Introduction to Email
Keene Memorial Library

The @ (at) symbol used in all email addresses.

What is Email?

It is Electronic Mail. A message can be sent from one computer to another and may contain text, images and other types of files. It is a fast, easy and usually free or inexpensive way to communicate with family, friends and colleagues.

Email is similar to traditional postal mail in that each email address is unique like a mailing address.

The primary differences are that email does not require postage costs and that email is much faster, requiring only seconds to receive messages.

You MUST have an email account to send or receive messages.

How Email Works

Email works much like postal mail in reality. Instead of a piece of mail moving between post offices an email message moves between computers known as mail servers as it "travels" across the Internet. The whole process takes seconds in most cases. Once a user has an email account he/she can send/receive messages to/from anyone else with an email account.

Sender   *Mail Servers*   *Recipient*

What You Need

You must have 3 things to send and receive email.

1. A computer or access to a computer
2. An Internet connection
3. An Email Account on a mail server

How to Get an Email Account

To get an email account you may use the email account(s) provided through your internet service provider (ISP) or use a website that provides free email accounts. Even if you do not have a computer or internet access at home you can sign up for an email account using a public computer at the library, or any other facility with internet access.

Your Email Account

When you register for an email account you create a username and password to access the account. Remember to keep the password secret for security. You will then have a unique email address that you use to send and receive email messages. Your address will be your username, then the @ symbol, then the domain of the provider (yahoo.com, gmail.com, etc…).

For example:

- Username is **johndoe**
- Password is **zero1234**
- Domain is **yahoo.com**

The email address would then be: johndoe@yahoo.com

NOTE: To get the "@" symbol, press and hold the "Shift" button and tap the "2" button at the top of the keyboard.

Email Providers

Email providers are websites that offer email accounts, usually free, to anyone who registers. Yahoo Mail, Gmail, Hotmail and AOL Mail are examples of popular email providers. If you have an email account with a provider your computer does not store your account, but accesses it from the providers' computers via the Internet.
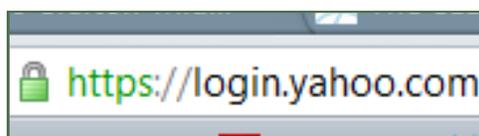
This means you can access you email account from any computer with internet access no matter where you are. This course uses Yahoo for new accounts.
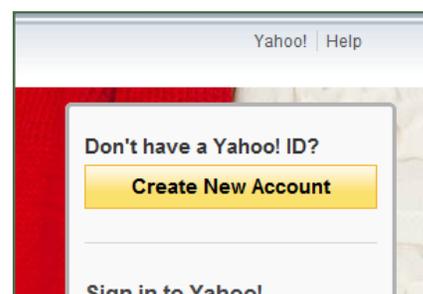

Creating an Account

NOTE: This handout will use Yahoo Mail as the example for all instructions and images.

1. Connect to the Internet.
2. Go to login.yahoo.com (*http:* or *https:* not required).
3. Find the *Create New Account* button & click on it.
4. Create a unique username (ID) and password.
5. Fill out other information.

Type in address

Click Create New Account

The Registration Screen

All fields are required except for the *Alternate Email* field. Secret questions are asked if you forget your password. Answer them to access your email and reset the password. The code at the bottom is used to make sure that dummy addresses aren't being created. If you cannot read the code click the *New Code* button.

Signing Into Your Account

1. Connect to the Internet.
2. Go to your email provider's website.
   a. login.yahoo.com in this case
3. Enter your username (Yahoo ID) and password.
4. If on a public or shared computer uncheck the *Keep me signed in* option below the password.
5. Click the *Sign In* button.

Email accounts will delete automatically after a period of inactivity, usually several months. In that case your username and password will not work.

Make sure to type in your username and password correctly or you will not be able to login. If a login fails type everything in again carefully.
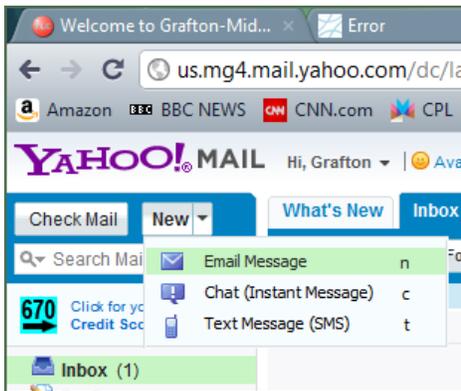
Sign In section

Signing Out of Your Account

1. Click on the *Sign Out* or *Logout* option at the top of the page.
2. You will then be signed out of your email account automatically.

