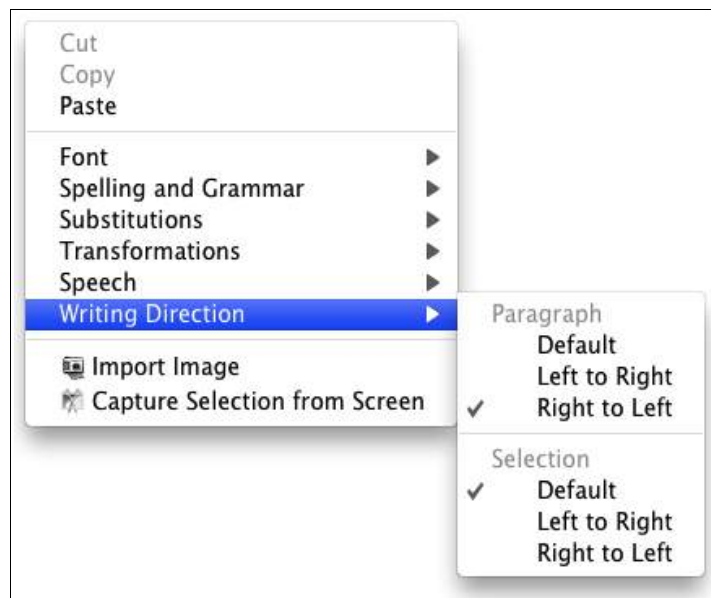
[Ali Rastegar](#) — July 2009

Mac OS X Snow Leopard is scheduled to be released in September. This article reviews some of its useful new features and changes which make using Mac OS X even more pleasant for ME (Middle Eastern) users. Some of the new features include:

- The ability to change direction for a selected part of text instead of the whole paragraph
- Right to left ruler in TextEdit
- keyboard shortcuts for changing direction

## Writing Direction Changes

You can now change direction for a selected part of text or the whole paragraph. "Writing Direction" contextual menu now includes two sections; one for paragraph and another for selection.

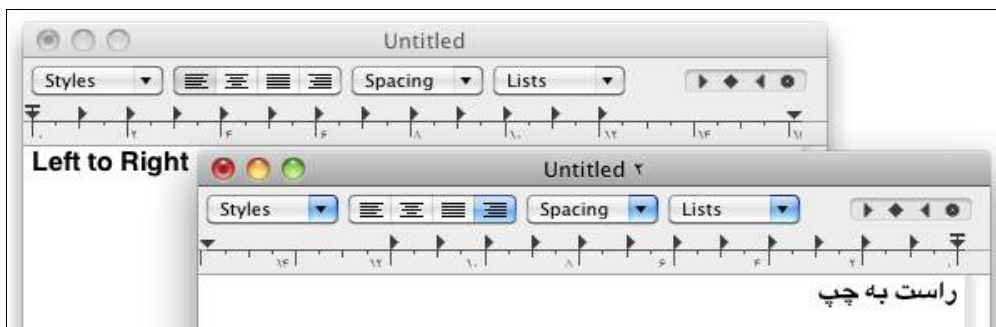


TextEdit and many other programs would change writing direction automatically whenever you change your input source (for example when you are writing in Arabic with right to left direction then change your input source to English, the English part of text gets left to right direction automatically).

Also worth of mentioning is Spotlight, Preview and other programs which had disabled writing direction menu in Leopard, have it enabled in Snow Leopard even though the result of using it is temporary.

## Right to Left Ruler

Whenever you change text direction to RTL in TextEdit, Bean and other compatible programs ruler changes its direction to RTL too!



## Language & Text

"Language & Text" is the new name for "International" preferences pane and it includes several new options for ME users.

