

## Using Windows Live Hotmail

Email, short for electronic mail, has become a standard form of communication world wide. Email is similar to a normal letter in that you can write as many words as you like and can use proper spelling, grammar and sentence construction, however instead of sending the letter through the post you send it via the internet. Using the internet to transfer the letter means the message will arrive at its destination more quickly than if you sent it in the post.

Email is of benefit in many ways. It saves time by avoiding having to find a post box to post a letter. The letter arrives almost instantly no matter where in the world you send it to. You can attach files such as photos, videos or documents without the weight of the letter increasing and thus costing more to post. The receiver has the advantage of a digital copy rather than a hard copy meaning they can edit the document. For these reasons email is popular with casual communication with friends and family, but is not always suitable for very important or sensitive information. If you have important information it may be best to avoid email and courier the documents instead. This ensures the recipient gets the news as not everyone checks their email daily.

Most email providers allow you to access your emails on any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. This is called webmail. Windows Live Hotmail is a free internet based email service. It is owned by Microsoft and has very good spam filtering so that you receive limited unsolicited junk emails. If you have a Hotmail address it can be used to access Windows Live services. These include Messenger which allows you to have a written 'conversation' with someone if you are both at your computers at the same time and Xbox LIVE which allows you to play online games with your Xbox console.

Signing up for Hotmail is a simple process that takes about 5 minutes. The first step is to go to the Hotmail website [www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com) Click on the blue sign up button on the left hand side. You will need to choose an email address. Most common email addresses are your name followed by your birth year. For example johnsmith1943. You can then choose

whether you want the traditional @hotmail.com or the new @live.com. After you choose the address you want click on the Check Availability button. If the address you wish to use has already been taken by another person you will need to choose another address. A trick you can use to keep a custom address that suits you is to add underscores or full stops to the address eg john\_smith\_1943. Experiment with your address until you find one that has not already been taken. You don't need to use your name as the email address; you can use your business name, property name, a hobby or a nick name. You cannot leave spaces between words in your address such as john smith 1943 and it does not matter if you use lowercase or capital letters in your address.

Choosing a strong password is very important for security to make sure no one else can access your email account. Avoid words, names or birth dates as these are easy to decode. Use a random list of letters and numbers in a mixture lower and upper case in the password. If you will have trouble remembering passwords try a word with a capital letter and a number for example Teatowel4. This still is a reasonable strength password.

To attach a file in hotmail click on the attach button and choose whether you are attaching a file or a photo. A window will appear to allow you to browse through your files and find the one you wish to attach. Once you select it the files will upload. You can attach more than one file and hotmail lets you attach files up to 10mb. I would stick to a maximum of 5mb as this will be quicker for people with slow internet connections. If you are emailing someone who you know has a dialup connection stick to attachments no larger than 2mb.

When sending an email you are able to send the same email to more than one person by adding several email addresses into the To field. The CC field stands for Carbon Copy, you can use this to send a copy of the email to someone that needs to see it, but to who the email isn't actually addressed to. The BCC field stands for Blind Carbon Copy. This is the same as the CC field except that the people in the To and CC field cannot see each the address in the BCC field.

Spam emails are emails received from people you do not know. These often cause problems and can be frustrating when you receive many of them. All email addresses are sent spam; it's just some addresses receive more than others. To minimise spam, avoid signing up to internet registers. Avoid listing your email address on websites. When you forward an email, remove all the email addresses out of the top; this will assist everyone who has already forwarded the email, to reduce their spam.

If you do not have the internet at home you can use hotmail on any computer in the world with an internet connection by visiting [www.hotmail.com](http://www.hotmail.com) The computers at the CTC have very reasonable prices and are cleaned regularly so people's personal details are not stored. If you would like assistance to set up a Hotmail account drop in and see Josh at the Community Hub Building or ring on 6343 1720.