
Gmail

(Redirected from [Using Gmail with Thunderbird and Mozilla Suite](#))

This article was written for [Thunderbird](#) but also applies to [Mozilla Suite / SeaMonkey](#) (though some menu sequences may differ).

Gmail provides free webmail accounts and POP, [IMAP](#) and SMTP servers. To add an account in Thunderbird you need to have a Gmail webmail account, create either a POP or IMAP account in Thunderbird and then enable it in Gmail settings using a browser.

You can create a new account by pressing the Add Mail Account button in [Tools -> Account Settings -> Account Actions](#). All you need to know is your email address and password, it will configure the account settings for you. It defaults to a IMAP account but you can tell it to use a POP account instead using a radio button. If you don't want it to automatically configure your account press the "Manual Config" button in the second screen of "Mail Account Setup".

After you create the POP/IMAP account in Thunderbird enable using the POP or IMAP server with your account by:

- Logging into your Gmail webmail account using a browser.
- If you're using a POP account, click on "Settings -> Forwarding and POP/IMAP -> POP Download:" and choose either "Enable POP for all mail (even mail that's already been downloaded)" or "Enable POP only for mail that arrives from now on".
- If you're using an IMAP account, click on "Settings -> Forwarding and POP/IMAP -> Enable IMAP"
- Click the "Save Changes" button.

If you're using the same Gmail POP account with multiple email clients you need to enable [recent](#) mode in order to let each email client access all of the messages in that account. You can do that by replacing username@gmail.com with recent:username@gmail.com as the username in Tools -> Account Settings -> Server Settings.

The account wizard uses gmail.com instead of googlemail.com in the server names. They're equivalent. [Gmail](#) is rebranded as Google Mail in Germany, Austria and the United Kingdom.

POP

- Type: **POP**
- Server Name: **pop3.gmail.com**
- User Name: **Your FULL email address**
- Port: **995** (this should be automatically set when you select SSL)
- Secure connection: **SSL/TLS**
- Secure authentication: **normal password**

IMAP

- Type: **IMAP**
- Server Name: **imap.gmail.com**
- User Name: **Your FULL email address**
- Port: **993** (this should be automatically set when you select SSL)
- Secure connection: **SSL/TLS**
- Secure authentication: **normal password**

Set tools -> account settings -> server settings -> advanced -> IMAP server directory to [Gmail] to fix problems with how it lists folders in the folder pane.

SMTP

- Server Name: **smtp.gmail.com**
- Port: **587** (you could also use port 25 if your ISP doesn't block it)
- Username: **Your FULL email address**
- Secure connection: **STARTTLS**
- Secure authentication: **normal password**

Don't configure Thunderbird to save a copy of any messages you send in tools -> account settings -> copies & folders. Gmail's SMTP server automatically saves a copy of any message you send in the Sent Items folder for you.

Troubleshooting and Gmail quirks

Gmail treats POP and IMAP messages individually and not as a threaded conversation.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions control whether an IMAP folder is visible in the folder pane (and any lists of folders). If it is cluttered with folders you don't normally use, you might want to hide some by unsubscribing them. This will however prevent you from being notified if you get new mail that is stored in them.

The All Mail folder contains a copy of all messages for the Gmail account. This is an artifact of how Gmail implemented labels, not a Thunderbird quirk. Thunderbird 3.x enables "message synchronization" by default, which keeps a local copy of all IMAP folders on your hard disk. If All Mail is subscribed, this doubles the amount of disk space used by your Gmail account and may cause some problems. It is recommended you

unsubscribe from the All Mail folder.

You can subscribe or unsubscribe a folder by:

1. Right click on the Inbox.
2. Select Subscribe.
3. Click on the '>' next to the Inbox to expand the folder list.
4. Check any folders you want to make visible (subscribe), uncheck any you want to hide (unsubscribe).
5. Press the OK button.

You can also use the Subscribe and Unsubscribe buttons in that menu.

To actually free the disk space, you have to navigate to the imapmail directory of your Thunderbird profile, then to the Gmail account and [Gmail].sbd, and delete the "All Mail" file and All Mail.msf.

Compatibility

The IMAP support is buggy/incomplete, though it's improved a lot since it was first available.

- \Answered and \Recent flags on messages are not supported.
- Only the From, CC, BCC, To, and Subject headers can be searched. All searches are assumed to be words. Searching for messages based on the Subject fails if it contains an underscore, but the search incorrectly finds messages whose body contains an underscore. Subject searches also fail if the search string contains a dot or an open or closed parenthesis as in the correct subject of messages. For example, a search of "2006.01.15" fails to find any message containing "2006.01.15" in the subject field (an exact search such as "2006.01.15 hello" also fails to find a message exactly titled "2006.01.15 hello"). [This bug has been raised to the Gmail team](#) and they are aware of it.

Labels

The IMAP folders correspond to the labels in Gmail's webmail. IMAP folder hierarchy is represented by "/" in Gmail's label. e.g. IMAP subfolder XYZ under ABC is mapped to label of ABC/XYZ(maximum length=40 bytes). However, mapping of IMAP folder to Gmail's folder or label at Web interface is special on some special folders.

- IMAP folder of [Gmail]/All Mail, [Gmail]/Drafts, [Gmail]/Sent Mail, [Gmail]/Spam, [Gmail]/Starred, [Gmail]/Trash
=> Gmail's folder of All Mail, Drafts, Sent mail, Spam, Starred, Trash.
- Other IMAP folders such as XYZ under [Gmail]
=> Gmail's label of [Gmail]/XYZ.
- Root level IMAP folder of Drafts, Sent, Trash
=> Gmail's label of [Imap]/Drafts, [Imap]/Sent, [Imap]/Trash.

