BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Email

Gmail, Outlook, and iCloud Mail — explained
in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for every email user

Take your time — you can't break it

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For Gmail, Outlook & iCloud Mail · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your email manual. It covers the three email services most folks use — **Gmail** (from Google), **Outlook** (from Microsoft), and **iCloud Mail** (from Apple) — side by side, in plain English. Read it in any order and at your own pace. There is no test, and you can't fall behind. Every chapter tells you what something does *for you* and walks you through it slowly. If your screen looks a little different from the words here, don't worry — email works the same way everywhere, and the idea is always the same.

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PART 1

Getting Started with Email

What email really is, the different services, your address, and how to sign in and find your way around the screen. Start here.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. Whoever is holding this book right now — this is for **you**. Maybe someone set up an email account for you years ago and you've never felt sure what to do with it. Maybe you use it every day but there are corners that still make you nervous. Either way, you've come to the right place, and I'm glad you're here.

I'm Bill. Helping folks feel at home with their technology is what I do every day, and I wrote this book the same way I'd sit down next to you at your kitchen table: patiently, in plain English, with no rushing and no fancy words. If I ever use a term you don't know, I'll stop and explain it right then — you won't have to look anything up.

Three email services, one book

Most people use one of three email services: **Gmail** (from Google), **Outlook** (from Microsoft, sometimes called Hotmail or Live from years back), or **iCloud Mail** (from Apple, with addresses ending in @icloud.com, @me.com, or @mac.com). This book covers all three together. The good news is that email works almost exactly the same way no matter which one you have — the buttons sit in slightly different spots, but the ideas are identical. Wherever something is genuinely different, I'll point it out.

This book is yours — read it any way you like

You do not have to read these pages in order, and there is no test at the end. Start on page one, or flip straight to the chapter that answers today's question. Fold the corners, underline things, scribble in the margins. Keep it by your chair and pull it out whenever you need it. It's a reference, not a race — you cannot fall behind.

The big promise: you truly can't break it

Here is the most important thing in this whole book. **You cannot break email by clicking around and exploring.** You can't wear it out. You can't delete something important just by looking. Opening messages, tapping buttons, and poking around to see what happens is exactly how everyone learns — including me. And nearly everything can be undone: a deleted message sits in a Trash folder for weeks before it's truly gone, so even a mistaken delete is easy to walk back.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

When you stop worrying about breaking something, you start actually using it — and email becomes genuinely useful: staying close to family, keeping your appointments and receipts, and handling the little daily errands of life with a lot less fuss.

And I'm only a phone call away

This book will carry you a long way on your own. But if you ever get truly stuck, you're never stuck alone — that's not how I do things. Call me at **(330) 200-8042** and we'll work it out together, with no judgment and no eye-rolling. There is no such thing as a silly question. The only bad question is the one you talked yourself out of asking.

So take a breath, pour yourself a cup of coffee, and let's get to know your email together. You're going to do just fine.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Email Actually Is

Before we touch a single button, let's answer the simplest question of all: what *is* email? Once this clicks into place, everything else gets easier.

Think of it as letters — but instant and free

Email (short for "electronic mail") is simply a letter that travels through the internet instead of through the post office. You type a message, put in the other person's email address the way you'd write an address on an envelope, and press Send. A second or two later, it arrives in their inbox — anywhere in the world, at no cost, with no stamp and no trip to the mailbox.

Just like paper mail, email can carry more than words. You can tuck in a photo of the grandchildren, a document, or a receipt — those tucked-in extras are called **attachments**, and we give them a whole chapter later on.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> **Email never "expires" and waits for you**
>
> Unlike a phone call, email doesn't need the other person to be there at the same time. Your message waits politely in their inbox until they're ready to read it, and theirs waits for you. There's no rush and no missing it — it simply sits there until you get to it.

Your email address: your personal mailbox

Every email account has one **address** — your own personal mailbox on the internet. It always has the same shape: a name, then the @ symbol (say "at"), then the name of your email service. For example, **janesmith@gmail.com** or **jane.smith@icloud.com**. You give this address to people so they can write to you, exactly like giving out your home address or phone number.

- The part **before** the @ is your personal name or nickname — you chose it when the account was made, and it can't be changed later, so don't worry about it now.
- The part **after** the @ tells everyone which service you use: **gmail.com** for Google, **outlook.com** (or hotmail.com, live.com) for Microsoft, **icloud.com** (or me.com, mac.com) for Apple.

TIP

Write your address down where you'll find it

Your email address is something people will ask for often — at the doctor's office, when you buy something, when a grandchild wants to send photos. Write it on the inside cover of this book, exactly as it's spelled, so you always have it handy and spelled right. One wrong letter and mail won't reach you.

The password: the key to your mailbox

Along with your address, your account has a **password** — a secret word or phrase that proves the mailbox is yours and keeps everyone else out. You'll type it when you first sign in on a device, and usually the device remembers it afterward so you don't have to type it every time.

STAY SAFE

Your password is yours alone

Never give your email password to anyone who calls, emails, or texts asking for it — no real company will ever ask. Keep it written in a safe place at home (not on a sticky note stuck to the computer). We'll talk much more about staying safe in Part 6. If you've forgotten your password, don't panic — Chapter 29 walks you through resetting it.

CHAPTER 3

Where Your Email Lives: App or Website

Here's something that confuses a lot of folks, so let's clear it up right away. There are two different ways to get to the very same email, and both are perfectly fine.

Two doors into the same mailbox

- **Through an app.** An **app** is a little program with an icon you tap or click — the Gmail app, the Outlook app, or the Mail app on an iPhone or iPad. You'll find these on a phone or tablet.
- **Through a website.** You can also open an internet browser (like Safari, Chrome, or Edge) and go to the email service's website — **gmail.com**, **outlook.com**, or **icloud.com**. This is the usual way on a computer.

The important thing to understand: **it's all the same mailbox.** A message that arrives shows up whether you check it in the app or on the website, on your phone or your computer. You're not keeping separate piles of mail — you're just opening the same drawer through different doors. Read a message on your phone, and it shows as read on your computer too.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> **This is why email "syncs" everywhere**
>
> Your email actually lives on the service's computers out on the internet (people call this "the cloud"), not on any one device. That's why you see the same inbox on your phone, your tablet, and your computer — they're all looking at the same mailbox. It also means if you lose or replace a device, none of your email is lost.

Which should you use?

Whichever you find easier. Many people use the app on their phone for quick checks and the website on their computer for longer messages. You don't have to choose just one. Throughout this book I'll show you both when they differ, and you can follow whichever matches what's in front of you.

CHAPTER 4

Signing In for the First Time

To read your mail, you first have to **sign in** — that just means telling the app or website your address and password so it knows the mailbox is yours. You usually only do this once per device; afterward it remembers you.

Signing in on a phone or tablet (the app)

1. Find and tap the email app's icon — the **Gmail** icon (a red, blue, green and yellow "M"), the **Outlook** icon (a blue envelope with an O), or the **Mail** icon (a blue envelope) on an iPhone or iPad.
2. If it asks you to sign in, type your full **email address** and tap **Next**.
3. Type your **password** and tap **Next** or **Sign In**.
4. You may be asked to confirm it's really you — often with a code texted to your phone. Type that code in. This is a good thing; it's keeping strangers out.
5. That's it. Your inbox appears, and the app will remember you from now on.

Signing in on a computer (the website)

1. Open your internet browser (Safari, Chrome, or Edge — the icon you click to "go on the internet").
2. Click the address bar at the top, type **gmail.com**, **outlook.com**, or **icloud.com**, and press the **Enter** key.
3. Click **Sign In**, then type your email address and password when asked.
4. If it offers to "stay signed in" or "remember this computer," it's fine to say yes *on your own* computer at home — but never on a library or other shared computer.

> **HEADS UP**
>
> **Type the address into the address bar, not a search box**
>
> When going to a website, type **gmail.com** into the bar at the very top of the browser (the "address bar"), not into a search box in the middle of the page. Typing it at the top takes you straight there. Searching for it can turn up fake look-alike pages — more on that in Part 6.

FROM BILL

If you're not sure of your password, that's okay

A great many of the house calls I make start with "I can't remember my password." It is one of the most common things in the world, and it is always fixable. Flip to Chapter 29 and we'll reset it calmly, step by step. You will not be locked out forever — I promise.

CHAPTER 5

Finding Your Way Around the Screen

Once you're signed in, you land on your **inbox** — the main screen of your email, where new messages arrive. It looks busy at first, but there are really only a handful of parts to know. Let's name them, and then the whole screen will feel calmer.

The main parts, wherever you are

- **The inbox** — the center of the screen, a list of your messages with the newest at the top. Each line shows who it's from, the subject, and a snippet of the message.
- **The message list vs. the open message.** Tap or click any line to **open** that message and read it fully. A back arrow or the word "Inbox" returns you to the list.
- **The Compose button** — how you start a brand-new message. On phones it's usually a round button with a **pencil** or **+** in a corner; on the website it's a button that says **Compose** or **New**, usually top-left.
- **The folders (or labels)** — Inbox, Sent, Drafts, Trash, Spam/Junk, and more. On a computer these sit in a list down the left side. On a phone they hide behind a **menu button** — three little lines (≡) in a corner — that you tap to slide them open.
- **Search** — a magnifying-glass icon or a box at the top for finding an old message. A lifesaver, and we give it its own chapter.

A quick tour of the standard folders

Folder	What it holds
Inbox	Where new mail arrives. Your home base.
Sent	A copy of every message you've sent, so you can check what you wrote.
Drafts	Messages you started but haven't sent yet — saved automatically.
Trash (or Bin / Deleted)	Messages you've deleted. They wait here for weeks before truly going away.
Spam (or Junk)	Suspected junk and scams, set aside automatically so they don't clutter your inbox.
Archive	A place to tuck messages you want to keep but out of the inbox (not deleted).

TIP

The menu button (≡) is your friend on a phone

On a phone, if you can't find your folders, look for three little stacked lines — often in the top-left corner. Tapping it slides out the full list of folders and settings. If you ever feel lost in the app, that button almost always brings the main menu back into view.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Name the parts once, and the fear fades

A screen full of unfamiliar buttons is intimidating; the very same screen with each part named is just a tool. Once you know "that's the inbox, that's Compose, that's where my folders hide," you can relax and start using it. That's the whole purpose of this chapter.

