



Middletown Thrall Library Presents

A Brief Guide to Establishing a Web Based E-mail Account

Getting Started...

If you would like to send and receive e-mail from any location, including the library, you will need something called a web based e-mail account: such an e-mail account will allow you to access your e-mail *wherever full Internet access is available*.

You may apply for a free web based e-mail account from a variety of third party services on the World Wide Web, such as Microsoft Hotmail.com (on the web at <http://www.hotmail.com>) or Yahoo! Mail (on the web at <http://mail.yahoo.com>). For more e-mail providers: <http://www.fepg.net>

Read the Fine Print Before You Register!

Whatever provider you select, be sure to read their online Terms of Service, privacy policies, and any other instructions or disclaimers. Do so before you enroll yourself in that service and any of its offers.

Choose a User Name and Password

Web based e-mail providers tend to work in the same manner: during the sign-up process you choose a USER NAME, which becomes part of your e-mail address (e.g. username@emailservice.xyz). You will also select a password. Because there are millions of e-mail users, the user name you would like to select is probably already being used by someone else. In that case, select an alternate user name recommended by the e-mail provider. You may also try another name. Keep trying until you find an available user name that works for you. Once you have successfully registered, *write your user name and password down and keep that information private*: these are the keys to your account!

Practice

If you would like to practice sending and receiving e-mail *without first registering with an e-mail provider*, you can use our E-mail Trainer simulation program (at <http://www.thrall.org/emailtrainer>), but remember this is *only a simulation*: *it will not allow you to send and receive real e-mail*.

Once you are ready and have registered with a *real* web based e-mail provider, practice accessing your account and sending/receiving messages. Try sending a message *to yourself*. Different e-mail providers use different words for similar functions. Click COMPOSE or NEW MESSAGE to write a message. Click INBOX, CHECK MAIL, or CHECK FOR NEW MESSAGES to see if you received any mail.

When Done...

REMEMBER TO LOG OUT OF YOUR ACCOUNT! Look for the "LOG OUT" or "LOG OFF" or "EXIT" button in your e-mail service and click it. Exit the web browser when completely done.

Delays

Please note: During 12 - 3 PM (Eastern Standard Time) web based e-mail providers are extremely busy, so there may be lengthy delays in accessing your account. You may not be able to access your e-mail.

Inactive and Infrequently Accessed Accounts

If you do not access your e-mail account regularly (at least once a month), it may be suspended or deactivated by your e-mail service provider.

Some Handy E-mail Tips

Composing Messages

When the “Compose Message” or “Send Message” page appears you will notice a form containing the fields TO, SUBJECT, and a larger rectangular box (called the BODY of the message).

TO: is where you type the e-mail address of the person you would like to contact. Type the e-mail address carefully: one letter off and your message will not reach its intended recipient! Type the “@” symbol by pressing SHIFT and the number 2 key (“2” at the top of the keyboard, not on the number pad) simultaneously.

SUBJECT is where you describe the nature of your message, as in “good news” or “just saying hi.”

BODY is where you will type your message. Many e-mail services will not use the term “BODY”; whatever term used, the large rectangular box is where you will be typing your message. When ready to send your message, click SEND. The next time the person you e-mailed checks for messages, your message will appear (if correctly sent), and they may choose to reply to you.

Reading Messages

New messages appear in your INBOX. This is the primary folder where all messages first appear. To read a message, click on its SUBJECT line in the list of messages stored in the INBOX.

Replying to Messages

To reply to a message you have received, click REPLY. You do not have to fill in the TO: or SUBJECT lines (the e-mail program does this for you). All you need to do is type your message in the large rectangular box and click SEND.

Deleting Messages

Once you read a message and decide you no longer need to refer to it you can delete it by first bringing up the message and then clicking on DELETE. Deleted messages go into your TRASH folder. Most web based e-mail service providers periodically delete messages in the TRASH folder, so be careful when deleting messages—they’re not likely to be retrievable once deleted!

Forwarding Messages

Sometimes you receive a message (such as a cooking recipe or a funny story) which you would like to share with someone else. You can do this by first bringing up the message and then clicking the FORWARD button. In the TO: line enter the e-mail address of the person you’d like to send a the message to and then click SEND. A copy of that message will be sent to the person.

Junk Mail / “Spam”

Eventually everyone with e-mail receives junk mail (also known as “spam”). While there is no proven way of completely eliminating spam, *you can minimize the problem* by being careful not to share your e-mail address with strangers or web sites that request your e-mail address for no good reason. Some e-mail providers offer e-mail filters to help you direct unwanted e-mail to the TRASH folder. Check with your e-mail provider for more information on e-mail filters. Never reply to junk mail, even if prompted to do so, as your reply will only result in more unwanted messages. Use the SUBJECT line of the message (when it appears in your INBOX) to determine what a message is about—sometimes that’s enough to help you determine if it can be deleted without being read.

Beware of Viruses!

Be careful not to open any files sent to you by e-mail without first having them checked for viruses. If you are *not* familiar with virus protection software you should never open a file sent by e-mail, even if it appears to have come from a friend or colleague of yours: the file might contain a virus, which is a potentially destructive program that could compromise or damage your computer.