Email ✉

Email (short for electronic mail) was first developed in the early 1970s as a way for users to send messages to each other using ARPANET. Over the decades, email has evolved into a powerful tool that allows users around the world to send messages and files instantly.

How Many Accounts Do I Need?

Most people find it useful to have at least one personal email account and one work email account. You might also want to use a "junk mail" account for when a website requires you to give one and you don't want to use your real account.

Keep in mind that having too many accounts will make it difficult to keep track of everything. **As a rule of thumb you should have at 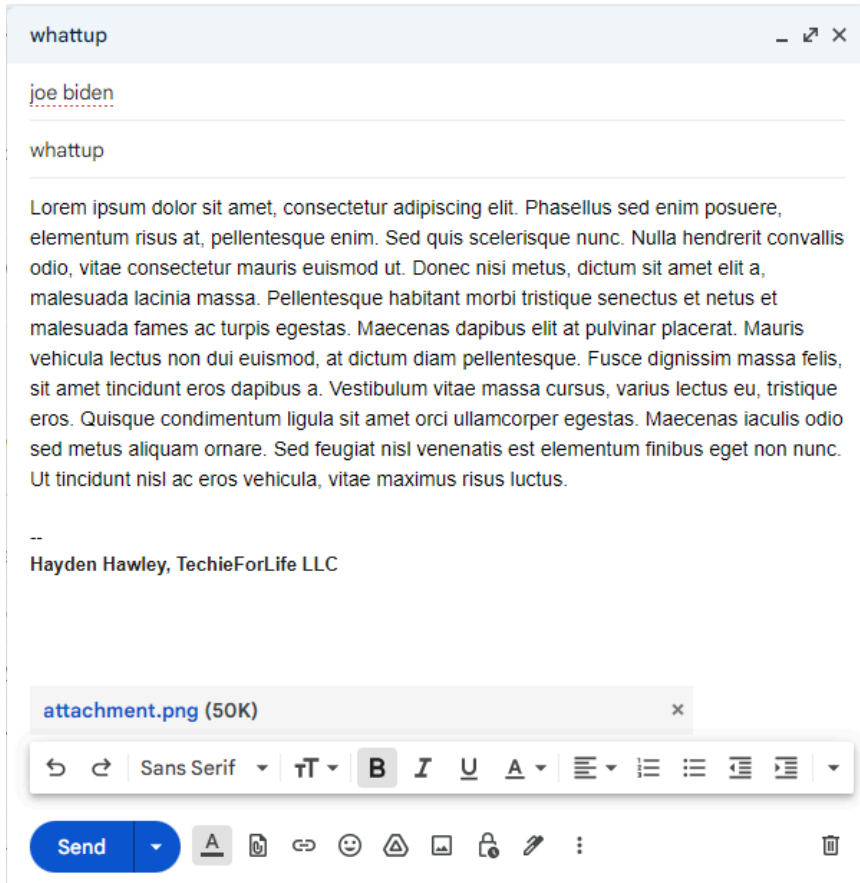least two but no more than four accounts**. This will help keep work-related messages separate from personal messages and provide an extra layer of security, without being too difficult to manage.

For example: I have my personal **primary** email account, a **work** email, a **school** email, and a **junk** email that I use for online registrations, subscriptions, and less important things. By using separate accounts for different purposes, you can easily filter and prioritize your emails based on their importance.

Setting Up an Email Account

1. **Choose an Email Provider**: Find out which provider meets your needs in terms of storage, features, and user interface. Popular Email providers include [Gmail](), which is integrated with Google services; [Outlook](), integrated with Microsoft Office Suite; and [ProtonMail](), which offers end-to-end encryption for enhanced privacy.

2. **Create a New Email Address**: Sign up for an account with your chosen provider and create an email address. It's important to choose a unique address that is easy to remember and professional, especially if you plan to use it for work or business purposes.

3. **Set a Password**: Choose a strong and secure password that includes uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters. Many email providers and web browsers offer strong randomly-generated passwords, which are difficult for hackers to guess. Avoid using the same password for multiple accounts, as this can make it easier for hackers to gain access to all of your accounts if they're able to guess one password. If you choose to write down your password in case you forget it, store it in a secure location away from your computer or other devices. Alternatively, use a password manager like [LastPass](), [Dashlane](), or [1Password]() to create and store your passwords.

