

Introduction to Gmail

Gmail is a free email service provided by Google. In many ways, Gmail is like any other email service: You can **send and receive emails**, **block spam**, create an **address book**, and perform other basic email tasks. But it also has some more unique features that help make it one of the most popular online email services.

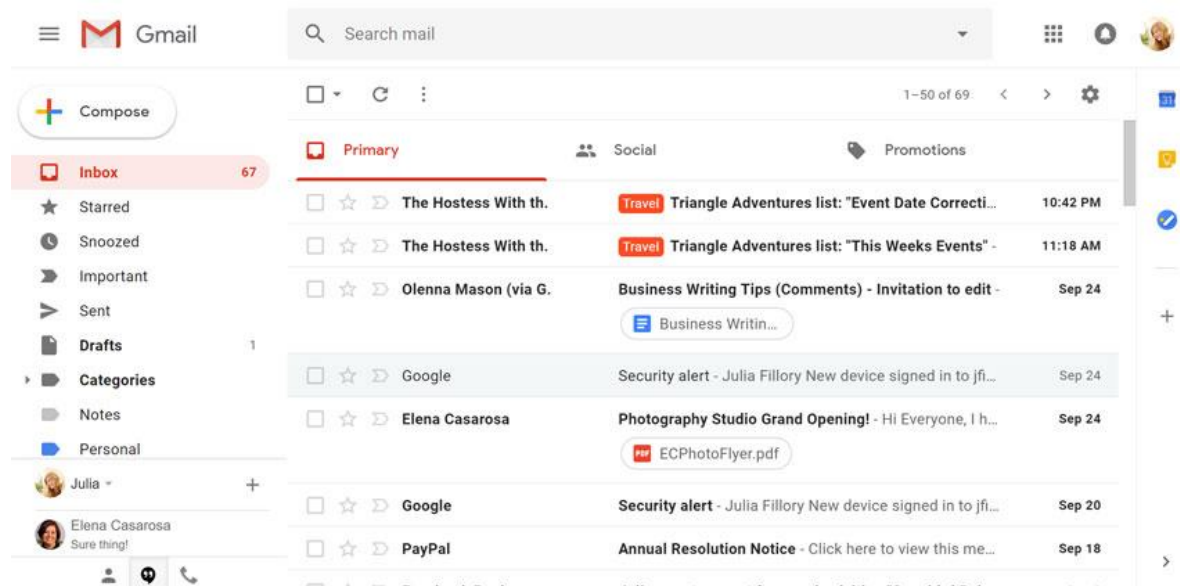
Gmail features

Gmail offers several useful **features** to make your email experience as smooth as possible, including:

- **Spam filtering.** Spam is another name for junk email. Gmail uses advanced technologies to keep spam out of your inbox. Most spam is automatically sent to a **separate spam folder**, and after 30 days it is deleted.
- **Conversation View.** An email **conversation** occurs whenever you send emails back and forth with another person (or a group of people), often about a specific topic or event. Gmail **groups** these emails together by default, which keeps your inbox more organized.
- **Built-in chat.** Instead of sending an email, you can send someone an **instant message** or use the **voice** and **video chat** feature if your computer has a microphone and/or webcam.
- **Call Phone.** This feature is similar to voice chat, except that it allows you to dial an actual phone number to call **any phone in the world**. It's **free** to make a call to anywhere in the United States or Canada, and you can make calls to other countries at relatively low rates.

Get to know the Gmail interface

When you're working with Gmail, you'll primarily be using the main Gmail interface. This window contains your inbox, and it allows you to navigate to your contacts, mail settings, and more. Also, if you use other Google services like YouTube or Calendar, you'll be able to access them from the top of the Gmail window.



Signing in to your account

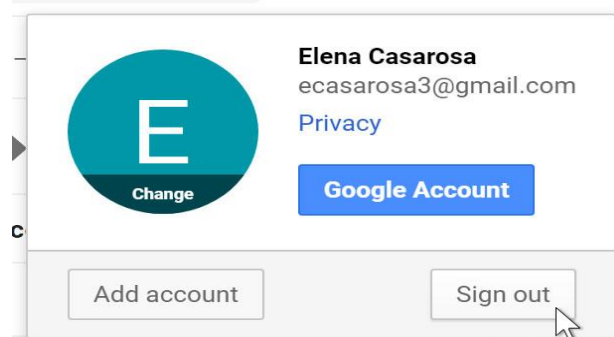
When you first create your account, you will be automatically signed in. Most of the time, however, you'll need to **sign in** to your account and **sign out** when you're done with it. Signing out is especially important if you're using a shared computer (for example, at a **library** or **office**) because it prevents others from viewing your emails.

To sign in:

1. Go to www.gmail.com.
2. Type your **user name** (your email address) and **password**, then click **Next**.

To sign out:

In the top-right corner of the page, locate the circle that has your first initial (if you've already selected an avatar image, it will show the image instead). To sign out, click the circle and select **Sign out**.



Importing mail and contacts

You may already have a contact list from another email address, and it would be a lot of work to re-enter all of this information manually. Gmail allows you to import your contacts from another email account, and you can even import all of your email messages from that account. Several email providers are supported, including **Yahoo!**, **Hotmail**, and **AOL**.

To add other accounts:

1. Click the gear icon in the top-right corner of the page, then select **Settings**.
2. Go to **Accounts** and click **Add a mail account**. You can then follow the instructions on the screen to import your mail.

