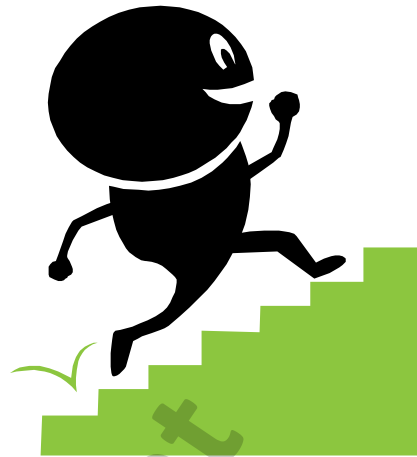


Easy Way



Teach yourself...

**Digital communications
technologies**

with

**Skype, Facebook, Twitter, SMS, MMS,
Blogs, Wikis etc**

- ☒ Easy to follow
- ☒ Step-by-step instructions
- ☒ Written in plain English

A Cheryl Price Publication

Easy Way – Digital communications technologies

This book is designed to teach beginner topics for learning digital communication technologies. It contains simple step-by-step exercises to guide you through the learning process.

There are dozens of exercises including consolidation exercises, both theory and practical at the end of each section.

The process of consolidation and accumulation of learning is unique to the Cheryl Price books.

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Cheryl Price
T.Dip.WP, T.Dip.T

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Table of Contents

Section 1 – Use Digital Communication Technologies

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------|----|
| What Are Digital Communication Technologies? | 2 |
| Email | 2 |
| Instant Messaging | 3 |
| Chat versus Email | 4 |
| Skype | 4 |
| Social Media | 6 |
| Websites..... | 8 |
| How to Use Email | 10 |
| Outlook 2010 Toolbar | 10 |
| Creating a Yahoo Email Account | 11 |
| Checking Email..... | 12 |
| Replying to an Email..... | 14 |
| Sending Email Attachments..... | 15 |
| Additional email functions and features | 17 |
| Email Business versus Personal Use | 19 |
| How to Set Spam Filters in Email..... | 21 |
| Protect Your Privacy in Email | 22 |
| How to Use Skype | 25 |
| How to Add Skype Contacts | 28 |
| How to Call on Skype..... | 29 |
| Skype Chat | 31 |
| How to Prevent Skype Spam | 31 |
| Skype Features and Benefits..... | 33 |
| Instant Messaging | 34 |
| How to Chat with AOL Instant Messenger..... | 34 |
| Internet Chat Acronyms | 36 |
| Instant Messaging Dangers | 38 |
| Facebook..... | 39 |
| Setting up Facebook..... | 40 |
| Fill Out Your Profile..... | 43 |
| Add Friends | 44 |
| Update Your Status | 44 |
| How to Use Facebook..... | 45 |
| How to Use Facebook Chat | 49 |
| Facebook Business versus Personal Use | 50 |
| Facebook Privacy Settings | 52 |
| Logging Out of Facebook..... | 53 |
| Hiding Your Facebook Information..... | 54 |
| How to Prevent Facebook Bullying | 54 |
| Time and Cost of DCTs | 58 |
| Revision | 59 |
| Consolidation Exercises | 60 |

Section 2 – Additional and More Advanced Digital Communication Technologies

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Short Message Service | 62 |
| SMS Limitations | 64 |
| Multimedia Message Service..... | 65 |
| iPods, iPhones, and iPads..... | 66 |
| Voice-over-Internet Protocol | 69 |
| VoIP Options | 70 |
| VoIP versus a Traditional Phone | 71 |
| VoIP Advantages..... | 72 |
| Website Referencing | 73 |
| Usenet..... | 76 |
| Google Groups..... | 77 |
| Electronic Mailing Lists | 79 |
| Social Software | 81 |
| Social Software Tools:..... | 81 |
| How to Find Blogs, Forums, and Wikis on the Internet | 83 |
| How to Start a Blog..... | 85 |
| Twitter | 87 |
| Some of the most common uses of Twitter: | 88 |
| How to Create a Twitter Account | 89 |
| Twitter Profile Features | 93 |
| Twitter Business Uses | 94 |
| Twitter Business Resources | 96 |
| DCT Management..... | 97 |
| Backup Data..... | 97 |
| Computer Viruses..... | 97 |
| Quick and Efficient Digital Communication | 98 |
| Revision | 99 |
| Consolidation Exercises | 100 |
| Glossary | 101 |
| Sources..... | 103 |

Use Digital Communication Technologies

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this section you should be able to -

- ☐ Understand the difference between several forms of digital communication technologies.
- ☐ Open a website and use hyperlinks
- ☐ Create and use your own personal email account.
- ☐ Download and use Skype for phone calls and chatting.
- ☐ Sign up for an instant messaging service and chat with other users.
- ☐ Create your own Facebook account and interact with other users in social media.

