Gmail Basics:
e-mail basics

E-mail:

E-mail refers to electronic mail. It serves the same purpose as traditional paper mail but recipients receive the messages nearly instantly by signing in to their accounts. E-mail is often used because it is fast, convenient, and usually free.

Gmail is a free e-mail service. The design is relatively simple and access is very reliable.

Set up an account by going to gmail.com and clicking on "Create account." Fill in the information required and click on "Next step" at the bottom of the page. The username you create will be your e-mail address @gmail.com. Do not forget your password.

Signing In and Out:

To sign in to your account, go to gmail.com. Type in your username and then click on "Next." You do not need to type @gmail.com as part of your username. Type in your password and then click on "Sign in."

When you are finished using your e-mail, click on your name in the top right and click on "Sign out."

Inbox:

After logging in, you will be viewing your inbox. E-mail folders are listed on the left. In the center of the screen is your inbox which is a list of all the e-mails you have received. E-mails in your inbox are listed in date order with the newest e-mails at the top.

To read an e-mail, you must first open it. To open an e-mail, simply click on the subject of the e-mail. After reading the e-mail, click on "Inbox" on the left side of the screen to return to your inbox or list of e-mails. Bold type in the sender and subject lines and a white background indicates a message has not yet been read. After a message has been read, the sender and subject lines are no longer bold and the e-mail is listed with a light gray background.

E-mails are grouped by conversation. If you reply to an e-mail, the original message and the reply will be grouped into one line or conversation in the inbox. Click on the e-mail subject to open both of the e-mails.

To delete an e-mail while reading it, click on the trash can at the top of the screen. To delete an e-mail from the inbox without reading it, click on the box to the left of the sender's name. A checkmark should appear in the box. Click on the trash can at the top of the screen. This method can be used to delete multiple e-mails simultaneously. Simply place a checkmark in the box before each e-mail to be deleted and then click on the trash can at the top of the screen.

Sending Mail:

To send an e-mail, you must know the recipient's e-mail address. Click on "Compose" in the top left. This will open a window at the bottom right. After the word "To" type the recipient's e-mail address. Click on the word "Subject" and type a brief description of what the e-mail is about. Click in the white box below the subject and type your letter or e-mail message.

When you are finished, click on "Send" at the bottom. A box at the top of the screen will say "Your message has been sent."

Responding to Mail:

To reply to an e-mail, open the e-mail and click on the "Reply" arrow at the top right of the e-mail. This will open a box under the original message in which you can type your response.

If you want to reply to the person who sent the e-mail and everyone who originally received the e-mail, click on the down arrow to the right of the "Reply" arrow. Click on "Reply to all." This will open a box under the original message in which you can type your response.

If you want to forward an e-mail to someone else, click on the down arrow to the right of the "Reply" arrow. Click on "Forward." This will open a box under the original message in which you can type the recipient's e-mail address and your response.

Tips:

- Don't forget to sign out. When you have finished using your e-mail, sign out properly so that others do not have access to your account. Closing the browser window does not necessarily sign you out of your e-mail account.
- Read the screen. Look at everything on the screen before getting discouraged. The needed information is often somewhere on the screen.
- Hover over icons you don't understand. A brief description of the icon's action will often appear when hovering over the icon with the mouse.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help.

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