

# Thunderbird E-mail Basics

Thunderbird is a free, easy to use, full-featured e-mail program for both Windows and Macintosh. We recommend it for use both on campus and at home. This handout explains how to use Thunderbird once it is installed and configured. This handout is based on Thunderbird version 2.0. If you have an older version (see Help – About Mozilla Thunderbird), you can update it by going to <http://www.mozilla.com>. For instructions on installing and setting up Thunderbird to access an SNC e-mail account, see the handout *Installing & Configuring Thunderbird for SNC E-Mail*, available at <http://www.snc.edu/techsupport>.

## Reading messages

When Thunderbird opens, it will prompt you for your password, then connect to the mail server, check for new mail, and display your Inbox. To check for new messages any other time, click the Get Mail button. Thunderbird automatically checks for new messages every 10 minutes (to change that: Tools – Account Settings – Server Settings).

The Thunderbird window, pictured below, has 3 panes: on the left is a list of your folders, in the upper right is a list of the messages in the selected folder, and in the lower right is the body of the selected message.

To read a message, click once on it in the message list and it will appear in the pane below. To delete a message, click once it and click the Delete button or press Delete on the keyboard. If printing a message (select it and click the Print button), it is a good idea to first check how the message will fit on a page by going to File – Print Preview.

The screenshot shows the Thunderbird interface with the following labels and arrows pointing to specific features:

- change folder view**: points to the folder pane.
- folder pane**: points to the left sidebar.
- threading**: points to the 'threading' icon in the message list.
- click column headings to sort messages**: points to the 'Subject' column header.
- read status indicator**: points to the 'read' icon in the message list.
- select columns to display**: points to the 'Date' column header.
- attachment indicator**: points to the 'attachment' icon in the message list.
- right-click here to customize toolbars**: points to the toolbar area.
- junk status indicator**: points to the 'junk' icon in the message list.
- current sort indicator**: points to the 'Date' column header.

The interface includes a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Go, Message, Tools, Help), a toolbar (Get Mail, Write, Address Book, Reply, Reply All, Forward, Tag, Delete, Junk, Print, Back, Forward), and a message list table:

| Subject                                            | Sender              | Date                |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Re: Congrats!                                      | Pete                | 3/2/1999 7:16 AM    |
| Re: (Fwd) SNC position announcement from milwaukee | Stefan Smith        | 8/2/1999 9:23 AM    |
| N.E.W. Curative Website                            | Richard Shay        | 4/17/2001 2:23 PM   |
| criteria for the selection of full text elec...    | Kristin Van Epern   | 10/12/2001 12:46 PM |
| Re: E-mail Contact                                 | Lidiette Quesada    | 6/28/2002 1:09 PM   |
| New Information!                                   | Alberto Herrera Jr. | 9/18/2002 11:55 AM  |
|                                                    | Kathleen Kasprzak   | 12/27/2002 4:42 PM  |

The selected message header is: **Subject:** criteria for the selection c **From:** Lidiette Quesada 6/28/2002 1:09 PM

The message body contains the following text:

I work for EBSCO as the Latin American Sales Manager and I am frequently asked in the field about documents that address the issue of criteria for the selection of full text electronic resources. We have been given them copy of a a paper that you presented at the WAAL Professional Development Workshop in July of 1997. The paper is very well received and some people have asked if I have a translated version. I have decided to translated the paper and asked you for your permission for distributing a translated version of this paper, wich I attached.

I will highly appreciate your comments and thoughts.  
<<Criterios para la seleccion de RECURSOS ELECTRONICOS EN TEXTO COMPLETO.doc>>

At the bottom right, it shows 'Unread: 0' and 'Total: 7'.


Sample Thunderbird window showing default view.

## Receiving attachments

Messages with attachments will be indicated by a paper clip icon in the attachment column of the message list. By default the attachment column is to the left of the Subject column, as shown in the illustration on page 1, although it is possible to move or hide it (see next section). When you view a message with attachments, the attachments will be shown in a separate pane below the message (not shown). To save an attachment:

1. Right-click on the attachment in the bottom part of the window and choose **Save As**.
2. Choose the folder in which to save the file, then click **Save**.