CHAPTER 5a

The Words You'll Keep Hearing

Every hobby has its own little vocabulary, and email is no different. None of these words is complicated once someone just tells you what it means. Here's a plain-English glossary you can flip back to any time a term trips you up. No need to memorize it — it's here for reference.

Word	What it means, plainly
Inbox	The main list where new mail arrives — your home base.
Compose	To write a new message. Also the name of the button that starts one.
Reply	To write back to whoever sent you a message.
Forward	To pass a message you received along to a different person.
Attachment	A file — photo, document — clipped onto a message.
Draft	A message you've started but not yet sent; saved automatically.
Spam / Junk	Unwanted mail, set aside automatically in its own folder.
Archive	To file a message away out of the inbox while keeping it.
Thread	A back-and-forth conversation, grouped together as one item.
Signature	A bit of text — your name, etc. — added to your messages automatically.
Link	Colored, underlined text that jumps you to a website when clicked.
Sync	The way your mail stays the same across all your devices.
Account	Your personal mailbox, opened with your address and password.
Two-step verification	An extra lock: after your password, a one-time code confirms it's you.
Phishing	A scam message pretending to be someone trustworthy to trick you.

GOOD TO KNOW

Jargon is just shorthand — and now it's yours

Every one of these words is simply a shorthand that saves people from repeating a long description. Once you know the handful above, most of the mystery of email evaporates. If you ever meet a word that isn't here, that's a perfect thing to ask me about — I'll give you the plain-English version in a sentence.

CHAPTER 5b

Making Email Easy on Your Eyes

Email should never leave you squinting. Every service and device gives you ways to make the text bigger, the contrast sharper, and the whole experience gentler on tired eyes. Let's set things up so reading is a pleasure, not a chore.

Make the text bigger

- **On a phone or tablet:** the fastest way is to **spread two fingers apart** on the screen to zoom in on a message. For a permanent change, go to your device's Settings → Display (or Accessibility) → Text Size, and drag the slider larger.
- **On a computer:** hold **Ctrl** (or **Command** on a Mac) and press the **+** key to enlarge everything on the web page; **Ctrl** and – to shrink it back. **Ctrl** and **0** (zero) returns to normal.

Turn up the contrast and comfort

If glare bothers you, most devices offer a **Dark Mode** that shows light text on a dark background — restful in the evening. And every device has an **Accessibility** section in Settings with bold text, higher contrast, and even a feature to **read your mail aloud** to you. These are not just for folks with poor sight; plenty of people simply find them more comfortable.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Comfortable is how you'll actually use it

A screen you can read without strain is a screen you'll reach for happily. Take five minutes to set the text size where it feels easy, and you've done yourself a kindness every single day after. If you'd like help finding these settings on your particular device, it's a quick and worthwhile thing to do on a call.

CHAPTER 5c

Is Email Free? Accounts, Costs, and Choices

A fair question, and one folks are often shy to ask: does email cost anything? The short answer is that everyday email is **free**, and has been for a long time. But it's worth understanding the picture so no one ever talks you into paying for something you already have.

The basic service is free

Gmail, Outlook.com, and iCloud Mail all give you a mailbox at no cost. You can send and receive as much as you like without ever paying a penny. If you have an iPhone, iPad, or Mac, your iCloud email came free with it. If you have an Android phone, your Gmail came free with it. You almost certainly already own at least one free email account.

What you might pay for (but rarely need to)

- **Extra storage.** Each free account includes a generous amount of room; if you fill it after years of photos, you can buy more for a few dollars a month. Optional.
- **An ad-free or "premium" version.** Some services offer a paid tier with no ads and extra features. Nice to have, never required.
- **A custom address** (your own name as the website part). Businesses use these; most folks never need one.

SCAM ALERT

No one legitimate charges you to "keep" your email

If you ever get a message demanding payment to "renew," "reactivate," or "keep" your free email account, it's a scam — full stop. Free email does not expire and does not send bills. Delete the message, and if it rattled you, give me a call and we'll confirm together that your account is perfectly fine.

GOOD TO KNOW

You already have what you need

The takeaway: for ordinary life, email is a free service you already own. Don't let anyone upsell or frighten you into paying for the basics. If a cost ever seems necessary and you're unsure, that's exactly the kind of thing worth a quick call before you reach for your wallet.

PART 2

Reading & Managing Your Mail

Opening and reading messages, keeping the inbox tidy, archiving and deleting, and finding anything again with search.

CHAPTER 6

Opening and Reading a Message

This is the heart of email, and the easiest part. When a new message arrives, it appears at the top of your inbox, usually in **bold** to show it's unread — like an unopened letter still in its envelope.

To read a message

1. Look at the top of your inbox list. Each line shows **who it's from**, the **subject** (the little headline), and a peek at the first few words.
2. **Tap or click the line** to open it. The full message fills the screen.
3. Read at your leisure. If the words are too small, you can make them bigger — on a phone, spread two fingers apart on the screen; on a computer, hold the **Ctrl** key (or **Command** on a Mac) and tap the **+** key.
4. When you're done, tap the **back arrow** (←) or the word **Inbox** to return to your list. The message isn't gone — it stays in your inbox, now shown as read.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **Bold means unread, plain means read**
>
> Your inbox quietly keeps track for you. A message in **dark bold type** hasn't been opened yet; once you open it, it turns to normal type. That's how you can glance at your inbox and instantly see what's new and what you've already seen. Many services also show a number beside "Inbox" counting the unread ones.

Who is this really from?

At the top of any open message you'll see the sender's name and, if you tap or click on it, their actual email address. This is worth a habit: **glance at the real address**, not just the friendly name. A message might say it's from "Your Bank," but if the address behind it is a jumble of random letters, something's wrong. We'll make this a reflex in Part 6 — for now, just know the real address is always there to check.

Links and buttons inside a message

Many messages contain **links** — colored, underlined words or buttons that, when clicked, whisk you off to a website. Links are useful and normal (a tracking link for a package, say). But they are also exactly how scammers try to trick you. The simple rule: **only click a link when you were expecting the message and you trust who it's from.** When in doubt,

don't click — and never feel rushed. Part 6 covers this in depth.

TIP

Reading on a phone? Turn it sideways

If a message looks cramped or the text runs off the edge on your phone, try turning the phone on its side (landscape). Many messages reflow to be wider and easier to read. Turn it back upright and the view follows.

CHAPTER 7

Marking, Flagging, and Keeping Track

As mail piles up, a few simple tools help you keep track of what still needs your attention — like setting certain letters aside on the kitchen counter to deal with later.

Mark as read or unread

Sometimes you open a message, realize you can't deal with it yet, and want it to look new again so you don't forget. You can **mark it as unread** — it goes back to bold, like a reminder flag. And if a pile of unread messages is bothering you, you can mark them read to clear the count. Look for an **envelope icon**, or press and hold (or right-click) the message to find "Mark as read/unread."

Star it, flag it, pin it

Every service has a way to **mark a message as important** so you can find it again fast:

- **Gmail** uses a **star** — tap the little star outline on a message and it turns gold. All your starred messages gather in one "Starred" view.
- **Outlook** uses a **flag** — tap the little flag to mark a message for follow-up.
- **iCloud Mail** also uses a **flag**, and lets you choose colors if you like.

These are purely for your own benefit — the sender never knows. Use them however helps: a star for bills to pay, a flag for messages you owe a reply.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A tidy inbox is a calmer inbox

When every message looks the same, important things slip through the cracks. A star or flag on the few that matter, and a quick tidy-up of the rest, turns a daunting wall of mail into a short, clear list of what actually needs you. That peace of mind is worth the two seconds it takes.

CHAPTER 8

Archiving and Deleting — and the Difference

Two buttons help you clear messages out of your inbox once you're done with them, and folks mix them up all the time. Let's make the difference crystal clear, because it matters.

Delete: throw it away

Deleting a message moves it to the **Trash** (Outlook and iCloud call it "Deleted," Gmail calls it "Bin" in some places). Deleted mail isn't gone forever right away — it sits in the Trash for a stretch of time (typically about 30 days) in case you change your mind, and only then is it permanently cleared. Use delete for junk, ads, and things you'll never want again.

Archive: keep it, but out of sight

Archiving is the gentler cousin. It takes a message out of your inbox but **keeps it forever**, tucked safely away where search can still find it. Think of it as filing a letter in a drawer instead of throwing it in the bin. Use archive for things you want to keep — a confirmation, a note from family — but don't need staring at you in the inbox.

Button	What it really does
Delete	Sends it to Trash; cleared for good after about 30 days. For junk you won't want.
Archive	Removes it from the inbox but keeps it permanently. For keepers you want out of the way.

TIP

Not sure? Archive, don't delete

When you can't decide, **archive** is the safe choice — the message is preserved and still findable by search, just out of your inbox. You can always delete it later. Archiving is the gardener's "keep it in case," and it costs you nothing.

How to do each

- **On a phone:** in many apps, gently **swipe a message sideways** in the list to reveal Archive or Delete buttons. You can usually choose in Settings which direction does which.
- **With a message open:** look along the top for a **trash-can icon** (delete) and a **box-with-a-down-arrow icon** (archive).

- **On the website:** hover over a message line and the same icons appear at the right edge, or select the box beside several messages and use the buttons at the top to handle them all at once.

HEADS UP

"Undo" appears for a few seconds — catch it

Right after you delete or archive, a little **Undo** banner usually flashes at the bottom of the screen for a few seconds. If you acted by accident, tap **Undo** quickly and the message hops right back. Missed it? Don't worry — deleted mail is still in Trash, and archived mail is found by search.

CHAPTER 9

Finding Anything Again with Search

This may be the most freeing chapter in the book. Once you trust **search**, you never again have to worry about losing a message or keeping a tidy filing system. The computer remembers everything — you just ask.

How to search

1. Find the **search box** or **magnifying-glass icon** at the top of your email.
2. Tap or click it and type **anything you remember** — a person's name, a word from the subject, a company, even a word that was somewhere in the message.
3. Press **Enter** (or tap Search). In a blink, every matching message appears — no matter how old, no matter what folder it's in.
4. Tap the one you want to open it.

