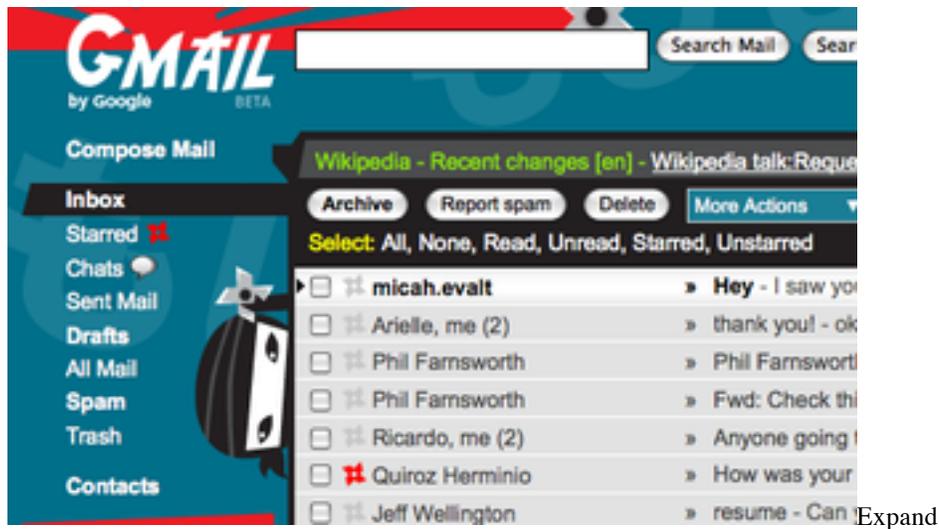


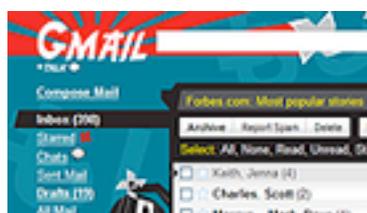
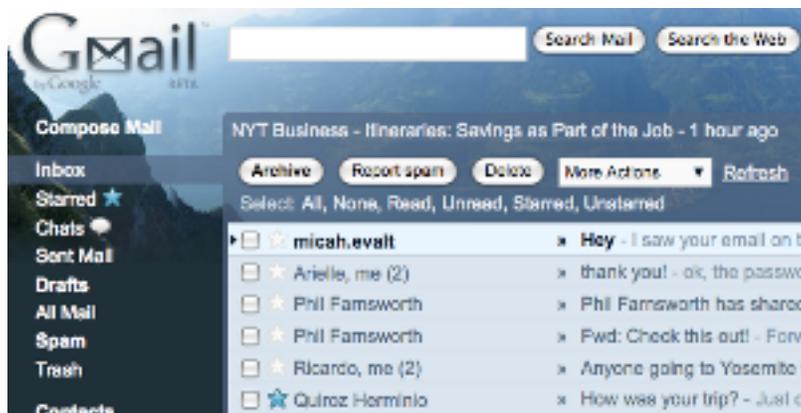
➤ Top 10 Things You Forgot Gmail Can Do

<http://lifehacker.com/5103016/top-10-things-you-forgot-gmail-can-do>



When friends push friends onto Gmail, it usually involves talking up the seemingly limitless storage space, the fast-moving interface, or its inter-connectedness with other Google applications, like Calendar. Those features are all fine and good, but Gmail does a lot of helpful things that some users never get to dig into. From one short web address, you can video chat Skype-style with contacts, ensure you didn't leave yourself logged in elsewhere, help mom gradually migrate from her old dial-up-era email address, and pluck a single message out of tens of thousands. Let's dig in and take a look at Gmail's less-touted features for power users.

