Archiving messages in Gmail

Archive messages

Archiving removes messages from your inbox, but keeps them in your account under the All mail label so that you can always find them later. Archiving is like moving messages into a filing cabinet for safekeeping, rather than putting them in the trash can.

Why archive?

- Clean up your inbox by getting messages out of your way.
- Archived messages stay in your account in case you need to find a phone number in someone’s signature or you become famous and write a memoir.
- When you delete a message (instead of archiving), it will be automatically and permanently deleted after about 30 days.

How to archive

Archive individual messages

1. Open Gmail.
2. Open the message (or select the checkbox next to it).
3. Click the Archive button.

Find archived messages

All your archived messages can be found with search or by looking in the All Mail view. When someone responds to a message you've archived, the conversation containing that message will reappear in your inbox.

Search

The easiest way to find archived messages is to search. If you're having trouble finding the result you want, you can refine your search by clicking the small arrow in the search box, and entering your criteria in the appropriate fields. Learn more about Gmail search.

Look in labels or All Mail

If you applied a custom label to a message, click your label on the left side of Gmail and look for your message there. Any message you've archived can be found in All Mail, so if you can't find your message in search or a custom label, follow these directions:
1. Open Gmail.
2. Hover over your label list on the left side of Gmail (under the compose button).
3. Click More at the bottom of your label list (you may need to scroll down).

If you don't see All Mail under More, look for All Mail towards the top of your label list.
4. Select All Mail.

If you don’t see All Mail under More, look for All Mail towards the top of your label list.
5. Look through the pages of messages.

Move archived messages back to your inbox

1. Find the message (see above).
2. Open the message (or select the checkbox next to it).
3. Click the Move to Inbox button in the toolbar.