If you look at the All Mail folder([Gmail]/All Mail of IMAP) using Gmails webmail it will label any IMAP

messages with the name of the folder. If you delete a message in Thunderbird it simply removes that folder's label from the message. Compacting the folder doesn't remove the message from the All Mail folder([Gmail]/All Mail of IMAP). You need to move it to the Trash or Spam folder([Gmail]/All Mail or [Gmail]/Spam of IMAP) to delete the message from all folders. It's not clear yet if this is also true for [Message aging](#). Moving back of mail in [Gmail]/All Mail of IMAP to any IMAP mail folder(except [Gmail]/Spam) restores all Gmail's label.

A copy of a message is stored for each label. That means if you assign two labels to a message and star it using Gmail's webmail it has a copy in two folders named after the label, the All Mail folder, and the Starred folder. If you copy a message to multiple remote folders (using Thunderbird) it will be marked with the corresponding labels when viewed using Gmail webmail.

If you move a message into the Spam folder, it is treated the same as if you had reported it in Gmail webmail using 'Report Spam'. See [How do actions sync in IMAP?](#) on Gmail's web site for more information on how it maps things.

Gmail recommends that you do not use [Gmail]/Trash as your Trash folder since Gmail only keeps a single copy of a message with multiple labels. **If you delete a message that way you're also telling it to delete the same message from any other folder (label) that has that message.** [\[1\]\[2\]](#) Gmail recommends not making Thunderbird move deleted mail into any folder and instead choose "Just mark it as deleted" from "When I delete a message" in Account Settings -> Server Settings.

Problems

- Gmail imposes an unspecified limit on [how many messages you can upload](#) during a short amount of time. If you exceed it, you get temporarily locked out of the account. It is not clear yet whether this is actually a bandwidth limit. A similar limit has been reported in the forums for *downloading* messages. This was primarily observed when [offline folders](#) are enabled. In those cases, a large amount of messages was downloaded on initial synchronization or when reindexing an IMAP folder.
- If large messages or attachments are truncated, set `mail.server.default.fetch_by_chunks = false` to work around a size bug in Gmail.
- Gmail has problems with non-ASCII characters in headers. This might occur if they're used in a recipient's email address, folder names or tags. To work around the bugs in Gmail header fields, go to "[Tools -> Options](#) -> Advanced -> General -> Config Editor (button)", right-click anywhere in the list of preferences, select *New*, select Boolean, copy-paste `mail.imap.use_envelope_cmd`, and set it to *true*. [\[3\]](#) [\[4\]](#)
- The [Gmail list of known IMAP issues](#) mentions that the "All Mail" folder can have well over 100,000 messages and that some email clients may crash if they try to process a folder with that many messages. Thunderbird doesn't have any known [limit](#) on the maximum number of messages in a folder, but most of the attention has been on the maximum size of a folder.

- This [forum thread](#) discusses some more quirks. Please check bugs listed in the dependency tree for [bug 402793\(meta bug\)](#) with "Show Resolved" before opening a bug relevant to Gmail IMAP at bugzilla.mozilla.org.
- If you send a message from your Gmail account to the same Gmail account in Thunderbird, that message will **not** be downloaded into Thunderbird. The message will, however, appear in your Gmail Inbox if you log into your account using the Gmail web interface. This is not a bug in Thunderbird; it is a quirk in the way Gmail implements POP. If you use IMAP, an e-mail sent to yourself shows up in Inbox, [Gmail]All Mail, and [Gmail]/Sent Mail folders.
- Gmail's SMTP server ignores whatever "From:" address you might specify using [multiple identity support](#) by default and uses your Gmail authenticated address instead. You have to [register any other address](#) using Gmail's web interface at Setting -> Accounts -> "Add another email address" to enable it as "From:" address. Your authenticated Gmail address is still added as a secondary "Sender:" header.
- If Thunderbird refuses to use the correct outgoing (SMTP) server, see the "Troubleshooting" section in [this article](#).
- The Gmail SMTP server now [officially supports](#) both STARTTLS (port 587) and SSL/TLS (port 465). Note: Thunderbird 3.0 renamed TLS to STARTTLS and SSL to SSL/TLS.
- Gmail scans attachments for viruses and blocks any that it thinks contains executables. This includes .zip files. You can work around this by changing the filenames to use file extensions it doesn't recognize. However, since that violates their policies you could potentially lose your Gmail account. A better solution might be to use a free file hosting site such as [RapidShare](#), [MegaUpload](#) or [YouSendit](#) and send a link to the file instead.

Disposable addresses

Gmail supports [plus-addressing](#), a useful way to create a disposable email address. Let's say your email address is JohnSmith@gmail.com and you need to give the xyzzy website an email address. If you give them JohnSmith+xyzzy@gmail.com, it will still be delivered to your inbox, despite the To: header having an extra "+xyzzy". If somebody starts sending spam to that email address, you could create a message filter that tests for xyzzy in the To: header and automatically delete (or move to the Junk mail folder) those messages when checking for new mail. Some email systems violate [RFC 2822](#) and won't send a message using plus addressing, but it is normally not a problem.

Mail fetcher

Gmail supports a way to periodically fetch email from up to five POP accounts and merge them into your inbox. The POP accounts could be provided by Gmail or another email provider. It works with Thunderbird, but you have to configure [mail fetcher](#) using Gmail webmail.

See also

- [Modify Thunderbird settings](#)
- [IMAP: advanced account configuration](#)

External links

Original URL:

http://kb.mozillazine.org/Using_Gmail_with_Thunderbird_and_Mozilla_Suite