

<http://www.techterms.com/definition/email>

## **E-mail**

It's hard to remember what our lives were like without e-mail. Ranking up there with the Web as one of the most useful features of the Internet, e-mail has become one of today's standard means of communication. Billions of messages are sent each year. If you're like most people these days, you probably have more than one e-mail address. After all, the more addresses you have, the more sophisticated you look...

E-mail is part of the standard TCP/IP set of protocols. Sending messages is typically done by SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) and receiving messages is handled by POP3 (Post Office Protocol 3), or IMAP (Internet Message Access Protocol). IMAP is the newer protocol, allowing you to view and sort messages on the mail server, without downloading them to your hard drive.

Though e-mail was originally developed for sending simple text messages, it has become more robust in the last few years. Now, HTML-based e-mail can use the same code as Web pages to incorporate formatted text, colors, and images into the message. Also, documents can be attached to e-mail messages, allowing files to be transferred via the e-mail protocol. However, since e-mail was not originally designed to handle large file transfers, transferring large documents (over 3 MB, for example) is not allowed by most mail servers. So remember to keep your attachments small!

<http://inventors.about.com/od/estartinventions/a/email.htm>

## History of Email & Ray Tomlinson

By [Mary Bellis](#), About.com Guide

Computer engineer, Ray Tomlinson invented internet based email in late 1971. Under [ARPAnet](#) several major innovations occurred: email (or electronic mail), the ability to send simple messages to another person across the network (1971). Ray Tomlinson worked as a computer engineer for Bolt Beranek and Newman (BBN), the company hired by the United States Defense Department to build the first Internet in 1968.

Ray Tomlinson was experimenting with a popular program he wrote called SNDMSG that the ARPANET programmers and researchers were using on the network computers (Digital PDP-10s) to leave messages for each other. SNDMSG was a "local" electronic message program. You could only leave messages on the computer that you were using for other persons using that computer to read. Tomlinson used a file transfer protocol that he was working on called CYPNET to adapt the SNDMSG program so it could send electronic messages to any computer on the ARPANET network.

### The @ Symbol

Ray Tomlinson chose the @ symbol to tell which user was "at" what computer. The @ goes inbetween the user's login name and the name of his/her host computer.

### First Email

The first email was sent between two computers that were actually sitting besides each other. However, the ARPANET network was used as the connection between the two. The first email message was "QWERTYUIOP".

Ray Tomlinson is quoted as saying he invented email, "Mostly because it seemed like a neat idea." No one was asking for email.