

# Transitioning to Google Apps Mail from Microsoft Outlook

To make the transition from Microsoft Outlook as smooth as possible, learn how you can accomplish the same tasks in Google Apps Mail. Check out some differences and discover new features along the way to jump-start your switch and unleash your productivity.

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## Reading mail

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Individual messages



Conversations

One of the major differences between Google Apps Email and Outlook is the way they each list your email messages. Outlook lists incoming email individually, regardless if it's a new message or a response to a prior email message. Apps Mail helps you manage messages more efficiently by listing groups of emails, called conversations.

Conversations are a collection of messages with the same subject line. When you click to read a conversation, you'll see all of the back and forth email responses that happens over the course of a single email conversation.



Lengthy email exchanges are simplified by keeping everything together -- no more hunting around to find bits and pieces of the same conversation!

Besides keeping your Inbox less cluttered and more organized, conversations also allow you to manage messages as a group. Any action you take on a conversation will affect all its contents. You can archive, delete, move, and label entire conversations with a few clicks.

## Organizing and searching your Inbox

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Folder and Rules

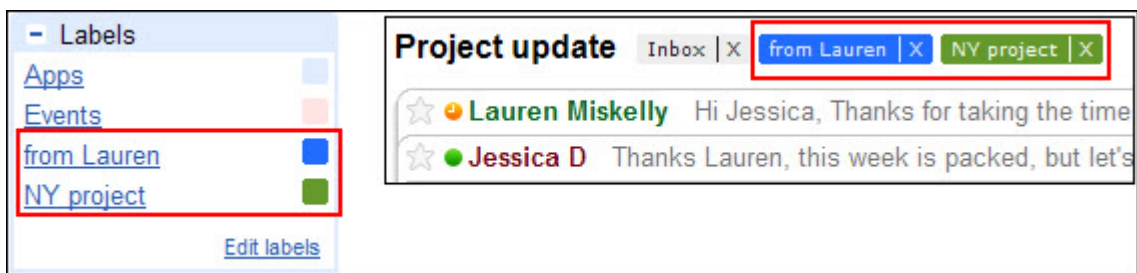


Labels, Filters and Search

Three Google Apps Mail features make organizing and finding mail in your account a snap: Labels, Filters, and Search. In combination, these features will allow you to categorize, search, and automatically process your mail in powerful ways. By reducing the time and energy spent organizing your mail, you can get back to more productive activities.

### Labels

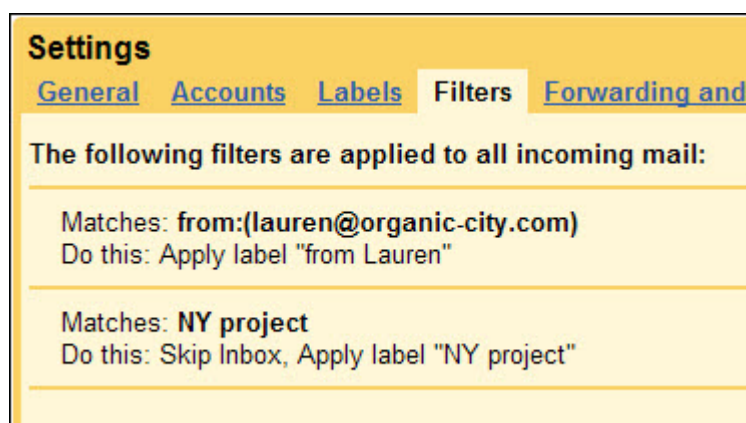
While you won't find folders in Apps Mail, you can use labels to organize email messages. Because multiple labels can be applied to the same conversation, you have the flexibility to manage conversations that may fall under more than one category.



By clicking on a label, you can view a chronological list of all conversations that have been tagged with that particular label. Unlike folders, messages with multiple labels will display in each label.

## Filters

Create filters that automatically label, archive, delete, and forward messages and let Apps Mail do the work for you. You can control which actions are taken based on the message subject, who sent the message, what text is included, whether it has an attachment, etc.



To get started with filters, click the **Settings** link in your account and select the **Filters** tab. Choosing to **Create a new filter** lets you specify what messages you want to filter and test how the filter will work.

## Search

Not sure if the message you're looking for is covered by your labels and filters? Not to worry, searching in Apps Mail is the best way to find messages. Try it and you'll find the same attributes that Google is known for: laser accuracy and blazing speed.

