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Productivity Tips and Tricks

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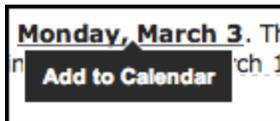http://scholarship.kentlaw.iit.edu/lib_pres/2

Productivity Tips & Tricks

Debbie Ginsberg
February 26, 2014

Create a Calendar Event from an Email

Google now lets you create calendar events right from your email.

1. When Google can identify a date in your email, it underlines it.
2. Move your mouse to the underline, and you'll see a tab to add the event to your calendar.

3. Click the tab, make any needed changes (like "add a time"), and then click "Add to Calendar".
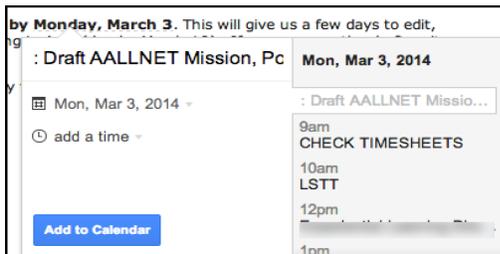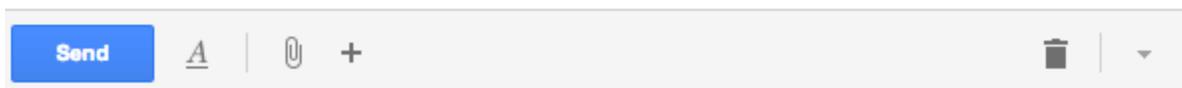

Note: sometimes, Google will guess the date incorrectly. You can edit the event if needed.

Send Large Attachments

Need to send a large attachment, either too large to send (bigger than 25M), or too large for the receiver to open? Google Drive can help.

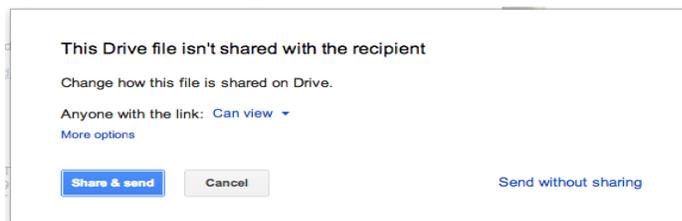1. At the bottom of Gmail's "compose" screen, click the plus-sign icon next to the paperclip:

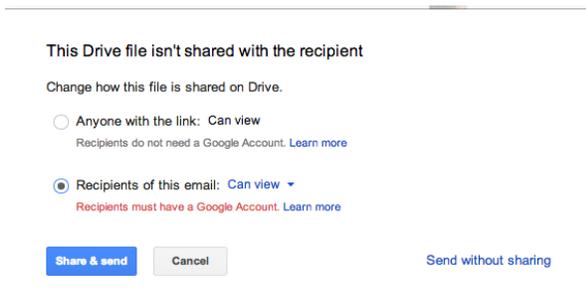2. Select "Insert Files Using Google Drive" (the "Drive" icon)

Upload your files on the next screen.

If you see this message:

then click "Share & send" to share. Use "more options" if you want to ensure that only the recipient can access it and can't forward it to others (this limitation works only if the recipient has a Gmail or Google account):

You may also see another message if you are sending the email to someone not at Chicago-Kent asking if the attachment is ok to send.

Dropbox

Looking for an even easier way to share a large file? If you have Dropbox, you can send a link to a Dropbox file. You can login to the Dropbox web interface and share from there. If you have installed the desktop assistant, you can right-click on the file and select "copy Dropbox link" and paste that link into your email.

Speech Recognition

Windows and Mac offer basic speech recognition tools that you can use to take dictation.

Windows

To turn on speech recognition:
1. Click the Start button.
2. Click Control Panel.
3. Click Ease of Access.
4. Use the Computer without a mouse or keyboard
5. Click Speech Recognition.
6. Click Start speech recognition.

After this, Windows will walk you through the process for setting up speech recognition. Be sure to take the tutorial to learn more about how this tool works. More directions for turning on speech recognition are here: http://bit.ly/winspeechrec

To dictate text:

1. Open Speech Recognition by clicking the Start button.
2. Click All Programs.
3. Click Accessories.
4. Click Ease of Access.
5. Click Windows Speech Recognition.
6. Say "start listening" or click the Microphone button to start Windows' listening mode.
7. Open the program you want to use or select the text box you want to dictate text into.
8. Say the text that you want dictate.

