

In Mac OS X Mail, how do I set up incoming mail filters?

The [Mac OS X Mail](#) application will allow you to set up filters or rules that process or sort mail as you receive it. For example, you might wish to have mail from a certain sender be filed in a folder with the sender's name. To set up a rule to filter your mail in Mac OS X Mail, follow the appropriate steps below:

Mac OS X 10.2.x and later

1. From the **Mail** menu, choose **Preferences...**
2. At the top of the window that opens, click **Rules**.

Note: In OS X 10.3.x, the junk mail filter is a separate option and is not part of Mail rules. This is different from previous versions of Mail. To adjust the junk mail filter, select **Junk Mail** instead of **Rules**.

3. Click the **Add Rule** button. To modify an existing rule, select it from the list, then click **Edit**.
4. A sheet will appear. If this is a new rule, give it a name in the "Description:" field. This can be anything you want.
5. From the pull-down menu directly underneath the description, you can select to have **any** or **all** of the conditions be requirements for Mail to perform the action(s) you specify for this rule. Selecting **any** means that even if other conditions are not met, Mail will still perform the action; selecting **all** means that if the conditions are not all met, Mail will not perform the action.
6. In the field just below the conditions statement, you can set the criteria you would like Mail to use in order to identify messages. The option you choose from the first menu on the left will determine what options are available in the rest of this section.

To add more conditions, click the plus sign button to the right of the first condition.

7. From the pull-down menu under "Perform the following actions:", select the action you wish to have Mail perform on each message it identifies using the criteria you selected above. The rest of the options available in this section will change depending on what you select from this first menu.

To add more actions, click the plus sign button to the right of the first action.

8. Click **OK** to save your rule.

In Mac OS X Mail, how do I set up incoming mail filters?

Mac OS X 10.1.x and earlier

1. From the **Mail** menu, choose **Preferences...**
2. At the top of the window that opens, click **Rules**.
3. Click the **Create Rule** button. To modify an existing rule, click its listing, then click **Edit**.
4. A sheet will appear. If this is a new rule, give it a name in the "Description:" field. This can be anything you want.
5. In the "Criteria" section, choose the message properties you would like to base your mail filter on. These include **From**, **To**, **CC**, **Subject**, or **Body**.
6. In the "Action" section, decide what you would like to do with incoming messages that meet the criteria you have established in the previous step. You will see the following choices with checkboxes next to each; you may select one or more of them:
 - **Set the color to:** Applies a colored label to the message header in your mailbox
 - **Play sound:** Plays an alert sound when the message is received
 - **Transfer to mailbox:** Places the message in a specified mailbox or folder
 - **Forward message to:** Forwards the message to the email address you enter into the field next to it
 - **Delete message:** Deletes the message
7. Click **OK**.