Introduction
This document is outlined to show you how to properly format your external hard drive for optimal performance with your Macintosh computer. Please note, reformatting will completely erase any data that lives on your external HD, so take proper precautions before following this procedure.

Step 1
plug in external HD using the Firewire 800 port connection (note: if you are reformatting a HD that only has a USB connection, you may also use the USB port at this stage. The procedure is the same).

Step 2
Check to see that the external HD icon shows up on your desktop

Step 3
Launch Disk Utility (located in Applications/Utilities/Disk Utility)

Step 4
In Disk Utility look for the external HD icon on the left hand side, and select it
  click the Erase tab,
    - Format should be set to "Mac OS Extended (Journaled)"
    - Name your external HD

When Ready, click the Erase button
Quit Disk Utility
Your external HD is now ready to be used with your Macintosh!