

 A FREE GUIDE TO A CALMER INBOX

STOP LETTING **EMAIL** RUN YOUR LIFE

A Free Guide to Taking Control of Your Inbox

Clear the junk, kill the noise, and build one simple system for handling email — with side-by-side steps for Gmail, Outlook, and Apple Mail. No inbox-zero pressure. No new apps. Just 30 focused minutes.

30

MINUTES TOTAL

05

SECTIONS COVERED

03

PLATFORMS: GMAIL + OUTLOOK
+ APPLE MAIL

[START HERE](#)

Welcome To Your Inbox Reset

Your inbox isn't the problem. Your system is.

Email was supposed to save time. For most people, it now runs the day — pinging, piling up, and demanding a decision every few minutes. This isn't about reaching inbox zero or becoming a different person. It's about spending thirty focused minutes building a system so your inbox stops running you.

HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

1 Delete the Junk

6 MINUTES

2 Unsubscribe

6 MINUTES

3 Rules & Filters

6 MINUTES

4 Folders That Actually Work

6 MINUTES

5 Daily Email Habits

6 MINUTES

🕒 GET READY

- ✓ Set a timer for each section so you keep moving.
- ✓ Have your email open and your password handy.
- ✓ Put other distractions away for these 30 minutes.

💡 KEEP IN MIND

- ✓ This isn't a test — skip anything that doesn't apply.
- ✓ Progress over perfection. Any step you finish counts.
- ✓ Menu names shift slightly between app versions.



Delete the Junk

🕒 6 MINUTES

💡 WHY IT MATTERS

A crowded inbox hides the messages that actually matter. Every promotional blast and automated receipt sitting in there competes for the same attention as an email from your boss or your kid's school. You don't need to reach zero today. You need the obvious junk gone.

🎯 YOUR GOAL

Clear out the biggest, easiest batches of junk first — old promotions, newsletters you skim, and receipts you'll never reopen.



GMAIL

- 1 Tap the search bar and type **category:promotions**, or open the Promotions tab.
- 2 Select a batch of old marketing emails using the checkbox above the list.
- 3 Tap the trash icon to delete the whole batch in one move.
- 4 Search **older_than:1y** to find and clear anything a year old or older.
- 5 Repeat with the Social and Updates tabs if you use them.



OUTLOOK

- 1 Open your main Inbox folder and click **Sort by sender** or Filter.
- 2 Choose a sender you don't need, then select their emails with Shift+Click.
- 3 Click **Delete** to clear the whole batch at once.
- 4 Search terms like "sale," "newsletter," or "receipt" and clear the results.
- 5 Empty your Deleted Items folder to free up space for good.



APPLE MAIL

- 1 Open Mail and go to **All Inboxes**.
- 2 Tap Edit and select a batch of old promotional or automated emails.
- 3 Tap the trash icon to delete them all at once.
- 4 Swipe left on individual emails for quick one-by-one deletes.
- 5 Go to Mailboxes > Trash, tap Edit, then Delete All to empty it for good.



DO THIS NOW

Pick one category — promotions, newsletters, or receipts — and clear out every email in it older than 30 days.

Unsubscribe

6 MINUTES

WHY IT MATTERS

Junk mail isn't random. Most of it comes from the same handful of senders, week after week. Deleting the mess without unsubscribing just means doing this again next month. A few minutes here keeps your inbox from silently refilling.

YOUR GOAL

Unsubscribe from the senders you delete on sight without ever reading — not the ones you actually want.

GMAIL

- 1 Open a marketing email and look for **Unsubscribe** next to the sender's name.
- 2 Click it, then confirm on the page that opens.
- 3 Repeat for at least 5 senders you never actually read.
- 4 Search "unsubscribe" to surface more candidates you may have missed.
- 5 If a sender won't unsubscribe cleanly, choose **Block** from the menu instead.

OUTLOOK

- 1 Open a marketing email in Outlook.
- 2 Look for the **Unsubscribe** banner near the top of the message.
- 3 Click it and confirm to stop future emails.
- 4 Repeat for at least 5 repeat offenders.
- 5 For anything with no unsubscribe option, right-click the sender and choose **Block**.

APPLE MAIL

- 1 Open a marketing email — Mail usually shows an Unsubscribe link under the sender's name.
- 2 Tap it for at least 5 senders you no longer want.
- 3 Confirm on the page that opens in your browser.
- 4 For stubborn senders, tap the name and choose **Block This Contact**.
- 5 Check back in a week — most unsubscribes take a few days.



DO THIS NOW

Unsubscribe from five senders right now. That alone will cut next week's junk mail in half.

Rules & Filters

6 MINUTES

WHY IT MATTERS

You shouldn't have to remember to sort your own email. A rule does it once and keeps doing it — automatically routing the predictable stuff out of your main inbox before it ever demands your attention.

YOUR GOAL

Build two or three rules that handle your most repetitive senders or subject lines automatically.

EMAIL — FILTERS

- 1 Click the search bar, then the sliders icon to open filter options.
- 2 Enter a sender or keyword — like a newsletter address or "receipt."
- 3 Click **Create Filter**, then choose Skip Inbox and Apply Label.
- 4 Pick or create a label so the emails land somewhere specific.
- 5 Repeat for your two or three most repetitive senders.

