Email Basics

Email, short for Electronic Mail, consists of messages which are sent and received using the Internet. There are many different email services available that allow you to create an email account and send and receive email and attachments, many of which are free.

Today we will focus on the services available through Yahoo! Mail because it is free and one of the more popular email services available, but we will also give hints, examples and advice for Gmail and the email software programs Outlook, Outlook Express, and Thunderbird.

The Pros and Cons of Email

The Pros

- It's fast. Most messages are delivered within minutes – sometimes seconds – around the world without the inconvenience and cost of using s postal service. In fact, postal service is often referred to as "snail mail" by email users.
- It's personal. While the nature of email is informal, its efficiency is an excellent substitute for telephone conversations.
- You can think through your response. Like a letter, you can type your reply and make changes before sending.
- The sender and the receiver don't have to be working at the same time. Email avoids problems such as telephone tag or trying to contact someone in a different time zone.
- Email makes it easy to keep a record of your communication. You can save and refer to later copies of the emails you send as well as those you receive.
- You can reach a lot of people at once. It is possible to send one message to hundreds of recipients at once, or you can send a private message to one individual.

The Cons

- Junk Mail (also known as Spam). This is as annoying in email as it is with traditional mail. Try not to send unnecessary messages.
- Ads. The reason you can get free email services like Yahoo is because of advertisements. You pay the price of having to click around them to read your mail.
- Misinterpretation. Email arrives without tone or hand gestures which can lead to misunderstandings.
- Email messages can be passed on to others. You should always count on the possibility of your message ending up in the inbox of someone it wasn't intended for.
- You can hide behind email. It's tempting to use email instead of facing a person when you have to deal with an unpleasant situation. It's best to talk to a person face-to-face under these circumstances.

Don't use email for:

- Long or complicated messages
  - Sometimes it's more effective to speak to someone in person or on the phone. It can be difficult to effectively write down a complicated message in email format.
- Questions that require a lot of clarification
  - If a message is going to require several exchanges back and forth to make sure it is understood, more direct communication is best.
- Delivering indiscreet, sensitive, or private information
  - While your Email account is personal, keep in mind that, while rare, passwords have been stolen and there are ways for interested parties to intercept information.
- Angry exchanges
- Things you should say in person

Setting Up a Yahoo! Email Account

Connect to the Internet by double-clicking the Internet Explorer desktop icon.
Go to the Yahoo! Mail site by typing http://mail.yahoo.com into the address bar at
   the top of the screen.
You should see a screen that looks like this:

Click on the **Sign Up** link at the bottom of the box.

Sign in to Yahoo!

Are you protected?
Create your sign-in seal. (Why?)

Yahoo! ID

(e.g. free2rhyme@yahoo.com)

Password:

☐ **Keep me signed in**
for 2 weeks unless I sign out. Info
[Uncheck if on a shared computer]

Sign In

I can't access my account | Help

Don't have a Yahoo! ID?
Signing up is easy.   Sign Up

Complete all information on the form

1. Tell us about yourself...

My Name   First Name   Last Name

Gender   - Select One -

Birthday   - Select Month -   Day   Year

I live in   United States

Postal Code

Yahoo! ID: Keep in mind
  that your Yahoo! ID will
  become your email
  address, so choose
  carefully! When you type
  in your selection, a box

2. Select an ID and password

Yahoo! ID and Email   @ yahoo.com   Check

Password   Password Strength

Re-type Password

will pop up that will ask you to check the availability of your ID. Because there are so
many email users, sometimes you might have to try a few before finding one that is free.

Tip: Your ID/email address doesn't have to be your given name. With email, you can choose
   something that is related to your occupation or interests. For example, you might want to
   be bluebird@yahoo.com. If you find that that is already taken, you could always add some
   numbers after it to make it more unique. If you were born in 1960, you could be blue-
   bird1960@yahoo.com.

Password: You will also need to select your password. Make sure your password is some-
   thing that you can remember, but no one else can easily figure out! Usually, you will need a
   password that is 6 characters or longer, and includes at least one letter, one number, and
   one special sign.

Example: Password4$

Setting Up a Yahoo! Email Account continued

Write down your Yahoo! ID and Password. This is crucial because you will NOT be able to access your email without them.

Yahoo! ID: _____

Password: _____

If you do forget your password, the next section of the form makes it possible for you to retrieve it.