Tips for finding the needle

- **You don't need the exact words.** Searching "Jane" finds everything to or from Jane. Searching "dentist" finds every message mentioning the dentist.
- **Search finds all folders at once** — inbox, archive, sent, even trash in most services — so an archived or filed message turns up just the same.
- **Searching your Sent folder** is how you find something *you* wrote. Search, then look for the ones from you, or switch the search to the Sent folder.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Search means you can never truly lose a message

Here's the weight off your shoulders: you do not need a perfect filing system, and you do not need to remember where you put anything. If it ever arrived in your email, search can find it again in seconds. Keep that in your back pocket and the whole business of email gets a great deal less stressful.

FROM BILL

This is the trick I teach first

When folks tell me they're overwhelmed by email, the first thing I show them is search. It turns the inbox from a place where things disappear into a place where everything can be found. Practice it today: search for your own last name and see what comes up. You'll feel the difference immediately.

CHAPTER 9a

Conversations and Threads

When you and someone email back and forth about the same thing, most email services are kind enough to **stack those messages together** into a single item, newest on top. This is called a **thread** or **conversation**, and it keeps a whole back-and-forth tidy instead of scattering ten separate messages through your inbox.

Reading a thread

- A thread shows in your inbox as one line, often with a small number (like “3”) telling you how many messages are stacked inside.
- Tap it to open. You'll see the messages piled one above another; tap any older one to expand and read it.
- The newest message is usually open at the bottom, ready for you to read and reply to.

GOOD TO KNOW

One tidy conversation, not ten loose letters

Threading is why a long exchange with your doctor's office or a relative stays as a single, sensible item instead of burying your inbox. If you'd rather see every message on its own line, you can turn conversation view off in Settings — but most folks come to like it.

If threads confuse you

Some people find the stacking confusing — they reply and can't find their reply, because it's tucked inside the thread rather than sitting alone. If that's you, remember your Sent folder always holds a plain copy of everything you've written, and search finds any message instantly. Nothing is ever lost inside a thread.

CHAPTER 9b

Little Icons and What They Mean

Email is sprinkled with small symbols. You don't have to learn them all, but recognizing the common ones turns a cluttered-looking screen into a readable one. Here's a field guide to the symbols you'll meet most.

Symbol	What it does
■ **Star / ■ Flag**	You marked this important, to find it again.
■ **Paperclip**	This message has an attachment clipped to it.
■ **Back-curving arrow**	Reply to the sender.
■ **Forward arrow**	Forward the message to someone new.
■ **Trash can**	Delete — sends it to the Trash folder.
Box with down-arrow	Archive — files it away, keeping it.
■ **Magnifying glass**	Search for a message.
■ **or … (dots)**	“More” — opens a menu of extra actions.
■ **Gear**	Settings — where you change how email behaves.
≡ **Three lines**	The menu — slides out your folders (on a phone).

TIP

When a symbol is a mystery, press and hold it

On most phones, if you gently **press and hold** a button (or hover over it with the mouse on a computer), a little label pops up telling you its name. It's a safe way to learn what any mystery icon does without having to guess — and holding never activates anything by itself.

CHAPTER 9c

Sorting, Sweeping, and a Tidy Inbox

If a crowded inbox weighs on you, a few bulk tricks can clear a lot of clutter in moments — no need to deal with messages one at a time. Here's how to tidy with a broad broom.

Selecting several messages at once

1. On a computer, click the small **checkbox** at the left of each message you want (or the box at the very top to select a whole screenful).
2. On a phone, **press and hold** one message until a check appears, then tap others to add them.
3. Now use the buttons at the top — **Archive**, **Delete**, **Mark read**, **Report spam** — and your choice applies to the whole batch at once.

Mark all as read

Staring at hundreds of unread messages? You can mark them all read in one go — select all, then “Mark as read” — and the nagging number drops to zero without deleting a thing. Sometimes a clean slate is the kindest thing you can give yourself.

TIP

Outlook's “Sweep” and Gmail's filters do the heavy lifting

Outlook has a **Sweep** button that can clear all mail from a chatty sender in one move, or keep only the latest. Gmail does the same through filters (Chapter 21). If one sender floods you — a store, a newsletter — these tools tame the flood for good with a single setup.

Don't feel you must reach “zero”

Some people love an empty inbox; others happily let messages pile up and rely on search. Neither is wrong. There's no prize for an empty inbox and no penalty for a full one. Tidy as much or as little as brings you peace — this is your mailbox, run it your way.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A broad broom beats one message at a time

Learning to select and act on a batch turns “I'll never get through all this” into a two-minute tidy. Clear a hundred old ads with three taps, and your inbox feels manageable again. The clutter was never as stuck as it looked.

PART 3

Writing & Sending Mail

Composing a new message, replying and forwarding, the CC and BCC lines, a tidy signature, and what to do with half-finished drafts.

CHAPTER 10

Writing a Brand-New Message

Receiving mail is lovely, but the real joy of email is writing back — reaching a loved one in a moment, from your chair, whenever the thought strikes. Let's write one together, slowly.

Starting a new message

1. Find the **Compose** button (on the website, top-left, often labeled **Compose** or **New**) or the round **pencil / +** button in a corner on a phone. Tap it.
2. A blank message opens with a few lines to fill in: **To**, **Subject**, and a big empty space for your words.

Filling in the three parts

- **To** — the email address of the person you're writing. Type it carefully, exactly as spelled. As you type, your email may suggest addresses you've used before — if you see the right one, tap it to save yourself the typing.
- **Subject** — a short headline so the reader knows what it's about, like "Lunch on Sunday?" It's optional, but a good subject is a kindness and helps you both find the message again later.
- **The message body** — the big space below. Tap it and type whatever you'd like to say, in as many words as you please. There's no length limit and no cost per word.

Sending it on its way

1. When you're happy with it, find the **Send** button — usually a paper-airplane icon (➤) or the word **Send**, at the top of the message.
2. Tap it once. You'll often hear a little *whoosh*. That's it — your message is on its way, and a copy is saved in your **Sent** folder.

> **TIP**
>
> **Type the message first, the address last**
>
> Here's a habit that prevents the classic mistake of sending a half-finished note. Write your message *first*, read it over, and fill in the **To** address *last*. That way you can't accidentally send before you're ready — there's no address for it to go to until you mean it.

GOOD TO KNOW

Most services give you a few seconds to "unsend"

Right after you hit Send, an **Undo** option usually flashes at the bottom for several seconds. If you spot a typo or forgot the attachment, tap **Undo** fast and the message pops back open for fixing. Gmail lets you lengthen this window in Settings — a nice safety net.

CHAPTER 11

Replying and Forwarding

Most of the email you send won't be brand-new — it'll be a **reply** to something someone sent you. This is even easier than starting fresh, because the address is already filled in for you.

Reply: write back to the sender

1. Open the message you want to answer.
2. Find and tap **Reply** — a back-curving arrow (■) or the word **Reply**, usually at the bottom or top of the message.
3. A new message opens with the **To** line already filled in and the original note quoted below (that's normal — it gives context). Type your answer at the top.
4. Tap **Send**. Done.

Reply All: careful with this one

If a message was sent to several people at once, you'll also see **Reply All**. This sends your answer to *everyone* who received the original, not just the sender. That's sometimes just what you want (a family group planning a get-together) and sometimes embarrassing (a private aside that lands in a dozen inboxes).

> HEADS UP
>
> **Reply vs. Reply All — pause and pick on purpose**
>
> Before you answer a message that went to a group, take one breath and ask: does *everyone* need to read this, or just the person who wrote me? Tap plain **Reply** for the one person, **Reply All** for the whole group. This single habit saves a lot of folks a lot of embarrassment.

Forward: pass a message along to someone else

Forwarding sends a copy of a message you received on to a *third* person — handy for passing along a photo your sister sent so your brother can see it too, or sending a receipt to someone who needs it.

1. Open the message. Find **Forward** — an arrow curving forward (■) or the word **Forward**.
2. The message body is copied for you, but the **To** line is empty — type the new person's address.
3. Add a line of your own at the top if you like ("Thought you'd enjoy this!"), then tap **Send**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Three buttons cover almost everything

Compose, Reply, and Forward are the three verbs of email. New thought? Compose. Answering someone? Reply. Sharing what someone sent you? Forward. Learn these three and you can hold up your end of any conversation — which is really what email is for: staying in touch.

CHAPTER 12

CC, BCC, and Writing to Several People

Under the **To** line, you may have noticed two more boxes: **CC** and **BCC**. They sound like secret codes, but they're simple, and knowing them makes you look polished.

Writing to several people at once

The easiest way to email a group is to put everyone's address in the **To** line, one after another (the app separates them for you as you go). Everyone gets it, and everyone can see who else did. Perfect for a family note where you *want* folks to see one another.

CC: "for your information"

CC stands for "carbon copy" (a leftover from the days of typewriters and carbon paper). Addresses you put in CC also get the message, but it signals "this is mainly for the To people; you're just kept in the loop." Everyone can see the CC names. In everyday life the difference between To and CC is mostly a matter of courtesy — don't lose sleep over it.

BCC: the private copy

BCC ("blind carbon copy") is the useful one. Anyone you put in BCC gets the message, but **the other recipients cannot see that they got it** — their address is hidden. This has two wonderful uses:

- **Emailing a big list while protecting privacy.** Sending the same note to twenty friends? Put them all in **BCC** so you don't share everyone's address with everyone else. It's the polite, private way to reach a crowd.
- **Quietly keeping yourself a copy** by BCC-ing your own second address, if you have one.

STAY SAFE

Use BCC for group emails to protect addresses

When you email a group of people who don't all know each other, put them in **BCC**, not To or CC. Otherwise you hand every person's email address to every other person — and those lists are exactly what scammers love to get hold of. BCC keeps everyone's address private. It's a small habit that's genuinely kind.

CHAPTER 13

Your Signature and Formatting

Two small touches make your email feel finished and like *you*: a signature that signs off for you automatically, and a little formatting when you want it.

Setting up a signature

A **signature** is a bit of text — your name, maybe a phone number — that the email adds to the bottom of every message you send, so you don't have to type it each time. You set it once in **Settings**:

1. Open **Settings** (a gear icon ■, or in the menu).
2. Look for **Signature**.
3. Type what you'd like — "Warm regards, Jane" is plenty, or add a phone number.
4. Save. From now on it appears automatically at the bottom of new messages; you can always edit or delete it on any single message before sending.