If you are using a public computer it is very important to sign out. This helps to prevent someone else from accessing your email account.
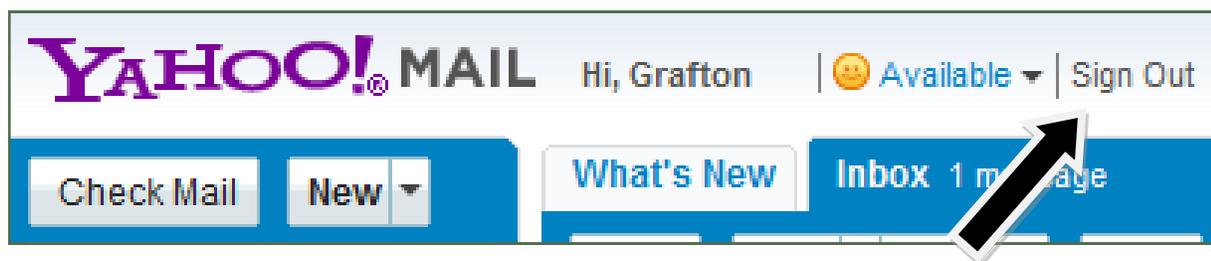
Sign Out command

The NEW button

Sending a Message

If you want to send an email message to someone you must have the recipient's email address. You can send the same message to multiple addresses.

To send a new message click on the *New* button at the top left of the page to open a blank message.

All outgoing email messages should have at least 3 things:

1. A destination email address in the *To:* line.
2. A subject for your message in the *Subject:* line.
3. A message in the message window.

The image below is of a new message that has all three things. Note that there are lines for Carbon Copies and Blind Carbon Copies as well if necessary.

You can change the font, color and highlight as well as adding bullet points and emoticons (the smiley face).
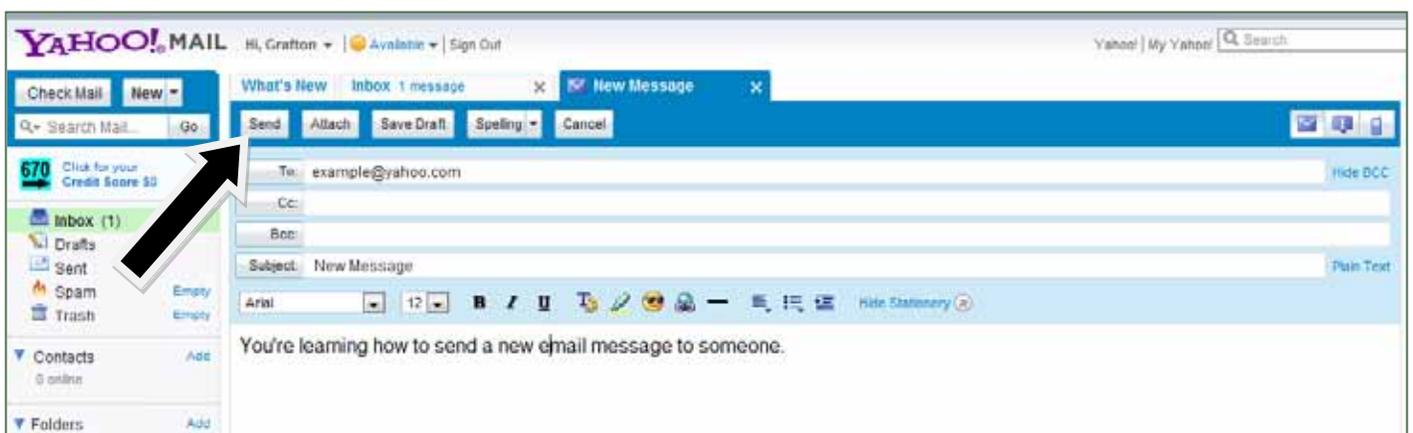
When you are finished click on the Send button at the top left of the message to send it. The recipient's email address MUST be correct or the message will bounce back as undeliverable. This is just like postal mail when it cannot be delivered
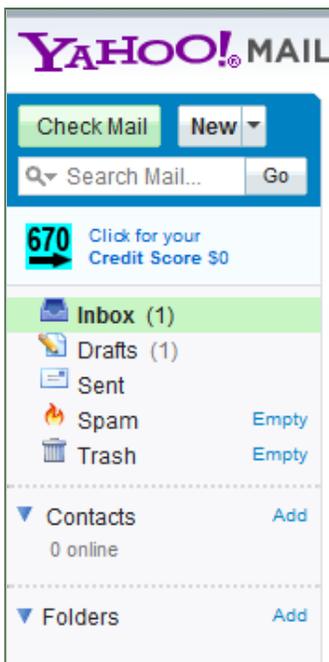
Reading Your Messages

Check Mail & Inbox

All messages that you receive are located in the *Inbox*. The Inbox contains all new and unread messages as well as any older messages that you have not deleted.

Click on either *Check Mail* by the New button or *Inbox* on the list below to get to the Inbox.