3. In case you forget your ID or password...

Alternate Email	
1.Security Question	- Select One -
Your Answer	
2.Security Question	- Select One -
Your Answer	

Here you can select two questions that Yahoo! can ask you to make sure you are really who you say you are. That way, your password won't be given out to someone trying to break into your account.

You may want to write down your answers if you think you might forget!

The next portion of the form is simply another security measure. Type the code into the box as you see it on your screen. These can be tricky, so if you don't think you can read the numbers and letters, then "try a new code" or click the "Need audo assistance?" button to hear it said to you.

Type the code shown [   ]   ◄)) Need audio assistance ?

nGzo3n

Try a new code

Setting Up a Yahoo! Email Account continued

Then click the "Create My Account" Button and you are done! If you forgot a piece of required information, or something isn't quite right - the same page will flash back up except there will be a red note beside what you need to fix. Additionally, if you take too long - the form might "time out" and you could have to start all over again. So work as quickly as you can!!!

Congratulations - You now have an email account! Remember that your email address is your Yahoo! ID directly followed by "@yahoo.com".

How do I use Outlook, Outlook Express, or Thunderbird on my computer?

Outlook, Outlook Express, and Thunderbird are pieces of software that are installed on your computer and can be set up to check your email. These are usually used with an existing email account (like your work account or the account you were given when you signed up for your internet access). Setting up Outlook, Outlook Express, and Thunderbird can be tricky - but if someone else has already done it for you - you're set!

Using one of these programs is great if you only check your email from one computer - but if you use lots of computers to check it, then you may want to go with a "web-based" email like Yahoo! or Gmail.
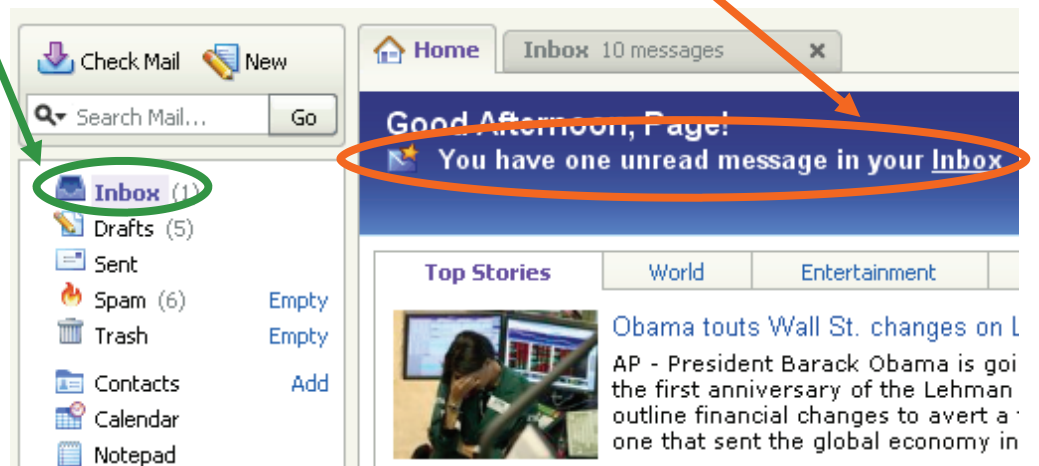
Many of the points we will discuss for the rest of class are the same in Outlook, Outlook Express, and Thunderbird as they are in Yahoo! or Gmail. The Buttons may be in slightly different places or look a little different, but the idea is the same!

Checking Your Email with Yahoo!

Once your have set up your email account, you can check your mail anywhere that you can access the Internet. This is how it is done:

1. Connect to the Internet by double-clicking the Internet Explorer desktop icon.

2. Go to the Yahoo! Mail site by typing http://mail.yahoo.com into the address bar at the top of the screen.

3. Type your **Yahoo! ID** and **Password** into the box at right. (don't forget the @yahoo.com at the end!)

4. The next page will show you the number of new messages in your Inbox.

Click on the **Inbox** link in the middle or on the Menu bar at left to retrieve your messages.