10. Change Gmail's look entirely with themes.

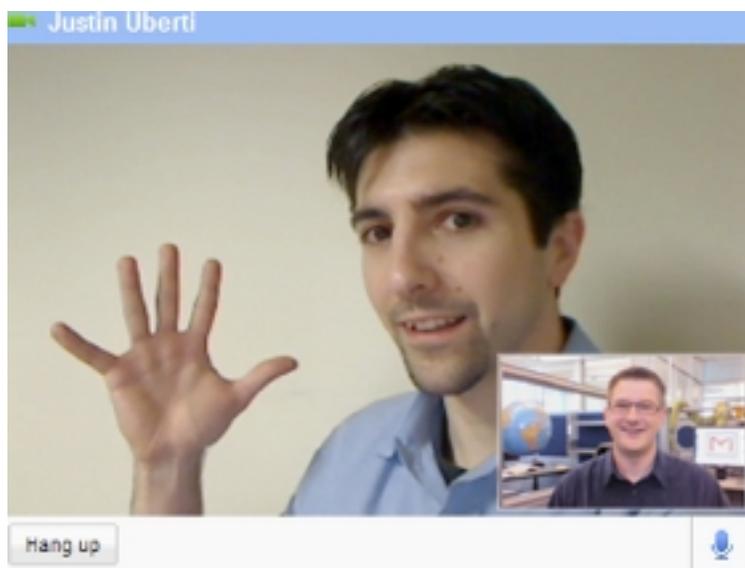


[Gmail Updates Its Look, Adds Themes](#)

Google's beloved web-based email client has always been ripe for third-party design customization (we've always been partial to the Gmail... [Read...](#)

Adam did the yeoman's work of compiling [screenshots and thumbnails of Gmail's new Themes](#), accessible through a Settings tab, and one can see that they're more than just a font switch and background image. Gmail's themes cover a nice range of aesthetic choices, geekiness, cute-overload, elegant color tweaks, and, for those who put a lot of time in on the screen, dark-themed schemes. If you haven't checked them out yet, they're certainly worth a look, if only to give your eyes a rest from all the variants of light blue.

9. Launch video and audio chats, no Skype required.



It's Windows-only at this point, and still requires a little browser plug-in, but it's surprising how little fanfare Gmail's native video chat application has received. It's comparable quality to most software-based solutions, it's got a full-screen mode, and, well, if the person's not all that intriguing, you can minimize them and get back to your email.

8. Back up your email from any system.



Just because Google wants you to put your digital life in the cloud doesn't mean you can't have your own copy of your own messages and attachments. There are lots of ways to get your entire Gmail dump onto your desktop. We're currently into [Gmail Backup](#), which is graphical for Windows and command line for Linux and Mac OS X. You can also grab it with the command-line-based [Fetchmail](#), grab them [via POP with Thunderbird](#), or use the web-based [StashMyMail](#) for 99 cents, if you don't mind the third-party-ness of it. To back up another email account using Gmail's generous storage space, you can always BCC: your outgoing messages to a Gmail account to make sure you've always got an online searchable copy of your mail.

Related

```
POP3> USER gina@scribbling.net
POP3C <OK send PASS
POP3> PASS =
POP3C <OK Welcome.
POP3> STAT
POP3C <OK 0 0
No mail for gina@scribbling.net at pop.g
POP3> QUIT
POP3C <OK Farewell.
6.3.1 querying pop.gmail.com (protocol PC
pleted
normal termination, status 1
```

[Geek to Live: Back up Gmail with fetchmail](#)

by Gina Trapani [Read...](#)



[Backing up Gmail with Thunderbird](#)

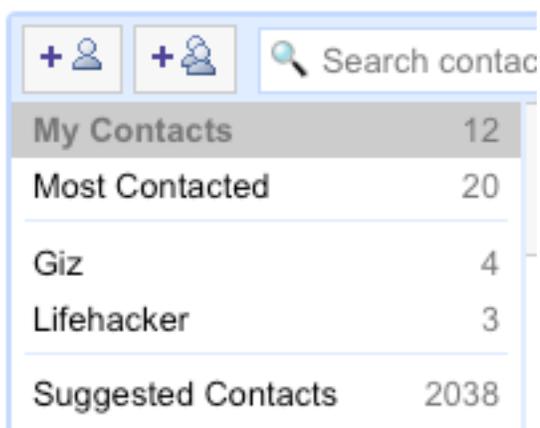
Ever since that brief but petrifying Gmail outage (and my ensuing freakout), I've been "backing up" Gmail messages via POP using... [Read...](#)

7. See all the places where you're signed in, and remotely sign out.

| IP address [?] | Date/Time (Displayed in your time zone) |
|------------------|--|
| 127.1.25.30 | 5:02 pm (0 minutes ago) |
| 230.10.10.2 | 11:17 am (5 hours ago) |
| 228.58.8.6 | 9:42 am (7 hours ago) |
| 230.9.19.17 | 6:30 am (10 hours ago) |
| 228.58.8.6 | Jun 29 (18 hours ago) |

