



By: Taty Sena
<http://simplytatydesigns.com>

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Introduction

About Gmail

The year is 2004 and three email services dominate the market. They are Hotmail, AOL and Yahoo mail. After extensive testing, Google decides to branch beyond being only a search engine and launches Gmail (or Google Mail in Germany) on April 1st. Because of the interestingly chosen “April Fools’ Day” launch (Gmail was made live minutes before midnight on March 31st, 2004), Gmail was met with a lot of skepticism, especially because it offered 1 gig of free storage space at a time when other companies offered in average 100mb.

Initially, only a limited group of 1000 opinion leaders were invited into the Beta test version of Gmail, and allowed to invite their friends and family.

Then users from

Blogger.com were also sent invitations, and within a short time, the invitations had become precious commodities. Some were being sold on Ebay for as much as \$150 and websites that swapped invitations started appearing all over the web.

Soon Gmail started allowing its users to invite as many as 50 people, and it started growing exponentially until almost anyone who wanted to join could easily get an invite from someone they knew.

In 2005 it had increased its mailbox size to 2 gigs, a huge amount of storage by 2005 standards and had become available in many languages beyond English.

It has since continually added new features and finally, in 2009, it removed the “Beta” status from its name. Gmail is now one of the top email services in the world.



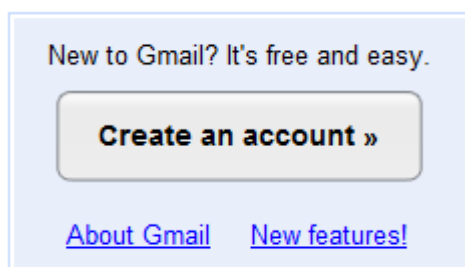
Why choose Gmail

Gmail has profited from Google's innovations to become such a popular email service. It has differentiated itself from other services in many ways:

- It has ever increasing amount of storage space instead of a set amount like Hotmail, Yahoo and AOL do
- It has created an interface that they believe works more naturally than the folder system used by the other 3 major services. It consist of stars and labels (more on that later)
- Gmail can be used as an account for a whole plethora of Google services
- Gmail Labs adds many features not commonly found on your average email account (more on that later)
- Certain features such as Google docs, Calendar and Chat work seamlessly among Gmail users and can be an efficient way of collaborating
- It is a powerful, reliable and feature rich email service. And it's free!
- Gmail can also be used with your own domain name, by using Google Apps
- It's compatible with most mobile phones

Creating an account

One question a lot of people seem to have is in relation to the difference between a Google account and a Gmail account. They are not necessarily the same thing. The catch is, you are allowed to create a Google account using your existing email account. That is not a Gmail account, but an account that allows you access to some of Google's services. One the other hand, if you do create a Gmail account, it automatically becomes your Google account with access to all of Google's services using that id and password. So basically, Gmail accounts are always Google Accounts, but Google Accounts aren't Gmail accounts if you are using a different email from username@gmail.com.



So then, how do you create a Gmail account?

1. Go to <http://www.gmail.com>
2. Click the button that says "Create an account" on the bottom right box.
3. Carefully fill out all the fields on the form
4. Click "I accept. Create my account"

You will be taken to an introduction page. Click

"Show me my account". You will be taken to your new email account and there will be some emails from the Gmail Team welcoming you, introducing you to some of the features and helping you import your contacts and old mail.

Get started with Gmail

First name:

Last name:

Desired Login Name:

@gmail.com

Examples: JSmith, John.Smith

[check availability!](#)

Choose a password:

[Password strength:](#)


Minimum of 8 characters in length.

Re-enter password:

☐ Stay signed in

☒ Enable Web History [Learn More](#)

Security Question:

Choose a question ... 

If you forget your password we will ask for the answer to your security question. [Learn More](#)

Answer:

Recovery email:

This address is used to authenticate your account should you ever encounter problems or forget your password. If you do not have another email address, you may leave this field blank. [Learn More](#)

Location:

Australia 

Word Verification:

Type the characters you see in the picture below.

Gmail as a Google Account

So now that you have created a Gmail account, can you use it for anything besides email? The answer is yes.

As explained above, Gmail accounts are also Google accounts, and though I won't explain all services associated with them, you should know that you can use your Gmail id and password on many Google services, such as:

- [Google Analytics](#) – To track visitors to your website
- [Blogger](#) – Blogging site
- [Google Calendar](#) – A calendar directly integrated with Gmail
- [Google Docs](#) – An online document editor directly integrated with Gmail; a Microsoft Office online substitute.
- [YouTube](#) – Online video streaming
- [Google Sites](#) – To create websites and wikis
- [Google Dashboard](#) – Your portal to all of the Google services that can be accessed with your Gmail or Google account, from one interface.
- And many, many more services and sites.



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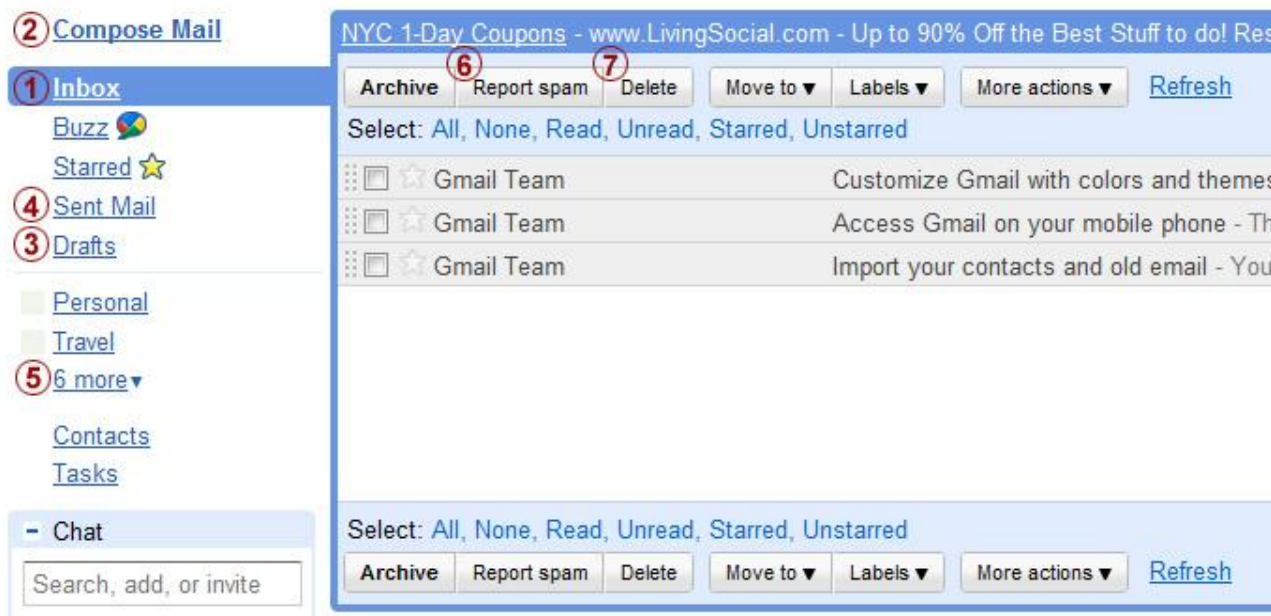
[Can't access your account?](#)