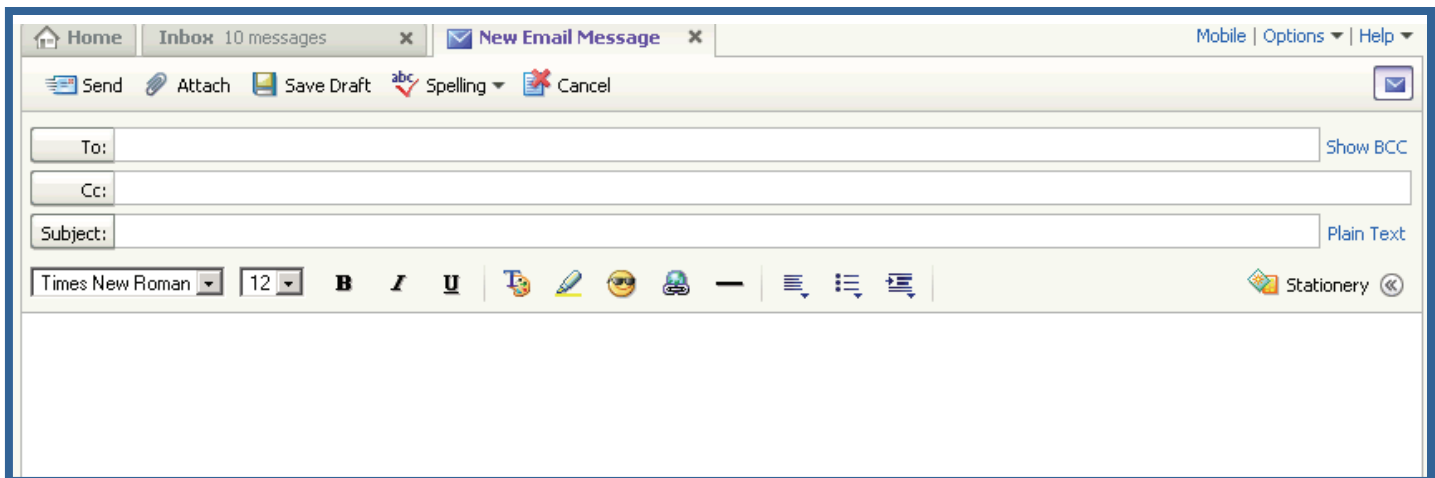5. The Inbox is where all of your incoming messages are stored.

Click on the **Subject** of the message to open and read it. We will go into more detail regarding Receiving and Reading messages in a later section. Usually, an unread (or new) message will be in bold!)

Composing and Sending Messages

To compose a message, click the **New** or **Compose** button at the top of any screen.

The compose screen (below) is a blank message form.

- **From:** is your email address, or the address sending the email. Usually this is already filled in with your address

- **To:** is where you type the email address of the primary recipients.

- **Subject:** is a concise indication of the subject of your message. It is important to include a subject line because it will benefit the recipient by allowing them see what your email is about before they open it. It is especially helpful if you are sending email to someone who might not recognize their address. This will help indicate to them that the email is not spam, or junk email.

- **Add CC / Add BCC:** To add secondary addresses to your email, click on these links and additional boxes will appear.

- **Add CC:** CC stands for "carbon copy." This allows you to "copy" a person on an email that you are sending to someone else.

- **Add BCC:** This is for "blind carbon copies." If you send a copy of an email to someone by putting their address here, the recipients in the **To:** and **CC:** boxes will not be able to see that person's address.

You can enter multiple recipients in all three address boxes. Separate the addresses with a comma and a space.

Composing and Sending Messages, continued

The box where you actually type your message is easy to spot because it's the largest one in the window. Click inside to start typing. If you want to change the appearance of your text, you can use the formatting toolbar at the top of the box. The formatting options are similar to those used in Microsoft Word.
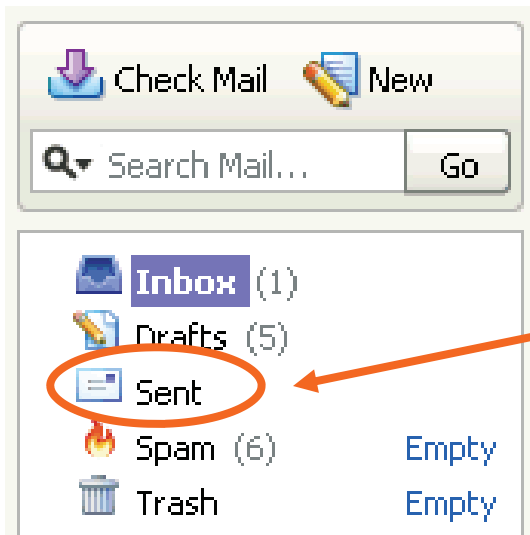
Yahoo Formatting Toolbar