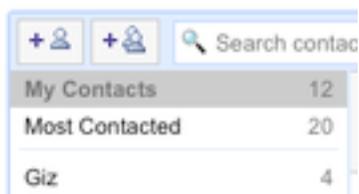
Friends' and significant others' computers, work, public terminals—people sign into Gmail from all kinds of places, and don't always remember to hit that privacy-ensuring "Sign Out" in the upper-right corner. At the very bottom of any Gmail inbox, though, is a text line showing where else the account is open, along with a list of sign-in times and IP addresses and a button that signs you out of everything but the browser you're in right then. No need to worry, then, that your friends' willpower will ever be tested by discovering you're still signed in on their system.

6. Serve as a central, synchronized, smarter contact list.



Used to be that Gmail put everyone you sent five emails to went into your contacts, but they've [wised up and created two lists](#): Your true contacts, and those oft-mailed but not well-known folks into "Suggested" contacts. That makes Google a much nicer, cleaner place to sync your computers and devices from. Mac users can pull Google Contacts into their Address Book [with or without an iPhone](#), Blackberry owners can [hook up too](#), and fans of Thunderbird have [got their own tool](#) as well. Oh, and the Google-centric Android platform does it too, of course.

Related



[Gmail Gives You More Control of Your Contacts](#)

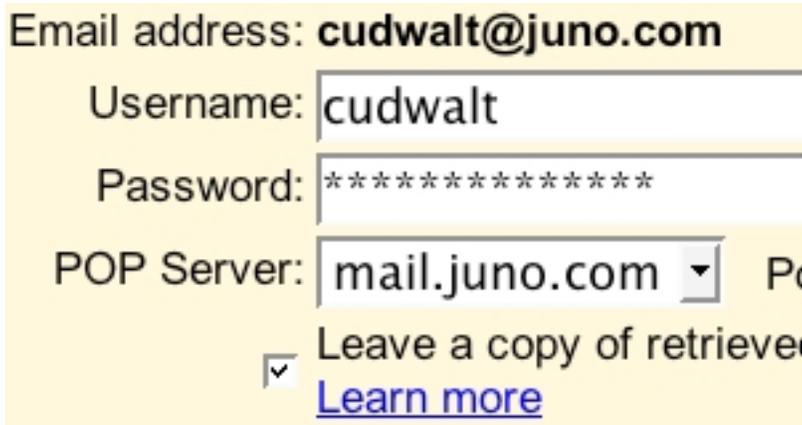
Used to be that every time [Read...](#)



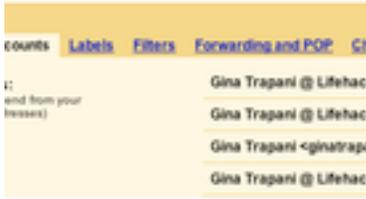
[Enable Google Contact Sync Without an iPhone or iPod Touch](#)

Mac OS X only: Earlier today we reported that Mac OS's latest update to 10.5.3 included Google contact syncing to Address Book—if you've... [Read...](#)

5. Consolidate all your email accounts.



Related



[Consolidate Multiple Email Addresses with Gmail](#)

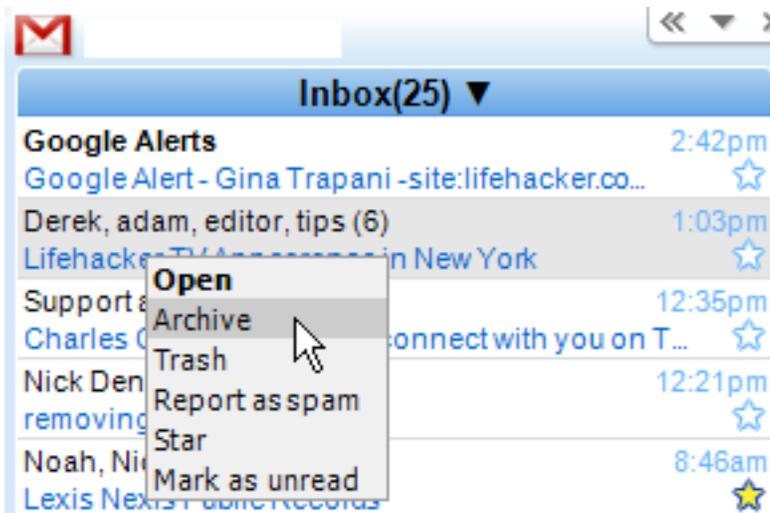
The following post was originally published in Chapter 1 of our new book, *Upgrade Your Life: The Lifehacker Guide to Working Smarter, Faster, ...* [Read...](#)

