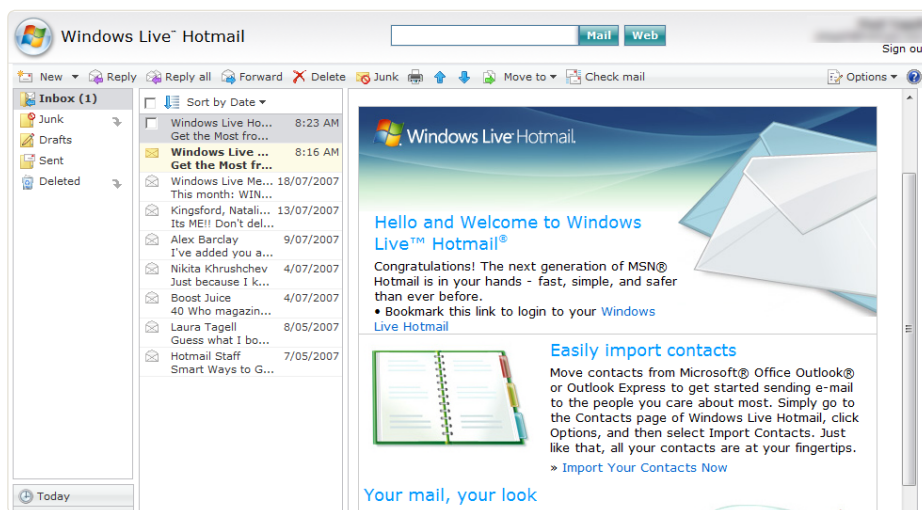




## Windows Live Hotmail

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With the release of Windows Live Hotmail, Hotmail users are given a major upgrade to their email experience. In this article we discuss the best new features and show you how to upgrade.



### Papa's got a brand new bag

Ever since it launched as the first free webmail service in 1996, Hotmail has always been on the cutting edge of email. This probably explains its popularity amongst readers of the Gizmo Guide for whom Hotmail is the email client of choice.

Recently, an upgrade called Windows Live Hotmail (WLH) has been released. WLH takes advantage of the increasing speed of many home broadband connections to incorporate some of the best features from the ultra-popular Microsoft Outlook program.

If you don't already have a Hotmail account you will need to sign up for one at [www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com). The service is free and signing up takes no time at all.

Once you have a standard account all you need to do is click on the big green button at the top left of the screen and follow the prompts choosing either the "Classic" or "Full" version.



### The Classic Version

If you have a slower internet connection, you will want to use the "Classic" version of WLH. Although some features are left

out of the "Classic" version, it still offers the best features of the new version without requiring a super-fast internet connection. One of the best features on offer is a powerful search option which will quickly scour your Inbox for those lost emails.

You also have the option of customizing the way your Hotmail looks. To do this, simply click where it says "Options" at the top right of the screen and a range of different background color options will pop down below it.

The Classic version also has advanced security options for your safety. Each message you open is color-coded depending on how safe the sender is. If a message is definitely dangerous, WLH tries to let you know so you don't open any virus filled messages.

### Need-for-speed email

The "Full" version of Windows Live Hotmail is better suited for computers with broadband connections. It has all the features of the Classic version as well as a few extras. The most prominent feature is a reading pane which shows the contents of your messages without actually having to open them. If you've ever used Microsoft Outlook you'll know how useful this feature can be. To run through your received messages quickly, you can preview the heading and first few lines of messages. If you want to see the Full message all you have to do is click on it once. Either way, it is much easier to check your email this way rather than having to open each message individually.

The reading pane also shows the different folders in your email. You can add as many folders as you wish to the list and they make it easy to organize your emails. Using the "Full" version you can drag and drop emails into the required folder allowing you to organize your messages in a flash.

Another handy feature in WLH allows messages to be handled by simply right clicking and choosing to either delete, forward, or reply to the message. The Full version also has an auto-complete feature, which automatically completes the email address of recipients if you've sent a message to them before. This saves time as you won't need to shuffle through through your address book or past messages to find that pesky email address.

If you make the swap and then decide that you prefer the old version changing back is very simple. Just find where it says "Switch to Classic" at the bottom left of your screen and click on it. If you decide afterwards that you liked the Full version, you can switch back to it by doing the exact same thing.

### The Bottom Line

If you've had trouble finding a worthwhile email service that is easy to use, go to Hotmail.com and try out the edgy new features. Whether you choose to use the Classic or Full version of WLH, it's sure to improve your email experience.