

Everything you ever wanted to know about E-Mail

E-mail (short for *electronic mail*) is a fast and convenient way to communicate with others. You can use e-mail to:

Send and receive text messages. You can send an e-mail message to any person with an e-mail address. The message arrives in the recipient's e-mail inbox within seconds or minutes—whether he or she is your next-door neighbor or lives halfway around the world.

E-mail is two-way. You can receive messages from anyone who knows your e-mail address, and then read and reply to those messages.

Send and receive files. Besides text, you can send almost any type of [file](#) in an e-mail message, including documents, pictures, and music. A file sent in an e-mail message is called an *attachment*.

Send messages to groups of people. You can send an e-mail message to many people simultaneously. Recipients can reply to the whole group, allowing for group discussions.

Forward messages. When you receive an e-mail message, you can forward it to others without retyping it.

One advantage of e-mail over the telephone or regular mail is its convenience: You can send a message at any time of day or night. If the recipients aren't in front of their computers and *online* (connected to the Internet) when you send the message, they'll find it waiting for them the next time they check their e-mail. If they are online, you might get a reply within minutes.

E-mail is also free. Unlike sending a regular letter, no stamp or fee is required, no matter where the recipient lives. The only charges that apply are those that you pay for an Internet connection.

What do I need before I can use e-mail?

To use e-mail, you need three things:

An Internet connection. To connect your computer to the Internet, you must first sign up with an [Internet service provider \(ISP\)](#). An ISP provides you with access to the Internet, usually for a monthly fee. You also need a modem.

What do I need to connect to the Internet?

You need an Internet service provider (ISP) and some hardware to connect to the Internet:

- **ISP.** An ISP provides access to the Internet. You sign up for an account with an ISP just as you do for telephone service or utilities.

- **Hardware.** For a broadband connection such as Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) or cable, you need a DSL or cable modem. This is usually included as part of the start-up hardware from your ISP when you sign up for a broadband account. For a dial-up connection, you need a dial-up modem. Many computers come with this type of modem already installed.

An e-mail program or web-based service. You can use Windows Mail, an e-mail program included with Windows. You can also use any other e-mail program, once you install it on your computer.

If you prefer, you can sign up instead with a free web-based e-mail service, such as Gmail, MSN Hotmail, or Yahoo! Mail. These services allow you to check your e-mail with a [web browser](#) from any computer connected to the Internet.

An e-mail address. You get an e-mail address from your ISP or web-based e-mail service when you sign up. An e-mail address consists of a user name (a nickname you choose, not necessarily your real name), the @ sign, and the name of your ISP or web-based e-mail provider—for example, **someone@example.com**.

Setting up Windows Mail

Once you have an e-mail address and an Internet connection, you're ready to send and receive e-mail. To use e-mail in Windows Mail, you must first set up an [e-mail account](#). Before you add an account, you'll need to get some information from your ISP: your e-mail address, password, the names of your incoming and outgoing e-mail servers, and certain other details. See [Where to find your e-mail account information](#).

To add an e-mail account in Windows Mail

Open Windows Mail by clicking the **Start** button , clicking **All Programs**, and then clicking **Windows Mail**.

On the **Tools** menu, click **Accounts**.

Click **Add**, click **E-mail Account**, click **Next**, and then follow the instructions.