What Are Digital Communication Technologies?

Definition: Digital communication technologies allow us to transmit information to other Internet users in digital format.

These digital communication technologies include email, Skype, instant messaging (also called IM), and numerous forms of social media.

Social media is a growing Internet trend that is on the rise, used for both personal and business communications. Two of the most popular and rapidly growing social media websites are Facebook and Twitter.

Facebook currently has over 50 million Internet users worldwide who spend 7 billion minutes on the website each month. Twitter has over 100 million registered users, and the website has grown by 182% over the past year.



It is clear that social media is evolving into an advanced form of digital communication, dictating both personal and business interactions on the Internet.

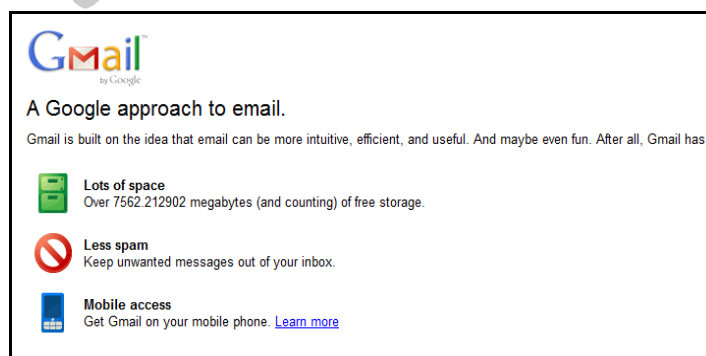
Email

Email is otherwise known as electronic mail, and it is a method used to send digital messages from one Internet user to another. Emails can be sent from personal computers, laptops, mobile phones, and any other devices connected to the Internet.

Every Internet user is entitled to a free email account through services like:

- Yahoo.com
- Gmail.com (Google mail)
- Hotmail.com
- Aol.com

Email has truly changed the face of global communication. It provides you with the opportunity to reach out to anyone, anywhere, instantaneously. Email is used for both business and pleasure, yet there are separate rules of etiquette for each type of email usage.



Here are some of the many advantages you can expect from using email:

- **Simple Management:** You can manage all of your emails and correspondences on one screen. You can even create specific folders to organise emails from separate senders, or you can categorise emails for business or personal purposes. On top of that, you can save conversations or messages online to greatly minimise your use of paper.
- **Quick Delivery:** Any messages sent will be delivered instantaneously worldwide. There is no other form of communication that can provide this speed or accuracy.
- **Low Cost:** When you compare email to regular postal delivery, faxes, or telephone calls, it is normally free or very inexpensive in contrast.
- **Secure Messaging:** Security settings from your email provider are very high, keeping all messages private. In many cases, faxes and phone calls do not provide this level of privacy. Your email will always be sent to the right address, unless you happen to type in the address incorrectly, causing the email to bounce back to you.
- **Easy Transfer of Materials:** You can attach files or documents to an email to send over the Internet. This is an eco-friendly method of communication since it cuts down on wasted paper, allowing you to deliver documents to another party within seconds.

Instant Messaging

Instant messaging is another form of digital communication, but it is different from email since it is done in real-time.