Start at the search bar at the top of the page and type whatever you remember from the message (e.g. text from the subject or message body, the recipient, etc.). You can also refine your query by using [search operators](#) or the advanced search option to hone in on messages with specific senders, recipients, subjects, labels, attachments, or date ranges.

## Keyboard Shortcuts

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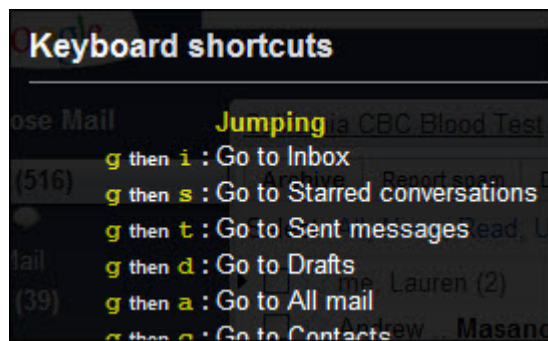


Keyboard Shortcuts



Keyboard Shortcuts

As with Outlook, Apps Mail provides keyboard shortcuts to efficiently navigate and take swift action on your email. To bring up a full menu of keyboard shortcuts, press **Shift + ?** when viewing your email.



## Signatures

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Two types: compose mail and replies to messages



One signature for all email

You can set a default signature that will be applied to all sent messages. To set up your signature, visit the **Settings** under the **General** tab.

<p><b>Signature:</b> (appended at the end of all outgoing messages)</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> No signature</p> <p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Jessica Daniels Project Coordinator, Organic City 650.555.5234</p>
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[For Labs-enabled Domains] You can add advanced features to your Signature in Apps Mail by enabling some experimental labs features. The **Signature Tweaks** lab lets you modify where your signature is placed in email messages, and the **Location in Signature** lab adds a map displaying the location from where you sent the email directly in the signature.

## Undo

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Undo



Undo

Apps Mail allows you to undo actions that you take on your messages. For example, if you moved your message to the wrong folder, press the **z** key to undo the action or click **Undo** in the yellow bar that will appear at the top of the page. While typing or editing a message, you can also press **Ctrl - z** to undo your last action.

The conversation has been moved to the Trash. [Learn more](#) **Undo**

[For Labs-enabled Domains] If you tend to send emails too hastily, enable the **Undo Send** lab. After initially sending your message, you'll have a couple of seconds to reconsider and undo sending the email message.

## Starred items

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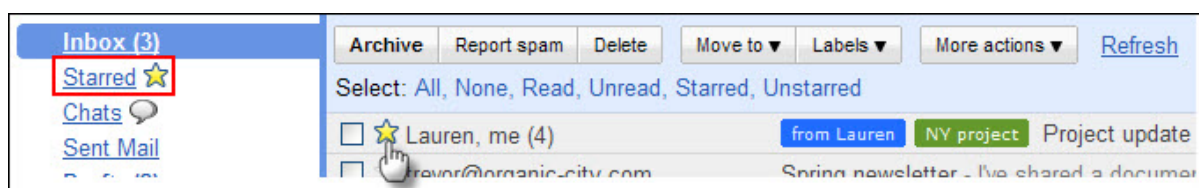


Red flags



Starred items

In Apps Mail, you can mark priority messages just as you can add a red flag in Outlook. Simply click the star icon (next to the sender's name) to star a message (click it again to remove the star). To see all the messages that you've starred, click the **Starred** link on the left side of your account.



[For Labs-enabled Domains] You can enhance the starring feature by enabling the **Superstars** lab in your account settings. This experimental feature allows you to use different types and colors of stars by toggling through a handful of icons, giving you another way to prioritize and flag your email.

## New email notification

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Notification for new email



Gmail Notifier

To have email notifications pop up in the corner of your screen when you receive a new message, you can download the [Google Talk client](#) (Windows only) or the [Gmail Notifier](#) (Windows & Mac).

## Out of Office Responder

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Out of Office responder  
(Exchange Server only)



Vacation responder

When you're away from your email, set up an automatic reply for your incoming messages. In the **Vacation responder** section of your **Settings** page, enter a message and turn the auto-response on or off as needed. If you don't want people who are contacting you for the first time to receive your auto-response, select 'Only send to people in my Contacts.'