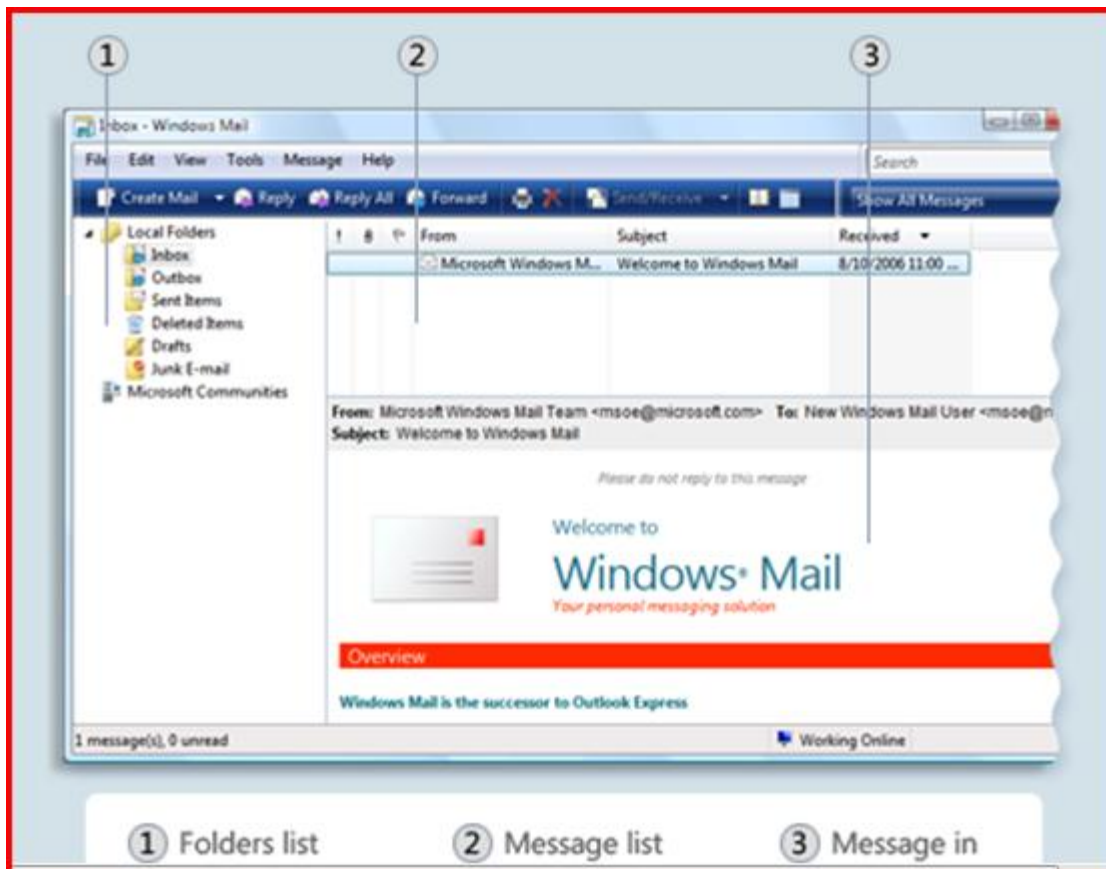
During setup, you'll be asked to pick a *display name*. This is the name that recipients will see when you send them an e-mail message.

Reading e-mail messages

Windows Mail checks to see if you've received e-mail whenever you start the program and every 30 minutes after that. (To change this interval, see [Check for new e-mail.](#)) E-mail you receive appears in your Inbox. The Inbox is one of several folders that hold e-mail.

To see a list of e-mail you've received, click **Inbox** in the **Folders** list. Your e-mail messages appear in the message list. The list shows who sent the mail, the subject, and when it was received.

To read a message, click it in the message list. The contents of the message appear below the message list in the Preview pane. To read the message in a separate window, double-click it in the message list.



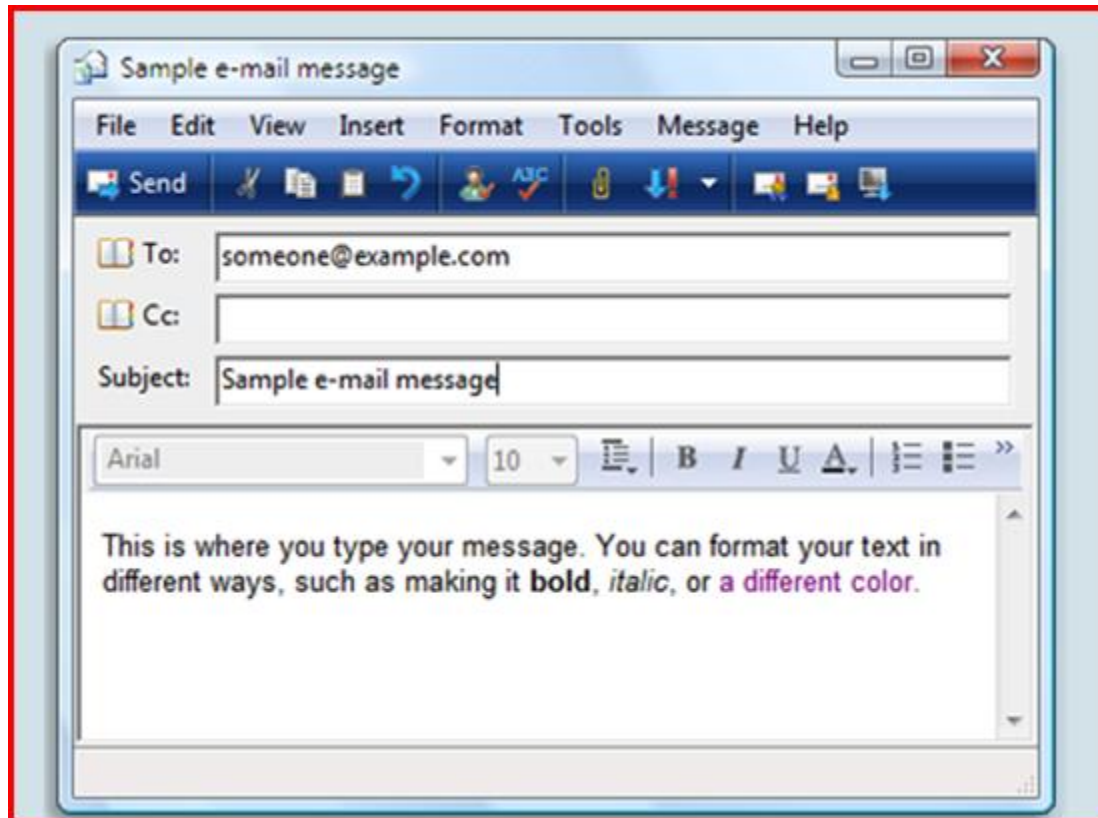
Click the Inbox to see your e-mail messages

