

POP vs. IMAP

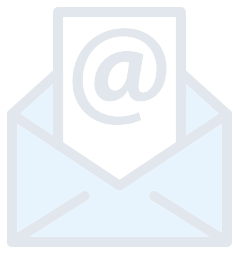
Understanding and Setting
Up the Right Email
Connection

POP vs. IMAP: Understanding and Setting Up the Right Email Connection

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POP vs. IMAP: WHY THIS MATTERS

How your email connects to the internet determines whether your messages stay in sync across devices or get trapped on a single computer. Most email headaches — missing sent messages, disappearing drafts, or outdated inboxes — come down to using the wrong setup.

POP and IMAP Explained Simply

POP (Post Office Protocol)

POP downloads your messages from the mail server to one computer and often deletes them from the server afterward. That means your emails live only on that device.

- You can send and receive messages just fine, but your Sent, Drafts, and Trash folders won't sync with other devices.
- If your computer crashes, those downloaded emails are gone unless you've backed them up.
- POP is best for people who check email from just one computer and don't need access on a phone or tablet.

IMAP (Internet Message Access Protocol)

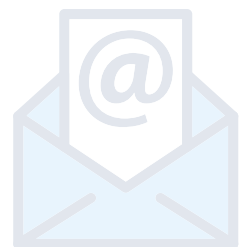
IMAP keeps everything stored on the mail server, syncing your inbox and folders across all your devices.

- Delete a message on your laptop, and it disappears from your phone too.
- Sent messages and drafts stay consistent everywhere.
- IMAP is the preferred setup for most users because it keeps everything unified and accessible.

Setting Up a New Email Account Using IMAP

When adding your email to a program like Outlook, Apple Mail, or Thunderbird:

1. Choose IMAP when asked what type of account you're setting up.
2. Enter your full email address and password.
3. Use these general settings (your hosting provider may confirm exact details):
 - Incoming server: mail.yourdomain.com
 - Port: 993
 - Encryption: SSL/TLS



- Outgoing server: mail.yourdomain.com
 - Port: 465
 - Encryption: SSL/TLS
- Save your settings and send yourself a quick test email.
- Check that your Sent, Drafts, and Trash folders are visible and syncing properly.



Switching an Existing POP Account to IMAP

If your current setup is POP and you're ready to fix the syncing issue, follow these steps:

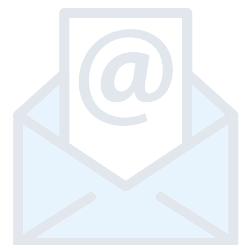
1. Back up important emails.
2. Create a "Local Backup" folder and drag any messages you want to keep into it.
3. Remove your existing POP account.
4. Deleting the account from your email program doesn't delete the emails already downloaded, but it's best to confirm backups first.
5. Re-add the account using IMAP settings.
6. Follow the IMAP setup instructions above with the same email address and password.
7. Test your connection.
8. Send yourself a message and confirm that the Sent folder now updates automatically and matches across devices.

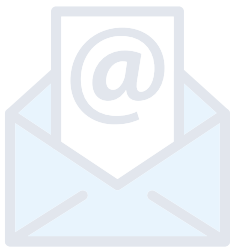
Setting Up a New Email Account Using POP

While IMAP is the best option for most people, there are a few situations where POP can make sense — for example, if you only check email on one computer or want to keep your messages stored locally rather than on the server.

To set up your account using POP:

1. Choose POP when adding your email account in your program (Outlook, Apple Mail, Thunderbird, etc.).
2. Enter your full email address and password.
3. Use these general settings (verify details with your hosting provider if needed):
 - Incoming server: mail.yourdomain.com
 - Port: 995
 - Encryption: SSL/TLS
 - Outgoing server: mail.yourdomain.com
 - Port: 465 or 587
 - Encryption: SSL/TLS
4. Look for an option like “Leave a copy of messages on the server” and turn it on if you want to keep backups online.
5. Save your settings, then test by sending yourself an email.





Troubleshooting Tips

Sent folder still missing?

Make sure the account is actually set up as IMAP, not POP. Some programs default to POP automatically.

Folders marked “This computer only”?

That’s a sign your email program is still using POP or creating local folders instead of syncing with the server.

Duplicate emails appearing?

Delete any old POP version of your account before setting up IMAP to avoid overlap.

Password or connection errors?

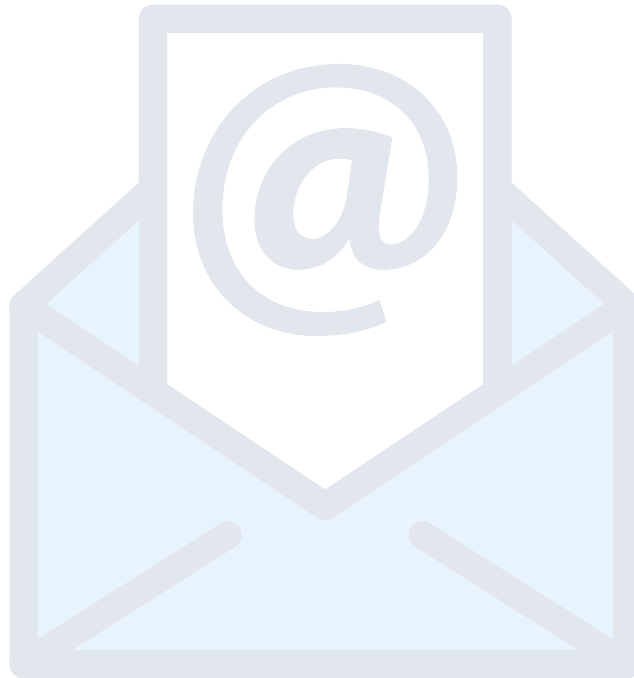
Double-check that SSL or TLS encryption is turned on and that the correct ports (993 and 465) are used.

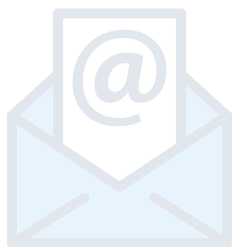
When to Use POP (and When Not To)

- Use POP if: You only ever check email from one computer and prefer to keep copies stored locally.
- Avoid POP if: You use multiple devices (like a laptop, phone, and tablet) or want your folders and Sent mail to sync across all of them.

Final Thought

If you can send and receive messages but your Sent folder doesn't update or your email behaves differently on each device, the problem isn't your email address — it's the connection type. Switching to IMAP usually solves it and keeps your messages where they belong: everywhere you need them.





About This Resource

This guide was created to help make sense of one of those sneaky tech issues that drive even the calmest business owners up the wall. Email can be confusing, but it doesn't have to be. The goal here is simply to help you understand what's going on, so you can fix it, breathe easier, and get back to doing what you actually love.

I'm Tina Marie Hilton, a WordPress website creator and tech consultant who's been helping entrepreneurs simplify the tech side of running their businesses since 2007. My focus is on giving solopreneurs and small business owners the confidence, clarity, and tools they need to make technology feel like a partner, not a problem.

This PDF is offered freely as part of that mission because when tech feels easier, your work (and life) flows better.

You can find more practical resources, tips, and tools at clericaladvantage.com.

Created by Tina Marie Hilton, helping solopreneurs untangle tech so their work (and life) flows with ease.