Navigating the Interface

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Hayden Hawley, TechieForLife LLC

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Composing, Replying, Forwarding: To create a new email, click the **Compose** or **New** button. To respond to a message, use the **Reply** button to send a response directly to the sender or the **Reply All** button to respond to the sender and all other recipients. To share an existing email with additional recipients, use the **Forward** button, which allows you to include comments or attachments before sending.
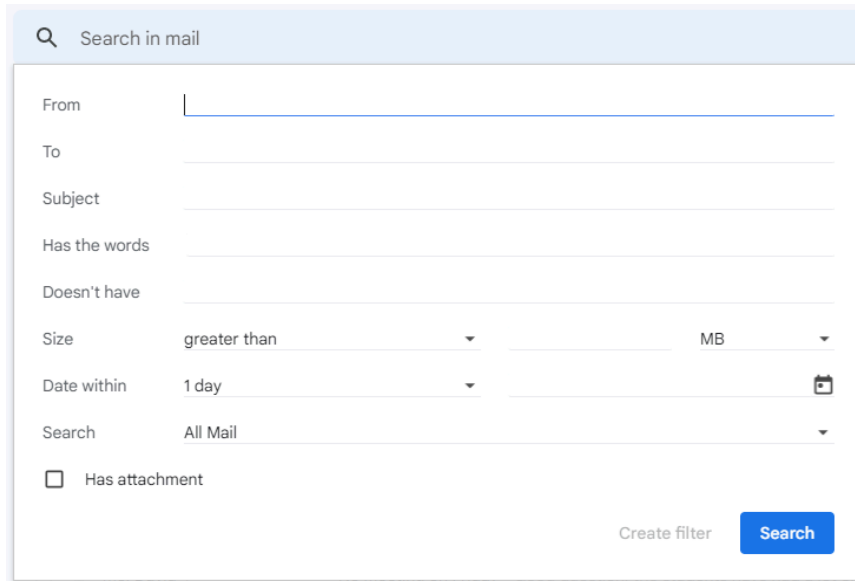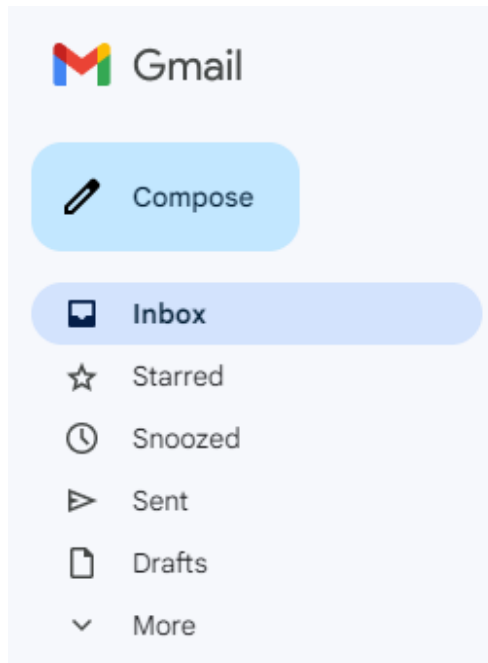
Folders: Email interfaces typically include folders for organizing messages, each with their own purpose.

- **Inbox**: This is the main folder where you receive new emails. Emails that are not filtered into other folders will be delivered to your Inbox by default.

- **Starred**: This folder is used to mark important emails that need attention or follow-up. You can star an email by clicking on the star icon next to the email subject line.

- **Snoozed**: This folder is used to temporarily hide emails from your Inbox until a later time when you are ready to deal with them. You can choose to snooze an email for a specific time or until a certain date with the clock icon, and it'll reappear in your Inbox at the designated time.

- **Sent**: This folder contains copies of all the emails you have sent. When you send an email, a copy is automatically saved in this folder for reference.

- **Drafts**: This folder is used to save unfinished emails that you may want to complete later. When you start composing an email but don't send it, it'll be saved here until you are ready to send it.
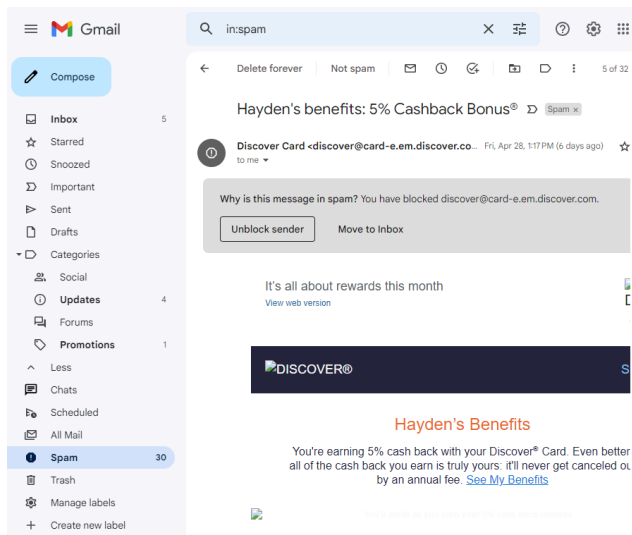
- **Spam**: This folder is used to store emails that have been automatically filtered as spam by Gmail's spam filter. Spam refers to unsolicited or unwanted emails, typically advertising some product or service. Some non-spam emails are occasionally sent here by mistake, so check this folder if you are expecting an email but can't find it in your main inbox.