To reply to a message, click the **Reply** button. To learn how to write and send a reply, see "Creating and sending an e-mail message" in this article.

See also [View e-mail messages in Windows Mail.](#)

Creating and sending e-mail messages

To create a new e-mail message in Windows Mail, click the **Create Mail** button. A new message window opens.



Sample e-mail message

Here's how to fill out the message window in Windows Mail and most other e-mail programs:

In the **To** box, type the e-mail address of at least one recipient. If you're sending the message to multiple recipients, type a semicolon (;) between e-mail addresses.

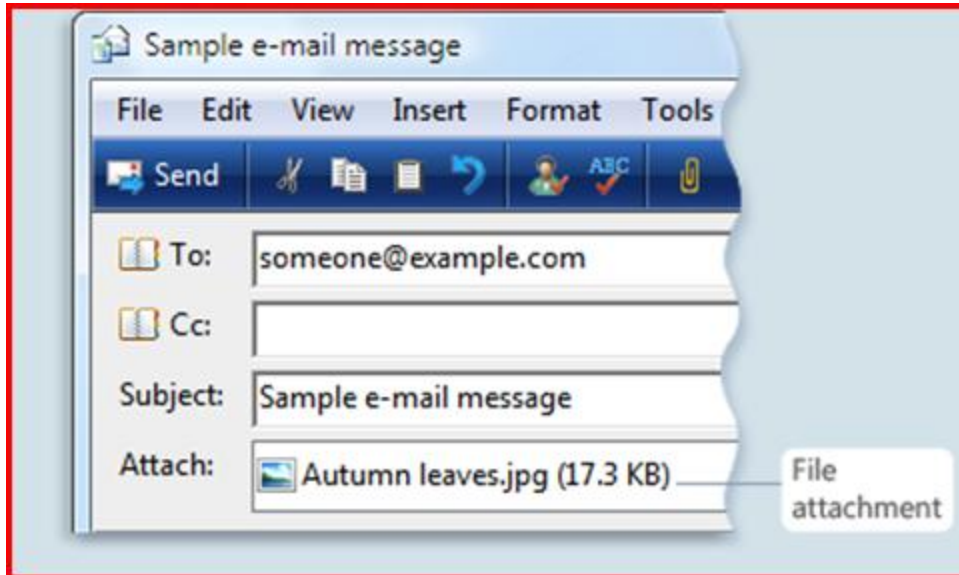
In the **Cc** box, you can type the e-mail addresses of any secondary recipients—people who should know about the message but don't need to act on it. They'll receive the same message as the people in the **To** box. If there are no secondary recipients, leave this box blank

In the **Subject** box, type a title for your message.

In the large blank area, type your message.

To attach a file to the message, click the **Attach File to Message** button on the toolbar (located just below the menu bar). Locate the file, select it, and then click **Open**. The file now appears in the **Attach** box in the message header

File attached to an e-mail message




You're finished! To send the message, click the **Send** button. It zips through the Internet to your recipients.

Note To change the style, [font](#), size, or color of the text, select the text, and then click one of the buttons on the formatting bar (located just above the message area).

Write an e-mail message

Composing an e-mail message is just like writing a note in a word processor. Once you've finished composing your message, you type your recipients' e-mail addresses and the subject of your message in the appropriate boxes, and your message is ready to send.

Keep in mind that you need to create an e-mail account for yourself in Windows Mail to be able to send e-mail messages.

1. Open Windows Mail by clicking the **Start** button , clicking **All Programs**, and then clicking **Windows Mail**.
2. Click the **File** menu, point to **New**, and then click **Mail Message** to open a new message composition window.
3. In the **To:** box, type the e-mail address for each of your primary recipients. In the **Cc:** box, type the e-mail address for each of the secondary recipients to whom you want to send a copy of the mail. If you're sending to multiple addresses, separate them with semicolons.
4. In the **Subject:** box, type the subject of your message.