Don't have an account?
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Gmail's Interface

Though most of Gmail's email functions are similar to the ones you might have used in other email services, it's common to have to take a little time to acquaint yourself to a different interface. Below is a simple guide to using Gmail's web interface:



1 – Inbox

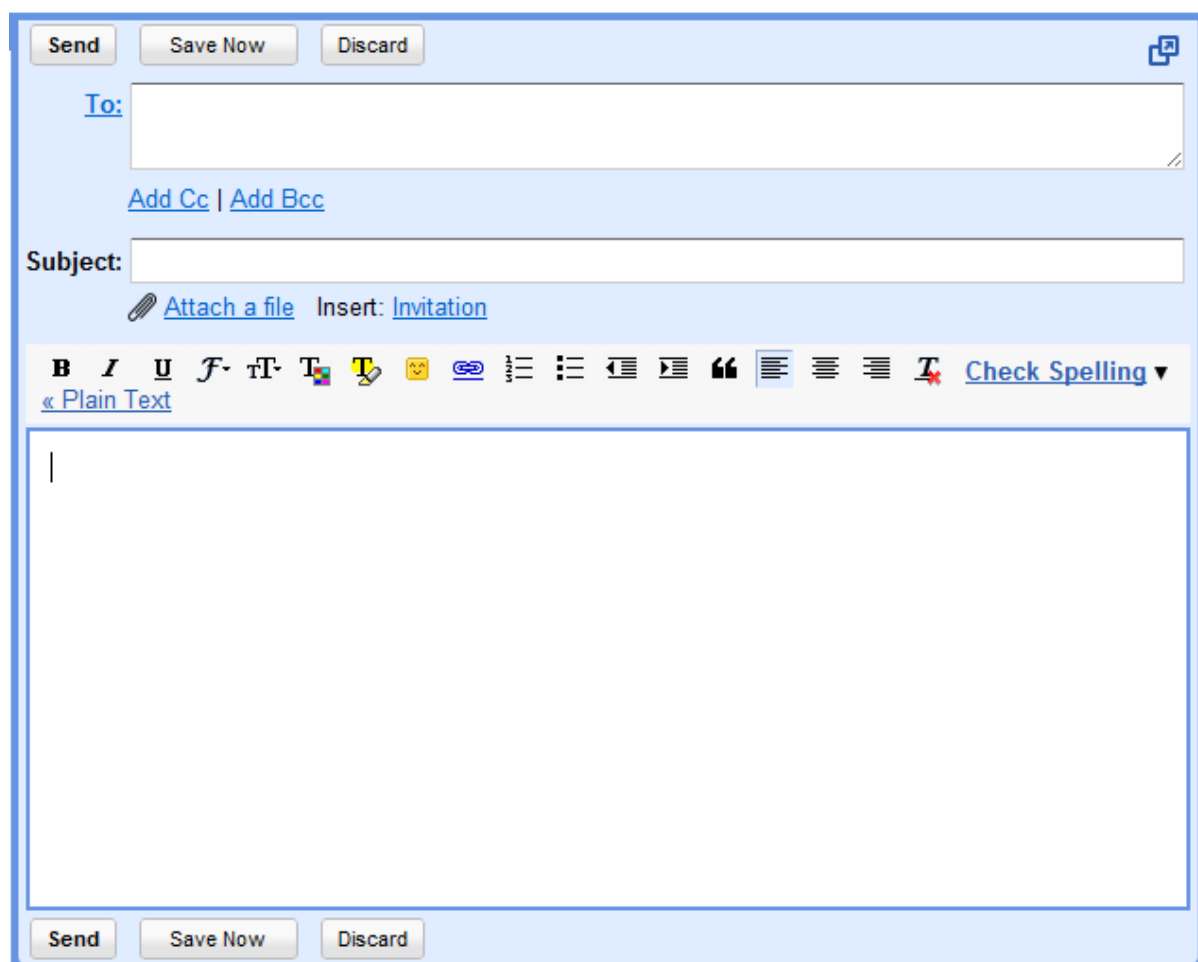
It is where you will find the email you have received and also where you will find replies you have written to those emails. Gmail stacks the messages sent back and forth between 2 or more people so you can view them all as a single strand, and easily follow conversations up as shown on the example below.

Getting there! Inbox | X



2 – Compose Mail

It is what you would click to start writing an email. You can either type the full email address or start typing the first few letters and Gmail will search through your contact list and give you email address options to choose from. You can also click on the “To” button to be taken to your contact list where you can choose the email you want to use. When writing your email, by putting your mouse over the buttons on the compose panel, you can tell what each button does, be it change color, font, insert image or link.



3 – Drafts

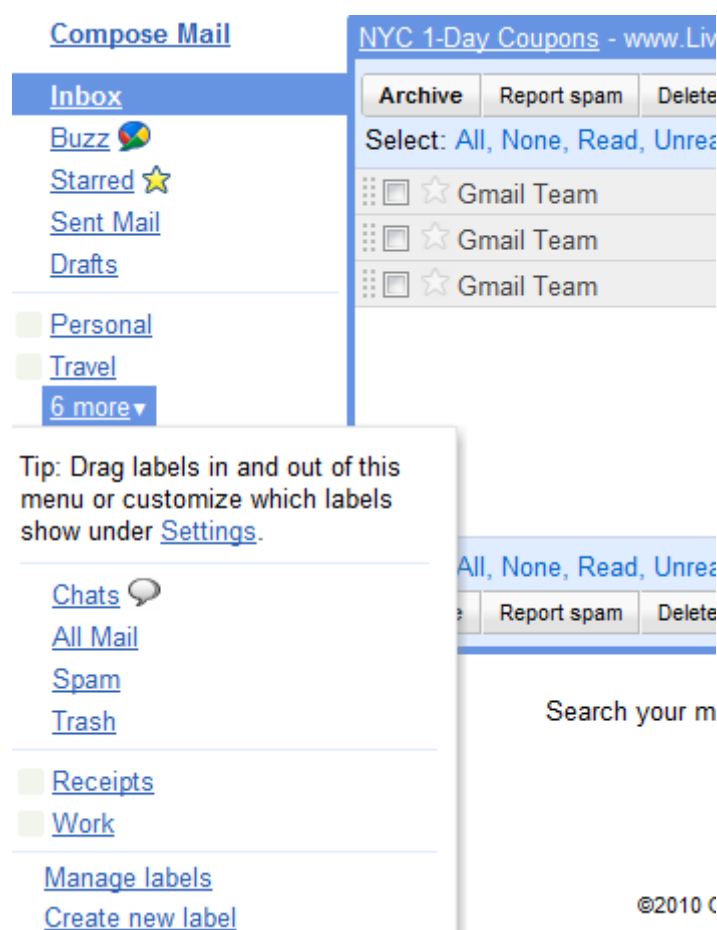
Gmail will save a copy of the email you are writing as you write it as a “draft”. It will do so on small time intervals, but if you decide to save it yourself, you can always just click on the button that says “Save Now” on the bottom of the compose window. When you do that, a copy gets saved on the Drafts folder so you can continue to write it later if you prefer. Once you send the message, they automatically disappear from the Drafts folder.