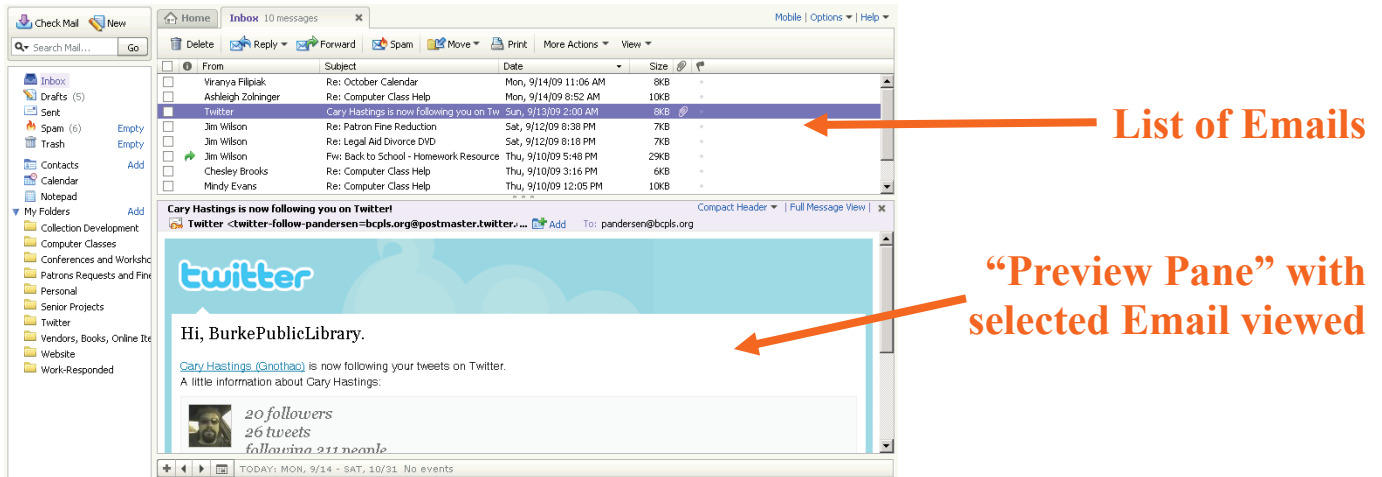Once you have completed your message, send it by clicking on the **Send** button at the top of the window.

IMPORTANT: You cannot cancel a message once you have sent it, so make sure you want to send the message before you click **Send**.

By default, Yahoo! Mail saves the messages you send in your Sent messages folder so you have a record of what you sent and when. You can find your Sent message folder from the main Mail tab in the Menu bar on the left in Yahoo! Mail and on the left side of each page.

Reading and Receiving Messages

By default, email messages are viewed in the **Inbox**. New messages are emboldened with a link under **Subject**. To view your message, click on the subject to open the message. The message will appear in the "preview pane" below the list of emails. If you want to open the email in a separate tab, double-click the subject.

List of Emails

"Preview Pane" with selected Email viewed

Once you have read your message, you have several options. The buttons for each of these options is on or near the toolbar. Look around a little and you will find them!:

- **Replying to the message**: Selecting this option will include the original message you were sent and address the message automatically to the person who sent it to you. You can then add text to the existing message and delete portions of the text if you wish before returning your reply to the sender.

  Click on the **Reply** button to reply only to the sender. Or, click on the arrow on the **Reply** button and select "Reply to Everyone" if you prefer to send the message to all recipients of the original message.

- **Forwarding the Message**: This feature copies the message you are viewing for delivery to another email address. You can't see the original message but you can add text at the beginning of the message before sending it.

