



Tips for Tech Savvy Seniors

# An Introduction to Email

## Beginners Guide: Part 1

Email is the modern way to send letters. You can send an email to anyone around the world and get a reply in minutes. It's free to set up a web mail email account, to help you stay in touch with family and friends.

### About email

Email is short for electronic mail. An **email** is a letter that is sent over a computer network instead of being sent through the post. You can attach documents and photos to emails, just like you can include a photo or a document with a letter.

- Email is free to send and receive (but requires a paid internet account to access).
- Each person has a unique **email address**, and you can send emails to yourself.
- Emails arrive in an **Inbox**, which you access via an email application or web service.
- Writing an email is much less formal than a letter, and you don't need to use **Dear sir**, or **Regards**.
- Because email is free, you will get junk email, which is called **spam**.
- You can have multiple email addresses if you want.

## A guide to email addresses

An email address consists of a name, and a web address, separated by the @ symbol. For example, **mary@domain.com.au**. Each email address is unique, so you know who your letter is going to. Often, people have an email address associated with their company, such as **joe@telstra.com.au**, or with a web mail services they use, for example a Gmail user has an address like **joe@gmail.com**

## Gmail is a free web mail service

You can set up a free email address and inbox with **Gmail**. This is Google's service, and you can find it at **www.gmail.com**. Visit this website and click **Create an account** to get your own gmail. The site will guide you through the steps.

Remember, when creating an email account, choose a strong password that's easy for you to remember but difficult for others to guess.

## Reading emails

To read an email, go to your **Inbox**. For Gmail, this is at **www.gmail.com**. When you sign in, the inbox will appear. New emails appear in bold. The **sender's** name will be on the left, and then the **subject** of the email. Click on an email to open it. It will no longer be bold and won't display as a new email anymore.

Gmail is just one free web mail option, and there are others you can choose. There are also email apps that run from your computer's desktop. These apps can be technically difficult to set up, so web mail is recommended.

## Addressing and sending an email

In Gmail, you create a new email by clicking the **Compose** button.

- Type in an email address in the **To** field, and remember that it needs to be exactly correct or the email won't get through.
- In the **Subject** field, briefly explain what the email is about, for example **This is my first email!**
- An email doesn't need to be a long letter, and most people expect emails to be quite short.
- Click in the **Body** of the email and type your letter.
- When you're ready, click the **Send** button.

The person you sent the email to should receive it almost instantly. A copy of this email is then saved in your **Sent** folder.

## Replying to and forwarding emails

A **Reply** is a response to an email you've received, while a **Forward** is a copy you send on to a third person. Your web mail service has buttons for Reply and Forward.

- Replies and forwards automatically include the previous email in their body, so you can refer to it. You can add your own message in the body of the email, this goes above the text being replied to.
- You won't need to enter an address when you **Reply**, as this is already filled in.
- When you **Forward**, the text is included too. However, you need to specify the email address you want to forward the email to.
- The **Subject** line of a Reply gets the letters **Re:** added to it, though you can remove these.
- The **Subject** line of a Forward gets the letters **Fwd:** at the front, so you can tell the email has been forwarded on from somewhere else. You can edit the Subject before you send the email, to remove these if you like.