4 – Sent Mail

All the email you have ever sent someone can be found by clicking the “Sent Mail” button. It will separate the emails you have sent from the ones sent to you so you can clearly see only the ones you sent yourself.

5 – More

The “More” button opens a series of options such as your “Spam” and “Trash”. You can drag those labels in and out of the more button to customize how you want to view the main buttons on your email, so if you decide you want to have your “Trash” button readily available under the inbox, just drag it there, and if you decide you want your “Drafts” under the “More” button, just drag it there.



6 – Report Spam

Gmail tends to do a great job keeping spam out of your inbox, but if you do receive some, or there is some insistent company that keeps emailing you even though you asked to be removed from their mailing list, simply select that email and click on “Report Spam”. It will make any emails from that address go straight to spam, and it will help Gmail recognize it in the future.

7 – Delete

Because your storage space with Gmail is constantly growing, it is unnecessary, for most people, to ever need to delete emails. If you just don't want to see a certain email on your inbox anymore, check the box next to that email and click the delete button. It will be moved to your trash folder. If you permanently want to remove your email, delete it out of your trash folder as well.

Keyboard Shortcuts

Gmail also allows for a series of keyboard shortcuts to make browsing and responding to emails quicker. For example, by typing “Shft + c”, you can open your composer email window, and by typing the letter “s” you can star a message.

For a complete cheatsheet of Gmail shortcuts, visit:

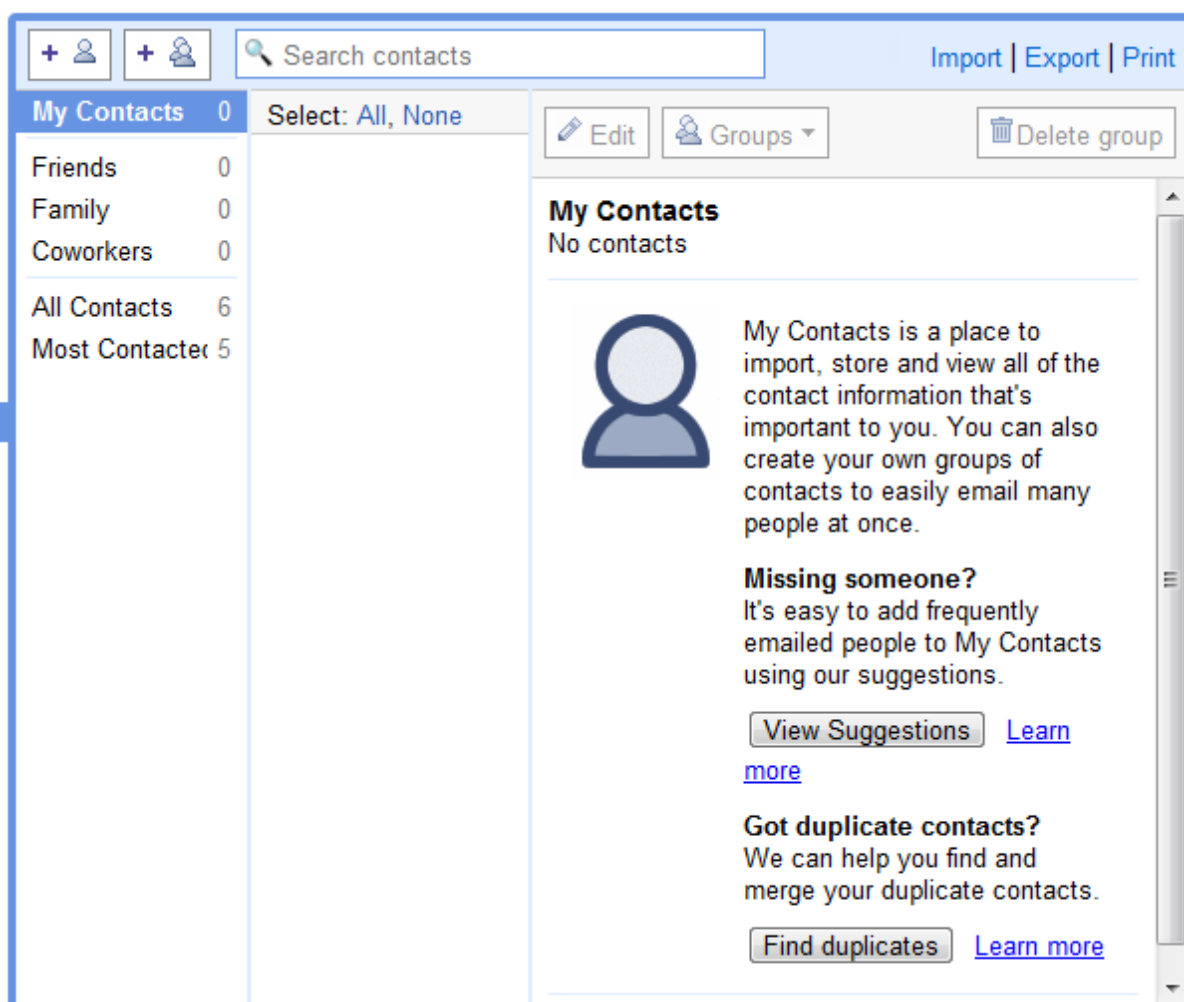
<http://mail.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=6594> or download MakeUseOf's Gmail Cheetseet at <http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/7-essential-cheat-sheets/>

Organizing your Gmail

Over time, you may receive thousands of emails, and trying to find a certain email can become a difficult task. That is why it is important to organise your emails so you can easily find important ones in the future. Below are some useful features to help organize all your emails and contacts.

Contacts

There are several ways to add and organize your contacts. Click on the "Contacts" button on the left hand corner bar and you will be taken to a page like this:



One very useful thing about Gmail is that you don't really have to add your contacts by hand in the long run. Gmail will automatically add the emails of everyone you replied to or have written to.

Gmail will, by default, show you initially the most used contacts you have. To view

contacts that don't appear on that list, either use the search feature or click on the button that says "All".

By clicking on the single little person with a + sign on the upper left hand side, you can add individual contacts.

By clicking on the multiple little people with a plus sign, also on the upper left hand side, you can create a group. You can move several people to each group, so when you need to email them you don't need to select them one by one. For example, when I am working on a project with a certain number of people, I create a group called "Project Whatever Name" and add to it all the people who are part of that project. That way, when I need to send them all an email, all I need to do is select that group on the email address field and they will all receive the email. You will notice that Gmail has already created a few groups for you if you decide to use them. They are the "Friends", "Family" and "Coworkers" groups you see to your left of the screen.