Making words bold, bigger, or a different color

When writing, you'll find a little row of formatting tools — often behind an **A** with a pen, or an underline/**B** bar. You can make text **bold**, change its size, add color, or make a bulleted list. You don't need any of this for everyday notes — plain text is perfectly good — but it's there if you want to emphasize a date or make a list clearer.

> **TIP**
>
> **Plain and simple is never wrong**
>
> Don't feel you must dress up your emails. A clear note in plain type is always welcome and always readable, on any device. Formatting is seasoning, not the meal. Write the way you'd talk, sign your name, and send — that's a fine email every time.

CHAPTER 14

Drafts: Finishing a Message Later

Started a message but the phone rang, or you want to sleep on it? Email has you covered. Anything you begin is saved automatically as a **draft** — you won't lose a word.

How drafts work

- As you type a new message, your email **saves it automatically** every few seconds. You don't have to do anything.
- If you close the message without sending, it goes to the **Drafts** folder, waiting.
- To finish it, open the **Drafts** folder, tap your half-written message, pick up where you left off, and send when ready.

GOOD TO KNOW

A draft is a message that hasn't been sent

Nothing in your Drafts folder has gone anywhere — these are private, unsent notes only you can see. It's a perfectly safe place to think out loud, start a difficult letter, or park something until you've gathered the right words. Finish it in a minute or next week; it'll wait.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

No more lost words

How many handwritten letters have been abandoned halfway and thrown out? With email, the half-finished note is never lost — it's tucked in Drafts, ready whenever you are. Start when inspired, finish when ready. That freedom makes writing feel a lot less daunting.

CHAPTER 14a

Good Email Manners

Email has its own gentle etiquette — nothing stuffy, just a few courtesies that make your messages welcome and clear. Follow these and you'll come across as thoughtful and easy to deal with.

A handful of kind habits

- **Write a clear subject.** “Question about Sunday dinner” tells the reader at a glance; a blank subject or “Hi” makes them guess.
- **Start with a greeting, end with your name.** “Hi Jane,” at the top and your name at the bottom make an email feel like a letter rather than a demand.
- **Keep it reasonably short.** Say what you mean kindly and plainly; folks appreciate not having to wade.
- **Mind ALL CAPITALS.** Writing in all capital letters reads as SHOUTING to most people. Use normal sentence case unless you truly mean to emphasize one word.
- **Reply in good time, but there's no need to rush.** A day or two is perfectly polite for most things. Email is patient by design.

GOOD TO KNOW

You don't owe anyone an instant reply

A quiet worry some folks carry is that email demands an immediate answer. It doesn't. Unlike a ringing phone, email waits. Answer when you've had a chance to think. A considered reply tomorrow beats a flustered one right now, every time.

CHAPTER 14b

Sending Later and Snoozing

Two handy tricks let you bend time a little: writing a message now but having it **send later**, and tucking a message away to **come back** to you at a better moment. Not every service has both, but they're worth knowing.

Schedule a message to send later

Say you want to wish someone a happy birthday but you'll be busy that morning. Write the note today, then instead of Send, look for a small **arrow or clock** beside the Send button and choose **Schedule send**. Pick the date and time, and your email delivers it for you automatically — even if your device is off. Gmail and Outlook both offer this.

Snooze a message to resurface later

If a message needs attention but not today, **Snooze** makes it vanish from your inbox and quietly return at a time you pick — tomorrow morning, next week — as if it just arrived. It's a lovely way to clear your inbox of things you can't deal with yet without forgetting them. Look for a little **clock** icon or “Snooze” in the message menu.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Let your inbox work on your schedule

Scheduling and snoozing put you in charge of time instead of the other way round. Write when the thought strikes; deliver when it suits. Hide what you can't handle now; meet it fresh when you can. Small features, but they take a surprising weight off.

CHAPTER 14c

Family Groups and Group Replies

Email shines for keeping a whole family in the loop at once — planning a reunion, sharing news, passing round photos. A little know-how keeps these group messages happy instead of chaotic.

Starting a family email

1. Compose a new message as usual.
2. In the **To** line, add everyone's address one after another — your email separates them with little chips as you go. (For a group where folks don't all know each other's addresses, use **BCC** instead; see Chapter 12.)
3. Write your note, add a clear subject like “Thanksgiving plans,” and send. Everyone gets it together.

When everyone replies

Once you've started a group message, replies can go two ways, and this is where group email gets tangled. If your cousin taps plain **Reply**, only *you* hear back. If she taps **Reply All**, the whole family does. For a genuine group conversation — “who's bringing what?” — everyone should use Reply All. For a private aside, plain Reply. A quick word at the start (“let's all Reply All so we can see each other's answers”) saves confusion.

TIP

Save your family group as a contact list

If you email the same group often, many services let you save them as a single named group (a “label” in Gmail Contacts, a “contact list” in Outlook). Then you type one name — say “Family” — and everyone's address fills in at once. A real time-saver, and a lovely thing to set up together on a call.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

One message, the whole family, instantly

Before email, keeping a scattered family in touch meant a dozen phone calls or a stack of letters. Now a single note reaches everyone, everywhere, at once — and they can all chime in. For staying close to the people who matter, that's email at its very best.

PART 4

Photos, Attachments & Files

Receiving and saving the photos and documents people send you, and tucking your own into a message — including when a file is too big to send.

CHAPTER 15

What an Attachment Is

An **attachment** is any file clipped onto an email and sent along with it — a photo, a document, a receipt, a boarding pass. The name comes from the paperclip you'd use to attach a page to a letter, and sure enough, the symbol for an attachment is almost always a little **paperclip** (■).

The kinds of files you'll meet

What it is	How to recognize it
Photos	Pictures, usually ending in .jpg, .jpeg, .png, or .heic. From family and from stores.
PDF documents	A fixed, printable page — statements, tickets, forms. Ends in .pdf.
Word documents	An editable letter or document. Ends in .doc or .docx.
Spreadsheets	Tables of numbers. Ends in .xls or .xlsx.

GOOD TO KNOW

The last few letters tell you the type

The bit after the dot at the end of a file's name (the "extension") tells you what kind of file it is — **.pdf** for a document, **.jpg** for a photo, and so on. You don't have to memorize these; your device knows which program opens each. But it's handy to recognize a few, especially because a surprise file type can be a warning sign of a scam (Part 6).

CHAPTER 16

Opening and Saving What People Send You

When someone sends you a photo or document, it arrives inside the message. Let's open it, and then keep it if you'd like.

Viewing an attachment

1. Open the message. The attachment appears as a little tile or thumbnail — a small picture of the photo, or a document icon with the file's name — usually at the bottom.
2. **Tap or click it once** to open and view it right there. A photo fills the screen; a PDF opens to be read.
3. To close it and return to the message, tap **Done** or the back arrow (←).

Saving an attachment to keep

Viewing is temporary; **saving** keeps a copy on your device so you can find it later, print it, or share it. How you save depends on what it is:

- **A photo, on a phone:** open it and tap the **Share** button (a box with an arrow pointing up, ■), then choose **Save Image** (iPhone) or **Download / Save to Photos** (Android). It lands in your Photos, with all your other pictures.
- **A document, on a phone:** open it, tap **Share** (■), and choose **Save to Files** (iPhone) or **Download** (Android).
- **Anything, on a computer:** hover over the attachment and click the **download** icon (a down arrow). It saves to your **Downloads** folder, where you can find it later.

TIP

Saved photos go to your Photos, with the rest

When you save a photo someone emailed you, it joins your regular photo collection — the same place your own pictures live. So the grandkids' photos your daughter emails end up right alongside the ones you took yourself. No separate hunting required.

HEADS UP

Only open attachments you were expecting

This is the single most important safety habit with attachments. An unexpected file — especially from someone you don't know, or one that ends in **.zip** or **.exe** — can carry a nasty surprise. If you weren't expecting it, don't open it. When a file comes from a friend but seems odd or out of character, call them first to check. Part 6 goes deeper.

CHAPTER 17

Sending a Photo or File Yourself

Now the other direction — clipping a photo or document of your own onto a message. This is how you share pictures with far-off family, and it's genuinely delightful once it's in your fingers.

Attaching a photo

1. Start a new message (or a reply) as usual, and fill in who it's to.
2. Tap the **paperclip** (■) — or, on a phone, you may also see a little **photo / mountain** icon just for pictures.
3. Your device shows your photos or files. **Tap the one (or ones) you want** to attach. A check mark or thumbnail confirms it's clipped on.
4. Finish your note and tap **Send**. The photo travels right along with your words.

Attaching a document

The same, but choose **Files** (or browse to the document) instead of Photos when the paperclip asks what to attach. Pick the document, and it clips on just the same.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Share a moment the instant it happens

A photo of the first snow, the birthday cake, the new porch — attach it to an email and it's in your loved one's hands in seconds, anywhere in the world, free. For keeping close to family who live far away, this one skill is worth the whole book.

CHAPTER 18

When a File Is Too Big to Send

Every so often you'll try to send something — usually a video or a big batch of photos — and the email will balk, saying the file is **too large**. This is normal and easily solved. Let's understand it and fix it.

Why there's a size limit

Email was built for letters, not for hauling enormous files, so each service caps how big an attachment can be. For Gmail the limit is about **25 megabytes** per message; Outlook and iCloud Mail are in the same neighborhood. A few photos are fine. A long video, or a dozen high-quality pictures at once, can sail past that limit.

The easy fix: a cloud link instead of an attachment

When a file is too big, the service offers to send it a smarter way: it quietly uploads the file to its own storage out on the internet and puts a **link** in your message instead. Your reader clicks the link to view or download the file. The names for this storage are:

- **Gmail** → **Google Drive**. When your attachment is too big, Gmail offers to send it via Drive automatically. Say yes.
- **Outlook** → **OneDrive**. Same idea — Outlook offers to upload and link it.
- **iCloud Mail** → **Mail Drop**, which can send very large files (up to 5 gigabytes) as a link that works for a few weeks.

1. Attach your file as usual. If it's too big, a message pops up offering to send it via Drive / OneDrive / Mail Drop.
2. Tap **OK** or **Use Drive link** (the wording varies).
3. Finish and send. Your reader gets a tidy link to click — no giant file clogging their inbox.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **For big piles of photos, a photo-sharing app may be easier**
>
> If you regularly share lots of photos with family, apps built just for that — a shared album in Photos, or Google Photos — can be gentler than email. But there's nothing wrong with the Drive / OneDrive link trick, and it always works. Start there.