Gmail eliminates the need to ever have to send one of those very late, apologetic "Don't check this email often" replies from your ancient accounts. Gina's explained how straightforward it is to [consolidate multiple email addresses into Gmail](#), with full importing of messages from any POP or IMAP-compliant account (almost all of them are) and the ability to keep sending emails from your old address, eliminating the need for mass pleas to update address books.

4. Help friends find their own Gmail messages or bookmark your own.

"You honestly do *not* have my email explaining how to take care of my dogs and disable the alarm system? Okay, no, it's no big thing, Steve. Hit this link, it should take you to the right message: <http://mail.google.com/mail/#search/buster+alarm+code+pedigree>" That kind of universal search link is pretty helpful, but the addresses of any email you open in Gmail are also permalinks for the account owner, meaning you can create lists of emails you need to get back to, bookmark an important thread in your browser favorites, and save them for any other purpose or list.

3. Keep your Gmail account(s) on your desktop.



Related

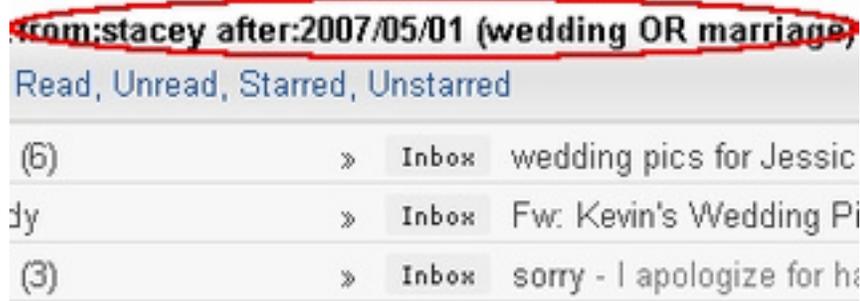


[How Do You Get New Gmail Notifications?](#)

Last night's release of the Google Desktop Gmail Gadget added yet another way for users of the big G's email service to be pinged about... [Read...](#)

More than one of the Lifehacker editors had gotten used to keeping Gmail and Lifehacker's Google Apps email open in two browser tabs, clicking over when a new message hit the title bar. With the just-launched [Google Desktop Gadget](#), though, all the basic actions of email—read, star, label, delete, respond—can fit into a corner of your desktop. If you're good with Gmail's [keyboard shortcuts](#), the gadget works with those, too, and can be opened in multiple instances for different accounts. Pretty neat stuff, but if it's not worth installing the whole [Google Desktop](#) suite for, check out the other ways our [readers get their Gmail notifications](#).

2. Give you total search power.



Related

```
is: -from: {
  *@lifehacker.com
  *@gawker.com
  *@gizmodo.com
  *@defamer.com
```

[Build advanced Gmail filters and persistent searches](#)

Click to viewIt's no surprise that the killer feature in Google's email offering, Gmail, is its search capability. Google's king of... [Read...](#)

It's easy to forget that the company providing Gmail is, by and large, a search specialist, and has given its webmail app some serious search, filter, and organization tools. Don't waste time scrolling through page after page of your mom's email—find that one email she sent a few months back, with the attached JPEG file and mentioning that cat, Mr. Nibbles or Snibbles or whatnot—`from:Stacey after:2008/09/01 has:attachment (nibbles OR snibbles)`. You can start at learning the [basic operators](#), then take Adam's tips on [building advanced filters and persistent searches](#)

1. Do much, much more with Gmail Labs experimental features.



It started out as a modest set of tweaks and small Oh Neat items, but Gmail's Labs section has become a powerhouse of email features. From Labs' increasingly-long list of tools, you can set up [canned responses for standard replies](#), stop yourself from [forgetting attachments](#), get your [Google Calendar agenda](#) and [Remember the Milk tasks](#), get at all your various attachment types with [Quick Links](#), and many, many more tweaks. Labs isn't particularly hidden away or obscure, but if you haven't taken the time to scroll down the list of options, you're almost certainly missing out on something that makes your webmail home a bit more comfortable.