- **Trash**: This folder is used to store deleted emails, which are permanently deleted after 30 days or can be manually emptied. It's moved to the trash folder when deleted.

Searching and Organizing: Utilize the search function, often located at the top of the email interface, to find specific messages by keywords, sender, or subject. Apply labels or move emails to folders to categorize and separate messages by topic, sender, or priority. Many email services also offer features like filters or rules to automatically sort incoming messages based on specific criteria.

Attachments: Email services typically allow you to send and receive files, such as documents, images, or videos, as attachments. When composing or replying to an email, use the "Attach" or "Add Attachment" button (the paperclip icon) to include a file. When receiving emails with attachments, be cautious of unfamiliar senders or unexpected files.

CC and BCC: When sending an email to a group, you can use **CC (Carbon Copy)** to include additional recipients who should be looped into the conversation. Everyone in the CC field will be visible to everyone receiving the email. To protect the privacy of recipients or to prevent unwanted reply-all scenarios, use **BCC (Blind Carbon Copy)**. This allows you to include recipients without revealing their email addresses to everyone else.

Email Signature: Email signatures are small blocks of personalized text or an image that appear at the end of emails. They often include your name, title, company, and contact information, making it easy for recipients to identify you and helping you appear more professional. To create an email signature, look for the settings within your email service.

Email Etiquette

- **Write Clear and Concise Subject Lines**: Choose a subject line that accurately reflects the content of your email. Avoid vague or misleading subject lines that may cause confusion or be perceived as spam.

- **Use Proper Greetings and Closings**: Begin your emails with an appropriate salutation, such as "Dear [name]" or "Hello [name]." Conclude your emails with a polite sign-off, such as "Best regards," "Sincerely," or "Kind regards," followed by your name and email signature. This shows respect and personalizes the message.

- **Keep Emails Professional and To-the-Point**: Use clear language, proper grammar, and a professional tone. Be concise and stay focused on the main topic, using bullet points or numbered lists. Avoid excessive capitalization, WHICH MAY COME ACROSS AS SHOUTING. Avoid emojis and slang in professional emails.

- **Timely Responses**: Respond to emails within 24-48 hours. If you can't provide a complete response right away, send a brief acknowledgement and let the recipient know when to expect a more detailed reply.

- **Proofreading**: Review your emails for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors before sending them. This demonstrates attention to detail and professionalism.

- **Attachment Etiquette**: Attachments should be in a widely compatible format and not too large, and should be mentioned in the body of the email to ensure the recipient is aware of them. Cloud file-sharing services like [Google Drive](), [Dropbox](), or [Microsoft OneDrive]() should be used for very large files.

- **Respect Privacy**: Be cautious when using the CC and BCC functions, as mentioned earlier. Avoid sharing sensitive or personal information without the recipient's consent.

Security and Privacy

Two-Factor Authentication (2FA): As discussed earlier, 2FA adds an extra layer of security to your account by requiring you to provide two forms of identification to access it. The first form of authentication is usually your password, and the second is usually a code sent to your phone. This means that even if an attacker acquires your password, they can't access your account without also having your phone.

Spam and Phishing: Phishing is a type of online scam where an attacker pretends to be a trustworthy entity to trick you into providing sensitive information. Be cautious of unsolicited emails and messages that request personal information. To recognize and avoid these threats, follow these tips:

- **Use email filters**
- **Check the sender's email address**
- **Look for poor grammar and spelling**
- **Be wary of urgent or threatening language**
- **Hover over links before clicking to verify them**
- **Don't provide personal information** (legitimate companies will never ask for passwords or Social Security numbers over email. The IRS will send a physical letter in the mail if they need to contact you, not email or phone.)