

Technology for Librarians 101

Email Tips

Resource for Selecting an eMail System

- Top 11 Free Email Services, Heinz Tschabitscher, Email Expert, About.com
http://email.about.com/od/freemailreviews/tp/free_email.htm

Keep your messages professional

- One of the most important elements to remember is that **email messages are NOT secure (encrypted) or private**. Do NOT send confidential correspondence or confidential data (e.g., bank account information) via email.
- Use separate email addresses for work and personal needs. You may also want a separate email address for Web forms and other similar purposes.
- Be professional. Email is easily forwarded.
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism.
- Do NOT respond immediately. You may appear to be constantly reachable or too eager to respond, depending on the circumstance. Wait a while and send a thought-out response.
- Cite all quotes, references, and sources. Respect copyright and license agreements.

Creating your message

- **Use a descriptive subject line.** Many people often decide to delete and not read based on the subject line. A standard practice is to not read and immediately delete any message without a subject.
- Limit your message to one topic. This helps replies, forwarding, and filing.
- Use proper grammar, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, and spelling in all email correspondence. Using all capital letters makes electronic correspondence difficult to read. Only use capital letters to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading.
- You can use your word processor to create and spell-check the text of the note. Use copy-and-paste to bring the text into the email note. Some email services offer a feature to spell-check every message before sending. This can be turned on in your settings.
- Set your software to automatically add your signature at the bottom of your email messages. Your office signature should include (at a minimum) your name and email address. Many also include professional title, office address, voice and FAX numbers, and/or social media addresses as part of their signature. Keep in mind the shorter the signature, the better (about four lines is common).
- Do NOT choose Reply All unless all parties need to see the message. You may reply to a sender, and CC (carbon copy) any other intended parties to include on your message.
- Before including a file attachment, there are two questions you need to answer:
 1. Does the other person have email software that limits the file size or number of files received?

2. Does the other person have the proper software to use the file? Although this doesn't relate to the process of attaching files, it is very important. For example, attaching a Mac or iOS file to an email note that goes to a Windows user, can cause major problems for the receiver. Also, you can use your word processor to save the file as an RTF or PDF file, so anyone could use the file.

Participating in listservs and discussion groups

- Follow any and all guidelines that the list manager has posted.
- Keep your questions and comments relevant to the focus of the discussion group.
- Be sure to save any administrative messages from the list manager, especially with instructions on how to unsubscribe.
- Do not send attachments to listservs and other discussion groups unless the attachment is pertinent for all members and you know that all members have the software to handle attachments.

Tips to stop spam

- If you have no dealings with the purported company sending the email, do NOT open or preview the email message — simply delete it!
- If you open such a message, do NOT reply, fill out any form, or click on any link (including Unsubscribe) in the message. Clicking on any link confirms that the email address is used by a person.
- Only use an automated vacation responder when you can control who receives the auto-reply. You do not want an auto-reply going to a spam email message.
- Use the filter tool to send spam email directly to a spam folder.

Tips for limited Internet access speed or limited data usage contract

- Keep the Inbox as clean as possible. Use folders for storing old messages.
- Do NOT select a theme or graphic background.
- Turn off image display. Check the email service Help system for instructions. You will be able to display the images you want to view within an email message.



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