

Gmail Workshop handout

1. Creating a Gmail account


1. Make sure you have your mobile phone handy for the verification process.
2. Go to the Google Account creation page. <https://accounts.google.com/signup>
3. Follow the steps on the screen to set up your account.
4. Use the account you created to sign in to Gmail.

2. Writing and Sending Emails Using the Compose Button

1. On the left, click Compose.
2. Add recipients and a subject.
3. Enter your message.
4. Emails you start writing but don't send are automatically saved in Drafts on the left.
5. Add attachments such as files & photos by selecting the paper clip or the image at the bottom of your email to the right of the send button, (Or you can drag and drop).
6. Click Send.

3. Reading and Organizing Your Messages in Your Inbox

By default, unread messages in your inbox have a white background and display in bold lettering while read messages have a gray background and normal type.

Gmail allows you to change your inbox style. Click on settings , then scroll down to 'inbox type' and select the one you want. The currently selected style is indicated with a check mark.

Switching from one style to another does not affect the messages in your inbox, it only changes the order in which the messages are listed.

4. Replying to and Forwarding Messages

Simply select "Reply" from the arrow button menu in the upper-right corner of an open message.

You can also reply by clicking the "Reply" link at the end of the message.


Forwarding messages can be accomplished in the same manner as replying to messages.


Gmail allows you to change the subject line when replying to or forwarding a message. To do this, click the arrow button next to the recipient's name and select "Edit subject" from drop-down menu.

5. Adding a contact

Gmail automatically adds people to your contacts list when you send them an email.

To add a contact from a received email: open the email from the person you want to add to your contacts.

On the email window, hover your cursor over the name of the email sender to let Gmail open a menu. Click on:  add to contacts.

To edit a contact or add one manually, click  at top right of page, scroll down and click on contacts, click on: create contact, fill in the details, and click save, then close that page to go back to Gmail.

6. Sending & receiving attachments (files, photos)

One way is to click "Attach files" at the bottom of the "Compose" window.

Select your files to attach to the message on the "Open" dialog box. You can attach multiple files at a time by selecting multiple files the same way you would in Windows Explorer. Click "Open" to attach the selected files. The progress of the attachment of the files displays at the bottom of the message.

You can also drag-and-drop files or images onto a message you're composing to attach them. Simply drag a file from an Explorer window to the message.

7. Quickly and Easily Find Messages Using the Search Box

Simply enter your search criteria in the search field and click the blue button or hit "enter."

For more search options, click on  to the right of the search box.


A dialog box drops down allowing you to search for email messages based on "From," "To," "Subject," message content, attachments, and more.

8. Performing Common Actions on Your Messages Using the Action Buttons

Action buttons let you take actions on your messages. For example, you can use the buttons to label, delete, or mark one or more messages as spam. The action buttons are located under the search box and above your messages.

Some buttons like "Archive," "Report spam," and "Labels" are only available if you've selected one or more messages or opened a message.


9. Customizing Gmail Using the Settings Button

Use the "Settings" gear button  to access 'Quick settings' and define your display density setting (the space between messages and objects in Gmail), access other settings or themes, and get Gmail help.


10. Automatically Categorizing Your Inbox Using Configurable Tabs

Gmail now offers tabbed, automatic categories for your inbox. This feature breaks your inbox into "Primary," "Social," "Promotions," "Updates," and "Forums." If you participate in many online services, this feature can be handy.

Choose Which Tabs are Visible in Your Inbox


Click on the "Settings" gear button , then 'see all settings', then inbox, and choose your tabs under categories. Click saves at the bottom of the page. (Every time you make a change remember to click save).

11. Organizing and Categorizing Your Messages Using Labels

When you select one or more messages, click "Move to"  and then select a label from the "Move to" menu. The selected message or messages are moved out of the "Inbox" into that label, like a folder.

To create a label: click on 'move to' then select 'create new' enter a name for your label then click on 'create'. To create a label but leave the email in the inbox use the label button.