On the upper right hand corner you will notice the import and export buttons. You can import your contacts formatted as CSV files from Outlook, Outlook Express, Yahoo! Mail, Hotmail, Eudora and some other apps. Gmail also supports importing vCard from apps like Apple Address Book.

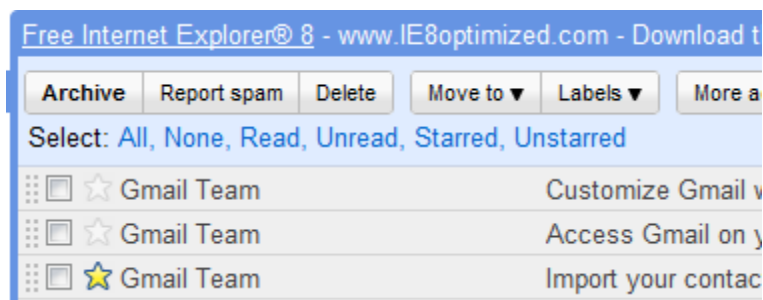
The Export button is used if you want to do the opposite, export all of your contacts to use in another program or as a back up. You can also print contact information if you prefer the hard copy.

Gmail will also help you manage your duplicate contacts by merging them or removing old contacts.

You can also click on someone's name and view all your recent conversations you have had, which means, you can see all the emails you exchanged recently. You can also do that simply by searching for the email address or the name of a contact on the search bar on the main screen.

Stars

Stars function in Gmail as a way of marking emails that you would like to pay attention to. You can star an email simply by clicking on the little star icon on the left hand side of any email when on inbox preview. When you decide to look for them again, you can simply click on the "Starred" button and it will retrieve all the emails you have chosen to mark with a star.



Labels

Labels are a much more elaborate way of organizing your emails. They work in a very similar manner to folders in other email clients. You can create labels by clicking on the button on top of the messages that says "Labels" and selecting "Manage Labels". You will then be taken to a page that lets you manage all of your labels, whether you want to show them or hide them from the left side menu, and the option to delete them or create new ones.

Settings
[General](#) [Accounts and Import](#) **[Labels](#)** [Filters](#) [Forwarding and POP/IMAP](#) [Chat](#)
[Web Clips](#) [Labs](#) [Offline](#) [Themes](#) [Buzz](#)

System labels	Inbox		
	Buzz	show	hide
	Starred	show	hide
	Chats	show	hide
	Sent Mail	show	hide
	Drafts (0 conversations)	show	hide
	All Mail	show	hide
	Spam	show	hide
	Trash	show	hide

Labels
 [show all](#) [hide all](#)

Junk E-mail (0 conversations)	show	hide	remove
Travel (0 conversations)	show	hide	remove
Work (0 conversations)	show	hide	remove

Note: Removing a label will not remove the messages with that label.

When you decide to add an email to a particular label, simply check the box next to that email, go to the label pull down and check the label you want to be

assigned to that email. Much like the stars, or folders, if at point you want to view only emails that have that label, click on the name of the label on the left hand side menu and all the emails you have attached that label to will appear.

You can also “mute” an email. Let's say you signed up for a mailing list, you want to receive, so they are not spam, but they send emails so frequently that you don't want to see it popping up all the time. Well, you can go to “more actions” and select “Mute” or simply type the letter “m” when reading one of the emails, and from then on, all emails coming from that group will bypass the inbox and go directly to archive, where you can find them when you do want to read the messages.

Advanced Settings

There are many settings to choose from with Gmail. Some control basic features, some add features to the emails, some determine how you reply, who you receive emails from, and how you use your Gmail services. Below is a brief guideline for some of those settings. You can access them by clicking on the "Settings" button on the upper left hand corner of your Gmail window.

Settings

General [Accounts and Import](#) [Labels](#) [Filters](#) [Forwarding and POP/IMAP](#) [Chat](#) [Web Clips](#) [Labs](#) [Offline](#) [Themes](#) [Buzz](#)

Language: Gmail display language: English (US) [Show all language options](#)

Maximum page size: Show 50 conversations per page

Keyboard shortcuts: [Learn more](#)
☒ Keyboard shortcuts off
☐ Keyboard shortcuts on

External content: [Learn more](#)
☒ Always display external content (such as images) sent by trusted senders - [Learn more](#)
☐ Ask before displaying external content

Browser connection: [Learn more](#)
☐ Always use https
☐ Don't always use https

My picture: [Learn more](#)
[Select a picture](#) that everyone will see when you email them.

Contacts' pictures: [Learn more](#)
☒ Show all pictures
☐ Only show pictures that I've chosen for my contacts - Pictures your contacts select for themselves will not be displayed.

Signature: [Learn more](#)
(appended at the end of all outgoing messages)
☒ No signature
☐

Personal level indicators: [Learn more](#)
☒ No indicators
☐ Show indicators - Display an arrow (›) by messages sent to my address (not a mailing list), and a double arrow (») by messages sent only to me.

Snippets: [Learn more](#)
☒ Show snippets - Show snippets of the message (like Google web search!).
☐ No snippets - Show subject only.

Vacation responder: [Learn more](#)
(sends an automated reply to incoming messages. If a contact sends you several messages, this automated reply will be sent at most once every 4 days)
☒ Vacation responder off
☐ Vacation responder on
First day: June 15, 2010 ☐ Ends: (optional)
Subject:
Message:
☐ Only send a response to people in my Contacts

General Settings

There are many things you can determine from the general settings. A few examples are:

- **Maximum Page size:** Determines how many emails you see at a time (the default is 50). Just remember, making that number very large can make your page load slower.
- **My Pictures:** allows you to upload a picture which will be seen by your friends when they chat with you, move their mouse over your name on the chat bar, on Buzz, or throughout your Gmail pages. It's a great way to personalize Gmail. There is also a setting to determine whether you get to see the pictures your friends uploaded.
- **Signature:** You can write something inside the box that would appear on the bottom of every email you write. Some people use that to add their contact information without having to type it every time. Others use it to add something fun, like a quote or a saying they like.
- **Vacation Responder:** Let's you add a message that will automatically be sent to anyone who emails you during a certain period of time. That way if some business email comes in, you can add the auto responder to reply with an alternate contact while you are away and a message saying when you are coming back. It is also useful for friends who might not realize you are away and who will be wondering why you aren't replying to their emails.

Accounts and Import

It is under these settings that Gmail has options to help you import your email and contacts from other email accounts. Simply click the button that says import mail and contacts and follow the prompts. It will ask for your email and password and email will attempt to import all of the information. In certain cases, such as when you are trying to import emails from your personal website, you might have to add information such as pop server.

You can also use Gmail as a substitute to using your own URL email such as yourname@yourwebsite.com, without people realizing you are doing it. That's where the "Send mail as" can be handy. The easiest way to make use of this is to set whatever your other email is to forward to your Gmail account. From that point, click on the "Send mail another address" button. Enter your name and the other email address and click next step. Gmail will send that email a confirmation number that

you have to type in that box to prove that you are the person receiving that email. Once you have added that number, you can select to either make that email your default responder, or it will be one of the emails on a pull down you can select to respond as.