Moving messages to other folders

Use folders to organize your email! Some are already made for you, can see these in the left menu bar on the main mail tab. If you want to create more folders - just click on "**Add**" at the top. A pop-up box will appear; type the name you want to use and click okay!
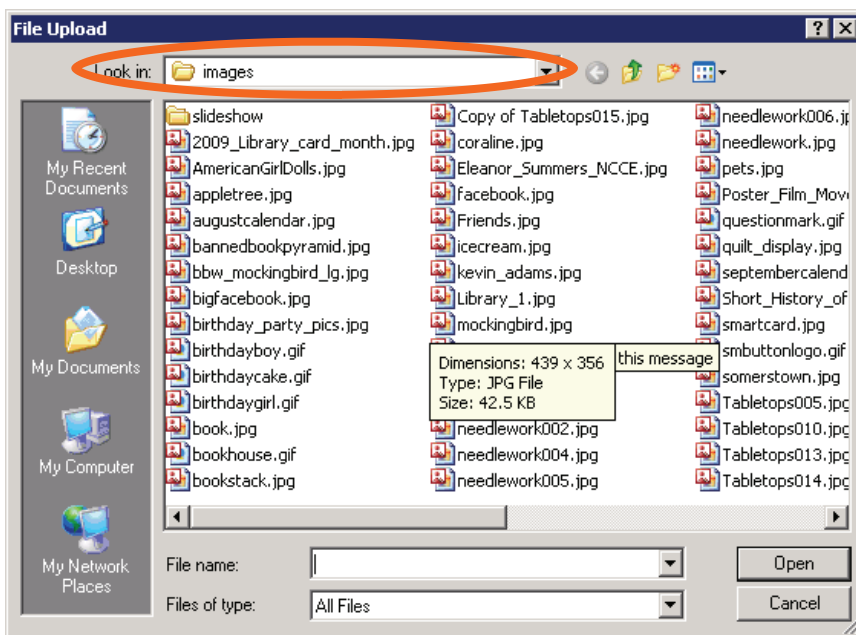
Messages can be moved to folders by selecting the message from the Inbox by checking the boxes next to each message you want to move. Then click on the "**Move**" button and choose the desired folder. If you already have the message open, simply click "**Move**" from the message screen and choose the folder you want to put it in!

Attaching Files to an Email

You can attach files to your email messages. This feature allows you to send pictures, documents and even sounds.

To attach a file, first you need to do the same things you do to compose a message
1. Click on Compose
2. Type the address
3. Type the subject
4. Type the message
5. When you are finished with your message, in Yahoo! click on the "Attach" Button under the subject box. This will open an Attachement Window

6. The **File Upload** window (left) should be open. Click on the down arrow of the "Look in:" window to find the file on your computer. Click on the file to select and click **Open**. If you have more files to attach, repeat these steps 5 and 6 before moving on.
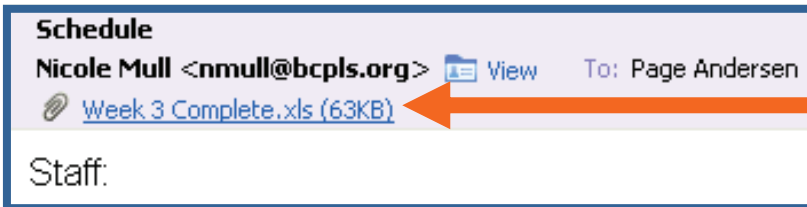
7. Once you click **Open,** you will return to the composition screen and Yahoo! Will automatically scan the attachment for viruses and attach it to your email if it's clean. This may take a little time, depending on the size of your file. Once the file is attached, you'll see the name, the size and confirmation that the file has been checked for viruses. Notice that the name of your file appears with a paperclip icon next to it.

8. If you have more files to attach, repeat these steps 5, 6, and 7 before moving on.

9. Click **Send** to send the message (in either program).

Receiving Attachments

When you receive a message with an attachment a paper clip appears next to the subject of the message in your inbox window.
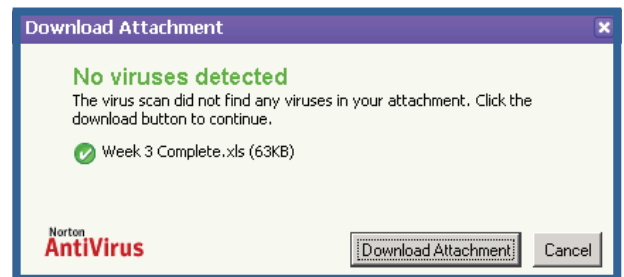
Click on the subject of the message to open it. At the bottom of the message "header" (aka where the to, from, and subject lines are and before the body of the message, you'll see a list of the attachments:

Schedule
Nicole Mull <nmull@bcpls.org> 📇 View   To: Page Andersen
📎 Week 3 Complete.xls (63KB)

Staff:

