Organizing and sorting your mail

You'll probably want to get organized. If you find the idea of browsing through thousands of messages to find a single conversation a little daunting, you can make things a lot easier using labels, filters, and search -- and you won't have to delete anything. Here's how it works:

Labels

- You can create labels and apply them -- manually or automatically -- in order to group related messages together. Let's say you want to keep messages from your mom all in one place.
  If you have a message from her already, just check the box next to the message in your Inbox.

- Create a label for her messages:
  1. Select Create new from the Labels drop-down menu (or type 'l' if you have keyboard shortcuts enabled).
  2. Enter a name for your label.
  3. Click OK.

  The name of your label will appear just before the subject line.

- You can find all your messages that have this label attached by clicking the label's name in the Labels section in the lower-left part of any Gmail page.

At this point, you can click Archive; the message will disappear from your Inbox, but will remain listed when you click the 'Mom' label, or All Mail. You can also still search for your archived messages. All you're doing when you archive a message is helping to keep the Inbox clutter down. You can also label and archive messages in one fell swoop by using the Move to drop-down menu.
Filters

If you don't want to mark all your messages from Mom one-by-one, you can set up a filter. The filter will detect when your mom emails you, and automatically applies the 'Mom' label (and if you'd like, you can send the message straight to the Mom section and skip the Inbox). To do so, just follow these steps:

1. Open a message from your mom.
2. From the More Actions drop-down menu, select Filter messages like these.
3. In the 'From:' field, enter your mom’s email address.
4. Click Next Step >.
5. Check the Apply the label: box and select Mom from your Choose label... drop-down menu (you might also want to apply some of the other options, like Skip the Inbox, which will send her messages straight to the Mom section and keep your Inbox clean).
6. If you'd like to add the label to existing messages as well as future ones, select the Also apply filter to x conversations below checkbox.
7. Click Create Filter.

You don't have to limit your use of filters or labels to any single person or email address, though; that's just the beginning. You can create filters to detect messages with certain words in the subject line, the body of the email, or messages sent to a specific person, and automatically perform any of the actions shown in the image above. This means you can automatically apply a star to messages from your mom that contain the word 'cookies.' Get creative. You can always go back and perfect your filters; just click Settings and select the Filters tab.
Search

If you're worried that you won't be able to find a specific conversation after you move it from your inbox, search has got you covered. When you'd like to find a message, you can enter a word or phrase in the search field and click the Search Mail button. Your results will be displayed with your search terms highlighted in yellow.

If your search is a little complicated -- maybe you're trying to find a message from your mom, about a restaurant, and you remember that she sent it to you and your brother. Just click Show search options. You can enter all of these criteria (and then some) to refine your results.

And there you have it.

Sending limits

In an effort to fight spam and prevent abuse, Google will temporarily disable your account if you send a message to more than 500 recipients or if you send a large number of undeliverable messages. If you use a POP or IMAP client (Microsoft Outlook or Apple Mail, e.g.), you may only send a message to 100 people at a time. Your account should be re-enabled within 24 hours.

If you send a large number of undeliverable messages, we suggest verifying your contacts' email addresses. It's also important that everyone you are sending mail to is willing to receive it.

Some file types are blocked

As a security measure to prevent potential viruses, Gmail doesn't allow you to send or receive executable files (such as files ending in .exe) that could contain damaging executable code.
Gmail won't accept these types of files even if they are sent in a zipped (.zip, .tar, .tgz, .taz, .z, .gz) format. If this type of message is sent to your Gmail address, it is bounced back to the sender automatically.

You can send and receive messages up to 25 megabytes (MB) total (including attachments). Any message that exceeds this limit will not be delivered to your inbox and will be returned to the sender.

**Legitimate mail is marked as spam**

If you find a message wrongly classified as spam, you can unmark the message. Just select the message, and click the **Not Spam** button that appears at the top and bottom of your current view. Unmarking a message will automatically move it to your inbox.

If you find that some senders' messages are consistently being mislabeled as spam, you can prevent this by:

- Adding their email addresses to your Contacts list. Gmail will deliver messages from members of your Contacts list to your inbox, unless they meet these criteria:
  
  A) the message is not authenticated AND  
  B) the 'To:' and the 'From:' fields contain the same address.

  This exception is in place because spammers will often insert the recipient address in the 'From:' field, assuming that this will automatically whitelist their spam message.

- Creating a filter so the messages are never sent to Spam.