You can also have Google host the email for your domain, by using Google Apps, that way you would use your own domain address but within the Gmail interface. To sign up to Google Apps, visit <http://www.google.com/a>

Check mail using Pop3 allows you to import emails from different accounts so you can read them and reply to them via Gmail. Gmail allows you to do that to as many as 5 email addresses. The difference between that and the forwarding option is that this allows you to get those emails on Gmail while still receiving them on your original email address.

You can read more about that feature by checking out Gmail Support or some of our articles: <https://mail.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=21289>

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/email-hack-easily-access-your-emails-from-hotmail-in-gmail/>

Among the options here, is also to add more storage to Gmail. If you are one of the super abnormally busy people who are capable of filling several gigs of storage space with simple emails, you can click the "add more storage" button to purchase more gigs annually.

You can also control your Google (and Gmail) account using the button "Google account settings". You can change your password, access other services and create a profile from here.

It is also worth checking out Gmail for business if you are looking for an affordable way to have your business emails hosted by Gmail.

Settings

[General](#) [Accounts and Import](#) [Labels](#) [Filters](#) [Forwarding and POP/IMAP](#) [Chat](#) [Web Clips](#) [Labs](#) [Offline](#) [Themes](#)
[Buzz](#)

Import mail and contacts: Import from Yahoo!, Hotmail, AOL, or other webmail or POP3 accounts.

[Import mail and contacts](#) [Learn more](#)

Send mail as: Simply Taty <simplyfortaty@gmail.com>

[edit info](#)

[Send mail from another address](#) [Learn more](#)

Check mail using POP3: Get your mail from other accounts in Gmail using POP3.

[Add POP3 email account](#) [Learn more](#)

Using Gmail for work? Companies can power their email with Gmail for businesses. [Learn more](#)

Add additional storage: You are currently using 0 MB (0%) of your 7455 MB.
Need more space? [Upgrade your storage](#)

Change account settings: [Google Account settings](#)
Change your password and security options, view your dashboard, and access other Google services.

Filters

The Filter setting allows you to manage spam and choose how to handle certain messages. Click on "Create new filter" and you can decide to "filter" a certain email address, subject and even specific words. You can then decide how you want that filter to be applied. The options include:

- Skip the Inbox (Archive it)
- Mark as read
- Star it
- Apply the label:
- Forward it to:
- Delete it
- Never send it to Spam

This way, every time you receive an email that fits the filter you set up, that action will be done without you having to do it manually.

For example, let's say I want emails from a particular sender to star it automatically. I create a new filter, user that email in the "from" field, click "next step", select "Star it" and click "Create filter". From then on, every email from that sender will automatically be marked with a star. For more information on filters, read:

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/set-email-filters-gmail-hotmail-yahoo/>

Forwarding and Pop/IMAP

What happens if you have a favorite email client, such as Outlook or Thunderbird, but you still want to use Gmail? You can control your options to either forward Gmail emails to another email address, or to set it up to work with other email clients so you can download your email to view on your computer or as a way of archiving the email in a physical location as opposed to on the Google cloud.

To set up forwarding and pop, visit:

<http://mail.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?hl=en&ctx=mail&answer=75726> for detailed instructions.

Offline

Another great feature is the ability to have access to your Gmail even when you are not online. So let's say you are on a plane with no web access, but it is also the perfect opportunity to catch up with all of those emails you haven't had a chance to reply to. If you enable Gmail offline, it will download the email to your computer, so that you can reply to and read your email, or catch up on adding contacts and when you go back online, those messages will be sent and Gmail will catch up to everything you did while offline. You can even add attachments that will be sent when you are back online.

It even has a "flaky connection mode" which helps Gmail adjust to the internet connection you have if it is unreliable and download the messages to your computer as the connection comes and goes. That way, you don't have to worry that you will lose the emails you have typed if you suddenly go offline. Gmail will catch itself up to the changes you made offline when the computer goes back online.

To turn Offline on, click on the "create a desktop shortcut" and Gmail will create an icon on your desktop to make it easier for you to access it while offline. It's almost like having an email program installed on your computer but with the Gmail features and with the knowledge that if your computer breaks, you still have all of your emails and contacts safely stored with Google.

The Fun Stuff

Gmail is not just about work though. The folks at Google have added a few features to ensure we can also have some fun while emailing. To access any of the settings for the features below, click on "Settings" on the upper right hand corner of your email.

Buzz

Buzz is basically Gmail's response to Facebook and Twitter. It is meant to work as a social network that you opt into if you want to use it. It is not active on your account by default. You can follow people on your email list and be followed, see their status updates and post pictures and video to share with each other. You can also use it to import your stuff from Twitter, Picasa, Flickr, and Google Reader. And share them with your friends and contacts.

You can learn more about some of the Buzz features by watching the short video at: <http://www.google.com/buzz>

Buzz can be enabled and disabled by going to "Settings > Buzz". You can choose to show it on Gmail, whether to make your Buzz contact lists public, or whether to enable or disable it completely.



The screenshot shows the Gmail Buzz interface. At the top, there's a user profile section with a placeholder profile picture, a name field, and links for "(Edit)", "0 connected sites", and "0 followers". Below this is a text input field with the prompt "Share what you're thinking. Post a picture, video, or other link here." A large dialog box is open in the center, titled "You're all set up to start using Buzz" with a close button (X) in the top right. The dialog contains the text "Buzz is a new way to share updates, photos, videos, and more." and two main points: "You can follow people to see their buzz." with a link "Find people to follow", and "When people follow you, they'll see your posts in Buzz." with a link "Post in Buzz". To the right of these points is a circular arrow icon and a placeholder profile picture. At the bottom of the dialog is an "Okay" button. Below the dialog, there's a status bar that says "Buzz - Following 0 people - Find people - Refresh".

Chat

The chat is a quick way to communicate with friends when emailing doesn't seem to be the best way to do it and you only need some quick and instant back and forth. It can only be used between Gmail users and even then, only between those who have accepted and opted in to accept chats, but that is still a surprisingly large number of Gmail users.

All you have to do to chat with someone is look for their name on the chat box on the left hand side of the screen. Check if they are online, which you can tell by looking for a small green dot next to their name. Double click on their name and a little chat window will appear. Start typing your message and click send (or enter). They will hear a little warning and a small window will appear that allows them to read your message and type back. In case they log off while you are typing, you will be told they are now offline and be given an option to send the chat as an email instead, which they will receive when they get back online. You can also sign into AIM by using the same interface and chat with your AIM friends as well.

Web Clips

When Gmail was just launched, there were certain concerns that Gmail would be mining information from the emails to post ads that were relevant to you. The truth is that there is an algorithm that determines what ads would be most relevant depending on key words from the emails, but no private information is ever sent to Google. Another way to control what you see on top of your inbox and related ads is by using "Web Clips", which can be found under "Settings > Webclips". It is basically a way to control what you want to see displayed above your inbox. You can choose among hundreds of feeds, custom content from major sites such as CNN, Forbes, YouTube, news and yes, even ads. And if you prefer, you can even disable them all together.