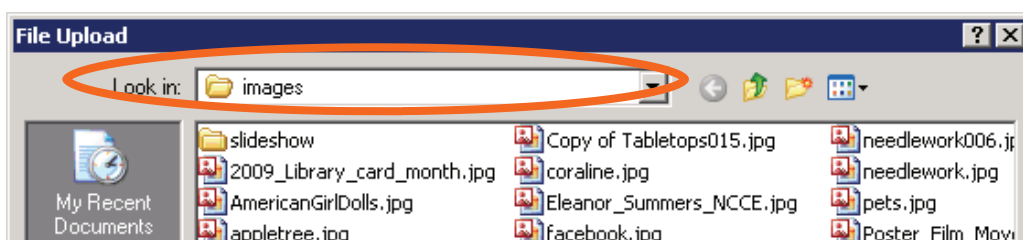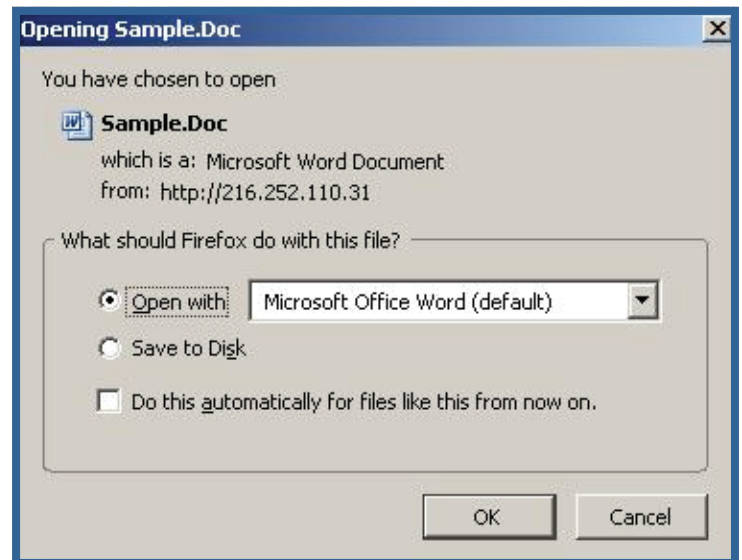**This Email has an attachment called "Week_3_Complete.xls"**

Click on the attachment name, and Yahoo! will scan the attachment for possible viruses and give you a report. Once the document has been determined clean, a box will pop up and you click on "Download Attachment" to download the document to your computer

Download Attachment

No viruses detected
The virus scan did not find any viruses in your attachment. Click the download button to continue.

✅ Week 3 Complete.xls (63KB)

Norton **AntiVirus**   [Download Attachment] [Cancel]

Once you click on Download, a box will pop up and ask you if you would like to open the file, or if you would like to save it to a disk:

To open the file, click the **Open** button, and the program that runs this type of file (such as Word) will open with the attached file.

To save the file to your computer, or a floppy disk or USB key: click the **Save** button. If you choose this option, you won't get to see the contents of the file first. Then you will have to "browse" to where you want to save the file.

Opening Sample.Doc

You have chosen to open

📄 **Sample.Doc**
which is a: Microsoft Word Document
from: http://216.252.110.31

What should Firefox do with this file?

⦿ Open with   [Microsoft Office Word (default) ▼]
○ Save to Disk

☐ Do this automatically for files like this from now on.

[OK]   [Cancel]

File Upload   [?][X]

Look in: [📁 images   ▼] ◐ 📂 📂 🎞▼

📁 slideshow   📄 Copy of Tabletops015.jpg   📄 needlework006.jp
📄 2009_Library_card_month.jpg 📄 coraline.jpg   📄 needlework.jpg
📄 AmericanGirlDolls.jpg   📄 Eleanor_Summers_NCCE.jpg   📄 pets.jpg
📄 appletree.jpg   📄 facebook.jpg   📄 Poster_Film_Mov

My Recent Documents

Attachments, continued

IMPORTANT: **Never open an attachment if you don't know the person who sent it.** This is the most common way computer viruses are sent. Do not open a file that ends in **.exe** unless you already know what it is and why you're receiving it.

If you think any attachment – even from someone you do know – looks suspicious, do not open it. Yahoo! has some virus protections built in, but it won't catch everything. Gmail has no virus protection. If you would like to learn more about computer viruses, how they are transmitted, and what damage they can do to your computer, go to this web address: http://computer.howstuffworks.com/virus.htm

And as always, remember that if your computer has internet access, you should have a virus protection program on it!
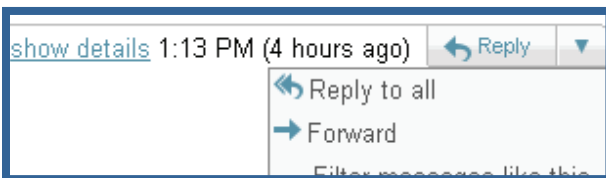
Gmail

What if I want to use Gmail instead of Yahoo! Mail? That's perfectly fine! It is a personal preference.