<p><b>Vacation responder:</b> (sends an automated reply to incoming messages. If a contact sends you several messages, this automated reply will be sent at most once every 4 days) <a href="#">Learn more</a></p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Vacation responder off <input checked="" type="radio"/> <b>Vacation responder on</b></p> <p><b>Subject:</b> <input type="text" value="I'm out of here!"/></p> <p><b>Message:</b> <input type="text" value="If you need me between 8/24/08 and 8/31/08, I'll be on the sunny shores of Hawaii."/> <input type="text" value="For urgent issues, please contact trevor@organic-city.com. Mahalo!"/></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Only send a response to people in my Contacts</p>
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[For Labs-enabled Domains] To preset your vacation responder during a specific time range, you can enable the **Vacation Time!** lab -- this feature lets you assign a start and end date for your auto-response.

## Spell Check

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Automatic spell check



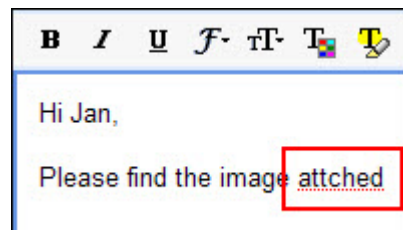
Manual spell check /  
browser

With Apps Mail, there are two ways to make sure nothing is misspelled:

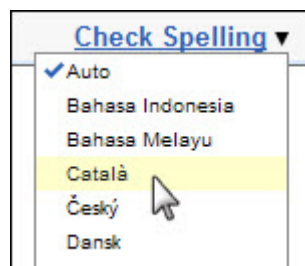
- Use the **Check Spelling** feature, located in the upper-right corner when you're composing a message. Misspelled words will be highlighted in yellow -- simply click on the highlighted words to view a list of suggested corrections.



- Use a browser with an automatic spell checker ([Firefox](#), Safari, [Google Chrome](#)) and misspelled words will be automatically underlined in red.



Are you sending a message in a different language? Check those messages too by clicking the black arrow next to the **Check Spelling** feature and selecting one of Google Apps Mail's 36 language dictionaries.



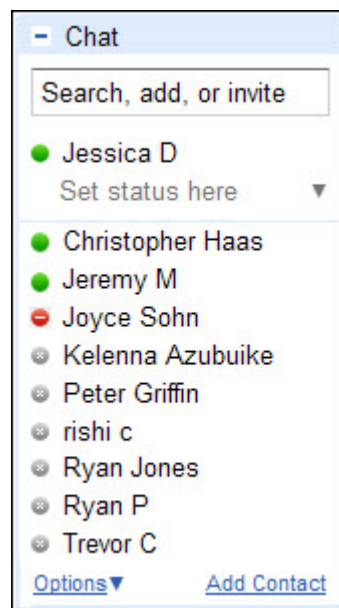
## Chat

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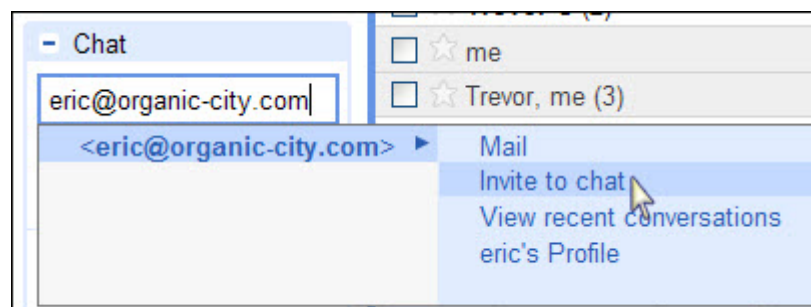


[For Chat-enabled domains]

Apps Mail provides a chat feature for those times when you want to quickly check in with your colleagues. Instead of waiting for email replies, exchange instant messages and get tasks done faster.



To start chatting, type in a coworker's email address into the chat gadget (on the left side of your Inbox) and select 'Invite to chat' in the drop-down menu that appears.



Once your coworker accepts your invitation, you'll see a green dot next to their name in your chat list when they're online. Click their name in the list to start a chat conversation.