## Displaying and sorting messages

Certain columns of information are displayed by default in the message list (upper right pane), such as Subject, Sender, and Date. To display other message information (or stop displaying an item), click on the  button to the right of the column headings (see illustration on page 1), then click on the item you wish to display. To rearrange the columns, click and drag the column headings to the left or right.

Messages can be sorted by any displayed column. To sort, simply click on the column heading for the item by which you wish to sort. Clicking the same column heading again reverses the order. The column heading with the arrow is the one currently being used to sort.

## Managing folders and messages

In the folder pane on the left, the first section lists your folders on the mail server (in the picture on page 1, this is under `donald.duck@snc.edu`). Folders on the mail server are accessible on your office computer through Thunderbird and also via the Zimbra web interface from anywhere in the world, so they're good for the things that you might need to access when off campus. The bottom section, under the heading **Local Folders**, lists folders that are stored on your computer's hard drive. Because local folders are accessible only from the computer on which you create them, they're good for things that you'll only need when in your office, or that you're keeping as archives or just in case you may need them again some day. Local folders can help you save space on the server and keep you from going over your quota. For more information on managing your e-mail and staying within your quota, see the handout *Managing your e-mail*, available at <http://www.snc.edu/techsupport>.

Thunderbird creates a few default folders which have special functions: **Inbox**, **Drafts**, **Sent**, and **Trash**. These may be present when you first use Thunderbird, or they may be created as needed (e.g., **Sent** may not be created until the first time you send a message). Do not attempt to delete or rename these folders.

### Creating, deleting, & renaming folders

- To open a folder, simply click once on it in the folder list on the left.
- To create a new folder, right-click on the account name at the top of the folder pane and choose **New Folder**. Be sure you right-click on the account name (in the picture on page 1, this is where it says "`donald.duck@snc.edu`") and not on the **Inbox**. Give the folder a name and click **OK**.
- To create a subfolder (a folder within a folder), right-click on the parent folder and choose **New Subfolder**.
- To rename a folder, right-click on it in the folders list and choose **Rename Folder**.
- To delete a folder, right-click on it in the folder list and choose **Delete Folder**.

**New in version 2.0:** Thunderbird now allows you to change the folder pane to view all folders, only recent folders, only folders containing unread messages, or only your "favorite" folders (which you can designate by right-clicking on a folder). To cycle through the available views, click on the small arrows above the folder pane (shown in the illustration on page 1 under "change folder view").

### Saving messages in folders

To save a message in a folder other than the **Inbox**, drag it from the message list to the folder pane and let go when the desired folder is highlighted. Alternately, you can select a message in the message list and go to **Message – Move**, or right-click on it and choose **Move to**.

## Composing & sending messages

To compose a new message, click the Write button. Address and compose the message, then click the Send button.

### Addressing messages

When you start typing an address or nickname on the “To” line of a message, Thunderbird will look for matches in your address books and display a list of choices. You can scroll through this list with your mouse or arrow keys and choose the entry you want. For more information, see the section **Using Address Books**, below. To Cc (carbon copy) or Bcc (blind carbon copy) someone, click the drop-down box where it says “To.” By default 4 address lines are shown; to send the message to more than four people, press Enter after the last address to get more lines.

### Sending attachments

To add an attachment to an outgoing message, click the Attach button in the Compose window. Locate the file you wish to attach, click once to highlight it, then click the Open button (or just double-click on the file name). You will see the file in the “Attachments” pane in the upper right of the Compose window. To remove an attachment, click once to highlight it and press the Delete key on the keyboard, or right-click on it and choose Delete.

### Replying to messages

To reply to the sender of a message, click the Reply button. To reply to all of the recipients of a message, click the Reply All button. Compose the message, check the address lines, then click the Send button.

### Forwarding messages

To forward a message, click the Forward button. Address and compose the message, then click Send. If you forward a message with an attachment, the attachment will be included with the forwarded message (you may delete it).

## Using address books

In Thunderbird, you can have multiple address books. To access them, click on the Address Book button. To open an address book, click on it in the left-hand pane. The list of names and addresses will be displayed on the right.

