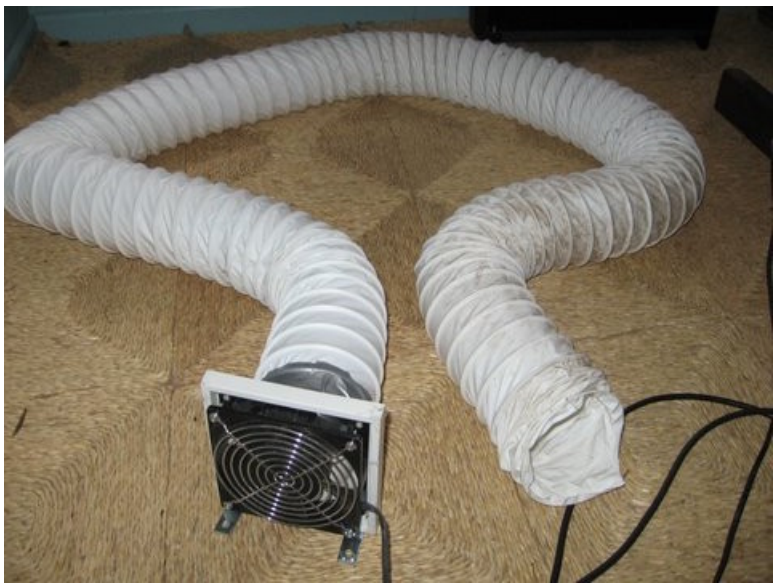
Cooling Mod For The Apple G5 iMac

The Apple G5 iMac is a mighty fine bit of hardware but is let down badly by its noisy cooling fan. What makes matters worse is that the cooling fan is on a vari-speed circuit and so the fan noise ramps up and down. In its natural state the original G5 iMac is less than ideal for audio applications.

The following modification is non destructive and completely external to the iMac.

Above shows the G5 iMac in a typical audio application running ProTools.



Above shows the hardware to be used in the cooling mod. The main ingredient is a 3 metre length of 100mm air duct (normally used to slurp humid air out of bathrooms), an end bracket for the duct, a slow or medium speed fan (blowing into the duct), a power cord for the fan, a fan finger guard and a couple of angle brackets for feet.

It is important to note that the fan does not have to move a great deal of air. The more powerful the fan the more noise it will make, therefore I recommend a lower airflow fan such as a Papst 4850N which has a published airflow of 59 CFM with a self noise of 32dBa (the fan in the photo is an old low airflow Sunon that I had lying about). The fan must be made to blow air into the duct.

The air intake for the original version of the G5 iMac is on the left underside of the monitor. The end of the flexiduct is simply gaffa taped over the internal fan air intake. Block all air holes as best you can but don't be concerned about a little bit of air escaping out the under side of the monitor.

The new external fan will now gently force feed air into the iMac. You will find that the internal iMac fan will cycle down to its lowest setting and will be barely audible. The external fan can be simply left on the floor or moved into another room if you want everything to be ultra quiet.

It is important that the external fan is always turned on first and turned off last. In a home or professional studio I always recommend that the mains power should be turned on and off at a master switch, make sure that the external fan is on this master circuit and you cant go too far wrong

Enjoy the world of near silent computing.

Regards, Warren Huck
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