An instant message is sent through an instant messaging program from one computer to another, and it is also available through mobile devices. *Instant messaging is often called IM or chat.*

Instant messaging programs are normally free to sign up for, similar to email. Here are some of the top IM providers that you can use for instant digital communication:

- [Yahoo Messenger](#)
- [Meebo](#)
- [AIM](#)
- [Google Talk](#)
- [Windows Live](#)
- [Skype](#)

Do more than just IM with
Yahoo! Messenger 10

Download Now

[Or try the new Yahoo! Messenger 11 Beta](#)

Enhanced video calling

Feel like you're there with high-quality, full screen video and voice calling

Keep up with what your friends are doing

See your friends' latest updates from Yahoo!, Flickr, Twitter and more with the new "Updates" view

Improved language support

Change your preferred language in Yahoo! Messenger with just a few clicks

To be able to use instant messaging, you and another party must be connected to the same Internet messaging system at the same time. You will then exchange small text messages that will appear as a conversation on a chat screen.

In order to use an IM service, the software must be downloaded and installed on your computer from any of the providers shown on the previous page. Although there are numerous choices in chat software, they all function in a similar way.

You must first register as a user, create a screen name, and make your new username available so that other people can chat with you. This is often a method that many people use to chat with friends or family in real-time; IM can also be used for business when telecommuting or meeting with a client or employer.

If you are a member of a social media website, there are often built-in chat features included so that you can instant message with other users of the website that are online when you are.

Here are a few important points to remember about instant messaging:

- In addition to sending chat messages, you can also attach and send electronic files, including audio, video, text documents, and images.
- A chat user can block another user that they don't wish to instant message with.
- You can only communicate with other users using the same chat software.

Chat versus Email

If you are wondering how chat differs from email, that is an important question. *The only difference between email and IM is the presence of the other user.* If you are sending an email, you can send it at any time to anyone on your contact list, and they can open and answer the message at their convenience.

In order to have a chat conversation, another IM user must be logged in to accept and receive any messages that you send. If you do send a chat message to another user who is not logged in, they will receive the message when they log in. However, they will not be able to respond to you instantly in an online chat conversation if they are not logged in at the same time that you are.

Chat is ideal to use instead of email for quick, long-term communication. If you want to talk with a friend for several hours online without paying a phone bill, chat would be preferred. Most importantly, chat services like Skype are often used for virtual work and telecommuting. This chat application cuts down on the expenses of lengthy phone calls related to business since you can chat for free with any clients or business contacts nationally or internationally.

This leads us to...

Skype

To date, Skype has over 23 million online users, and it is also available for use on your mobile phone. Skype was developed in 2003 as a means to enhance digital communications inexpensively and efficiently.

Skype can be downloaded for free to use on your computer or smartphone for instant messaging, and if you pay more for the service, you can call from your computer to a mobile phone or land line, send texts, or use **Wi-Fi**. *Skype offers services that are free, pay-as-you-go, or subscription-based.*

Skype is an instant messaging application that allows you to register and create your own username, listed in the Skype directory. As a Skype user, you will be able to voice chat and instant message with users in any area of the world. Skype will store your chat history, allow for group chat, and store off-line messages if you are sent a chat message when you are not logged in.

Skype also offers the convenience of videoconferencing, which is video chat using a WebCam on your computer. This type of video call is especially helpful to speak to family members and friends or to use for a virtual business meeting.

Here are a few advantages that you can expect from using Skype for instant messaging:

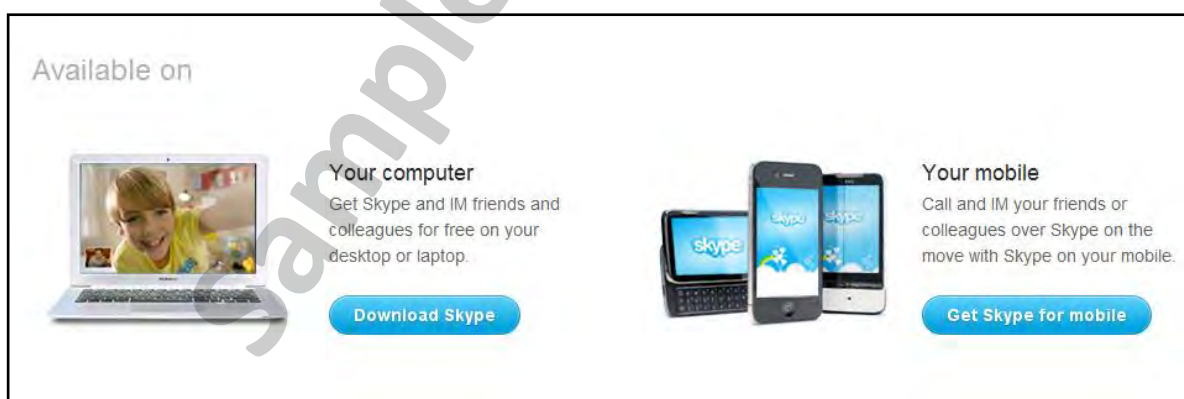
- **Free Downloadable Software:** Skype is a complete communication package that you can download for free to your computer or mobile phone. Even for the newest Internet user, Skype is easy to install and user-friendly in its navigation.