Labs

Labs adds a whole new dimension to your email experience, which makes you an active participant on the development of your email features. What Google has created with Labs, is a way of testing features they are considering implementing on their email, as well as trying some of the totally wacky, but sometimes surprisingly useful add-ons Google created for their email.

Because many of those features are being tested, some of the features come and go, but they are certainly worth a try anyway. Some of the current Lab add-ons include:



- **Don't forget Bob** – A feature that reminds you to include someone you might have forgotten if you generally email them together. So if you usually send emails about cake recipes to 3 of your aunts, and one day you only add 2 of them to your recipients, it will ask you before you send it if you might have forgotten the 3rd one.
- **Got the wrong Bob?** – Is a feature that checks that same list to ensure you added the correct aunts. Let's say, one aunt named Mare Claire and she loves cake, and the other is named Marie Claise and she is always on a diet and gets personally offended if you email her about food, Gmail will let you know if you accidentally include the wrong one just in time to save you from the blunder.
- **Undo Send** – Once enabled, this amazing Lab add-on that allows to basically "unsend" a message you have just sent. Made a mistake? Forgot something? Wish you hadn't sent it right after you clicked the button? No worries, just click the undo right next to the message that says your email has been sent, and Gmail will revert it to your account compose mode as if you had never clicked send.
- **Default Text Styling** – Which adds a feature to your general settings that let's you choose a default text style for all of your emails.
- **Mail Goggles** – It's a fun and sometimes annoying little add on that forces you to solve simple math problems if you are sending an email late night on the weekends. The idea is that you might be sending an email you might regret the next morning after a crazy night of partying. The math is a way of testing if you still have enough of your mental capacity to be aware of the email you are sending.

There are many more Labs features to check out. Some are great work tools, such as integration to Google Docs and Google Voice, others are simply games, or ways to keep you from working too hard, so check them all out!

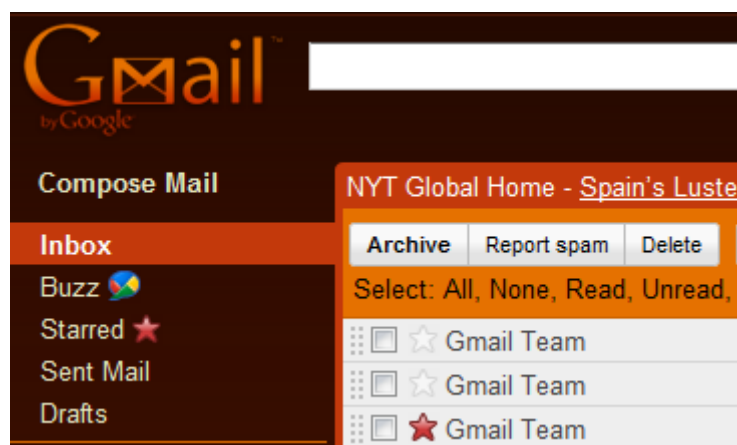
Remember, if you install an Lab feature and Gmail stops working, you can remove them all by going to <https://mail.google.com/mail/?labs=0>

Available Labs

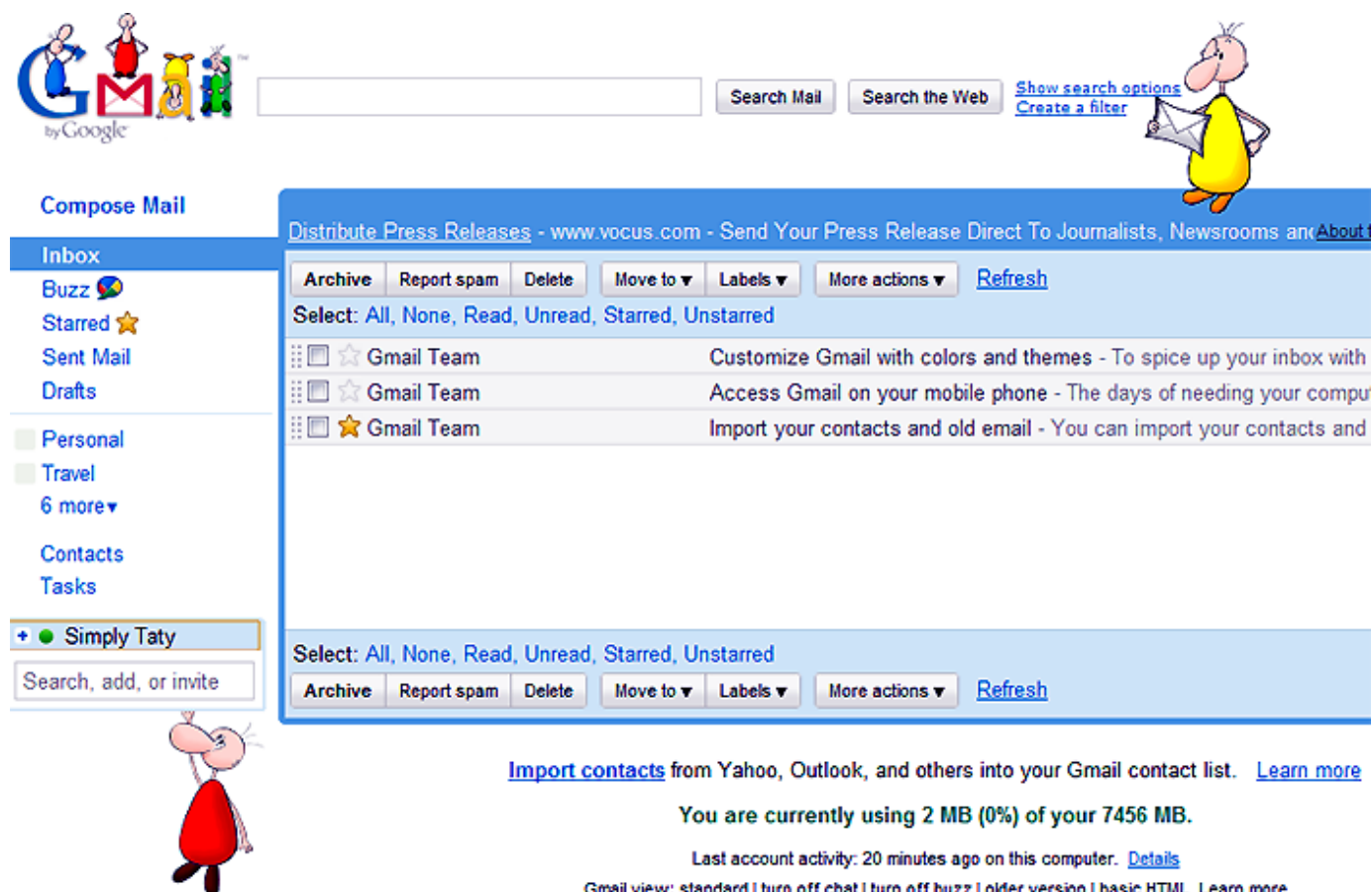
	<p>Add any gadget by URL by Dan P and Dong C</p> <p>Adds a "Gadgets" tab to Settings, where you'll be able to specify the URL of any gadget. This gadget will show in a box in the left column.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable</p> <p>Send feedback</p>
	<p>Advanced IMAP Controls by Jamie N</p> <p>Choose which labels show up in IMAP, turn off message auto-expunging, or trash messages when they're deleted from IMAP.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable</p> <p>Send feedback</p>
	<p>Authentication icon for verified senders by E R</p> <p>Displays a key icon next to authenticated messages from certain senders that spammers attempt to fake. Currently works for mail from PayPal and eBay only.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable</p> <p>Send feedback</p>
	<p>Back to Beta by Darren</p> <p>Soothes the soul by putting the familiar beta sticker back on the Gmail logo.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable</p> <p>Send feedback</p>
	<p>Canned Responses by Chad P</p> <p>Email for the truly lazy. Save and then send your common messages using a button next to the compose form. Also automatically send emails using filters.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable</p> <p>Send feedback</p>
	<p>Create a Document by Jeremie LE & David K</p> <p>Allows you to create a Google Document from an email conversation or a new blank document if your keyboard shortcuts are enabled by hitting 'g' then 'w'.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable</p> <p>Send feedback</p>
	<p>Custom date formats by Emil E</p> <p>Adds options to the general settings page allowing the date and time format to be changed independent of language. For example, you can use a 24-hour clock (14:57) or show dates with the day first (31/12/07).</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable</p> <p>Send feedback</p>