All unread messages (ones you have not opened) are in **boldface** and the total unread will show in parenthesis next to the Inbox on the left of the screen. The image to the left shows 1 new unread message.

IMPORTANT: DO NOT open messages from unfamiliar addresses unless you are expecting them. Infected attachments can be security risks.

The inbox lists all received email messages with the newest first by default. The Sender, Subject, Date and Attachments (if applicable) are shown on the message line. Click anywhere on the message line to open and read the message. The whole line will turn slightly green to let you know which message line your mouse is on.
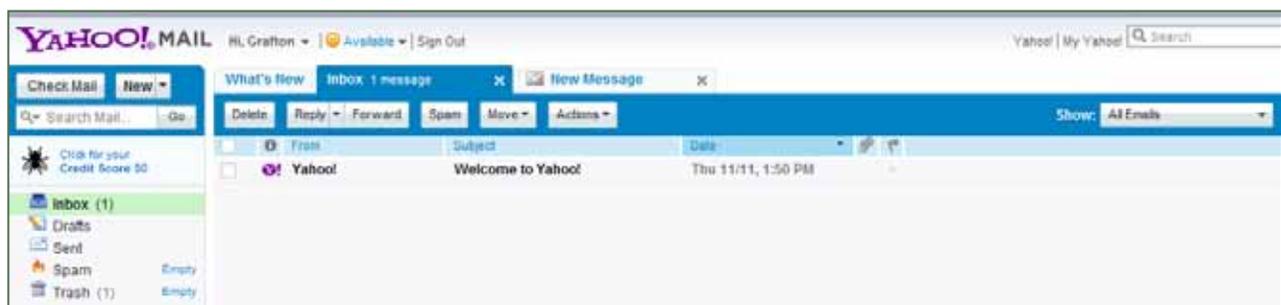
Click anywhere on the message line to open and read the message,

Once you are done reading the message you can return to the inbox by clicking Check Mail or Inbox again.

NOTE: Virtually all email accounts can be controlled in the same way.

Deleting Messages

You can delete a message after reading it or delete a message before reading it. Delete a message from your inbox does not delete the message from your account.

Deleting open messages

To delete a message you have opened:

1. Find the *Delete* button at the top left of the message.
2. Click the Delete button.
3. Click the *Empty* button by the Trash at the bottom of the list on the left.

Click the checkbox before deleting, or select multiple messages to delete

To delete a message without opening it:

1. Click on the small box at the left side of the message line to select the message.
2. You can select multiple messages to delete at once by checking multiple boxes.
3. Click the *Delete* button at the top left of the inbox.
4. Click the *Empty* button by the Trash at the bottom of the list on the left.

NOTE: You can delete messages from the Inbox at any time opened or unopened. Click the checkboxes by any messages before clicking Delete.

Security and Spam (Junk Mail)

Spam is junk mail and should be deleted. Email accounts will have filters that automatically find most spam, but some will get through. Remember to empty the Spam folder (just above Trash) regularly.

Do not open attachments that could be infected with a virus. This can be the case with any email messages, but especially spam messages.

Further Reading & Information

When printing from an email message you MUST use the *Print* button in the message, not the print function from the File Menu. Otherwise the message will not print correctly.
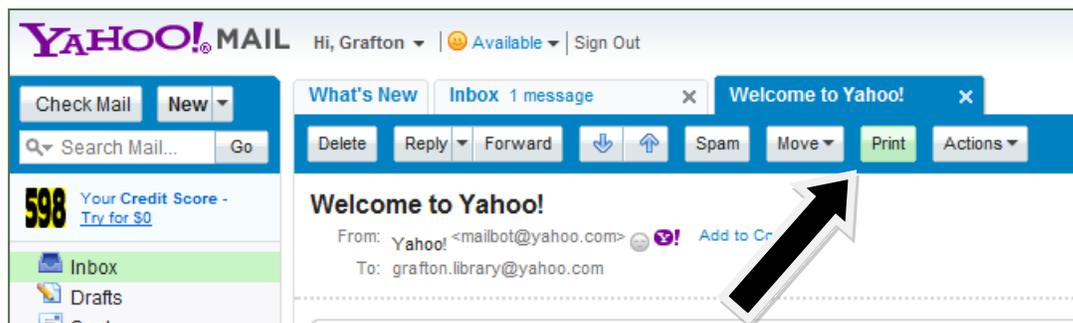
Determining which email provider is right for you can be difficult. This website has a comparison chart of features and services for the various email providers.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_webmail_providers

Make sure that you have an updated Antivirus program on your computer to help protect against threats from email. Messages from "suspicious" or unknown senders, phishing attempts (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phishing), giveaway notices and chain letter forwards are the most dangerous messages. Do not open or download attachments (files attached to an email like images or documents) from unknown senders as these are the most likely to be infected.

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