In addition to chatting, you can call from computer to computer anywhere within the nation or overseas for free.

- **Inexpensive Services:** Calling another Skype user is free and much less expensive than a traditional phone call. This eliminates the worry of racking up an expensive cell phone bill, and Skype also provides clarity without the crackling or cutting out of a cell phone.

For business purposes, a Skype user can host a conference call with up to five other users. If you do miss a call on Skype, it can also be routed from the computer to your mobile phone for added convenience with a small fee.

- **File Transfers:** Skype allows you to transfer files from computer to computer in a secure transaction for images, web links, text documents, and video files.
- **Video Chat:** Skype offers the unique feature of video chat where a caller can talk to another user face-to-face via a **WebCam**. This is a service often used for connecting with friends or family overseas or even for a job interview.



The advertisement is titled "Available on" and is divided into two sections. The left section, "Your computer", features a laptop displaying a video call with a young boy. Below the laptop is a blue button that says "Download Skype". The right section, "Your mobile", shows three mobile devices (a feature phone and two smartphones) displaying the Skype app interface. Below the devices is a blue button that says "Get Skype for mobile".

Skype is one of the most advanced and trustworthy forms of chat communication to date. Skype has been used to streamline traditional communication for:

- Friends
- Family
- Dating
- Work
- Business
- School

Social Media

Social media represents the latest trend in digital communication, *yet it is quickly becoming a household presence*. For this reason, you may have heard the buzz word "social media" being tossed around lately, and you may even have an account with a popular social media website like Facebook.

Social media is a form of social communication at its basic level, but it encompasses a number of different types of websites and communities. Social media has been created by Internet users, for Internet users. The social media revolution on the Internet was spurred on by Internet users wanting to take control of their environment.

Much of this had to do with the abuse of spam and junk mail in the early days of the Internet. Internet users wanted to find a more advanced and private way to communicate with one another, so private social websites were born for this purpose.

According to a graphic presented by SocialMediaGraphics.posterous.com (*image below*), there are currently over 1.5 million social media users in New Zealand alone. 70% of these users have profiles on Facebook, 14% on Twitter, 11% on Bebo, and 9% on MySpace.



While you may be familiar with many of the popular social media websites above, here are few basic categories found in social media:

- **Social Networking:** This highly popular area of social media includes websites like [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [MySpace](#), which can be used to privately interact with friends and family, post comments, and join groups to have discussions.

The latest Internet trend in social networking has encouraged businesses to create profiles on these websites to market their companies and to network on professional websites like [LinkedIn](#).

- **Social Bookmarking:** Websites like [Delicious](#) and [StumbleUpon](#) allow you to bookmark various forms of content and tag websites all over the Internet. You can also interact with other users that have bookmarked their own list of content and links.
- **Social News:** Internet users can vote for articles and blogs on websites like [Reddit](#) and [Digg](#). Since these social news websites are user-driven, the top voted news articles will remain on the homepage based on their daily popularity.
- **Photo/Video Sharing:** Social websites like Flickr and YouTube allow Internet users to interact by posting and sharing videos and photos and commenting on posts by other users. This platform of social media often creates viral video, where an Internet video is passed from user to user to gain mass popularity in a matter of hours or days.
- **Wikis:** Users can interact by creating and commenting upon web content and articles in a database.

Perhaps the most popular area of social media is in social networking with websites like:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [MySpace](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Ning](#)
- [Classmates](#)
- [Bebo](#)
- [Friendster](#)



In years past, the above social media websites have been used for very specific purposes. However, today many businesses are making their presence known on personal social media websites, like Twitter and Facebook, *for the purpose of marketing and interacting with their customers directly to boost sales.*

While Internet users involved in social media still value their privacy, businesses that approach social media with the correct etiquette can often become successful in creating an online presence and following.

