

# Apple Mail for Mac

A desktop setup using standard mailboxes, Favorites, search, and restrained automation.

**Archive is the normal destination. The three working queues exist only for messages that still require intentional attention.**

Use this offline guide alongside the interactive walkthrough. Interface labels can vary slightly by account type, organization policy, and app release.

# The Next Concepts Inbox Zero method

Use this same sequence for every message on every platform.

## 1. Read the message.

Understand what it means before organizing it.

## 2. If no action is required, archive it.

Archive is the primary and most common destination.

## 3. If it takes two minutes or less, complete it now and archive it.

Do not create a task queue for work you can finish immediately.

## 4. Only when attention remains, move it.

Choose 1 | Action, 2 | Waiting, or 3 | FYI.

## The four destinations

### Archive

Nothing further is required, or the work was completed in two minutes or less.

### 1 | Action

I owe a meaningful next move that cannot be completed now.

### 2 | Waiting

Someone else owes the next move.

### 3 | FYI

Information intentionally retained for later reading or reference.

Most processed email should be archived. Labels and folders are not storage areas; they should contain only messages that still require deliberate attention.

# 01 Create standard mailboxes

- Choose Mailbox > New Mailbox and select the server account as Location, not On My Mac, unless local-only storage is intentional.
- Create the three mailboxes in every active account and keep their order consistent.

# 02 Build the Favorites view

- Show the sidebar and drag the three mailboxes into Favorites.
- If you use multiple accounts, optionally add All Inboxes as the receiving area.

## 03 Reset the backlog

- Search a safe date range in the correct Inbox or account, review the result, and Archive in batches.
- Archived messages remain searchable. Respect active work and retention requirements.

## 04 Use desktop tools wisely

- Drag or use Move only when remaining attention belongs in Action, Waiting, or FYI.
- Use flags for urgency, Remind Me for a specific future time, and search for retrieval.
- Smart Mailboxes are optional views. Narrow rules may handle predictable information only after the manual system works.

# Practice the decisions

Read the scenario, choose the smallest honest outcome, and compare it with the answer.

**Paid receipt  
with nothing  
left**

Archive.

**A short  
response you  
can finish now**

reply, then Archive.

**A 30-minute  
proposal you  
owe**

1 | Action.

**A contractor  
owes a revised  
schedule**

2 | Waiting.

**A report  
intentionally  
saved for  
Friday**

3 | FYI.

**A  
time-sensitive  
request that  
takes longer**

flag it and move it to Action.

## Daily rhythm

- Process the Inbox in one or more deliberate blocks. Read, archive by default, finish two-minute work, and move only the exceptions.
- Work 1 | Action during a focused block. Archive messages when the work is complete.
- Review 2 | Waiting before the end of the day and archive resolved threads.

## Weekly review

- Action: remove completed work and clarify anything vague.
- Waiting: follow up, archive resolved threads, and return new responsibility to Action.
- FYI: read what still matters and archive anything that no longer deserves attention.
- Review optional rules, flags, reminders, and categories so they remain useful rather than noisy.

# Your quick-start checklist

- I understand that Archive is the default and most common outcome.
- I read first and archive when no action is required.
- I complete work that takes two minutes or less and then archive it.
- I use Action, Waiting, and FYI only when intentional attention remains.
- I archive completed messages during daily and weekly reviews.

## INBOX ZERO TEAM TRAINING

**STARTING AT \$499**

Hands-on setup and one shared process for up to ten employees across Gmail, Apple Mail, and Microsoft environments.

**Request training at [nextconcepts.biz](https://nextconcepts.biz)**