

Email Setup Guide - SmartForms AI

SmartForms AI sends automated email responses to form submitters. This guide helps you configure reliable email delivery.

Why SMTP Configuration?

WordPress default email (PHP `mail()` function) is unreliable:

- Often blocked by hosting providers
- Emails go to spam folders
- No delivery guarantees
- Works differently on each host

SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) solves this by using professional email services.

What You'll Need

- WordPress admin access
- 5-10 minutes
- Email service (Gmail, SendGrid, or your hosting provider)

Recommended: WP Mail SMTP Plugin

Best choice: WP Mail SMTP by WPForms (5M+ active installs, free)

Why This Plugin?

Free and trusted (5M+ users) Easy setup wizard Supports all major email providers Built-in email testing No coding required

Setup Instructions

Step 1: Install WP Mail SMTP

1. Go to: **WordPress Admin → Plugins → Add New**
2. Search: "WP Mail SMTP"
3. Find: "WP Mail SMTP by WPForms"
4. Click: **Install Now**
5. Click: **Activate**

Step 2: Choose Email Provider

After activation, you'll see a setup wizard. Choose your provider:

Option A: Gmail (Easiest)

Best for: Personal sites, testing, small businesses

Steps:

1. In WP Mail SMTP, select: **Gmail**
2. Follow the Google OAuth setup (plugin guides you)
3. Or use App Password (see below)

Using Gmail App Password:

1. Go to: <https://myaccount.google.com/security>
2. Enable: **2-Step Verification**
3. Go to: **App Passwords**
4. Create password for: **Mail → WordPress**
5. Copy the 16-character password
6. In WP Mail SMTP:
 - Select: **Other SMTP**
 - SMTP Host: smtp.gmail.com
 - SMTP Port: [587](#)
 - Encryption: **TLS**
 - Username: your-email@gmail.com
 - Password: [paste app password]

Option B: SendGrid (Professional)

Best for: Professional sites, high volume

Free Tier: 100 emails/day (sufficient for most forms)

Steps:

1. Sign up: <https://sendgrid.com/free/>
2. Create API Key:
 - SendGrid Dashboard → Settings → API Keys
 - Create API Key → Full Access
 - Copy the key (starts with "SG.")
3. In WP Mail SMTP:
 - Select: **SendGrid**
 - API Key: [paste your key]
 - Save Settings

Option C: Your Hosting Provider

Best for: If your host provides SMTP

Steps:

1. Contact your hosting support for SMTP details
2. They'll provide:
 - SMTP Host
 - SMTP Port
 - Username

- Password

3. In WP Mail SMTP:

- Select: **Other SMTP**
- Enter the details provided
- Save Settings

Step 3: Configure From Email

1. **From Email:** **noreply@yourdomain.com** (or your Gmail)
2. **From Name:** **Your Business Name**
3. **Force From Email:** Yes
4. **Force From Name:** Yes

Step 4: Test Email Delivery

1. In WP Mail SMTP, go to: **Email Test** tab
2. Send To: [your email address]
3. Click: **Send Email**
4. Check your inbox (should arrive within seconds)

If test succeeds: SMTP is configured correctly!

Step 5: Configure SmartForms AI

1. Go to: **SmartForms AI** → **Settings**
2. **Auto-Response Settings:**
 - Enable auto-responses:
 - From Name: Your Business Name
 - From Email: (same as WP Mail SMTP)
 - Reply-To Email: (your support email)
3. **Save Settings**

Step 6: Test SmartForms AI Emails

1. Create a test form or use existing form
2. Publish on a page
3. Fill out the form with your email
4. Submit
5. Check your inbox for auto-response

If email arrives: Everything is working!

Troubleshooting

Emails Still Not Arriving

Check Spam Folder:

- First emails often go to spam
- Mark as "Not Spam" to train filters

Verify SMTP Settings:

- In WP Mail SMTP, check connection status
- Resend test email
- Check credentials are correct

Check Error Logs:

- WP Mail SMTP → Email Log
- Look for error messages

Contact Support:

- WP Mail SMTP has excellent support
- Your hosting provider can help with SMTP issues

Gmail App Password Not Working

1. Verify 2-Step Verification is enabled
2. Create new App Password
3. Copy password without spaces
4. Use "Other SMTP" (not Gmail option)

SendGrid Emails Going to Spam

1. Verify domain authentication in SendGrid
2. Add SPF and DKIM records (SendGrid guides you)
3. Takes 24-48 hours for DNS changes

Best Practices

Email Deliverability

Use professional From Name Use real Reply-To address Don't send from "noreply@gmail.com"
Keep email content professional Test regularly

SMTP Provider Choice

Gmail: Great for <100 emails/day **SendGrid:** Great for professional sites **Your Host:** Works if they support SMTP

FAQ

Q: Do I need SMTP for SmartForms AI? A: Highly recommended. Default WordPress email is unreliable.

Q: Will SMTP work for other plugins? A: Yes! Once configured, ALL WordPress emails use SMTP (WooCommerce, contact forms, etc.)

Q: Is WP Mail SMTP free? A: Yes, free version is sufficient for most sites.

Q: Can I use my business email? A: Yes! Configure your business email as SMTP sender.

Q: What if I change hosting? A: SMTP configuration is site-specific. Reconfigure on new host.

Support

WP Mail SMTP Support:

- <https://wordpress.org/support/plugin/wp-mail-smtp/>

SmartForms AI Support:

- Contact through plugin support forum

Hosting Provider:

- Contact for SMTP credentials and help

Summary

1. Install WP Mail SMTP (free)
2. Choose provider (Gmail/SendGrid/Host)
3. Configure settings
4. Test email delivery
5. Configure SmartForms AI
6. Test auto-responses
7. Done! Reliable email delivery 

Setup Time: 5-10 minutes **Cost:** Free (Gmail/SendGrid free tiers) **Benefit:** Professional, reliable email delivery