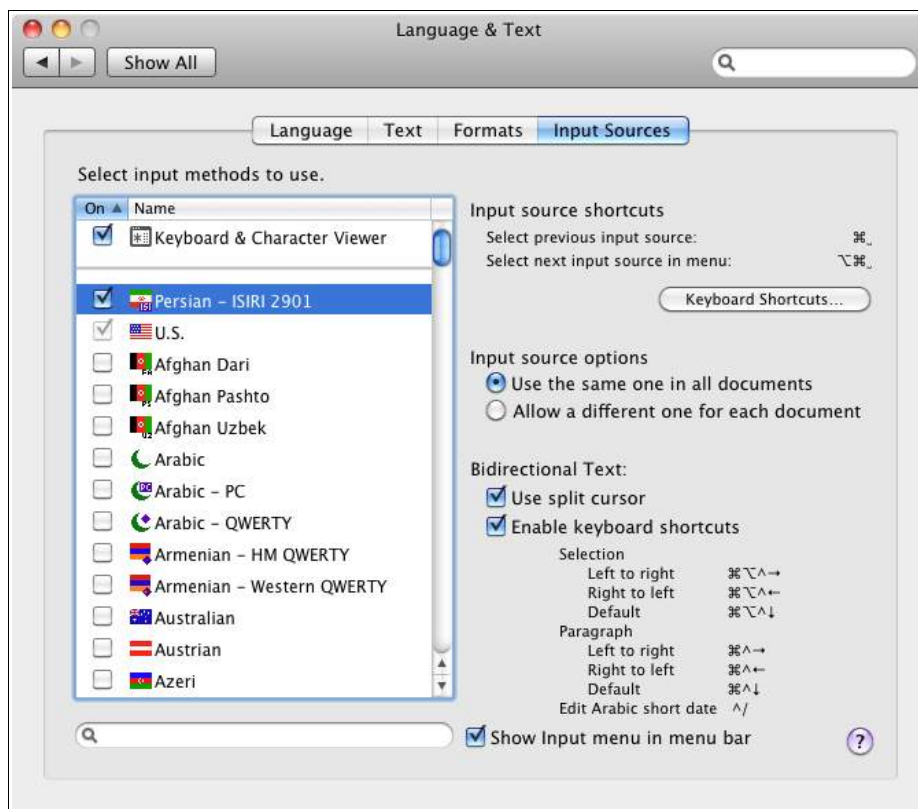
## New Calendars

In **Formats** tab you can choose several new calendars including Persian which is Jalali/Hijri Shamsi calendar. It is not useful for all ME users but it is a very welcomed addition for countries using that calendar.



## Input Source (Keyboard Layout) Features

**Input Sources** tab includes new options usable by all ME users.



**Input source options** is a new section which has two options:

- Use the same one in all documents
- Allow a different one for each document

When you enable any BiDi enabled keyboard layout such as Persian, Arabic, Hebrew and Afghan a new section would appear called "**Bidirectional Text**". It has two options:

- Use split cursor — when enabled splits cursor in the place of direction changes
- Enable Keyboard shortcuts — enables shortcuts for changing selection direction, paragraph direction and editing Arabic short date.

Another interesting feature is a new transparent window which appears whenever you press keyboard shortcuts to change your input source.

## Font Changes

Some middle eastern fonts such as Geeza Pro and Al Bayan are updated. Geeza has an updated look which makes it more like Arabic font used in iPhone OS 3.

If you are interested to know about changes in hebrew fonts tell me the name of those fonts and if possible provide some text to test them, I will post the results.

## Customizable Spell checker

You can now install your own spelling dictionaries in Hunspell format. Simply copy .aff and .dic files of your dictionary to /Library/Spelling and it will be installed. You can disable or enable it in **Language & Text** preferences pane.



In my experimentation it is too buggy to be usable with BiDi text. I hope to see this fixed in the final version of Snow Leopard.

## Better PDF Search and Copy/Paste

Preview can correctly search BiDi text in some PDFs and when you copy and paste selected text in them it would work as expected. I am not sure what makes some PDFs more compatible but I had best results with PDFs made with Mac OS X 10.4 Quartz engine and surprisingly OpenOffice.Org 3.1.

