

Email and web mail

Email

To set up email you need:

- A computer
- An internet connection via an analogue modem (ordinary phone line) or terminal adaptor (ISDN) or broadband modem (ADSL and cable)
- An account with an ISP (Internet Service Provider)
- Email software

Your Internet Service Provider will give you an email account, a password and a mailbox such as yourname@hostname.co.uk. You can also set up an email account with a mailbox and passwords with non-ISP's such as Google and Hotmail.

With a dial-up connection, you have to pay the cost of your internet phone calls (local rate), and in most cases a subscription to your provider (though some are free). A broadband connection is 'always on', with only a flat-rate subscription. Very few people pay by the minute nowadays and the majority of people pay a monthly fee for broadband access.

Anti-virus scanning is becoming standard on email accounts and many email providers now offer an anti spam (electronic junk mail) service.

Webmail

Webmail, as its name suggests, is web-based email. To use webmail, you do not need any email software - just a computer connected to the internet via any one of the connection types listed above, and a browser.

Users simply sign up to the webmail service of a web portal such as MSN or Yahoo. They are given a unique user name and a personal mailbox on the portal's email server, and they can then send and receive messages via a special web page.

A basic webmail account is usually free, although this will have a very limited amount of storage.

The advantage of webmail is that users can receive and send mail from any computer in the world with internet access. If you have a dial-up connection you can download your emails and then read them offline to avoid staying on-line for long periods.

Some ISPs will enable their regular email customers to access their mailbox via webmail as well as through the email software on their PC.

Features of email

- Automatic reply to messages
- Auto forward and redirection of messages
- Facility to send copies of a message to many people
- Automatic filing and retrieval of messages
- Addresses can be stored in an address book and retrieved instantly
- Notification if message cannot be delivered
- Automatically date and time stamped
- Signatures can be attached
- Files, graphics or sound can be sent as attachments, often in compressed formats
- Webmail and mobile email can be used to receive and send messages while on the move.

Using email

- Broadband email
 - Your connection is always on - so simply write and address your message and hit 'send' to send your mail and 'receive' to download any incoming messages from your email provider's server.
- Webmail
 - Connect to the internet (if using a dial-up account) and open your browser.
 - navigate to your webmail provider's portal and enter your user-name and password.
 - all incoming mail will now be visible, and you can also compose and send mail, and download attachments to your computer.
 - when you're done, log out and close your connection.

- Dial-up email
 - Prepare your message offline as typing your message online will increase phone charges.
 - Connect to the internet and log on to your email account.
 - Send your message and download any incoming mail sitting on your service provider's computer.
 - Log off and close your connection.

Email is evolving ...

- Many mobile phones already allow messages to be sent to the recipient's email inbox while the sender is on the move. The latest generation of mobile phones enables users to send and receive wireless email in exactly the same way as a static computer.
- Email can be sent and received via digital TV, specially adapted phones, public kiosk terminals and the latest generation of games console.
- A spreading network of wireless 'hotspots' in public places allows people to send and receive email via laptop computers.
- A new range of in-car phones will enable motorists to check their email on the road.

Email benefits

- Fast delivery of your message
- Available 365 days, 24 hours per day - and, with webmail, wherever you are in the world as long as you have access to the internet.
- Cheap: when using broadband, individual mail transfers are effectively free. When going online from a dial-up account, calls are charged at local rates and (for conventional email) need only last a few seconds.
- Facility to send the same message to more than one person

Email concerns

- It can only be sent to people who themselves have access to the internet.
- Viruses are easily spread via email attachments - anti virus measures must be in place to avoid this and are now offered by many e-mail providers.
- Phishing - sending an e-mail to a user falsely claiming to be a legitimate company to scam the user into providing information

such as personal information and bank account numbers on a bogus website. The details will then be used for identity theft.

- No guarantee the mail will be read until the user logs on and checks their mail.
- Spam!

ROM is memory that cannot be changed by a program or user. ROM retains its memory even after the computer is turned off. For example, ROM stores the instructions for the computer to start up when it is turned on again. The operating system is loaded from the hard disk and stored in RAM whilst the machine is being used.

A book is a number of pages bound together along one edge and usually protected by thick paper or stiff paste-board covers.

Job losses and job changes due to effects of ICT being introduced

- Computerised sewing machines in textiles rather than people.
- Teachers-interactive white-boards
- Receptionist-computer processes data
- Doctors/Nurses-self diagnosis system.