



Introducing the Internet

Part Three
Email

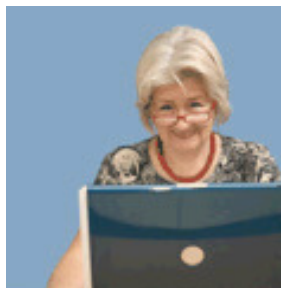


Introduction

Dear Friend,

Welcome to The Web on Wheels' Intro to the Internet, Part Three in this series! As we mentioned in Part One, the World Wide Web is only one portion of the Internet. Another large part of the Internet is email. In fact, email is the primary form of communication across the globe because it's fast and virtually free. In this part, we're going to explain how email works, how to use it with confidence, and how to prevent spam and viruses from attacking you.

Our main goal in this series is to help you to gain confidence with the Internet, and make it into a useful everyday tool, rather than thinking of it as something rather frightening. Believe it or not, if you go through these Guides slowly and carefully, you will become competent at using the Internet, and firm in understanding what it is and how it can help you do what you need.



Part Three of this series involves email. Simple and straightforward, we'll introduce you to what email is, how to write and receive email, basic email etiquette, and how to steer clear of spam and viruses. You'll be able to use this guide in the future as necessary in communicating over electronic mail. Enjoy!

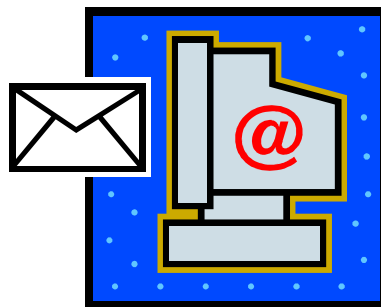
Part 3

Email

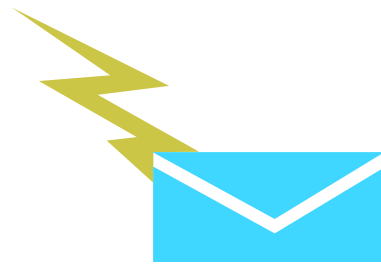
Part Three revolves around email (electronic mail). There's so much to learn, and we want to make sure you easily and confidently grasp the concepts without becoming overwhelmed. So, let's take some short steps and, at the end of this Part Three, you'll have the confidence and knowhow to compose, forward, send, and receive email.

Here's what we'll cover in Part Three:

1. Electronic Mail? What's that?
2. How to Write and Send Email
3. How to Receive, Reply to, and Forward Email
4. Avoid Viruses and Spam



1. Electronic Mail? What's That?



The full name for email is 'electronic mail' because email is not sent through the post but rather electronically. Simple enough? Actually, email is the simplest part of the Internet. Email is just text: letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs. That text is sent from machine to machine. All the other bells and whistles are pieces of the Internet attached to the text of an email.

What is an email account?

An email account, is your personal mailbox address on the Internet. If you're paying for Internet service, your Internet Service Provider (ISP) will give you an email address. It's your choice to use it or not, there's no obligation. Most people want to maintain the same email no matter what. If you ever change your ISP, you'll have to tell all your email friends about your email address change. For some folks, that's too much trouble.

Your personal email **username** is the part that comes before the @ in an email address. Aunt Shirley has an email account and her email address is auntshirley@thewebonwheels.com.au, so '**auntshirley**' is Aunt Shirley's username. This ensures that all email messages Aunt Shirley's friends send to her will go to her email mailbox and not anyone else's. Aunt Shirley creates a password so she's the only one who can read her emails. Since many people have sensitive information in their email mailboxes, you should never share your email account password with anyone.

What is that business after the @?

The part that comes after the @, pronounced 'at,' is a domain name, so it looks like a website address without the www before it.

This domain name indicates the email host, or provider, managing the email account on the Internet. Common email providers that do not charge for an email account are gmail.com, yahoo.com, and hotmail.com. Other domain names can indicate a person's professional employer, personal website address, or member organisation.



Examples of various email hosts.