FROM BILL

"File too large" is not an error you did

When folks see "file too large," they often think they've done something wrong. You haven't — it's just email politely saying "this is bigger than I was built to carry, let's use the bigger truck instead." Accept the link offer and carry on. If it ever won't cooperate, that's exactly the sort of thing a quick call sorts out.

CHAPTER 18a

Printing an Email or Attachment

Sometimes you want a message or a document on paper — a boarding pass, a receipt, a recipe, a letter to keep. If you have a printer, email prints as easily as anything else.

Printing a message

1. Open the message you want.
2. Open its menu (the three dots ■ or …) and look for **Print**.
3. A preview appears. Check the printer shown is yours, choose how many pages, and tap **Print**.

Printing an attachment

For a PDF or document attached to a message, open the attachment first, then look for the **Print** option in *its* menu or the Share button (■). This prints just the document, nicely, rather than the whole email around it.

GOOD TO KNOW

No printer? You can save it as a PDF instead

Even without a printer, the Print screen usually offers **Save as PDF** — this makes a tidy document file on your device that you can keep, email to someone, or print later at the library or a relative's house. A handy trick worth remembering.

TIP

Trouble printing is usually the printer, not the email

If a print won't go through, nine times out of ten the culprit is the printer — off, out of paper, or not connected to your Wi-Fi — not the email. Check the printer first. Printers are their own special adventure; if yours is being stubborn, that's a fine thing to call me about.

CHAPTER 18b

Working with Photos People Send

Photos are the most joyful thing email carries — grandchildren, gatherings, the garden in bloom. Here's how to make the most of them beyond just looking once.

Saving a whole batch at once

When someone sends several photos in one email, you don't have to save them one by one. Open the message and look for a **Save all** or **download-all** option near the photos (on a computer, often a single “Download” button grabs them together as a bundle). On a phone, you can usually tap each photo's Share button and choose Save.

Sharing photos onward

Once a photo is saved to your Photos, you can send it on to anyone else — by email, or by a text message, or in an app like WhatsApp. Open Photos, find the picture, tap **Share** (■), and choose how to send it. The grandchildren's photos your daughter emailed can be passed along to your sister in moments.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Keep the moments, don't just glimpse them

An emailed photo you only glance at is gone when you close the message. One you *save* joins your collection to enjoy any time, set as your background, print for the fridge, or share onward. Saving the ones that matter turns a passing glimpse into a keepsake.

HEADS UP

Photos pile up and fill your storage

The flip side of lovely photos is that they take up the most room in your mailbox and on your device. This is exactly why having a backup matters so much — see the *Backing Up Everything* manual in this series. Save your treasures somewhere safe, and you can clear the emails without a second thought.

CHAPTER 18c

Opening Documents Safely

Documents — PDFs, Word files, spreadsheets — arrive by email all the time, from the doctor, the bank, family, and businesses. Most are perfectly harmless and genuinely useful. A little care tells the good from the rare bad.

The safe-opening checklist

1. **Were you expecting it?** A statement from a company you do business with, a form you asked for — fine. A surprise “invoice” or “receipt” you don't recognize — pause.
2. **Do you know the sender, and does the real address look right?** Tap the sender name to check the true address.
3. **Is the file type normal?** A .pdf, .jpg, or .docx from someone you trust is routine. A **.zip** or **.exe** you weren't expecting is a red flag — don't open it.
4. **Still unsure?** Don't open it. Ask the sender (by phone or a fresh message) whether they really sent it, or call me.

HEADS UP

A surprise “invoice” or “receipt” is a favorite scam

One of the most common tricks is an attachment dressed up as a bill, receipt, or invoice for something you never bought — hoping alarm (“I didn't order this!”) makes you open it or call a fake number. Don't. If you truly want to check a charge, go to the real company's website or the number on your card, never the one in the message.

Viewing is safer than downloading

When you do open a document from a reasonably trusted sender, simply **viewing** it inside your email (a quick tap to preview) is gentler than downloading and running it. Preview first; download only what you mean to keep. And keep your device's updates current — they quietly patch the very holes that bad files try to slip through.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Confidence with documents, not fear

The aim isn't to make you nervous of every attachment — the vast majority are helpful and fine. It's to give you a three-second habit that lets you open the good ones freely and set the rare bad one aside. Caution and confidence go hand in hand here.

PART 5

Contacts & Keeping Organized

Saving the people you write to, sorting mail into folders and labels, teaching your email to file things automatically, and taming notifications.

CHAPTER 19

Your Address Book (Contacts)

You don't have to remember or retype anyone's email address. Your device keeps an address book — called **Contacts** — and once a person is in it, you can reach them by typing just the first few letters of their name.

Adding someone to Contacts

The easiest moment to save someone is right when they email you:

1. Open a message from the person.
2. Tap or click their name or address at the top.
3. Choose **Add to Contacts** (or **Create New Contact**).
4. Check the name and address are right, add a phone number if you like, and **Save**.

Using your contacts

Now, when you write a new message and start typing a saved person's name in the **To** line, their address appears for you to tap — no spelling required. This also quietly protects you: a message claiming to be from a contact but arriving from a *different* address is a useful warning sign.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Reach anyone by name, not by memory

Keeping your contacts current means the people you love are always a couple of taps away, by name. No squinting at a scrap of paper, no mistyped addresses bouncing back. Add folks as they write to you and your address book fills itself in over time.

CHAPTER 20

Folders and Labels

If you like things filed and tidy, you can create your own **folders** (Outlook, iCloud) or **labels** (Gmail) to sort mail — one for the grandkids, one for bills, one for a club you belong to. Remember, though: thanks to search, filing is now optional, not required. Do it only if it brings you peace, not duty.

Folders vs. labels — a small difference

- **A folder** (Outlook, iCloud Mail) holds a message like a physical folder — the message lives in one folder at a time.
- **A label** (Gmail) is more like a colored sticker — a message can wear several labels at once, and still lives in your single big pile. Clicking a label shows everything wearing it.

Making one and filing a message

1. In the folder/label list, look for **Create new folder** or **Create new label** and give it a name.
2. To file a message, open it and look for **Move to** (folders) or **Label** (Gmail), then pick your folder or label.
3. On a computer you can also drag a message onto a folder name in the left-hand list.

> **TIP**
>
> **Don't build a filing cabinet you'll have to maintain**
>
> It's tempting to make a tidy folder for everything. But every folder is one more thing to keep up. My honest advice: make just two or three for the things you refer back to often, and let search handle the rest. A simple system you'll actually use beats an elaborate one you won't.

CHAPTER 21

Teaching Email to File Automatically (Filters & Rules)

Here's a genuinely clever feature once you're comfortable: you can teach your email to handle certain messages *automatically* — always file the power company's bills in a "Bills" folder, say, or always mark a newsletter as read. These automatic instructions are called **filters** (Gmail) or **rules** (Outlook).

What they can do for you

- Automatically move messages from a certain sender into a folder, so they skip the inbox.
- Automatically mark certain mail as important (star/flag it).
- Automatically send obvious junk from a particular sender straight to Trash.

Setting a simple one up

The friendliest way is to start from a message that's a good example of what you want handled:

1. Open a message from the sender you want to automate.
2. Open its menu (three dots ■) and look for **Filter messages like this** (Gmail) or **Create rule** (Outlook).
3. Choose what should happen — e.g. "move to the Bills folder" — and save.
4. From now on, matching messages are handled for you, every time.

GOOD TO KNOW

Filters are optional — and reversible

You never *need* filters; plenty of happy email users never make one. But if a certain kind of mail floods your inbox, a filter quietly tames it. And nothing's permanent — you can edit or delete any filter later in Settings. If you'd like help setting up a couple of useful ones, this is a lovely thing to do together on a call.

CHAPTER 22

Notifications: When Your Device Pings

A **notification** is the little alert — a sound, a banner, a red number on the app's icon — that tells you new mail has arrived. Helpful when you're waiting on something important; maddening when it's every advertisement. You're in charge of how much it bothers you.

Turning the noise up or down

Notification settings live in your **device's** Settings, not usually inside the email itself:

- **On an iPhone or iPad:** Settings → Notifications → scroll to your email app (Mail, Gmail, or Outlook). Turn **Allow Notifications** on or off, and choose whether you want sounds and banners.
- **On an Android phone:** Settings → Notifications (or Apps → your email app → Notifications). Same choices.
- **On a computer:** notifications are gentler; you can usually turn browser alerts off in the email's own Settings.

TIP

The red number bothering you? Turn off "badges"

That little red number on the app icon (the "badge") counts unread messages, and for some folks it creates a nagging sense of a chore undone. If it stresses you more than it helps, turn **Badges** off in your device's notification settings. Your mail still arrives — you just check it on your own schedule, in peace.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Let email serve you, not nag you

There's no prize for answering email the instant it lands. Set notifications so they alert you to what matters and stay quiet about the rest — or turn them off entirely and simply check your mail once or twice a day, like the mailbox at the curb. You decide the rhythm, not the phone.

CHAPTER 22a

More Than One Email Account

Plenty of people have two email addresses — maybe an old one everyone knows and a newer one, or one for family and one for shopping. The good news is you can keep an eye on all of them in one place instead of signing in and out.

Adding a second account to your app

1. Open your email app's **Settings** (the gear ■, or the menu).
2. Choose **Add account**.
3. Pick the service (Google, Outlook/Microsoft, iCloud, or “other”) and sign in with that account's address and password.
4. Both mailboxes now live in the one app. A button or your picture in the corner lets you switch between them, and many apps can even show them side by side in one combined inbox.

TIP

A separate address for shopping keeps things tidy

If your inbox drowns in store offers and receipts, some folks keep a second, free email address just for shopping and sign-ups — so the clutter lands there and their main address stays for family and important mail. It's optional, but a tidy trick if the junk ever feels overwhelming.

CHAPTER 22b

Away Messages and Taking a Break

Going on a trip, or simply want folks to know you're not at the computer for a while? You can set an **automatic reply** (also called a “vacation responder” or “out of office”) that answers your mail for you while you're away.

