Access Panel Network

Training Guides

A guide to email

Email is a system for sending and receiving messages electronically over a computer network, between personal computers. In this guide we will help you to set up an email account.

Setting up an email account

Use email to stay in touch with friends, family and colleagues, wherever they are. Email is also a handy way of keeping track of your hobbies and interests by signing up to newsletters and is fast-becoming the primary means of contacting many organisations - from businesses to your local council.

What you can do with email

- Send and receive messages from friends, family and colleagues

- Create your own, unique email address, which people can use to contact you

- Receive newsletters and updates from organisations that you choose

- Sign up to other online services (online services nearly always require you to have an email address)

How to get an email account

Use an Internet Service Provider (ISP)

If you have the internet at home from an Internet Service Provider (ISP) such as BT Broadband, Sky, Virgin Media or AOL, you will most likely already have an email address that was set up when you first obtained the service. If you need help accessing this account contact their customer services for your login details.

Get a free internet-based email address

Whether you have access to the internet at home or not, you can register for a free email account with one of many websites that offer a free email service - for example, Yahoo!, Hotmail or Google. Once you've registered an email address with one of these providers, you will be able to send and receive emails on any computer with internet access.

All have similar features, are constantly being developed to make them as easy to use as possible, and have some built-in safety features to filter out any unwanted emails, called Spam.

Using email

Email is the most popular form of electronic communication and the biggest use of the internet. It is easy to use, personal, and usually free. You can reach people anywhere in the world, instantly, and even send and receive emails directly from your mobile or tablet while you are on the move. You can email family and friends, or send mass emails to lists of contacts.

An email address is made up of two parts: a Username and a Domain. When you register with an email provider you will be asked to create a Username, for example Bob760. The domain is determined by the provider you decide to set up an account with. For instance, if you sign up with Yahoo their domain is yahoo.co.uk. The username and the domain are connected with the @ (at) symbol to create your email address - Bob760@yahoo.co.uk.

Once you have your email account set up, you will be able to receive emails from other email account holders from any internet provider, so if someone you know has an AOL account and you have Yahoo! it is okay you will still receive emails to and from them. Just pass your email address to those you want to have it. Be careful of submitting your email address to different websites to avoid them selling it to spammers (spam is unwanted mail; similar to junk mail you get in your post).

Downloading your emails

When you get a new email it is delivered to your email Inbox. There are a few ways that you can check your inbox.

- You can go to the internet providers website (i.e. aol.com or yahoo.co.uk) on any pc or tablet

- You can use a mobile phone that has internet access or an Application from your email provider that allows you to view your email inbox

- You can also use Microsoft Office's application called Outlook. This allows you to synchronize the application with any email account. Help with setting this up can be found on the website of your email provider. They will give you the details you need such as account type (POP3 or IMAP). Once you have this all you need is your username and password.

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