- auntshirley@bigpond.com.au is Aunt Shirley's Internet Service Provider (ISP - Bigpond) email account. Unless Aunt Shirley indicates otherwise, then Bigpond will send correspondence regarding her Internet connection to this email account.
- auntshirley@gmail.com.au is Aunt Shirley's personal account that she signed up for free, online.
- auntshirley@auntshirley.com is Aunt Shirley's personal website account. Aunt Shirley has this because she wants for her friends on email to know she also has a website on the Internet.
- auntshirley@browncompany.com.au is Aunt Shirley's workplace account because she is an employee at the Brown Company, a company in Australia (as indicated by the 'au'). Sometimes people prefer not to be contacted by friends through their business account, so be sure that discussing personal or recreational topics over work email is acceptable.
- auntshirley@thewebonwheels.com.au indicates Aunt Shirley is a member of the Web on Wheels organisation, and she uses that account to receive email from and send email to other Web on Wheels members.

We here at the Web on Wheels don't want to overwhelm you, but the following is helpful if you have more than one email account. If you find yourself with more than one email account and you would prefer to receive all email at just one email account, you have the option to forward email from all your accounts to one central one that you choose. For instructions on how to do this, one-on-one coaching through the Web on Wheels will take you through each step of the way.

How do I get to my email?

If email is like the post – letters that arrive and are sent from a mailbox, then email must have electronic mailboxes. Well, that's just what an email client is – your electronic mailbox. Email clients are software, that you either download as a program onto your computer or that you access online as a web page.

An 'email client,' is the place on the Internet or a program on your computer that holds all your email messages.

The common email client for a personal computer is Microsoft Outlook.

The email client for a Mac is iMail.

A free email client to download from the Internet is Thunderbird.

Popular online email clients are provided by Google (Gmail), Yahoo, Hotmail, and AOL. You may visit these websites and click on their email link and sign up for a free account. With online email, (Webmail) the benefit is that you may access your email from any computer with an Internet connection worldwide.

All your email isn't stored on your computer; it's stored on the Internet on a server, so the client is the place you go to in order to access the email. Remember back to 'Part One: What Is the Internet?' Like we explained then, a mum computer, called a server, directs the traffic of all the baby computers and holds larger collections of information available on the Internet.

All that data needs a home, and baby computers just aren't big enough. Well with email, thousands upon thousands of people have email, and their individual computers can't possibly think of storing all that information. So, the email client pulls your email messages from the email host or provider, and lets you read them and reply to them.



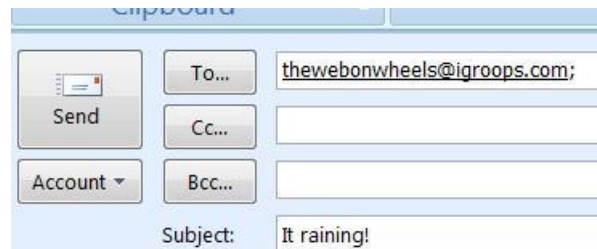
2. How to Write and Send Email

Well now that we know what email is and how it works, let's get down to it. It's time to start writing to Aunt Shirley and all the other people connected to the Internet who may want to say hello. (or if you'd like to practice or say hi to me – please do email me: Vivienne@thewebonwheels.com.au – I'd love to hear from you!)

Write Email

If you want to write, or in email lingo 'compose,' an electronic mail message, log in to your email account and click 'compose.' You'll either see a window pop up or be directed to another page ... you'll see a few empty boxes, called fields, in which you may type.

To:
CC:
BCC:
Subject/Header:
Body:



The screenshot shows a portion of an email composition interface. On the left, there are buttons for 'Send', 'Account' (with a dropdown arrow), and 'To...' (with a small envelope icon). On the right, there are input fields for 'To...' (containing 'thewebonwheels@igroups.com;'), 'Cc...', 'Bcc...', and 'Subject:' (containing 'It raining!').

We'll go through each one of these.

*Attachments can be included in your email. What's an attachment? Literally a file attached to an email message. Remember, in the beginning of Part Three, we explained that email is simply text, words without any bells and whistles. You can't do a whole lot with that. What if you want to share pictures of your children or friends with Aunt Shirley? Well, sometimes you can't send them in the body of an email, you must attach it. We'll get to that soon.

