

Web Mail vs Email Clients* – Galen Garretson

When new to the internet, the difference between web mail and email clients can be confusing. You may have been shown how to use one way but don't know how to use the other.

Both web mail and email clients use the internet to read and send mail. What may be confusing is how each of these work.

When someone sends you an email it is stored on an email server (computer). The email server usually belongs to your Internet Service Provider (i.e. Charter, Century Link, etc) or it can belong to a free service such as Gmail or Hotmail.

How you send and receive your email will depend on whether you use Web Mail or an Email Client.

Web Mail

With web mail, you read or send email through your internet browser and the web mail interface.

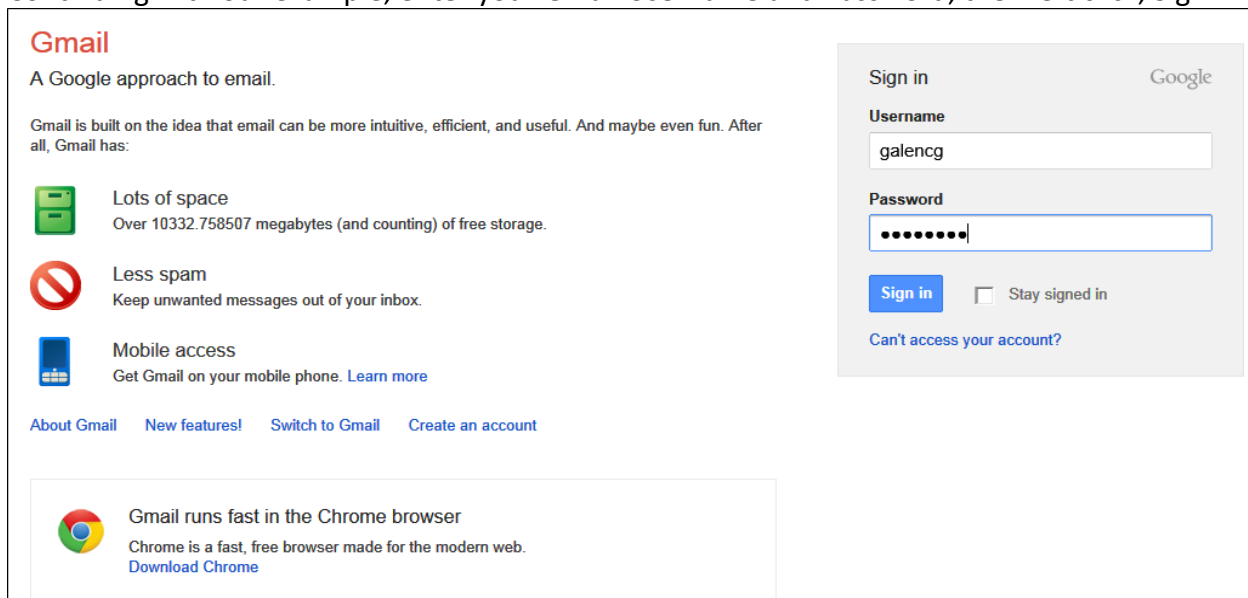
Some examples of web mail are:

- Gmail
- Hotmail
- Yahoo Mail
- Outlook (outlook.com new with Windows 8)
- Your ISP (Internet Service Provider): Charter, Century Link, etc.

Accessing Web Mail




When you access a web mail account you use your internet browser.

1. You will be given a web address to access your web mail. We'll use Gmail** as an example. The web address to access Gmail is: www.gmail.com.
2. Next you will need to set up an account. Here is a YouTube tutorial: [Setting up a Gmail Account](#)
3. After setting up an account you will need to login. This requires your user name and password. Continuing with our example, enter your Gmail Username and Password, then left click, Sign in.




Gmail
A Google approach to email.

Gmail is built on the idea that email can be more intuitive, efficient, and useful. And maybe even fun. After all, Gmail has:

-  **Lots of space**
Over 10332.758507 megabytes (and counting) of free storage.
-  **Less spam**
Keep unwanted messages out of your inbox.
-  **Mobile access**
Get Gmail on your mobile phone. [Learn more](#)

[About Gmail](#) [New features!](#) [Switch to Gmail](#) [Create an account](#)

 Gmail runs fast in the Chrome browser
Chrome is a fast, free browser made for the modern web.
[Download Chrome](#)

Sign in Google

Username

Password

☐ Stay signed in

[Can't access your account?](#)

If there is an option to “stay signed in”, avoid this, particularly if you are using a public computer. The login information is saved to a cookie on the machine. The next person who uses the computer will have access to your web based email account if you use the “stayed signed in” feature.