Gmail is very similar to Yahoo!Mail in many ways. To sign up – go to www.gmail.com and click on the "create an account" on the right side of the screen. The sign-up procedure is very similar to the one for Yahoo!Mail.

To check your email, go to www.gmail.com and enter your username and password. Once you click "sign in" it takes you automatically to your inbox. Just as in Yahoo!Mail – the unread emails are bold and you click on the subject of the email to open it and read it.

The reply button, reply all button, and forward button are all in the same place … at the top of each email where it says "reply" – just click the little downward arrow beside it to expand and choose which you want!

The Composition Screen for Gmail is almost exactly like the one in Yahoo!Mail – including having a formatting toolbar for easy use. Attaching a document or picture is also the same!

The main difference between Gmail and Yahoo!Mail is that Gmail does NOT have folders ("labels" are a different thing). In Gmail, you keep everything in the same big folder but you have the Google-powered search to help find anything you need. And there is a lot more storage space on Gmail, so you may never have to delete anything!

Address Book/ Contacts

The Address Book feature allows you to keep track of email addresses, which can sometimes be hard to remember.
To access your Address Book, click on the **Addresses or Contacts** button.

Adding addresses: To add an address, select the **Add Contact** button. You can add as little or as much additional information about each email address as you prefer. Keep in mind, however, that if you add a name associated with the email address, it will be easier to look up later since email addresses are not always clear.

Saving a received email address to the Address Book: Whenever you receive an email, you can add the email address to your Address Book automatically, without going through all of the steps outlined above. When the email is open, simply click on the **Add to Address Book Link** next to the sender's email address.
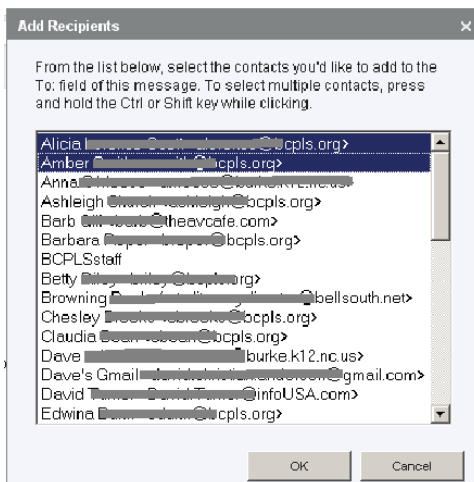
Looking up Addresses: Once you have saved an email address to your Address Book, you can look it up when sending an email. If you can't remember the email address off hand, just click on **Insert addresses** underneath the **To:** box.

You will get a pop-up box with your Address Book. Simply check next to the addresses you want to include, being sure to indicate whether they should be in the **To:**, **CC:**, or **BCC:** fields. Then click **Insert Checked Contacts**.

If you are using the newer version of Yahoo! Mail, you click on the **"To:" "CC:" or "BCC:"** buttons in a new email, and your address book will pop up. Click on the name you want to send the email to and press ok; it will automatically put the contact into the correct field in your email. If you want to choose more than 1 name, hold down the **"Control"** key on your keyboard while you click the names with your mouse!

Getting Help

At the Library

You can access your Yahoo account from anywhere there is Internet access, including your public library. However, the library has no control over your free email account. When the Internet is busiest, your account is likely to be slow. At times, you may not be able to access it at all. While library staff might be able to you with the features of your account, remember that they cannot to look up your username and password for you.

What if I forget my password?

If you remember can't remember both your ID and Password, Yahoo! can help you. Remember those personal questions you answered when you were signup? Click on the link for **Forget your ID or password?** at the bottom of the sign-in box, and it will prompt you to answer these questions. If your answer matches the one you provided when you signed-up, or if you can provide enough personal information, you should be able to retrieve your forgotten information.

Note: This feature only works if you can remember either your ID or Password. If you have forgotten both, you may need to create a new account.

Yahoo! Mail Help

If you have a specific question, at the top right corner of your Yahoo mail page, you'll find a **Help** link.
On the Help page, you can type your question or problem into the search box, or you can browse through the categories and find one that best meets your needs.