Sometimes email accounts have a fancy little thing happen once you begin typing an email address... the program automatically matches what you're typing with addresses you've entered previously. You may continue typing, especially if none of the computer's guesses are correct, or select one of the guesses by clicking on it or using your arrow keys and pressing enter once it's highlighted.



To:

The 'To:' field indicates to whom the email will be sent. You must have an email address for the email to send successfully. Remember, email addresses have an @ symbol somewhere in the middle. The same goes for the next two fields: 'CC:' and 'BCC:' Only email addresses in those fields will allow the email to send successfully.

CC:

'CC' means 'carbon copy' or 'courtesy copy' and although the term is rather outdated, the email addresses you type in here are still receiving the email, but you are indicating to them that they are not the main recipient, but you find it important for them to also view the email. For instance, if Aunt Shirley is planning a party, and she addresses her email to Samantha, asking her to bring a salad. Aunt Shirley wants all the other attendees to know that Samantha's bringing salad, so she writes all the other attendees' email addresses in the CC: field. Everyone in the CC: field will be able to see everyone's email addresses who received the email.

NOTE: if you want to send to more than one person, you simply separate the names with a comma and a space: type the first name, type a comma, then a space, then type the next name – do that as many times as needed.



BCC:

'BCC' means 'blind carbon copy' and anyone whose email address is in this field is 'blinded' from seeing who else received the email. NOTE: This field is not always visible in all programs, sometimes you need to go into Settings and 'Show BCC'.

If Aunt Shirley has a large list of friends to whom she'd like to send a recipe, she may choose to BCC: all the recipients as it really isn't necessary for all her friends to know who else received the recipe. When there are a lot of email addresses in the To: or CC: fields, the list is long, and recipients have to scroll down until the body of the email message begins. To save this, Aunt Shirley uses BCC: so that the list of emails isn't shown, and the body of the email can be seen as soon as it is opened.

Subject/Header

The subject or header of an email message appears in your inbox in bold. Usually, the subject of an email is a short 5 to 10 word phrase that relates to the general topic of the email itself. This helps recipients reference the email quickly, especially if they want to go back to it in the future. For Aunt Shirley's party invitation email, she may have the following as a subject line, 'Party at Aunt Shirley's 5 Apr' There's no need to be grammatically correct or to spell things out. As long as it's short and the recipients can quickly glean that the email is an invitation and that it's worth opening to read, you've written a successful subject line. Normally, email clients display the entire subject line in your inbox.

Body

The body of an email comprises the actual meat of the correspondence you want to send. Whilst letters by post may be drawn out and detailed, keep in mind that email is meant to be short and to the point. Of course, it's up to you how long you allow your email correspondence to go, but most folks prefer only a maximum of one or two paragraphs. If you're sharing a long story, it may work to your benefit to summarise the story in the body of your email and type the detailed version in a word processing file and attach it to the email. Friends who are willing to read more will be able to choose when they want to spend time reading through the story, and they may print the story out without all the email recipient and subject fields.

Attachments

Briefly, an attachment is any computer file you wish to include in your email. If you don't see a button that says 'attach a file,' the option is represented by a paperclip. Click on that, and you'll be able to select a file from your computer to attach to the email.



Attachments may include pictures, documents, spreadsheets, etc.

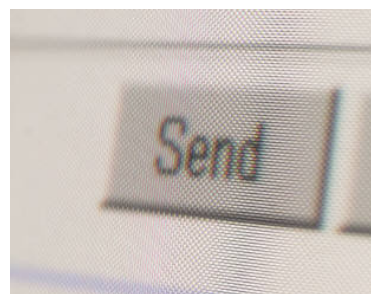
Make sure that the file type may be accessed by whomever receives your email.

Remember, the file type is indicated after the dot in a file name, e.g. form.**pdf** or babyphoto3.**jpg**. The most common file types that are pretty universally accepted include .pdf, .gif, .png, .doc, .rtf, .txt, and .xls. Beyond this, it may be a problem for your friends to open up other files if they don't have the same program that made the file.

