

# 6 Ways to Clean Up Your Inbox

Life is too short to spend time wading through dozens of unwanted or dangerous emails. These steps can improve the quality of what appears in your inbox.



## ① **Hide your email address from public exposure**

If you have social media accounts, make sure your email address isn't visible. That way, online scraping programs won't be able to collect your address and sell it for spamming purposes.

## ② **Unsubscribe**

If you no longer want to receive information from a company or an organization, unsubscribe. Most legitimate email lists offer an unsubscribe option, typically in fine print near the bottom of the message.

## ③ **Mark as spam**

If you've never heard of the company, mark them as spam and set your email program to block or delete any messages from them.

It's also possible that you ordered something from a company and didn't notice their offer to add you to their mailing list. (Typically, you have to uncheck a small box to decline.) You may feel like they tricked you into signing up, but their messages are not spam. Just unsubscribe.

## ④ **Set up filters**

Most email services include options to create filters that will direct messages from specific senders into a designated folder or to be automatically deleted.

For example, you may want to put all messages from online retailers in a "Shopping" folder. If you aren't sure how to do this, it's easy to find step-by-step instructions by searching online for "How to set up filters on [Outlook, Google Mail, etc.]."

## ⑤ **Create a disposable or junk email account**

It's easy to set up a free email account (think Yahoo or Gmail) to use exclusively on sites that require an email registration (to download a report, for example). You can sign into this email account when you need to "verify" it as a real email address, but ignore it the rest of the time.

There are also disposable and temporary email services that will forward messages to your real email address, but keep your primary address out of spammer's hands.

## ⑥ **Start over**

If your primary email account is so over-run with spam that you don't WANT to clean it up, you can always use the current address as your "junk" account and set up a new one that's only shared with your most important contacts.

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