Themes

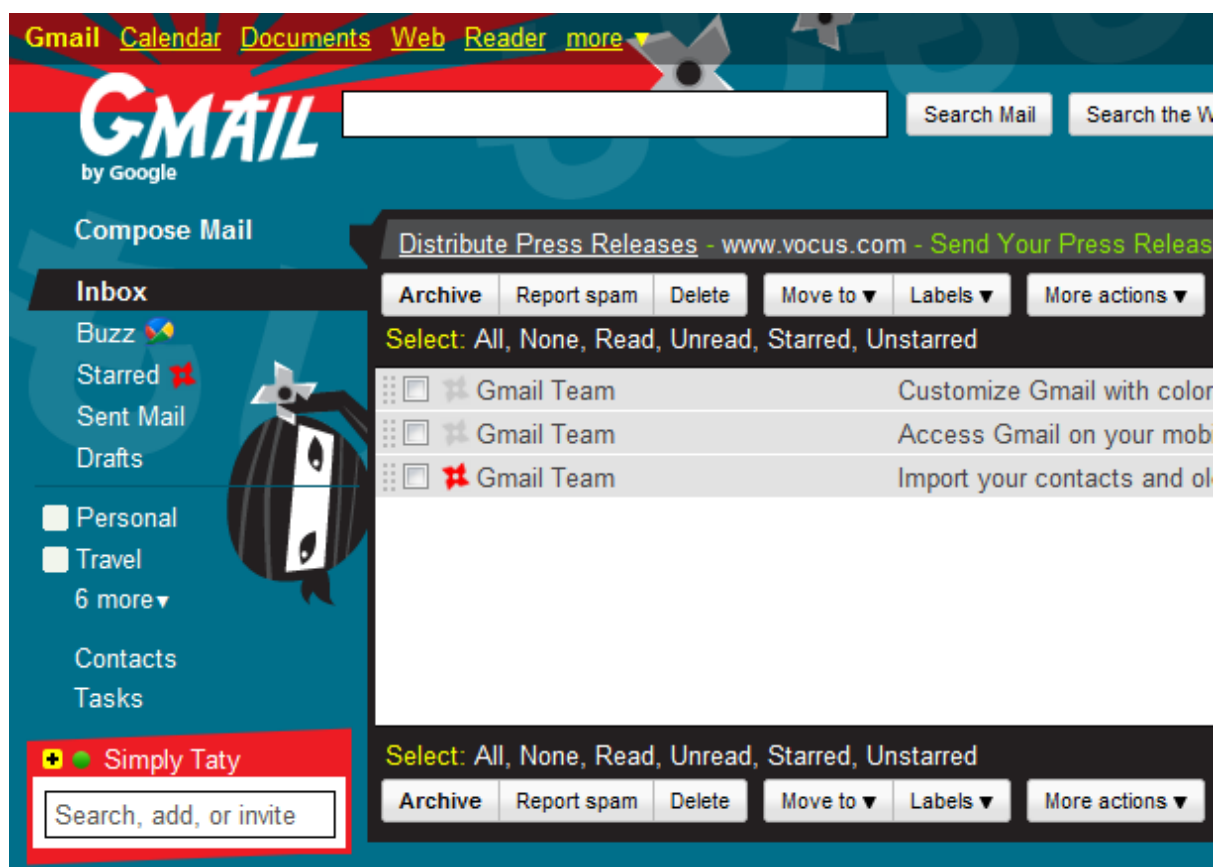
Now, for some people, the Gmail look is dull and boring. Fear not... If the standard Gmail interface is too tame for you, Google has thought of people just like you and added "Themes" to Gmail. Basically it allows you to choose from several looks. From a warm colored "Sunset":



To the cutesy Zoozimps, which changes depending on your zip code:



Or the funky Ninja theme:



Or even an option to chose your own colors if you prefer.

To change your themes, simply go to "Settings> Themes", and click on the one you like. Some themes will ask you for your zip code, type it in, then click save. And watch your email change right before your eyes.

Gmail Mobile

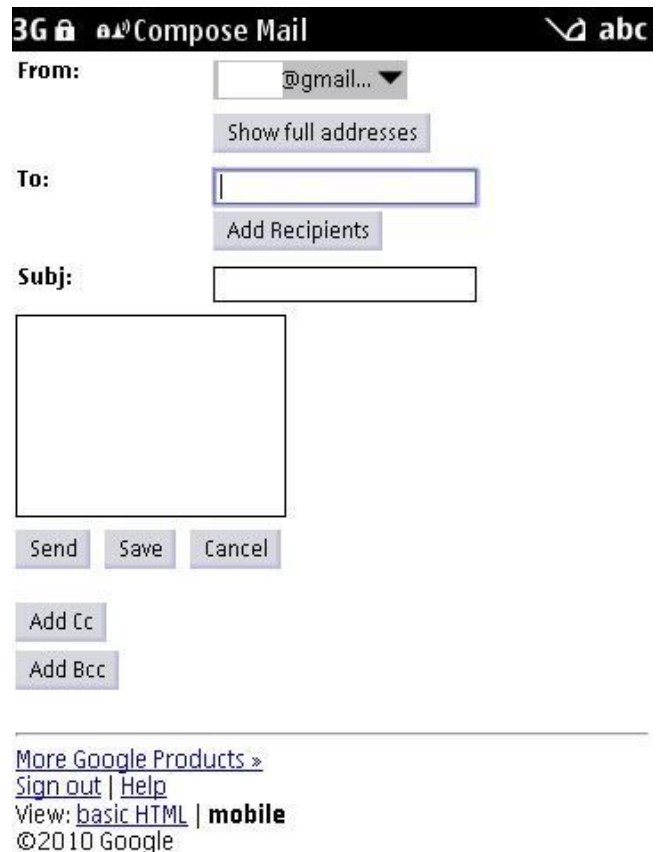
There are many ways to integrate Gmail into your phone, be it an Android phone, another smartphone or a simple Java capable phone.