Send

To send off your email, simply click on the 'send' button.

If your email client is online, such as a yahoo mail account, your email should send instantly as soon as you click 'send.' To make sure it's sent, simply click on the 'sent' folder among your email account folders.



If you have an email client like Outlook or iMail, which is downloaded onto your computer, you must be connected to the Internet, and depending on your particular settings, the message might go immediately, or wait until the next scheduled 'Send and Receive' or you might click the 'send and receive' button to manually send the email straight away.

To make sure it's sent, simply click on the 'sent' folder among your email account folders.

3. How to Receive, Reply to and Forward Email

You're a pro at composing and sending off email. Hooray! Now it's time to receive and forward. Believe it or not, receiving and forwarding are not so different, you just need to know your way around.

Receive

If you've got an email client downloaded onto your computer, you need to be connected to the Internet. When you open up your email client it should automatically do a 'Send and Receive'. If not, click the 'send and receive' button.

If your email client is an online account, simply logging in to your account will show you the most recently received emails. If you keep your inbox window open, you need to 'refresh' the webpage in order to receive the newest emails.

Every email account has an 'inbox' and it's where all your new email arrives. When you are viewing your 'inbox,' you don't have to open an email to know who it's from or what it's about. This is important to know so that you don't end up opening an email with a virus that may harm your computer. See the next section for more on preventing email viruses and spam.

Email inboxes are organised by the date received, and from your inbox, you can easily view the sender's email, the subject, and the date and time it was sent. Some inboxes include a small excerpt from the beginning of the body of the email, the size of the email in bytes, and a paper clip to indicate whether there are any attachments included in the email.



You may open an email simply by clicking on it, though some require that you double click to open.

To open an attachment, double click the icon or highlighted text, or click download, and the attachment should automatically open up on your screen.

Note: If you want to save the attachment, often email programs have a button or an option to Save Attachments. If not, then when you open the attachment you may choose to 'Save' the attachment.

Reply to

Since most emails merit some sort of response, you simply click 'reply' to reply to the particular message. If you click reply, the subject of the email automatically inserts 'RE:' in front of the subject line. 'RE' means 'reply' or 'regarding.' One fantastic thing about email is that when you click reply, the original message is copied and included in the lower half of the body of your email. This way, the recipient knows to which email you're referring.

Here's an example.

Aunt Shirley sent you an email with the subject 'Party on 5 Apr.' Once you click 'reply,' the subject of the email then changes to 'RE: Party on 5 Apr.' This automatic change saves you time in having to write a new message and retype a subject line every time, and it allows Aunt Shirley to quickly see you're replying to her 5 Apr party invite. How courteous of you!

NOTE: If you have received a message with more than one person's name in the To: and CC: fields you can reply to everyone by clicking on the Reply to All button, if your program has that option. Your reply will then go to every email address visible in the original message.

Forward

Well, let's say you'd like to make sure your best friends knows about Aunt Shirley's party, and you've gotten permission from Aunt Shirley to invite said best friend.

In email, you have the option to *forward* an email on to others so they may see the email as it was originally written.

So instead of writing up your own email telling your best friend Jill about the party, simply click on '**forward**' and the entire contents of Aunt Shirley's email are already in the body of the new email message – along with any attachments.

At this point, you might click into the top of the message Body, above the forwarded email, and say, 'Dear Jill, I'd like you to come along with me to Aunt Shirley's party. Are you available? Sincerely, ...' In addition, the subject line of Aunt Shirley's 'Party on 5 Apr' has automatically changed to 'FWD: Party on 5 Apr.' By the way, 'FWD:' stands for 'forward.' Anyone to whom you send this email can see quickly that you're forwarding them a party invite, and if they're interested, they may click on it to see what the party's all about.

4. Avoid Viruses and Spam

Plain and simple, if it's from someone you don't know or an address with which you're unfamiliar, don't open it. We repeat, DO NOT OPEN IT. Sometimes even opening an email from a strange address is enough to unleash an unfriendly amount of viruses that could wreak havoc on your computer. Here at the Web on Wheels, we want to make sure you don't end up the victim of spamming or viruses.

