



# HOW TO CHANGE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS (WITHOUT LOSING YOUR MIND)

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by Jeff Bohr

**H**ow long since you upgraded your computer? How long do you usually keep your car before trading it in? Have you had the same email address for over 15 years?

## IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE

I am often asked about how to change an email address. Sometimes a client has been 'hacked,' and their email and password have been compromised more than a few times. Sometimes the amount of junk mail, or spam, becomes a relentless barrage that cannot be held back. There are several solutions to these dilemmas, including creating a stronger password, unsubscribing (this only works when it is a legitimate site!) and using junk mail filters.

It is often easier to start fresh with a new email address, and I will describe that process in this article. Contrary to what most people think, changing your email address can be a rather easy process, if you plan and follow the steps reviewed here.

First, it is a good idea to keep your current email active even when creating a new one. This will allow you to monitor the old account and check for any messages from senders not aware that your email has changed. And it is almost impossible to truly delete an email address.

Next, you need to decide on a new email provider, or you can reserve your own domain for email. There are several free services: Gmail (yourname@gmail.com), Apple's iCloud (yourname@icloud.com) and Yahoo! (yourname@yahoo.com) are some of the largest and most stable. Another option is to get your own domain (www.yourname.com) and then you have a personal email address (you@yourname.com) that is unique and memorable. No one can take away your email address if you own the domain. Domain names can be purchased for under \$15 per year, and adding an email account is usually another \$20 annually.

After you create the new account, you will need to send out an electronic 'Change of Address' notice. This can be simple and to the point, it will go to those friends, family and associates that you



correspond with regularly, we will address other accounts shortly. You have probably received several such emails from your friends and colleagues, now it's your turn. Here is a simple template:

### **SUBJECT: MY NEW EMAIL ADDRESS**

Message Body: Effective immediately, my new email address will be example@example.com. Please copy this address and paste it into your address book, replacing my prior email.

Thanks!

Jeff

• Important: Send this email from your new email address, and make sure to put all the recipients into the BCC field to avoid sending your entire address book to everyone.

Your Internet Service Provider (ISP) will likely only allow you to send 20-30 emails at a time – an anti-spam measure. This is short, simple and to the point. You now have a fresh, clean email account that is only known by those with whom you shared it. Continue to monitor your original address for any stragglers that did not get the notice, and you can notify them of your new address on a case-by-case basis.

“ Send this email from your new email address, and make sure to put all the recipients into the BCC field to avoid sending your entire address book to everyone.

### UPDATING YOUR ONLINE ACCOUNTS

Rather than trying to sit down and remember all the places your email address is stored online, update web sites as you visit them. This applies to banks, credit cards, airlines and other online retailers. Fill out the change of email address forms on sites you are registered with as you return to them, this will make the task less daunting. Keep a list of those you have completed for reference. Also remember that your username is often your email address, and this may not need to be changed everywhere it is used. You often have a separate user name and contact email, you may keep your old username but make sure to change your contact email in your account settings for each website. For example, if you have an iTunes account, it can be difficult to change the original email you signed up with due to music copyright laws. In that case, keep the original email you used for future iTunes purchases, but change your contact email so that you still receive receipts.

One reason to keep the older email active is that you can use that when you need to fill out a form that requires an email address, this will help you keep the junk separate from valid emails. You could also create a second new email address, often called an alias, which you could use only for forms and online shopping, to help filter any resulting junk mail. Also remember that it is often not a good idea to delete an email account entirely, as you may need to check it for messages from those you correspond with less frequently.

There will come a time that you only need to check that old email account once a month or less!

Changing your email does not have to be a difficult process, and by following the steps listed it should be an easy endeavor. Meanwhile, go through all of the websites you log onto via your email address, and change your account information to reflect your new address. Do the same with mailing lists. If you subscribe to a blog, a newsletter, or just a group of friends, make the change so you won't fall off the list.

Have tech questions? Send them to [jeff@jeffbohr.com](mailto:jeff@jeffbohr.com) and I'll answer them in a future column!



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