Setting an automatic reply

1. Open **Settings** and look for **Vacation responder** (Gmail), **Automatic replies** (Outlook), or **Auto-Reply** (iCloud).
2. Turn it on and type a short message — for example, “Thank you for your note. I'm away until the 20th and will reply when I'm back.”
3. Choose start and end dates if offered, and save.
4. Now anyone who writes you gets your friendly note once, automatically. Turn it off when you're back (or it stops on its own at the end date).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Peace of mind while you're away

An away message means no one is left wondering why you've gone quiet, and you come home without the guilt of unanswered mail hanging over you. Set it, forget it, and enjoy your trip. Your email politely holds the fort.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your mail still arrives while you're away

An automatic reply doesn't stop or delete anything — all your mail still arrives and waits safely in your inbox for your return. It simply sends a courteous “I'll get back to you” in the meantime. Nothing is missed.

CHAPTER 22c

Calendar Invitations That Arrive by Email

Now and then an email arrives that's really an **invitation to an event** — a doctor's appointment, a family gathering, a video call. These look a little different, with buttons like **Yes**, **Maybe**, and **No**, and they can add the event straight to your calendar. Handy once you know what you're looking at.

Responding to an invitation

1. Open the message. You'll see the event's name, date, time, and often **Yes / Maybe / No** buttons.
2. Tap the button for your answer. The organizer is told automatically, and if you said Yes, the event is added to your calendar.
3. If you don't use a calendar, you can simply read the details and ignore the buttons — nothing bad happens.

GOOD TO KNOW

An invitation is just a special kind of email

Don't let the extra buttons throw you. An invitation is an ordinary message with a little event attached. You can open it, read it, and reply like any other email. The Yes/No buttons are simply a convenience that saves you writing back “sounds good!” by hand.

A note on video-call invitations

Invitations for a video call (Zoom, FaceTime, Google Meet) include a **link** to click at the appointed time to join. Save the email, and when the moment comes, open it and tap the link. For the full story on video calls, see the *Video Calling* manual in this series — this is just so you recognize the invitation when it lands.

STAY SAFE

Only join calls you were genuinely expecting

Video-call and meeting links are useful, but a link in an *unexpected* message — “join this meeting now” from someone you don't know — deserves the same caution as any surprise link. If you weren't expecting it, don't click. When a real appointment is set, you'll know it's coming.

PART 6

Spam, Junk & Staying Safe

The single most important part of this book: telling real mail from the fakes, handling spam, spotting scams, and never getting caught out.

CHAPTER 23

Spam and Junk — and the Spam Folder

Spam (also called **junk**) is unwanted email — advertisements, chain letters, and worse. Every email service fights it for you with a **Spam** or **Junk** folder that catches the obvious stuff automatically, so it never clutters your inbox. It's quietly one of email's best features.

How the spam folder works

- Suspected junk is moved to **Spam** / **Junk** on its own — you don't have to do anything.
- Messages there are cleared automatically after about **30 days**, so it empties itself.
- You can peek inside now and then in case something good landed there by mistake.

Training it: Report and Not Spam

When junk slips into your inbox, don't just delete it — **report it as spam** (sometimes called "junk"). This moves it *and* teaches your email to catch similar messages next time. And if a good message ends up in Spam by mistake, open it and tap **Not Spam** to rescue it and teach the filter it was fine.

> TIP
>
> **Report, don't just delete, the junk**
>
> Reporting junk as spam does more than deleting it: it trains your email's filter so you see less of that kind of thing over time. Thirty seconds of reporting today buys you a quieter inbox tomorrow. Look for **Report spam** / **Report junk** in the message's menu or the toolbar.

CHAPTER 24

Blocking a Sender

When one particular sender keeps bothering you, you can **block** them. Their future messages are sent straight to spam without ever troubling your inbox — and they're never told they were blocked.

How to block

1. Open a message from the sender.
2. Open the message's menu (three dots ■, usually near Reply).
3. Choose **Block "[their name]"** and confirm.

That's it. To undo it later, go to **Settings** → **Filters and Blocked Addresses** (Gmail) or the equivalent blocked-senders list in Outlook / iCloud, and remove the name.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **Block vs. unsubscribe — which to use**
>
> For a legitimate newsletter or store you once signed up with, the gentler fix is to **unsubscribe** — scroll to the very bottom of the message and tap the small **Unsubscribe** link; the mail simply stops. Save **Block** for genuine pests and senders you don't trust. One important caution on unsubscribe links comes next.

CHAPTER 25

Spotting a Scam Email

This is the chapter I'd most like you to read twice. The sad truth is that criminals use email to try to trick people — often older people — into giving up passwords, money, or personal details. The good news: once you know the handful of tricks they use, they become surprisingly easy to spot. Knowledge really is your armor here.

The telltale signs of a scam

- **It creates fear or urgency.** "Your account will be closed in 24 hours!" "Suspicious activity detected — act now!" Real companies don't rush you like this. Urgency is the scammer's favorite tool, because a frightened person stops thinking clearly.
- **It asks for a password, PIN, Social Security number, or payment.** No real bank, government office, or company will *ever* ask for these by email. Ever. Full stop.
- **The sender's real address is wrong.** The name says "Amazon" but the address behind it is amaz0n-security@random-mail.com. Tap the sender name to reveal the true address and look closely.
- **It wants you to click a link or open an attachment** to "verify," "confirm," or "unlock" something. The link leads to a fake page built to steal what you type.
- **Odd spelling and grammar,** or a greeting like "Dear Customer" instead of your name.
- **An offer too good to be true** — a prize, a refund, an inheritance, a sweetheart in distress. If it seems too good to be true, it is.

SCAM ALERT

The golden rule: real companies never ask for secrets by email

Burn this into memory: **no legitimate bank, the IRS, Social Security, Apple, Google, Microsoft, or Amazon will ever email, text, or call to ask for your password, PIN, full Social Security number, or a payment in gift cards.** Any message that does is a scam — 100% of the time, no exceptions. Delete it, or call me if you're unsure.

What to do when a message smells wrong

1. **Stop.** Don't click anything. Don't reply. Scammers count on a fast, fearful reaction — so slow right down.

2. **Don't use the message's links or phone numbers.** If it claims to be your bank, set the email aside and reach the bank the way you normally do — the number on the back of your card, or their real website you type yourself.
3. **Check with someone** — a family member, or me at (330) 200-8042. Describing it out loud to another person almost always makes a scam obvious.
4. **Report it as spam / phishing** and delete it.

STAY SAFE

Be wary of "Unsubscribe" on mail you don't recognize

Unsubscribe is safe and helpful on real newsletters you signed up for. But on junk from a sender you don't recognize, even clicking Unsubscribe can tell a scammer your address is live — inviting *more* junk. For mail from genuine strangers, don't click anything; just report it as spam. Use Unsubscribe only for senders you recognize and once trusted.

CHAPTER 26

Safe Habits That Keep You Protected

A few steady habits make you a very hard target. None of them is complicated — together they're better protection than any gadget.

Bill's short list of safe habits

- **Never share your password.** Not with callers, not by email, not with "support." A real company already has what it needs.
- **Use a strong password** — longer is stronger; a short phrase you'll remember beats a tricky word. And don't reuse your email password on other sites.
- **Turn on two-step verification** (also called two-factor). After your password, it texts or shows a one-time code to confirm it's you. It's the single best lock on your mailbox, and worth setting up — together, if you like.
- **Slow down with anything urgent or money-related.** Urgency is the scammer's crowbar. Real matters can wait the ten minutes it takes to check.
- **When in doubt, ask.** There is never any shame in forwarding a suspicious message to a trusted person, or calling me, before you act.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

A little caution buys a lot of freedom

The point of all this isn't to make you afraid of your email — it's the opposite. Once these habits are second nature, you can use email freely and confidently, knowing you won't be caught out. A handful of steady habits, and the worry simply lifts.

FROM BILL

When something feels off, that feeling is worth a call

In all my years helping folks, I've learned to trust that little voice that says "this doesn't feel right." It's usually correct. If an email gives you that feeling — about money, a password, an account, anything — don't wrestle with it alone. Call me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll look at it together. I would far rather get a call about a message that turns out to be fine than a call after the harm is done.

CHAPTER 26a

Real Scam Examples — and How We Spot Them

Reading about scams in the abstract is one thing; recognizing one in your own inbox is another. So let's walk through a few of the most common scam emails just as they appear, and name exactly what gives each one away. Once you've seen the pattern, you'll see it everywhere.

“Your account has been suspended”

A message with a bank or Amazon logo says your account is locked and you must **click here to verify** immediately. **What gives it away:** the fear and urgency, the demand to click a link, and — if you check — a sender address that isn't really the company's. **What to do:** don't click. If you're worried, open your account the normal way, by typing the real website yourself or calling the number on your card.

“You've won” or “Your refund is waiting”

A cheerful note says you've won a prize, or that a refund or inheritance awaits — just confirm your details or pay a small “fee.” **What gives it away:** you didn't enter anything, and no real prize or refund ever requires you to pay first or hand over personal details. **What to do:** delete it. If it seems too good to be true, it is.

“It's me — I need help”

A message appears to come from a friend, grandchild, or pastor, saying they're stranded or in trouble and need gift cards or money wired quickly, quietly. **What gives it away:** urgency, secrecy, and an unusual request for gift cards or wire transfer. **What to do:** contact the person directly by phone, using the number you already have — not by replying. It's almost always a scammer wearing a familiar name.

“We couldn't deliver your package”

A note claiming to be from the post office, UPS, or FedEx says a package is held and you must click to “reschedule” or pay a tiny fee. **What gives it away:** you're not expecting that package, the link isn't the real carrier's site, and real carriers don't collect fees this way. **What to do:** don't click; track any real package on the carrier's own website.

SCAM ALERT

Every scam leans on one of three feelings

Notice the pattern: scams work by stirring up **fear** (“your account is at risk!”), **greed** (“you've won!”), or **sympathy** (“I need help!”). The moment an email makes you feel a sudden rush of any of these and wants you to act fast — that's your signal to stop, set it down, and check. The feeling itself is the warning.

CHAPTER 26b

Two-Step Verification, Set Up Calmly

I mentioned two-step verification as the single best lock for your mailbox. It's worth a chapter of its own, because it's the one security step I most wish everyone would take — and it's not hard.

