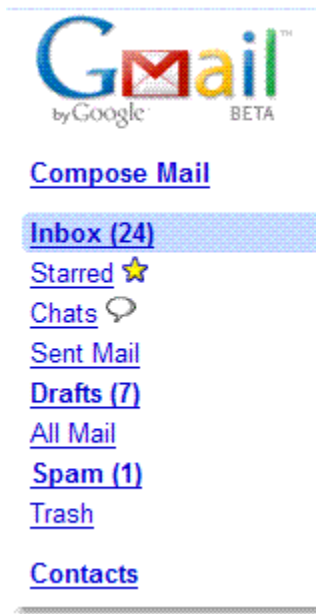# Google Apps Email (Gmail) Getting started guide

Brand new to Gmail? No problem. Here's a quick run-through of what you'll need to get comfortable.

First, you may want to take a minute to familiarize yourself with the navigation links:

Compose Mail opens a new message. If you're feeling shaky, you can read more to brush up on <u>sending messages</u>.

Inbox shows your conversations (the number in parentheses indicates how many unread conversations you have).

Starred shows you only messages you've marked with a star (use stars to mean whatever you'd like).

Chats lists your archived <u>Chat</u> conversations.

Sent Mail shows messages you've sent.

Drafts houses messages you've started and saved to work on later.

<mark>**All Mail** shows you *almost* all of your mail; you'll see content from your Inbox, Starred, Chats, Sent, Drafts, and all your archived messages; you won't see Spam or Trash.</mark>

Spam is where we send the messages we think are suspicious.

**Trash** is where messages you delete end up; you can empty the trash whenever you feel like it.

Contacts lists the email addresses of people you've corresponded with; you can add more details as you see fit.

Organizing and sorting your mail

Next, you'll probably want to get organized. If you find the idea of browsing through thousands of messages to find a single conversation a little daunting, you can make things a lot easier using <u>labels</u>, <u>filters</u>, and <u>search</u> -- and you won't have to delete anything. Here's how it works:

Labels

- You can create labels and apply them -- manually or automatically -- in order to group related messages together. For example, let's say you want to keep messages from your mom all in one place. If you have a message from her already, just check the box next to the message in your Inbox.
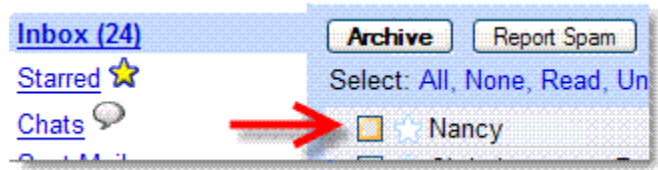
- Create a label for her messages; select **Create new** from the Labels drop-down menu (or type 'l' if you have keyboard shortcuts enabled). Enter a name for your label, and click **OK**. The name of your label will appear just before the subject line.

- You can find all your messages that have this label attached by clicking the label's name in the **Labels** section in the lower-left part of any Gmail page.
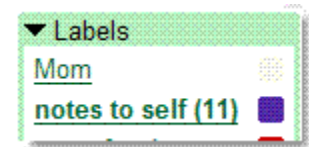
At this point, you can click **Archive;** the message will disappear from your Inbox, but will remain listed when you click the 'Mom' label, or **All Mail**. You can also still search for your archived messages. All you're doing when you archive a message is helping to keep the Inbox clutter down. You can also label and archive messages in one fell swoop by using the Move to drop-down menu.

Filters

If you don't want to mark all your messages from Mom one-by-one, you can set up a filter. The filter will detect when your mom emails you, and automatically applies the 'Mom' label (and if you'd like, you can send the message straight to the Mom section and skip the Inbox). To do so, just follow these steps:

1. Open a message from your mom.
2. From the **More Actions** drop-down menu, select **Filter messages like these**.
3. In the 'From:' field, enter your mom's email address.
4. Click **Next Step >**.
5. Check the **Appy the label:** box and select **Mom** from your **Choose label...** drop-down menu (you might also want to apply some of the other options, like **Skip the Inbox**, which will send her messages straight to the Mom section and keep your Inbox clean).
6. If you'd like to add the label to existing messages as well as future ones, select the **Also apply filter to x conversations below** checkbox.
7. Click **Create Filter**.

You don't have to limit your use of filters or labels to any single person or email address, though; that's just the beginning. You can create filters to detect messages with certain words in the subject line, the body of the email, or messages sent to a specific person, and automatically perform any of the actions shown in the image above. This means you can automatically apply a star to messages from your mom that contain the word 'cookies.' Get creative. You can always go back and perfect your filters; just click **Settings** and select the **Filters** tab .

Search

If you're worried that you won't be able to find a specific conversation after you move it from your inbox, search has got you covered. When you'd like to find a message, you can enter a word or phrase in the search field and click the **Search Mail** button. Your results will be displayed with your search terms highlighted in yellow.

If your search is a little complicated -- maybe you're trying to find a message from your mom, about a restaurant, and you remember that she sent it to you and your brother. Just click **Show search options**. You can enter all of these criteria (and then some) to refine your results.
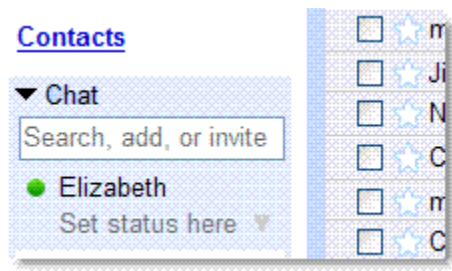

And there you have it. If you'd like, you can read up on more tips for using search operators to find your messages.

Chat

As you're looking around, you'll probably notice the Chat box in under the links in the left navigation bar.

Chat allows you to talk to your Gmail contacts (those who use Gmail, Google Talk, or even your AIM buddies) in real-time, directly within Gmail.

The status icon to the left of your contacts' names indicates whether they're available (green), idle (yellow), busy (red), or offline (grey). You can also add a note, by clicking the **Set status here** link, which will show under your name in your friends' Gmail.

To chat with a friend:

1. Click the name of your friend in the Chat section. A window will open in the lower-right corner of the page.
2. Type into the text field.
3. Press **Enter** to send your message.

Unless you choose to chat off the record, your Chat conversations will be archived and stored in your Gmail **Chats** label. This way, you can search for content from your chats, or you can browse your previous conversations by clicking the **Chats** navigation link.