More directions for dictating text are here: http://bit.ly/windictatetext
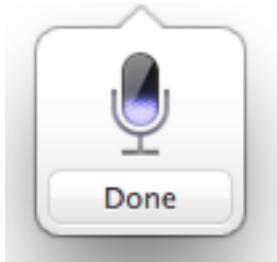
You may need to set up a microphone.

Mac

Turning Dictation on or off:
1. Go to "System Preferences."
2. Choose "Dictation & Speech."
3. Click "On" to turn Dictation on, or "Off" to turn it off.

Using Dictation in an application:
1. Select a text field.
2. Press the fn (Function) key twice or choose Edit > Start Dictation. You'll see this icon:

3. Dictate what you want to have inserted into the text field.
4. When finished, click "Done" or press the fn key again.

If you have an older version of OS X, your computer will listen for up to 30 seconds at a time. Your spoken words then appear in the text field. You will also need to be connected to the Internet. The latest version of OSX, Mavericks, can listen for longer than 30 seconds. If you turn on "Enhanced Dictation" in System Preferences, you also do not need an active Internet connection. With Mavericks, text will appear as you speak.
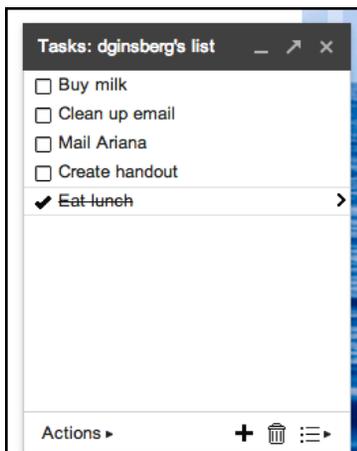
Macs feature built-in microphones.

Tracking Tasks in Gmail

Gmail can help you keep track of your tasks.

1. Click the arrow next to "Mail" in the upper-left corner and select "Tasks". Tasks appear in the lower right.
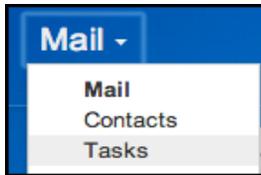
2. Use your enter key or the plus icon to add tasks. Click the check box when the task is done. Use the trashcan icon to remove tasks.

You can create a task from an email using the "More" menu at the top of your email. You can also email your task list to yourself.

Organize Email

Does it seem like you are getting too many emails? Here are some tools to help you regain control of your inbox.