Within personal and business relationships, social media can be used for:

- Communication
- Sponsorship/support a cause
- Contests/giveaways
- Connecting and building relationships
- Consumer research
- Customer service
- Building communities

Each social media website has its own form of communication and personal slang, which will be covered later.

Most social media websites allow you to register and create your own username and profile, post comments and send messages to other users, and post other forms of web content to share, like photos, videos, articles, and links to webpages.

Here are some of the many benefits that you can expect from the use of social media:

- Connect with friends and family for free
- Stay updated with news and current events
- Join a community of like-minded users with shared interests
- Share your personal stories, blogs, and content
- Market your business inexpensively
- Brand and create a presence for your company online
- Interact with customers and ask for their feedback
- Raise awareness about a cause or charity

In today's world, social media marketing for businesses is on the rise. While social media in the past has primarily been used for pleasure and personal entertainment, businesses are more present in social media than ever.

We will shortly discuss the best practices for each of these forms of digital communication, as well as how to create your own accounts and use email, instant messaging, Skype, and social media.

Websites

A website is the basis of all Internet content and communication. A website is made up of numerous webpages that contain content, images, or video; each website will be hosted from a web server and can be accessed through its Internet address, also known as a **URL**.

Exercise 1

- 1 In your web browser type: **www.newstalkzb.co.nz** and press Enter.

The Newstalk ZB website which displays news, events, talkback information, sport etc will be displayed as shown below. Options on a website will vary as websites can change daily. There may be other buttons or features, and also a search facility as indicated on this website.

The screenshot shows the Newstalk ZB website interface. Annotations with arrows point to various features:

- Website address URL typed into the web browser to access the website.** Points to the address bar showing <http://www.newstalkzb.co.nz/>.
- You can click here to subscribe to the Newstalk ZB newsletter** Points to a "Sign-up to the Newstalk ZB newsletter" button.
- This link allows you listen to Newstalk ZB Live** Points to a "Listen Live" button.
- Search facility** Points to a "SITE SEARCH" input field.
- You can follow Newstalk ZB on Facebook and/or Twitter** Points to social media icons for Facebook and Twitter.
- Website homepage** Points to the main content area of the website.
- Website categories. Click here to visit each website category.** Points to the navigation menu (HOME, NEWS, LISTEN, HOSTS, WIN, EVENTS, LIFE & STYLE, FOLLOW, CONTACT).

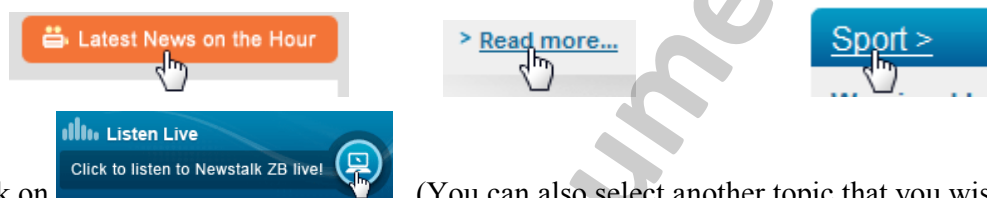
An individual webpage is an Internet document normally written in HTML text. A webpage will then be transported through Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP), which encrypts the website so that it is secure and private to be accessed by Internet users.

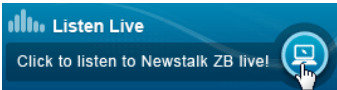
Note All public websites are available through the World Wide Web.