You can download a simple bookmark to connect you to the mobile version of Gmail by going to <http://www.google.com.au/mobile/mail/>. From that page you can even have Google send you the link to your phone via text message.

Android and smartphones have a plethora of options to choose phone. Be it integrating the email with their phone, importing the email into the email program,

or simply accessing it online. Gmail was built to be easily accessible by people on the move.

From any phone, you can go to <http://gmail.com> to get the Gmail web app or access the mobile version of Gmail.



Android phones, Blackberry and Nokia S60 can download the native app from <http://m.google.com/mail>. (It is pre-installed on android phones.)

And most smart phones in the market, including the Blackberry, iPhone and Windows based phones can sync either via IMAP, POP3 or using Google Synchronizer.

And we can't end without mentioning a few other integrated features:

Google Docs

Google Docs has set itself to become an online substitute for Microsoft Office. It allows you to create documents, import documents from different formats such as Excel and PowerPoint, and export them to some of the most commonly used formats as well as share them with contacts for a true collaboration.

Learn more about it by watching the short video at: <http://docs.google.com>

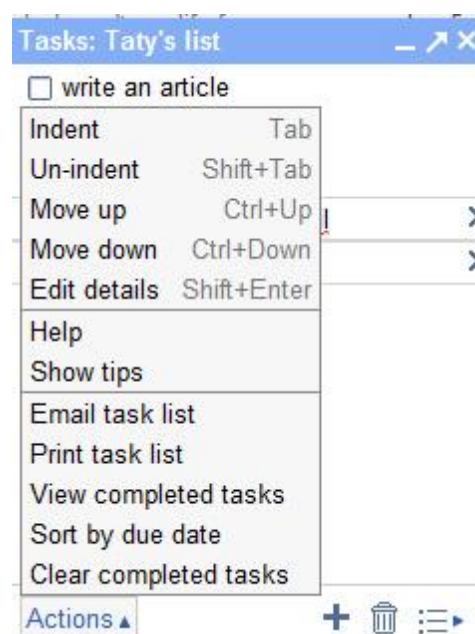
Google Calendar

Google calendar, which is also fully integrated with Gmail, has an enormous array of usages. It reminds you of your events, synchronizes with some desktop applications and cell phones. It also allows you to share your calendar with others, so you can have a common calendar, post it on your website, or simply make it public. You can use it to send invitations, or simply keep track of all of your appointments with color coordinated topics. Learn more about it by watching the short video at:

<http://www.google.com/calendar>

Tasks

Tasks are a way of helping you keep track of short notes, small reminders and to do lists without having to leave your Gmail. Simply by clicking on "Tasks" on the left menu, you will see a small window appear on the right side of your screen. You can add a Task simply by typing on the small window. Once the task is added, there are several options you can use by clicking on the little arrow to the right of the task. Some of the options include adding a due date to your task, which will automatically add it to your Google Calendar or adding more details to those tasks. You can also use the "Actions" button on the bottom of that window for even more features such as emailing the task list and printing it among others.



Conclusion

Gmail has created innovative features, and in typical Google tradition, has mixed very well, the fun aspects and its productivity features, for a very complete and dynamic email service. One of its greatest qualities is its ability to be flexible to all kinds of people with completely different needs and desires, and to do most of what it has set itself out to do quite well. To read even more about Gmail, checkout some of the other Makeuseof articles:

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tags/gmail/>

Some of the articles include:

- **How To Search Emails In Gmail Efficiently**
<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/search-emails-gmail/>
- **How To Recover Lost Gmail Password With A SMS Message**
<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/how-to-recover-your-lost-gmail-password-with-a-sms-message/>
- **How To Access Hotmail Email Messages from Your Gmail Account**
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- **How To Save Time with Gmail Email Templates using “Canned Responses”**
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- **How To Back Up Files To Gmail With Just One Click**
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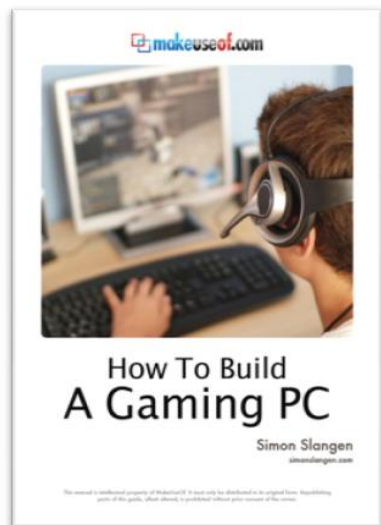
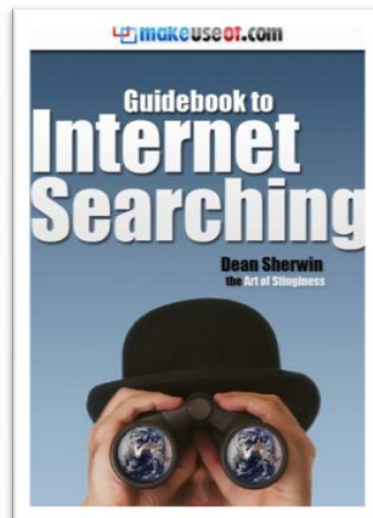
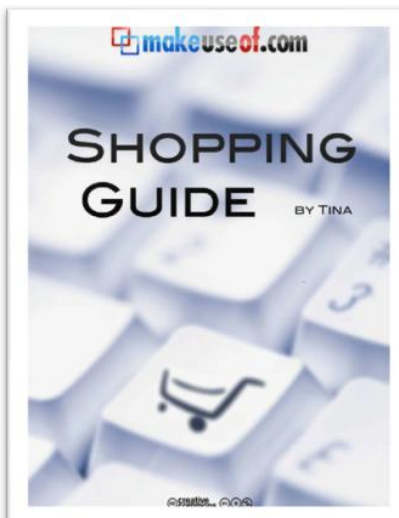
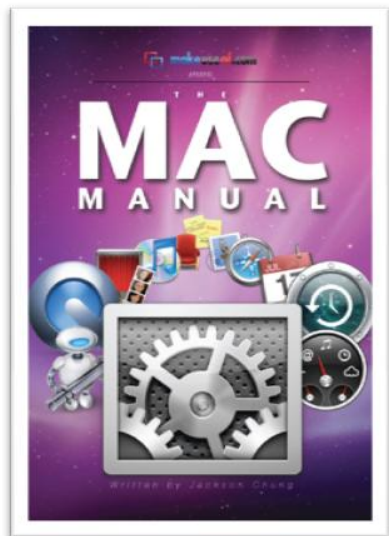
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