

## Decide Whether to Delete or Archive in Google Mail

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### Deleted Mail

A message that is **deleted** in Gmail will be sent to your trash, where it will be automatically permanently deleted after 30 days (or if you empty the trash manually). Messages deleted from the trash, whether manually or automatically after 30 days, can NOT be recovered!

Why would you delete?

- You are certain you will never need to refer to it again
- It contains confidential information you should not have been sent
- It has a large attachment you no longer need

### Archived Mail

A message that is **archived** in Gmail will be removed from your inbox, but will still appear in searches, in All Mail, and in any labels you assigned to it. Note that this is different from Outlook's use of the word "Archive". In Google, archived mail is not downloaded to your computer, just taken out of your Inbox. It still counts against your mail quota.

Why would you archive?

- You may want to refer to the message in the future, but do not want it to appear in your Inbox
- You try to maintain "Inbox Zero" and/or use your inbox as a to-do list of active emails

### Spam or Unwanted Mail

If you have received spam or unwanted mail, we recommend taking action beyond just archiving or deleting it.

- If it is a mailing list you no longer wish to receive, look for the Unsubscribe link on the bottom. This is legally required to be on all promotional mailings.
- If it is spam, use Gmail's [Report Spam](#) button. This not only removes the email, but also helps Google detect spam in the future (for this reason, we don't recommend using it for legitimate emails).
- If it is a phishing attempt - an attempt to get you to click a link and provide personal information, we recommend using the [Report Phishing](#) action. If you are unsure if it is a legitimate email, you can check the [IT at Brown](#) website to see if it is a known phishing attempt.