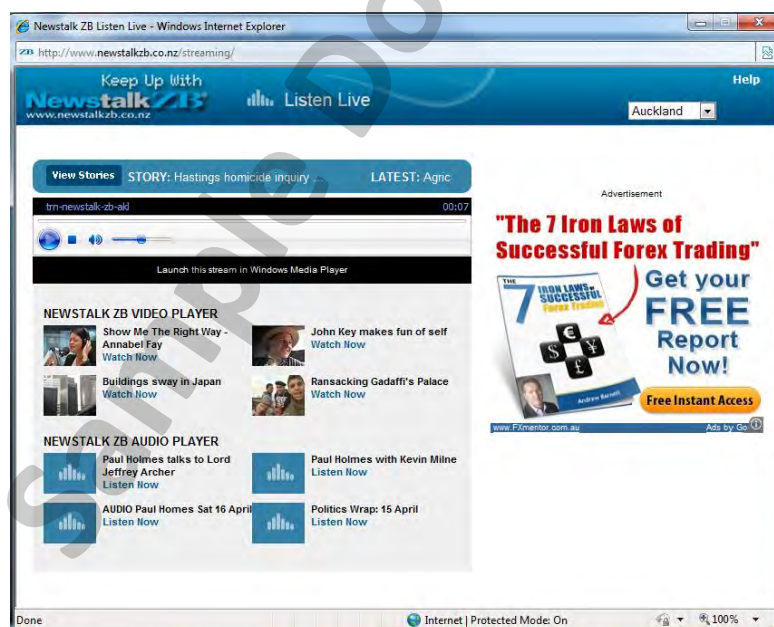
Each individual page of a website can be accessed through the URL typed into the web browser. When an Internet user types in the main URL of the website, they will be directed to the homepage. **This homepage is the first page that an Internet user visits upon entering a website.**


On each website, you will find **hyperlinks**, which are text or a picture that links to another page of a website when you click on it. A hyperlink may link internally within the website to another webpage, or it may link to an external website as a resource or reference for the user.



Generally the mouse pointer displays as a hand when it is moved to a hyperlink as shown below.





- 2 Click on . (You can also select another topic that you wish to listen to or to watch.) The Newstalk ZB Listen Live window will be displayed. This is a separate window from the Newstalk ZB web site.



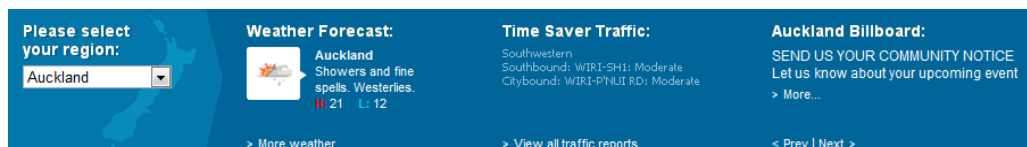
A Windows Media Player button  will be displayed at the bottom of the screen. If you close the window accidentally you can click on this to display it again.

- 3 When you have finished listening and/or watching click on the Stop button .
- 4 Close this window by clicking on the Close button  at the top right of the window.

- Click on various hyperlinks to move around the website.


- Click on the Back button  at the top of the screen to go back or on  to return to the homepage (ie the first page displayed when you enter a website.)

- Scroll down to the bottom of the website (or press Ctrl End) and you will see additional options for the weather (you can select your region), traffic reports etc.




- Other categories are displayed underneath, ie News, Listen, Hosts, Life & Style etc. Click on any that interest you and follow the links.

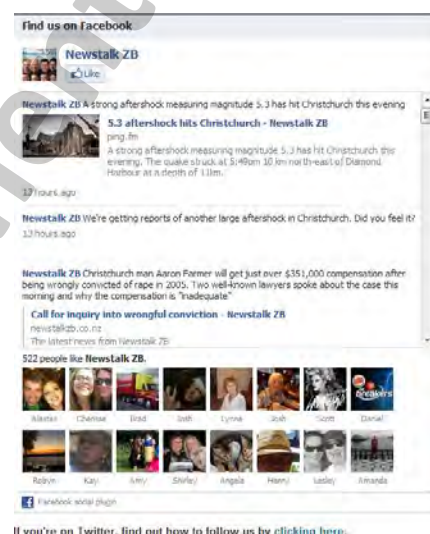
- Press Ctrl Home or scroll to the top of the page.

- Click on the Facebook hyperlink  which will display information about the Newstalk ZB Facebook page and also a live preview of it as shown at the right.

Notice that there is also a link underneath for Twitter.

Below that there is a  **SHARE** button which when clicked on allows you to link this website to your own Facebook page, and/or to other pages, eg Twitter, Stumbleupon etc..

- When you are ready to exit from Internet Explorer click on the Close button  at the top right of the window.