5. Click in the main message window and type your message.
6. Once you're satisfied with your message, do one of the following:
 - To send the message right away, click the **Send** button.
 - To send the message at a later time, click the **File** menu, and then click **Send Later**.

The message will be sent the next time you click the **Send/Receive** button.



Tip

If you're writing a lengthy message and want to come back to finish it later, you can save it at any time. To save a message, click the **File** menu, and then click **Save**. Saved and unsent messages are stored in the Drafts folder.

E-mail etiquette

Like telephone conversations and face-to-face communication, e-mail communication has certain implied rules of behavior. These rules are referred to as e-mail etiquette or *netiquette* (a combination of "Internet" and "etiquette"). For effective communication, follow these guidelines:

Be careful with humor and emotion. E-mail does not convey emotion well, so the recipient might not understand your intended tone. Sarcastic humor is particularly risky because the recipient might interpret it literally and take offense. To convey emotion, consider using emoticons (see "Using emoticons" in this article).

Think before you send. Writing and sending an e-mail message is fast and easy—sometimes too easy. Make sure you've thought out your message first, and avoid writing when you're angry. Once you send the message, you can't get it back.

Use a clear and concise subject line. Summarize the contents of the message in a few words. People who receive a large amount of e-mail can use the subject to prioritize the message.


Keep messages short. Although an e-mail message can be of any length, e-mail is designed for quick communication. Many people don't have the time or patience to read more than a few paragraphs.

Avoid using ALL CAPITAL LETTERS. Many people perceive sentences written in all uppercase letters as "yelling" and find it annoying or offensive.

Be careful with sensitive or confidential information. Any recipient can forward your message to others—either intentionally or accidentally.

Additionally, in formal or business communication, avoid spelling and grammatical errors. Sloppy e-mail conveys an unprofessional image. Proofread your messages before you send them, and if your e-mail program has a spelling checker, use it.

To check spelling in a message

1. Open Windows Mail by clicking the **Start** button , clicking **All Programs**, and then clicking **Windows Mail**.
2. After writing a message, click the **Tools** menu in the **New Message** window, and then click **Spelling**.

If a spelling error is found, you'll be given the opportunity to correct the error, or add the word to the spelling checker's dictionary.

3. When the spelling check is complete, click **OK**

Using emoticons

Because it's often difficult to convey emotion, intent, or tone through text alone, early Internet users invented *emoticons* (a combination of "emotion" and "icons")—sequences of keyboard characters that symbolize facial expressions. For example, :) looks like a smiling face when you look at it sideways. Below are some examples of emoticons.

Emoticon	Meaning
:) or :-)	Smiling, happy, or joking
:(or :-)	Frowning or unhappy
;-)	Winking
:-	Indifferent or ambivalent
:-o	Surprised or concerned
:-x	Not saying anything
:-p	Sticking out your tongue (usually in fun)
:-D	Laughing

Dealing with junk e-mail

Just as you might receive unsolicited advertisements, flyers, and catalogs in your regular mail, you'll probably receive **junk e-mail** (often called *spam*) in your Inbox. Junk e-mail might include advertisements, fraudulent schemes, pornography, or legitimate offers. Because it's very inexpensive for marketers to send junk e-mail, it's not uncommon for people to receive a large amount of it.

Windows Mail includes a junk e-mail filter that analyzes the content of messages sent to you and moves suspicious messages to a special junk e-mail folder, where you can view or delete them at any time. And if a junk e-mail message slips past the filter into your Inbox, you can specify that any future messages from the sender be automatically moved to the junk e-mail folder.

Block spam and other unwanted e-mail

Windows Mail helps you manage your Inbox to keep it free of unwanted e-mail messages in the following ways:

- The junk e-mail filter is designed to catch obvious unsolicited commercial e-mail messages (often called "spam") and move them to a special Junk e-mail folder. You can increase or decrease the junk e-mail protection level based on how much junk e-mail you receive.
- You can move e-mail messages from the Junk e-mail folder back to your Inbox.
- You can block messages from specific e-mail addresses by adding them to the Blocked Senders list.
- You can prevent the blocking of messages from specific e-mail addresses by adding them to the Safe Senders list.

To help prevent junk e-mail:

Use caution in giving out your e-mail address. Avoid publishing your real e-mail address in [newsgroups](#), on websites, or in other public areas of the Internet.

Before you give your e-mail address to a website, check the site's privacy statement to be sure it does not permit the disclosure of your e-mail address to other companies.

Never reply to a junk e-mail message. The sender will know that your e-mail address is valid and might sell it to other companies. You're then likely to receive even more junk e-mail.