12. Creating filters

You can create a filter based on an existing message. To do this, select a message in your message list or in a label. Click the "More" action button  and select "Filter messages like these" from the drop-down menu. Notice that the "From" field on the "Filter" dialog is automatically filled in. Enter any other filter criteria you want and click "Create filter with this search."

Specify your filter criteria by selecting filter options on the next dialog.

13. Keep Track of Important Emails Using the Star System


Gmail's star system allows you to mark your most important emails so you can easily find them later. By default, starred messages are labeled with a yellow star, but you can add other color and types of stars. Stars display to the left of the sender's name in your inbox.

To add a star to a message in your inbox, click the star icon next to the sender's name. Gmail allows you to use multiple colors and types of "stars" to differentiate messages from one another. Click the "Settings" button and select "Settings" from the drop-down menu. On the "General" tab, scroll down to the "Stars" section. Drag icons from the "Not in use" section to the "In use" section to add different types of stars. If you have more than one type of star in use, clicking the star icon next to an email message cycles through all the stars in use.

14. Setting up an Email Signature in Gmail


to set up a signature that will be automatically appended to any emails you compose in Gmail, click the settings gear button and select "Settings" from the drop-down menu. Stay on the "General" tab, scroll down to the "Signature" section and select the option below "No signature" to turn the feature on. Give your signature a name then in the space on the right insert what you want to use as your signature and apply formatting if you want. Click save at the bottom of the page'

15. Keeping your Account and Data Secure


1. To access your security, data and privacy settings click on  at top right of page, click on account, then in the left pane you can access your security settings etc. I recommend going through it and viewing their recommendations.
2. Use a good strong passphrase as a password, change it regularly.
3. be extremely careful about clicking on links especially when they are from an unknown source. Check If a Link Is Safe with Google Transparency Report: <https://transparencyreport.google.com/safe-browsing/search>
4. If your bank has asked you to sign in online don't use their email link to do so, open a Google window and access it by typing in the banks name or preferably web address.
5. Gmail has the best spam filtering system I have seen.
6. To turn off smart features to avoid tracking: Click on settings, see all settings, general, Smart features and personalization and untick the box.

16. Importing emails from other email accounts

To import mail and contacts from your old account, (this will be in effect for 30 days)

1. Click  Settings and then see all settings.
2. Click the Accounts and import or Accounts tab.
3. In the second section, click Import mail and contacts.
4. Follow the steps on the screen.
5. Click Start import.

To just have emails from another account forwarded on a permanent basis:

1. Open the account you wish to forward from, click Settings  and then See all settings.
2. Click on the Forwarding and POP/IMAP tab.
3. In the "Forwarding" section, click Add a forwarding address.
4. Enter the email address that you want to forward messages to.

5. Click Next and then Proceed and then OK.
A verification message will be sent to that address. Click the verification link in that message.
6. Go back to the settings page for the Gmail account you want to forward messages from, and refresh your browser.
7. Click the Forwarding and POP/IMAP tab.
8. In the "Forwarding" section, select forward a copy of incoming mail to.
9. Choose what you want to happen with the Gmail copy of your emails. We recommend Keep Gmail's copy in the Inbox.
10. At the bottom of the page, click Save Changes.

If your email account that you want to forward from is not a Gmail account the instructions will be different, try doing a google search for: How to forward emails from (E.g. Hotmail) to Gmail

17. More Settings

There are too many settings to list here, I suggest you have a look at them and if any of them interest you give them a try, or do a google search to learn more, or book a lesson.

What's the difference between IMAP and POP?

The key difference is where your emails are stored. With POP your emails are downloaded to your device and deleted from the server (unless you change the default settings). With IMAP, emails "reside" on the server and you can easily read and interact with emails from multiple devices.

Useful links for Tutorials

It can be a pain to have to type these address's so if you would like an email sent with clickable links let the Office know.

Getting to know Gmail: <https://www.howtogeek.com/school/gmail-guide/lesson1/>

GCFGlobal: <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/gmail/>

GCFGlobal videos: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL007352170EA6EB06>

How to use Gmail (video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kLyef9rM1k&t=703s>