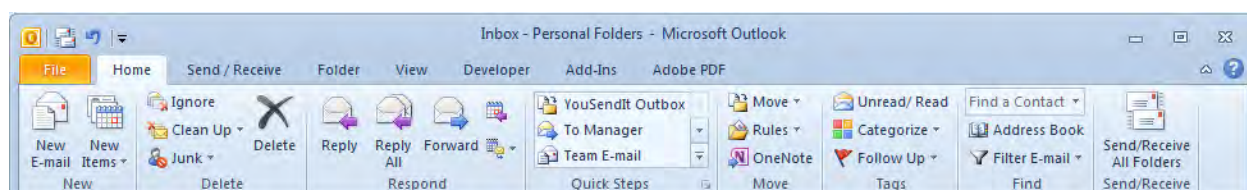


How to Use Email

One of the most popular email programs available is Yahoo email. Setting up an email account through Yahoo is quite simple and will offer you access to send, receive, and save email messages.

Another widely used email program is Outlook, provided by Microsoft. Microsoft Outlook offers email management tools for business and personal purposes and has over 500 million users worldwide. Many people prefer the use of an Outlook Xtra account due to its user-friendly toolbar that allows you to create a new email, mark an email as junk mail, delete an email, and reply to or forward an email.

Outlook 2010 Toolbar

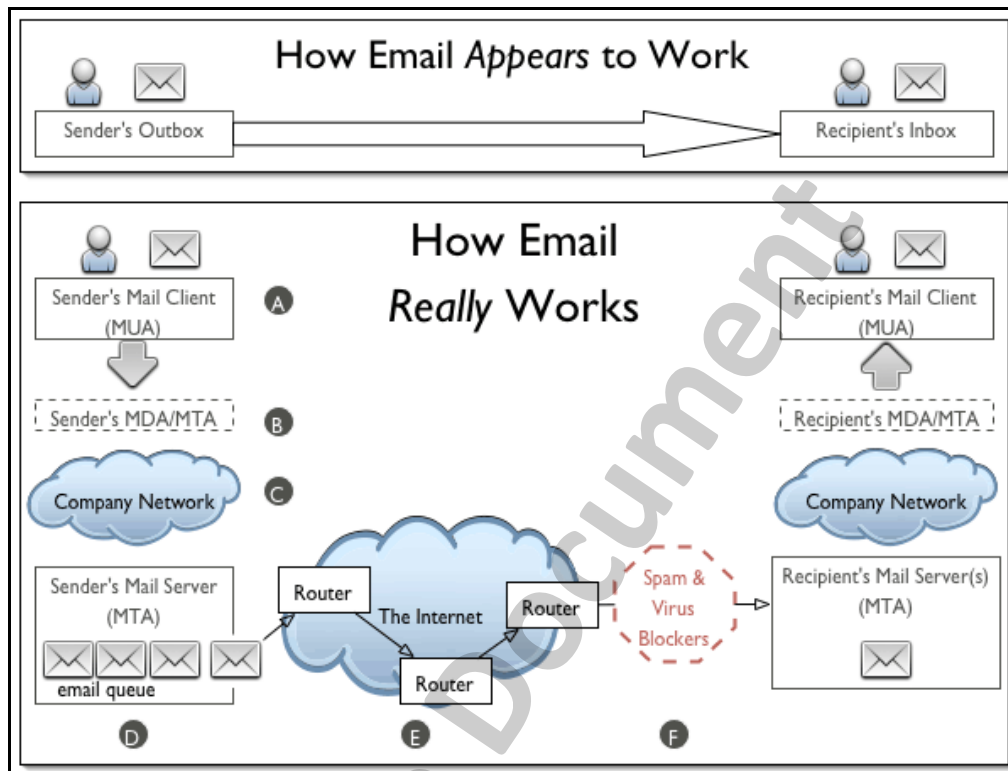


In this day and age of the Internet, having an email address is highly important. Not only does it streamline basic communication between friends and family, but it is often required to sign up for memberships, make online payments, and access a number of websites.

