

# Emails and their importance

**Electronic mail (email or e-mail)** is a method of transmitting and receiving messages using [electronic](#) devices. It was conceived in the late–20th century as the [digital](#) version of, or counterpart to, [mail](#) (hence *e-* + *mail*). Email is a ubiquitous and very widely used communication medium; in current use, an [email address](#) is often treated as a basic and necessary part of many processes in business, commerce, government, education, entertainment, and other spheres of daily life in most countries.

Email operates across [computer networks](#), primarily the [Internet](#), and also [local area networks](#). Today's email systems are based on a [store-and-forward](#) model. Email [servers](#) accept, forward, deliver, and store messages. Neither the users nor their computers are required to be online simultaneously; they need to connect, typically to a [mail server](#) or a [webmail](#) interface to send or receive messages or download it.

Originally an [ASCII](#) text-only communications medium, Internet email was extended by [Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions](#) (MIME) to carry text in other character sets and multimedia content attachments. [International email](#), with internationalized email addresses using [UTF-8](#), is standardized but not widely adopted