4. Once logged in, you can now read the emails sent to your web based email account and send emails from this email address.
5. Here is another YouTube video on using Gmail: [Using Gmail](#)

You can also set up some web based email accounts to be picked up via your email client. e.g. Gmail, your website email accounts, etc.

Email Client

An email client is a piece of software on your computer that you use to read and send emails from your computer. The advantage of using an email client is that the emails are stored on your computer and are accessible faster than using a web based email interface. Also, with an email client you can read the messages you already received without being connected to the internet or connecting to your web mail service.

There are various email client programs available. Some of the more common email clients are:

- Windows Live Mail (XP, Vista, Windows 7 & 8)
- Outlook Express – (XP and previous versions of Windows)
- Outlook – part of the Microsoft Office collection of programs
- Thunderbird – comes with the Firefox browser

Using an Email Client

To use your installed email client you will need to click the desktop icon for it or look in your Programs list for the shortcut.

An email client needs some setting up before you can use it. Such things as Incoming and Outgoing servers, ports, and security settings. However, most service providers are happy to help you setup your email client to access your email. Or, you can give one of the RASCAL folks a call. Here's the basic set-up steps for two popular email clients

1. Create an email account
 - [Create an email account in Outlook Express or Outlook](#)
2. Edit the email account
 - [Edit account name property](#) in Outlook Express or Outlook
3. If you are a travelling type person who takes a laptop with you, you can set your email client on the laptop to leave a copy of emails on the web mail server. This way, when you get back home, the email client on your home computer can pick up the email. This saves you transferring or emailing yourself important emails once you get home.
 - [Leave a Copy of Email on Email Server](#)
4. Like web based email, you can organize and sort email in your email client.
 - [Sort Order of Email in Outlook Express – Outlook](#)
 - [Organize Outlook Express Emails](#)
 - [Organize Outlook Emails](#)
5. You can also create email signatures in your email client.
 - [Create an Email Signature in Outlook Express](#)
 - [Create an email signature in Outlook](#)

So now, you know how to use web based email and an email client. It's handy to know how to use both of these methods of reading and sending email. A seasoned traveler might want to check email from home or while away on a trip. They can use web mail to check emails and leave the messages there to be picked up at the home upon their return or set up their email client at home/on the laptop to leave the emails on the email server so they can pick up the mail during their travels.

It's Your Choice (or both!!)

For webmail

- New features often arrive faster – may be added every few weeks, while clients may not get updates for years
- Access all of your mail immediately – clients generally only sync recent mail, though they can sync all of your mail
- Possibly more customization – Gmail has themes, for example, while Outlook doesn't have that much customization
- IM built in - with Outlook.com it's Skype, with Gmail it's Google Talk and Google+, with AOL Mail it's AIM; you get the idea. It's generally more social.

For the email client

- Access mail offline – you can also queue changes and new messages for when you are back online
- *Possibly* more features – it really depends. The Windows 8 Mail client has no-where near as many features as Outlook.com, but Microsoft Outlook probably has more features than Gmail
- Notifications as new mail arrives
- Maybe faster performance
- Less distracting – when using a browser to access your mail, the temptation is there to add a new tab and check Facebook. When using a dedicated app, it's a lot more steps to do so and therefore there's less chance of you doing it.
- System integration (sometimes) – For Windows 8 users the Windows Mail app supports live tiles, pin folders to start, notifications and lock screen support. Using IE to access Outlook.com doesn't provide any of this.
- Access multiple email accounts - though Gmail and Outlook.com can do this via POP, the problems with it have just been summed up by the sentence before the comma: it's with POP. That means changes don't sync back, and if it's your work email, that might be a problem. Clients often using IMAP or Active Sync instead, so the changes sync back, resulting in a better experience.

So it comes down to personal choice and there's no better or worse option. I use both.

* Portions taken from All of Time and Tech

**Gmail is only used as an example and not recommended over any other web mail service.