Here is what you will need to set up your Yahoo email account:

- Computer
- Internet access
- Yahoo account through www.yahoo.com

Here is a helpful infographic showing how email works via the Internet:



Creating a Yahoo Email Account

Exercise 2

The first step in the process is to sign up for your own free account at www.yahoo.com.

- 1 In your web browser type www.yahoo.com in the Address box then press Enter.
- 2 At the right of the screen click on [Sign up](#).
- 3 Enter your own username and password, ensuring that you choose a password that is difficult for other people to guess so that your email does not get hacked.


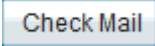
Many people choose a username that is their first and last name, or you can choose a username that is creative and more personal to you, like chocolatelover@yahoo.com. *It is up to you!*

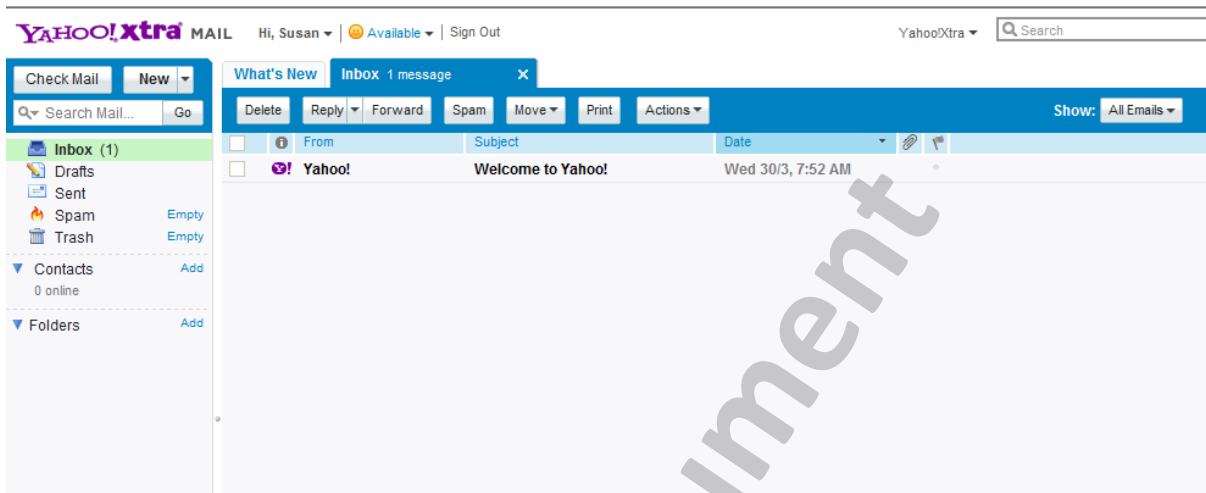
If the ID you wish to create is not available you will be given suggestions. Notice that you can select a yahoo.co.nz OR rocketmail.com OR ymail.com email address. You must remember the email address and password that you have entered!


- 4 After you have created your Yahoo account or when next you want to use email, click on [Email](#) located at the top of the screen. (Enter your Email and Password if required.)

Checking Email

Exercise 3

- 1 Click on  **Inbox** located on the left side of your mailbox homepage.
- 2 Click on  in the upper left-hand corner. This is an optional feature since your new emails will appear in bold in your Inbox when they are new and unread.

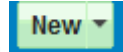
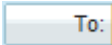


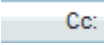
- 3 To read an email, click on the subject line of the message.
You can also double-click on your message to open it in a new tab on your computer.
- 4 Once an email is opened, click on  at the top of the screen if you wish to print it for your records.

Sending an Email

Exercise 4

To send an email, follow these simple steps. Practise sending an email to a friend (or to mary.jones@cherylprice.co.nz as shown on the next page – you will receive a reply!).

- 1 Click on  to open a new email message.
- 2 Type the email recipient's email address into the blank field that says . If you have any saved email addresses, they will automatically appear under a recipient's name.

The  field (Carbon Copy) is used to copy an email to another party. You can copy an email to multiple people using this feature.

- 3 Type the Subject of the email. The email subject line should state what the email is about. For business purposes, it is important to be thorough and to the point in your email subject line. For personal use, you can enter any information that you would like into the subject line of the email.

Note The subject line is what your email recipient will see when your email arrives in their email Inbox. It is optional to enter a subject line, although it is recommended.