You can also make voice and video calls with Apps Mail's chat feature after [downloading](#) the voice and video chat plug-in. If you're chatting with a contact that



has a camera icon next to their name in your chat list, click **Video & more** at the bottom of your chat window to start a voice or video chat.

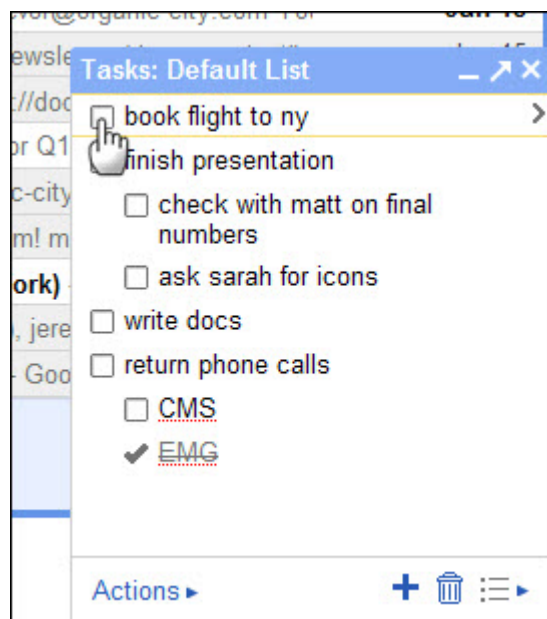
## Tasks

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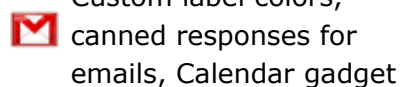
[For Labs-enabled Domains]

Google Apps Mail also allows you to keep track of to-do lists in a similar way to Outlook's tasks feature. To turn on Google Apps Mail Tasks for your account, enable the **Tasks** lab in your **Settings**. Once enabled, the 'Tasks' link on the left side of your account will open the to-do list window. In the tasks window, click the '+' icon to get started and add a task. Once you've completed a task, check it off the list.



## Additional Features

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Throughout this document, sections marked with "[For Labs-enabled Domains]" describe features that are only available if your domain has enabled the special "Labs" feature of Google Apps Mail. While these features are still considered experimental, they are a great way to customize your Inbox to make it work for you. In addition to the Labs features mentioned in this document, there are a number of additional options, including offline access to Mail, custom label colors, adding pictures to chat, custom keyboard shortcuts, and more.

<p>▼ Quick Links</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Unread mail in inbox</a> x</li> <li><a href="#">From family</a> x</li> <li><a href="#">NY flight itinerary</a> x</li> <li><a href="#">Directions to party</a> x</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Add Quick Link</a></p>	<p><b>Quick Links</b> by Dan P</p>	<p><input type="radio"/> Enable <input checked="" type="radio"/> Disable</p>
<p>Adds a box to the left column that gives you 1-click access to any bookmarkable URL in Organic City Mail. You can use it for saving frequent searches, important individual messages, and more.</p>	<p><a href="#">Send feedback</a></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Chris Scully</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Melissa, Jessica</b> (2)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Ed, Jennifer</b> (2)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Michael L, Hadley</b> (3)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Superstars</b> by Kai H &amp; Julie W</p>	<p><input checked="" type="radio"/> Enable <input type="radio"/> Disable</p>
<p>Adds additional star icons. After enabling this feature:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Go to the "General" Settings page to choose which superstars you wish to use.</li> <li>(2) Use either the keyboard shortcut ('s) or click to rotate through your selected superstars.</li> <li>(3) Use the search operator "has:" to find all messages with your superstar (e.g. "has:red-bang", "has:blue-star"). Learn the name of a superstar by hovering over its image in the "General" Settings page.</li> </ol>	<p><a href="#">Send feedback</a></p>	

To enable Labs features, click the green beaker icon at the top right of your page to see a list of the available options (or click **Settings**, then select the **Labs** tab). If you do not see Labs enabled in your account, contact your domain administrator for additional information.

jessica@organic-city.com | | [Settings](#) | [Older version](#) | [Help](#) | [Sign out](#)

1 Labs feature is enabled

Keep in mind that Apps Mail is a web application, which means that features can be updated and added without the trouble of downloading or installing updates. Because of this, Apps Mail will continually add new functionality to help you be even more productive. To stay updated on new releases and changes to your Mail, check in on the [Google Apps Updates Blog](#).