Quick and Easy Fix

Search Gmail for the word "unsubscribe." Look for unsubscribe links and use them to remove vendors, listservs, and other email sources you no longer need. Note: if you don't recognize the sender and think the email might be spam, mark it as spam and use a filter to hide future messages (see below). Clicking "unsubscribe" on a spam message may help spammers gather personal information.
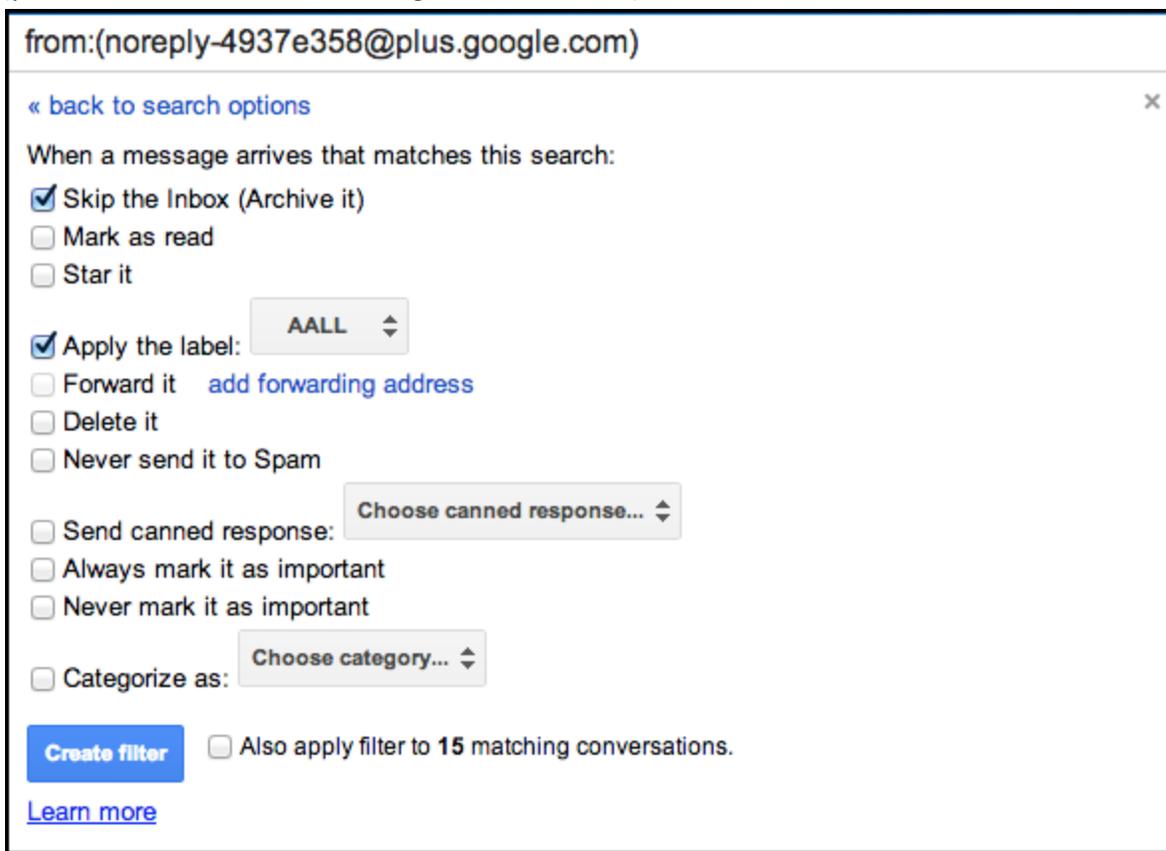
Filters

Keep your inbox clean by removing emails from online stores, publishers, or other senders that you don't

need to see every day. To create a filter:

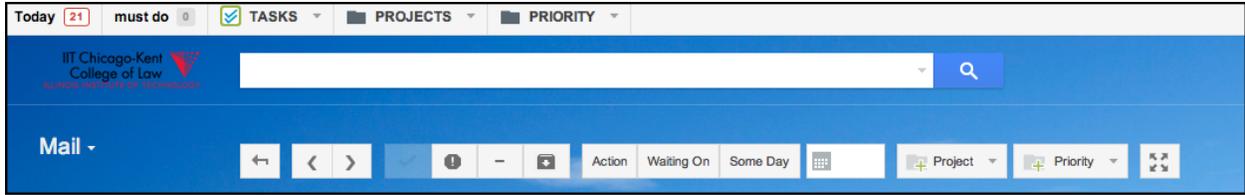1. In the "More" menu, select "Filter Messages Like These:"
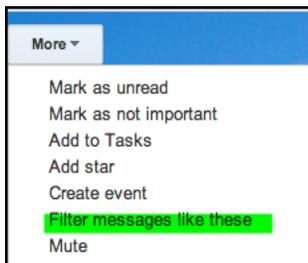
2. In the next box, click "Create filter with this search." Then, click "Skip the Inbox" and "Apply the label" (you can make the label something like "read later.")

Be sure to check your "read later" label every once in a while, but you don't need to check it every day.

Activeinbox
http://www.activeinboxhq.com/, $40/year

Use Activeinbox to turn emails into tasks.

You'll need to install a browser extension to use this tool. It works in Firefox, Chrome, and Safari (PC and Mac), but not Internet Explorer. With Activeinbox, you can give emails a due date, defer emails to another time, and focus on your most important messages. You can even take notes on emails to remind yourself what you want to do next. I often use Activeinbox to flag email messages that I send myself but need to follow up with later.

Activeinbox is a great tool if you are using the "Getting Things Done" method to stay on top of tasks: http://bit.ly/tipsforemailmgmt

It is also handy for achieving "Inbox Zero": http://bit.ly/activeinboxzero