What it is, in plain terms

Normally, your password alone opens your email. **Two-step verification** (also called two-factor, or 2FA) adds a second, quick check: after your password, the service sends a **one-time code** to your phone by text, which you type in. That way, even if a crook somehow learned your password, they still couldn't get in without *your phone in their hand*. It's like adding a deadbolt beneath the doorknob lock.

Turning it on

1. Go to your account's **Security** settings (in Gmail, your Google Account → Security; Outlook and iCloud have the same under account settings).
2. Find **Two-step verification** (or “Two-factor”) and choose to turn it on.
3. Give the phone number where you'd like codes texted, and confirm with the test code it sends.
4. That's it. From now on, new sign-ins ask for a texted code — a minor extra step for you, an enormous wall against strangers.

STAY SAFE

Never read a sign-in code aloud to anyone

Those one-time codes are powerful, and scammers know it. If anyone — by phone, text, or email — asks you to read back a verification code that just arrived, **do not**. No legitimate company will ever ask for your code. A caller asking for it is a scammer trying to break into your account in real time. Hang up.

FROM BILL

Let's set this up together — it's worth it

Two-step verification is the one thing I'd most like every person I help to have switched on, and it's the kind of setup that's quick and painless with someone beside you. If you'd like, call me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll turn it on for your email in a few minutes, so your mailbox is genuinely locked tight. It's one of the best half-hours you can spend on your safety.

CHAPTER 26c

Passwords Done Right (Without the Headache)

Passwords are the locks on everything you do online, and email is the master lock — because so many other accounts can be reset through your email. Getting your email password right is worth a few minutes. The good news: "right" no longer means "complicated."

What makes a good password now

- **Longer beats trickier.** A memorable phrase like purple-garden-coffee-9 is both easier for you and harder for crooks than a short jumble like P@7x!.
- **Don't reuse your email password** anywhere else. If one site is breached, you don't want the key to your mailbox handed over with it.
- **Avoid the obvious** — your name, birth year, "password," or "123456." These are the first things guessed.
- **Write it down on paper** kept somewhere safe at home. A notebook in a drawer is far safer than a password that's so simple a stranger could guess it.

Password managers — a helper worth knowing about

Your phone and computer can offer to **remember and even invent** strong passwords for you, storing them safely behind your device's own lock (Face ID, fingerprint, or passcode). This is called a **password manager** — Apple's is built into iPhones, Google's into Android and Chrome. You don't have to use one, but it takes the memory burden off your shoulders entirely.

STAY SAFE

Your email password is the master key — guard it most

Because forgotten passwords for most websites get reset *through your email*, whoever controls your email can reach your other accounts. That's why your email password deserves to be strong, unique, and paired with two-step verification (Chapter 26b). Lock the master door well, and the rest of the house is far safer.

FROM BILL

Sorting passwords is a wonderful thing to do together

If your passwords are a tangle of sticky notes and half-remembered guesses — and whose aren't? — this is one of the most worthwhile afternoons we can spend. We'll get your email locked down properly, set up a safe way to keep track, and you'll feel the weight lift. Call (330) 200-8042 whenever you're ready.

CHAPTER 26d

A Calm Word About Staying Safe

We've covered a lot of caution in this part, so let me end it the right way — with reassurance. The point of all these habits is not to make you afraid of your email. It's to make you so quietly confident that fear never gets a foothold.

The criminals who send scam emails are counting on exactly two things: that you'll feel a rush of fear or excitement, and that you'll act before you think. Everything in this part is designed to take those two tools away from them. When you slow down, check the real sender, refuse to share secrets, and ask a trusted person when something feels off, you become a remarkably hard target — and the whole online world opens up to you safely.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Caution is what lets you relax

It may sound backwards, but a few steady safety habits are what *free* you to enjoy email without worry. You no longer have to wonder “is this one a trick?” — you simply run through your quick checks and you know. That calm confidence is the real prize of this part, and it's yours now.

And remember the backstop beneath all of it: you are never on your own. Any message, any moment, any doubt — a phone call to someone you trust clears it up. There is no shame in asking, ever. The wisest people I know ask the most questions.

PART 7

When Things Go Sideways

Calm, step-by-step fixes for the everyday email troubles — forgotten passwords, mail that won't send or arrive, a full mailbox, and keeping things working across your devices.

CHAPTER 27

First Aid: The Fixes That Solve Most Things

Before we tackle specific problems, here are the gentle first moves that fix a surprising share of email trouble. Try these before anything fancier — they're safe and they never delete your mail.

The calm checklist

1. **Check your internet.** Email needs the internet. Can you open a website? If not, that's the real problem — check your Wi-Fi.
2. **Close the app and open it again.** On a phone, swipe it closed and reopen; on a computer, close the browser tab and return to the website.
3. **Restart the device.** Turning it fully off and on again clears more gremlins than almost anything else, and never harms your mail.
4. **Pull down to refresh.** In most phone email apps, dragging the inbox list downward and letting go tells it to check for new mail right now.

> TIP
>
> **Restarting is the gentlest fix there is**
>
> If email is acting strange — slow, stuck, not updating — turning the whole device off and back on again solves a remarkable number of problems, and it never deletes a single message, photo, or contact. When you call me, it's often the very first thing I'll have you try, so it's worth trying yourself first.

CHAPTER 28

Mail Won't Send or Won't Arrive

When your message won't send

- **Check the address** for typos — one wrong letter and it can't deliver.
- **Check your internet** — no connection, no sending. The message waits safely in your Outbox until the connection returns, then sends on its own.
- **Attachment too big?** See Chapter 18 — use the Drive / OneDrive / Mail Drop link offer instead.

When expected mail doesn't arrive

- **Look in Spam / Junk.** This is the number-one hiding place for mail you were expecting. Found it? Open it and tap **Not Spam** so it behaves next time.
- **Refresh** the inbox (pull down, or click refresh) — it may just not have checked yet.
- **Double-check the sender has your address right.** If they typed it wrong, it never left their end. Ask them to try again, or send them a note first so they can reply.
- **Check filters.** If you set up a rule, a message may have been filed into a folder instead of the inbox. Try a search for the sender.

GOOD TO KNOW

A "bounce-back" tells you what went wrong

If an email truly can't be delivered, you usually get an automatic reply (a "bounce" or "Delivery failure") explaining why — most often a mistyped address. Read the first line or two; it's the computer trying to help. Fix the address and send again.

CHAPTER 29

Resetting a Forgotten Password

Forgetting your password is one of the most common things in the world, and it is **always fixable**. You will not be locked out forever. Take a breath, and let's walk through it calmly.

The reset, step by step

1. At the sign-in screen, look for **Forgot password?** (or "Can't sign in?") and tap it.
2. The service will offer to confirm it's you — usually by **texting a code** to your phone, or emailing a link to a backup address. Choose a method you can get to.
3. Enter the code or click the link when it arrives.
4. Now **type a new password, twice.** Choose something you'll remember but a stranger couldn't guess — a short phrase works well. Write it in a safe place at home.
5. You're back in. Your mail, contacts, and everything else are exactly as you left them — resetting the password changes none of it.

HEADS UP

Do this only on the real sign-in page

Always reset your password by going to the real website yourself (gmail.com, outlook.com, icloud.com) or your app's own sign-in screen — never by clicking a "reset your password" link in an email you didn't ask for. That kind of link is a classic scam. If *you* started the reset, you're fine; if a *message* is pushing you to, stop.

FROM BILL

This is a great thing to do together

Password resets are fiddly precisely because they're designed to be hard for strangers — which can make them hard for you, too, in the moment. If you hit a snag, don't batter away at it until you're locked out. Call me at (330) 200-8042 and we'll do it together, calmly, in a few minutes. I help someone with this nearly every week; you are in good company.

CHAPTER 30

A Full Mailbox and Running Out of Space

Every email account comes with a certain amount of **storage** — room for your messages and attachments. Fill it up and new mail may stop arriving, with a warning that you're "out of space." Here's what's really going on and how to make room.

Why it fills up

It's almost never the words that fill your mailbox — it's the **attachments**, especially photos and videos, piling up over years. With Gmail, the space is also shared with Google Drive and Google Photos, so those count too.

Making room

- **Empty the Trash and Spam folders** — these hold deleted and junk mail that's still taking up room until cleared.
- **Find and delete the biggest messages.** You can search for large messages (in Gmail, search larger:10M) and clear the giants — usually old emails with big attachments you've already saved.
- **Save and then delete** precious attachments: download the photos to your device or a backup first (see the Backup manual!), then delete the emails.
- **Or simply buy more space** — all three services sell extra storage for a few dollars a month if you'd rather not sort. That's a perfectly reasonable choice.

TIP

Start with Trash and Spam — it's the easy win

Before anything else, empty your Trash and Spam folders. Folks are often surprised how much room is reclaimed by clearing mail that was already on its way out the door. It's the quickest, safest space you'll ever free up.

CHAPTER 31

The Same Mail on All Your Devices

One of email's quiet marvels is that your inbox looks the same on your phone, your tablet, and your computer — read a message on one and it shows as read on the others. This is called **syncing**, and it happens by itself. When it seems *not* to, here's the picture.

How to add your email to another device

1. On the new device, open its email app (or go to the website).
2. Choose **Add account** and pick your service (Google, Microsoft/Outlook, or iCloud).
3. Sign in with the same address and password you always use.
4. Your whole mailbox appears — nothing is copied or moved; the new device is simply another window onto the same mailbox out in the cloud.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your mail isn't trapped on one device

Because your email really lives out on the internet, not inside any one gadget, you can lose, break, or replace a phone or computer and **not lose a single message**. Sign in on the new device and everything is right there. That's a genuine comfort worth remembering.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Check from anywhere, on whatever's handy

Syncing means you're never tied to one screen. Read a long message on the computer, reply from your phone on the porch, and it all stays in step. Your email meets you wherever you are — which is exactly how it should be.

CHAPTER 31a

Setting Up Email on a New Phone or Computer

A new device is exciting and, let's be honest, a little nerve-racking. The worry is always the same: “Will I lose my email?” You won't. Because your mail lives out on the internet, setting it up on a new device is simply opening a fresh window onto the mailbox you already have.

The steps, same everywhere

1. On the new device, open the email app (or go to the website) you want to use.
2. Choose **Add account** or **Sign in**.
3. Pick your service — Google (Gmail), Microsoft (Outlook), or Apple (iCloud).
4. Type your **email address** and **password**, and confirm with a texted code if asked.
5. Give it a moment, and your whole inbox — every message, contact, and folder — appears, exactly as on your old device.

