

Get Control of Your Inbox

Posted by [Coach](#) • December 1, 2009 • [Printer-friendly](#)

Tame Your Email Inbox



You don't have to drown in a daily deluge of emails.

With a little determination and diligence, the dream of logging in and finding an empty inbox can be a reality for you.

Here are two basic rules, presented by technology writer [Farhad Manjoo](#), on how to overcome a cluttered inbox.

1. Clear out your inbox.

Set aside an hour or two on a Saturday morning to respond to every important message that has dogged you in the last couple months.

Next, **delete the junk** and move everything into a new folder called Archive. This folder will house all of your old mail - read and unread.

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2. Don't let messages pile up.

With your email inbox now empty, think of this as its optimal state. And, your goal should be to keep it this way.

When you receive a new message, **do something with it THAT DAY**. Don't read your email and let it sit there. Instead, take one of the following actions:

- **Archive it** - Most email messages require no action or response. These types of messages should be sent directly to the Archive folder.
- **Respond to it** - If the email message calls for an easy answer - send it, and then push the original message into your Archive.
- **Forward it** - If the message is best handled by someone else - send it off to that person, then Archive it.
- **Hold it for later** - This can be the most problematic action. Some email messages require complicated answers, or information that is not readily available. You can leave these messages in your inbox with a promise to come back to them soon - or you can create a file entitled UNANSWERED EMAILS, but be sure carve out time at the end of the day to respond to them.

Remember, the goal here is to **keep your inbox empty**. Let each email message sitting there be a stark reminder of the messiness that procrastination can cause.

Tackle those messages - before they tackle you!

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