- To create a new address book, go to File ▶ New ▶ Address Book.
- To add an address to your address book from a message you received, right-click on the address in the message window and choose Add to Address Book.
- To add an entry to an address book manually, click on address book in the left-hand pane and click the New Card button. Fill in the desired information (only the e-mail address is required) and click OK.
- To edit an address book entry, click once on it and click the Properties button, or just double-click on it.
- To delete an entry, highlight it in the list and click the Delete button.

### Configuring the SNC Directory

Thunderbird will automatically look up addresses in your address books as you type them, and will display a list of matches for you to choose from. It can also do this with the SNC directory. To configure the SNC directory:

1. Go to Tools – Options and click on the Composition category (in the row across the top).
2. On the Addressing tab, check the “Directory Server” box. (“Local Address Books” should also be checked.)
3. Click on the Edit Directories button, then click the Add button.
4. In the “Name” box, type a name for this directory, e.g., “SNC Directory.”
5. In the “Hostname” box, type: `ldap.snc.edu` (that’s a small letter “L,” not a number one).
6. In the “Base DN” box, type: `o=snc.edu` (that’s a small letter “O,” not a zero).
7. Click OK three times to close all of the boxes.

### Creating distribution lists

1. Click on the Address Book button, then click on the address book in which you want the new list.
2. Click the New List button.
3. Put the list name in the “List Name” box. You do not need to fill in the other 2 boxes.
4. Type or paste the e-mail addresses in the spaces provided, one per line. If you already have the SNC directory set up (previous section), Thunderbird will look addresses up as you type.
5. Click OK.

## Creating a signature

To attach a signature to outgoing messages in Thunderbird, you must first create the signature in a text editor:

1. In Windows, go to Start – Programs – Accessories – Notepad. On a Mac, use TextEdit (Go – Applications – TextEdit).
2. Type or paste the text of your signature file. Thunderbird will automatically insert "--" above it.
3. If using TextEdit on a Mac, go to Format – Make Plain Text.
4. Save the file in a location you'll remember (e.g., your My Documents folder, M drive, etc.). Close the file.
5. In Thunderbird, go to Tools – Account Settings.
6. Check the "Attach this signature" box and click the Choose button. Locate and select the file you just created, click Open, then click OK. The signature will automatically be included in all outgoing messages; you may delete or change it as needed on any message.

## Using the junk mail controls

With Thunderbird's junk mail controls, you can train it to recognize and mark junk mail for you and delete it all at once. Note that the default message display includes a "Junk status" column with a flame icon at the top.

When Thunderbird identifies a message as junk, there will be a flame icon in the Junk status column. If Thunderbird incorrectly identifies a message as junk, click on the flame icon to unmark it.

To mark a message as junk, click on the dot in the "Junk status" column, or highlight the message in the list and click the Junk button at the top.

Once all of the appropriate messages are marked as junk, go to the Tools menu and choose Delete Mail Marked as Junk in Folder to delete them. To have Thunderbird automatically delete messages when you mark them as junk:

1. Go to Tools – Options and click on the Privacy category (in the row across the top).
2. On the Junk tab, check the "When I mark messages as junk" box and under that, choose "Delete them."

## Searching for messages

To search for messages in the current folder, type the search criteria in the search box in the upper right. If the search box isn't displayed, you may want to add it by customizing the toolbar (see next section). Click on the magnifying glass icon to change the search criteria. To do a more complex search, right-click on the folder (or on the account name to search all folders) and choose Search Messages. In the "Search Messages" window, use the "+" button to do searches with multiple criteria.

## Customizing the toolbar

Thunderbird's default toolbar may contain features you don't use, or may not contain features that you do use. To customize the toolbar buttons to suit your preferences:

1. Right-click anywhere in the toolbar area and choose Customize.
2. To add a button, drag it from the Customize Toolbar window to the desired location on the toolbar.
3. To remove a button, drag it from the toolbar to the Customize Toolbar window.

## Assistance and questions

If you have any questions or need more information, contact the Help Desk at (920) 403-HELP (4357) or [helpdesk@snc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@snc.edu). The Help Desk is for St. Norbert College students and employees only.