GOOD TO KNOW

You are not moving your mail — it's already everywhere

There's nothing to transfer, copy, or back up to get your email onto a new device. Signing in is the whole job. The old device and the new one simply both look at the same mailbox. You could sign in on five devices and see the same inbox on all five.

FROM BILL

New device day is a great day for a visit

Setting up a new phone or computer is one of the most common and most satisfying things I help folks with — we get your email, photos, contacts, and favorite apps all in place, and you walk away confident instead of fretting. If you've got a new device in a box, don't let it sit there intimidating you. Call (330) 200-8042 and we'll bring it to life together.

CHAPTER 31b

“My Email Looks Different Today”

Every so often you'll open your email and something has **moved or changed** — a button is in a new spot, the colors are different, a new feature has appeared. This is normal, it's not your fault, and nothing is broken.

Why it happens

The companies that make email — Google, Microsoft, Apple — update their apps and websites from time to time, tidying things up or adding features. These updates arrive on their schedule, not yours, so now and then you'll be greeted by a slightly rearranged screen. The *ideas* never change, though: there's still an inbox, still a Compose button, still Reply and search. Only the furniture got moved.

Finding your footing again

- **Look for the words, not just the spot.** This whole book tells you what to look *for* — “Compose,” “Reply,” the magnifying glass — so even when a button moves, you know its name.
- **Check the corners.** Buttons that move usually land in a corner or behind the three-dots (■) or three-lines (≡) menu.
- **Give it a day.** What feels strange today feels normal by week's end. Your hands adjust faster than you'd expect.

TIP

A changed screen is not a broken screen

The next time your email greets you looking different, take a breath before you worry. You didn't do anything, and nothing is lost — the company simply freshened things up. Hunt for the familiar words, and you'll be back in your groove in a minute. And if a change really throws you, that's a perfect quick call: I keep up with these so you don't have to.

CHAPTER 31c

When Your Own Mail Lands in Someone's Spam

We've talked about junk arriving in *your* inbox. Occasionally the reverse happens: you send a perfectly good message and the other person says it never came — only to find it later in *their* Spam folder. Frustrating, but fixable.

Why it happens

Spam filters aren't perfect. A first-time message, one with a big attachment, or one with lots of links can occasionally be mistaken for junk by the *recipient's* email service — nothing you did wrong. It's simply an overcautious filter on their end.

How to make sure you get through

- Ask the person to check their **Spam / Junk folder** and, if your message is there, mark it **Not Spam** and add you to their contacts. After that, your mail sails through.
- Keep first messages simple — a clear subject, a few plain sentences, no giant attachments — so filters have no reason to be suspicious.
- If you must send a large file, use the Drive / OneDrive link trick (Chapter 18) rather than a huge attachment.

GOOD TO KNOW

Being added as a contact is the magic fix

The single most reliable way to ensure someone always gets your email is to have them add your address to their **Contacts**. Email services trust mail from known contacts and wave it straight into the inbox. It's a one-time, two-second favor that solves the problem for good.

FROM BILL

“They said they never got it” — a common mystery, easily solved

I get this one a lot, and it's almost never anything to worry about. Nine times out of ten the message is sitting in the other person's Spam folder, perfectly intact. Have them look there first. If it's still a puzzle, call me — these little delivery mysteries are usually a two-minute fix once we look together.

CHAPTER 31d

Backing Up What Matters in Your Email

Your email provider keeps your mail safe out in the cloud, and for most folks that's plenty. But a few treasures — irreplaceable photos, important documents — deserve a second home, just in case. A little care here means you never lose what can't be replaced.

Simple ways to keep a spare copy

- **Save precious photos** out of email and into your Photos, which itself backs up to the cloud (iCloud Photos or Google Photos). Now they're in two safe places.
- **Save important documents** (statements, forms) as files on your device or to Drive / OneDrive / Files, so they don't live only inside an email.
- **Print the truly vital few** — a will, a key receipt — so a paper copy exists no matter what.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Keep the irreplaceable in more than one place

The golden rule of anything precious: one copy is no copy. Pull your treasured photos and vital documents out of email and give them a second home, and you can face a lost password, a dead phone, or any mishap without losing what matters. The *Backing Up Everything* manual in this series walks you through the whole peaceful routine.

CHAPTER 31e

Keeping the App Itself Up to Date

Your email app, like everything on your device, gets **updates** from time to time — small improvements and, importantly, security patches. Keeping it current is one of the quietest and most effective things you can do for a smooth, safe experience.

Letting updates happen

- Most phones update apps **automatically** in the background — you don't have to lift a finger, and this is the easiest setting to leave on.
- To check by hand on an iPhone, open the **App Store**, tap your picture in the corner, and scroll to see if your email app has an update waiting.
- On Android, open the **Play Store**, tap your picture → **Manage apps** → **Updates available**.

GOOD TO KNOW

Updates fix problems and close security holes

An out-of-date app is more likely to misbehave and, worse, to have known weaknesses that crooks look for. Updates patch those up. So when your device asks to update — or just does it quietly overnight — that's a good thing working on your behalf. Let it.

TIP

Update on Wi-Fi and while charging

Updates can be large, so they're happiest downloading over your home **Wi-Fi** rather than your cellular data, and while the device is plugged in. Leave your phone charging on the nightstand overnight and it'll quietly tidy itself up while you sleep.

CHAPTER 31f

Email and Texting — Cousins, Not Twins

Folks sometimes mix up email and text messages, and it's worth a moment to untangle them, because they suit different jobs. Both send words electronically, but they travel different roads.

	Best for
Email	Longer notes, attachments, formal matters. Reaches any email address. Waits in an inbox.
Text message	Short, quick notes between phones, by phone number. Arrives as an instant ping.

When to reach for which

- Sending a document, a batch of photos, or a longer note — **email**.
- A quick “running late, see you soon” to one person — a **text**.
- Reaching a business, office, or someone whose phone number you don't have — **email**.

GOOD TO KNOW

The same scams visit both

Here's the important overlap: the very same tricks — fake package notices, “your account is locked,” urgent requests for money or codes — arrive by text as well as email. Everything you learned in Part 6 applies to suspicious texts too. A link in a surprise text deserves exactly the same caution as one in a surprise email.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Two good tools, each for its job

You don't have to choose one and abandon the other — most folks happily use both, email for the weightier things and texts for the quick ones. Knowing which fits the moment just makes you a little more fluent, and a little more at ease, in staying in touch however suits the people you're reaching.

PART 8

When to Call Bill & Your Cheat-Sheet

An honest word about when a friendly expert is the right answer — and a one-page cheat-sheet of everything to keep by your chair.

CHAPTER 32

When to Call Bill

This whole book is here so you can do more on your own, with confidence. But part of being genuinely helpful is being honest about when a hand from someone who does this all day will save you time and worry. So here, plainly, is when I'd say pick up the phone — and when you probably don't need to.

Good reasons to call

- You think you may have **replied to a scam**, clicked a bad link, or given out a password. Call right away — fast action limits the harm, and there's no judgment here, ever.
- You're **locked out** of your email and the reset isn't working.
- You're **setting up email on a new phone or computer** and want it done right the first time.
- You'd like help turning on **two-step verification** or choosing a strong password — well worth doing, and quick with company.
- Your inbox feels **out of control** and you'd like it tidied and a couple of helpful filters set up.
- Anything that gives you that **"this doesn't feel right"** twinge. Trust it.

Things you can almost always handle yourself

Reading, sending, replying, forwarding, attaching a photo, searching for an old message, deleting junk, and reporting spam — these are all yours now. Use this book as your refresher, take your time, and remember you can't break anything by trying.

FROM BILL

How I like to help

I'm Bill, and I've spent 30+ years helping folks feel at home with their technology, right here in Portage County, Ohio. I don't rush, I don't talk down to anyone, and there's no such thing as a silly question at my table. Whether it's a two-minute phone answer or sitting down together, we'll get it sorted. Call **(330) 200-8042** or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**.

STAY SAFE

If you think you've been scammed, call sooner rather than later

If you ever believe you gave a password or payment to a scammer, reach out quickly — to me, to your bank, or to a trusted family member. Changing a password and alerting your bank promptly can stop trouble before it grows. You will not be scolded; you'll be helped. These things happen to careful, smart people every single day.

Thank you for letting me be a small part of how you stay connected to the people and things you care about. You've learned a great deal in these pages, and I'm proud of you for it. Keep this book handy, be kind to yourself as you practice, and don't be a stranger.

— Bill

CHAPTER 33

Your Email Cheat-Sheet

Tear this out, or fold the corner, and keep it by your chair. These are the everyday moves, all in one place.

The everyday buttons

To do this	Do this
Read a message	Tap or click the line in your inbox. Bold = unread.
Reply	Open the message, tap the back-curving arrow or "Reply."
Reply All	Answers everyone on the message — use with care.
Forward	Pass a message on to someone new; type their address.
New message	Tap Compose / New (computer) or the pencil / + (phone).
Send	The paper-airplane icon or "Send" at the top.
Attach a photo/file	Tap the paperclip, choose the photo or file.
Delete	Trash-can icon. Goes to Trash for ~30 days first.
Archive	Box-with-down-arrow. Keeps it, out of the inbox.
Search	The magnifying glass; type anything you remember.
Report spam	The message's menu → Report spam / junk.

The safety rules, short and sharp

- No real company **ever** asks for your password, PIN, or Social Security number by email.
- **Urgency** and **fear** are scam tools — slow down.
- Don't click links or open attachments you weren't expecting.
- Check the sender's **real address**, not just the name.
- Reach your bank the usual way, never through a suspicious message's link or number.
- When something feels off — **stop and ask.**

Keep these handy

My details	
My email address	_____ (write it here)

My details	
My email service	Gmail / Outlook / iCloud (circle one)
Where my password is kept	_____
Bill's Home Tech	(330) 200-8042 · billshometech.com/book

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

You know your way around now

Look back at where you started. You can read, write, reply, attach a photo, find any old message, clear out junk, and — most important of all — spot a scam before it spots you. That's not a small thing; that's genuine independence. Be proud, keep this book close, and enjoy staying connected.

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