



## Tech Savvy Seniors

# INTRODUCTION TO EMAIL

## QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Email is one of the fundamental internet technologies, a tool used by nearly every person with an internet connection. It allows you to, at no cost, send a letter of unlimited length to one person – or many people at once. It arrives almost instantly, and they can reply straight away.

## FIVE FACTS ABOUT EMAILS

1. Email is the modern way to send letters – you can send a message to the other side of the world and get a reply in minutes!
2. Sending and receiving email is generally free, and you can actually send an email to as many people as you like.
3. Each person on email has a unique email address, which is how you direct an email to a specific person.
4. You can even send emails to yourself as reminders.
5. All your emails come into your Inbox, which is like your virtual letterbox.

## A GUIDE TO EMAIL ADDRESSES

An email address always has an @ symbol (pronounced at). Australian email addresses often finish with .com.au – although if you use a webmail service like the Microsoft® Outlook® service (outlook.com) or the Google™ Gmail™ service (gmail.com), you can also end up with a .com address. An example of an email address is mary@ domain.com.au – It would be read aloud as mary at domain dot com dot au.

If a person uses a free web mail service, their address will have that service's name after the @ symbol; For example, [myname@hotmail.com](mailto:myname@hotmail.com)

Email tends to be informal, and has its own writing conventions. Emoticons use punctuation and letters to help indicate the tone of an email.



## SETTING UP AN EMAIL ACCOUNT WITH GMAIL WEBMAIL

Let's create a unique, private email address. It will look something like myname@gmail.com (where "myname" is your name).

1. Go to [www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com) in your web browser. This takes you to the Gmail webmail login page.
2. Left-click on the Create Account button. This takes you to the Google Account sign-up page.
3. You have to fill in some of the fields. One by one, move your mouse pointer to the empty boxes (called fields) and left-click on them, then type in the answer. In the appropriate fields, type in your details. The most important details are:
  - A username for your email address (your email address will be username@gmail.com, where username is the name you enter into the field). If a username is already taken, Google will immediately let you know, and suggest alternatives (which are usually whatever you entered with a string of numbers at the end).
  - A password (which you have to retype to confirm it). Your password can be anything you like – although Gmail webmail might reject passwords that hackers might guess too easily. You just need to remember it!
4. You might have to solve the captcha (that's the box with the hard-to-read words in it) by typing in the words you see in the box into the field just below it.
5. When you're done, left-click on Next.
6. And that's it – you've created an email account for yourself. It's yours forever.
7. You can log into your email at any time by going to [www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com). Instead of clicking on Create Account, however, you now type your username and password into the login fields.

## READING EMAIL YOU'VE RECEIVED

It's easy to send and receive mail.

Log into Gmail webmail if you're not already. In the middle you can see all the email in your Inbox.

On the left are your navigation items: Inbox, Starred, Snoozed, Sent Mail and Drafts, with a big Compose button above them. These move you to different sections of your email. For now the important one is the Inbox.



Next to Inbox you'll see a number. For example, Inbox (1). That means you have one new or unread emails waiting in your Inbox.

Now to read one of your email, follow these quick steps:

1. Left-click on the subject of the email. The email will open up, and you'll see its full contents.
2. Above the opened email, a new bar will appear, with controls for that email. The two most important are:
  - the Back arrow, which takes you back to your Inbox.
  - the Trash can, which deletes this mail from your Inbox
3. To go back to your Inbox, left-click on the Back arrow. You can also click on Inbox on the left to go back to the main Inbox view.

## STAYING SAFE ONLINE

For any new user to email and the internet, knowing how to stay safe online is a key lesson. Some important things to remember:

- Don't open email attachments unless you know they're safe. That includes email attachments from people you know.
- People can lie about who they are on email. An email may say it's coming from your bank, but really it might be someone trying to trick you into getting money from you. If you're concerned, call your bank directly.
- Always err on the side of caution!
- Don't give out your personal information (including your address, phone number or even name) to strangers, either in email or on websites. Install internet security software to help protect your PC and the files you keep on it.
- If a stranger emails you and offers you money (or asks for it), they're probably a scammer.
- Be very careful about who you give your credit card details.

Your email address will be seen by others, so should not be offensive. It's also important to make a note somewhere of both your username / email address and password. You'll need these to access your email in the future.



## ADDRESSING AND SENDING AN EMAIL

Now that we know how to read emails, it's time to figure out how to send one. First, you will need a recipient's email address. Then just follow these steps:

1. In Gmail webmail, click on the Compose button on the left. On the bottom right of the screen a new panel will pop up. This is where you create your email.
2. In the To field type in the email address of the recipient. It has to be exact: if even one character is wrong, it won't get to its destination.
3. In the Subject line, give the email a subject. This can be anything, but the idea is to give a quick overview of what email contains.
4. In the big empty box at the bottom (called the body of the email), you can type the main contents of the email.
5. If you want to get fancy, there are formatting buttons, like in a word processor.
6. When you've finished and you're ready to send the email, click on the blue Send button. The email will be sent off into the ether, and you will be returned to your Inbox.
7. You'll also see one other thing: Gmail webmail keeps a complete record of every mail you send. If you click on Sent on the left side of the window, you'll be able to see a record of the mail you just sent. (If you do this, you can return to your Inbox again just by clicking on Inbox).

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Gmail webmail is not your only free email option. Other, similar providers of electronic mail boxes include:

Windows® Live Mail: [outlook.com](http://outlook.com)

Yahoo® Mail: [mail.yahoo.com](http://mail.yahoo.com)

Inbox.com: [www.inbox.com](http://www.inbox.com)

## REPLYING TO AND FORWARDING EMAILS

A reply is a response to an email you've received. It goes back to the person who sent the original email. People can reply back and forth indefinitely.



A forward is when you send an email you've received to somebody other than the original sender

## REPLYING TO AN EMAIL

To reply to an email somebody has sent you:

1. Go to your Gmail webmail Inbox.
2. Open the mail you want to reply to.
3. Underneath the email you'll see two boxes, Reply and Forward. Click on Reply. Alternatively, just at the top right of the email there's a little arrow pointing left. That also starts a reply.
4. A Reply window will appear, underneath the original email. It looks a lot like the Compose email window, except that the recipient will already be filled in for you (it will be the person who sent you the email originally).
5. Click on the Reply window and type in your reply.
6. When you're done, left-click on Send.
7. The person who sent the original email should get your reply straight away. The subject line will be the same as before, but with a re: at the beginning of it, indicating that it's a reply.

## FORWARDING TO AN EMAIL

Forwarding an email is a lot like replying.

1. Go through the same steps as above, except instead of clicking Reply, click on Forward below the opened email.
2. You'll notice that the process looks nearly identical to Reply, with two notable differences: the recipient in the To field isn't filled in for you; and there's a forward note already placed for you in the body.
3. Click on the To button in the forward field, and choose from your list of contact who to send it to.
4. If you have anything to add to the email, it's expected that you type it above the original contents.
5. Click on Send when you're ready to forward the email on. When that person receives the email, the subject line will have Fwd: at the beginning (indicating that it's a forward)



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