OUTLOOK — RULES

- 1 Open Settings, then go to **Mail > Rules**.
- 2 Click Add New Rule and name it something clear.
- 3 Set the condition — a sender, subject word, or keyword.
- 4 Set the action — move to a folder, mark as read, or forward.
- 5 Save, then repeat for your next most repetitive sender.

APPLE MAIL — RULES

- 1 On Mac, open Mail Settings (Preferences) > Rules.
- 2 Click Add Rule and name it clearly.
- 3 Set the condition — from a sender, or subject contains.
- 4 Set the action — move message to a mailbox.
- 5 On iPhone, add repeat senders to VIP instead so they stand out.



DO THIS NOW

Build one rule right now for the sender or subject line that shows up in your inbox the most.

AREA 04

Folders That Actually Work

6 MINUTES

WHY IT MATTERS

An elaborate folder system is its own kind of clutter. If you need a map to find anything, the folders aren't helping. A handful you actually check beats twenty you forgot existed.

YOUR GOAL

Build three folders — no more — that match how you actually work, not how you think you should.

EMAIL — LABELS

- 1 In the left sidebar, click **More**, then **Create New Label**.
- 2 Create three labels — try **To Do**, **Waiting On**, and **Reference**.
- 3 Drag an email onto a label, or select it and click the label icon.
- 4 Point your Section 3 rules at these same labels.
- 5 Archive anything labeled instead of leaving it in the inbox.

OUTLOOK — FOLDERS

- 1 Right-click your inbox name and choose **New Folder**.
- 2 Create three folders — try **To Do**, **Waiting On**, and **Reference**.
- 3 Drag an email into a folder, or right-click and choose **Move**.
- 4 Point your Section 3 rules at these same folders.
- 5 Move filed emails out so the inbox holds only what's active.

APPLE MAIL — MAILBOXES

- 1 Go to **Mailbox > New Mailbox**.
- 2 Create three mailboxes — try **To Do**, **Waiting On**, and **Reference**.
- 3 Drag an email into a mailbox, or use the **Move To** button.
- 4 Point your Section 3 rules at these same mailboxes.
- 5 Keep your inbox for anything you haven't dealt with yet — nothing else.



DO THIS NOW

Create your three folders right now and move this week's backlog into the right one.

AREA 05

Daily Email Habits

6 MINUTES

WHY IT MATTERS

A clean inbox doesn't stay clean by accident. It stays clean because you check it on a schedule instead of letting it check on you. This is the habit that protects everything you just built.

YOUR GOAL

Replace all-day checking with two or three set check-ins, and turn off the notifications tempting you in between.



SCAN

Open your inbox at set times — morning, midday, end of day. Scan for anything urgent first.



SORT

Move anything that isn't urgent into a folder from Section 4, or delete it on the spot.



RESPOND

Answer anything under two minutes now. Everything else goes on today's task list — not back in the inbox.

TURN OFF THE PULL



EMAIL

In the app, go to Settings > Notifications and switch to **High priority only**, or turn notifications off entirely.



OUTLOOK

Go to Settings > Notifications and turn off new message alerts. Keep alerts for VIP or flagged senders only.



APPLE MAIL

On iPhone, go to Settings > Notifications > Mail and turn off Badges, Sounds, and Banners for non-VIP accounts.



DO THIS NOW

Turn off email badge notifications on your phone right now, and pick your two check-in times for tomorrow.

You Did It. Now Keep It That Way.

A clean inbox isn't a one-time event — it's a habit. The good news is maintenance takes minutes, not thirty. Build these small check-ins into your routine and the clutter never gets the chance to pile back up.

 2 MINUTES

Weekly

- ✓ Clear out new junk and unsubscribe from one new sender.
- ✓ Empty anything sitting in Deleted or Trash.

 10 MINUTES

Monthly

- ✓ Re-check your rules — add one for any new repeat sender.
- ✓ Archive anything that's sat in your inbox for two weeks.

 30 MINUTES

Quarterly

- ✓ Do the full reset again, start to finish.
- ✓ Review your three folders — merge or rename what isn't working.



"An empty inbox was never the goal. A calm one is. Small steps, every week — that's the climb."

Stop Letting Email Run Your Life — Checklist

Print this page and check off each box as you go.



DELETE THE JUNK

6 MIN

- ☐ Cleared a batch of old promotional or automated emails
- ☐ Searched for and deleted anything older than a year



UNSUBSCRIBE

6 MIN

- ☐ Unsubscribed from 5+ senders
- ☐ Blocked any sender with no unsubscribe option



RULES & FILTERS

6 MIN

- ☐ Created 2–3 rules or filters for repeat senders
- ☐ Confirmed new mail is routing where you expect



FOLDERS THAT ACTUALLY WORK

6 MIN

- ☐ Created 3 folders that match how you work
- ☐ Moved this week's backlog into the right folder



DAILY EMAIL HABITS

6 MIN

- ☐ Chose two or three daily check-in times
- ☐ Turned off non-essential email notifications



Total time invested: ~30 minutes



Small Steps. Real Progress.

Thanks for taking these thirty minutes for your inbox. It won't stay perfectly organized forever — nothing does. But now you know exactly how to reset it, any time the noise starts creeping back in.

KEEP CLIMBING

10 Ways AI Can Save You Five Hours This Week

If this guide helped, the next one in The Humble Climb Systems Series is waiting for you — free, practical, and ready in about 30 minutes.

Download it at TheHumbleClimb.com ✓

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