What's a spam email?

Spam email is any email you receive from someone you don't know (or from a company) that you did not specifically request to receive.

What's a virus email?

A virus email is normally an email that contains in it a link that doesn't look normal.

Normal Link Sample: www.google.com/help

Suspicious Link Sample: www.abbio23.com/2222kd/aslk.exe

Notice that there are letters and numbers, but they don't make much sense. Also, notice that instead of ending in .html, .htm, or .php, the link ends in .exe. .exe means it's an executable file. ANYTHING ending in .exe means it's a program that will run as soon as you click on it. Never do that unless you know exactly what that program is and that you have requested the program from that person.

Very often, the email accounts of friends and family are hijacked, and you'll get suspicious links that come from their email. Do not open it. Just delete it.

Very rarely, a virus enters your system through an email that you've opened. These normally do not come from senders you know, but from an email that you've never seen before. Do not even open these emails from strangers. Click on the checkbox, or click on the message to highlight it, and click the 'delete' button. You don't want to find out what sort of harm such emails can do to your computer.

As a rule of thumb, only open email from email addresses you know. If the address is unfamiliar, consider whether it may be a family member or friend. If you don't think it is, and the subject line seems odd, mark it and move it in the trash without opening the email at all.

Spammers and virus creators are very clever these days. They may even send you an email that pretends to be a familiar piece of correspondence. For instance, the email subject may say, 'I miss you' and the body of the email begins, 'I'd like to reconnect...' Well that type of message may make anyone want to open it. That's why we suggest you always check who the email is from and never open if it's from an unfamiliar sender.

How to Delete an Email without Opening It

All of our online inboxes have a column with checkboxes. You may click on one or several emails, thus selecting that particular email, and click on a certain button.

If you click on the checkbox for a suspicious email, and then click on the 'delete' button, you've successfully gotten rid of the suspicious email without actually opening it. This can save your computer from potential damage. In the least, you avoid having to open emails that you really don't want to read, and you save the time it takes to open it. (If you have an email client on your own computer, then remember to do the 'Empty Deleted Items' function to get rid of these messages permanently,)

Sometimes we get those annoying little emails advertising products or services in which we have zero interest. There are actually ways to prevent these getting into your inbox at all.

If you find that your inbox is full of unwelcome emails and you're having a hard time even finding the important emails from legitimate friends and family, please feel free to contact us at the Web on Wheels. We have one-on-one coaching services during which we'll walk you through ways to filter out junk email so it never appears in your inbox at all. If you would like more help, or one-on-one coaching, please call Viv on: (03) 9787 7500 or email: info@thewebonwheels.com.au

Part 3 Summary

Well that's email plain and simple. We hope you're confident in what you can do with email and that you're comfortable enough to sign up for an email account and begin corresponding with family and friends worldwide.

Part Three covered what email is and how it works, how to compose, send, receive, reply to and forward email, and how to avoid spam and virus email.

In short, email is just words going from one person to another through computers. It's private, so you should be the only person who knows the password to access your individual email account.

We learned how to compose, or create, a new email, how to send it to one person, how to send a copy to others in the CC field, and how to prevent the recipients from seeing each other by typing the email addresses in the BCC field. In addition, we learned the importance of a subject line and how to write one, and that you should write the most detailed parts of your email in the body.



Then we found out how to receive email from others, how to reply and forward those emails, and how to open attached files.

Most importantly, we learned some key ways to avoid receiving unwanted emails whether they were spam or virus emails.

In Part Four, we'll cover making purchases online. We'll look at everything from deciding whether a particular product or service online is legitimate, adding in those shipping costs, exploring e-bay, and avoiding those sneaky listserv signups that automatically add you into a list that will receive future emails you may or may not want.

This concludes Part Three of the 'Intro to the Internet' series.

If you would like more help, or one-on-one coaching, please call Viv on: (03) 9787 7500 or email: info@thewebonwheels.com.au