

# How to distinguish between POP and IMAP when setting up Gmail and Outlook.

When setting up an email client or application, you might encounter the terms POP and IMAP. But what are they? How do they affect your email? And which is the right choice?

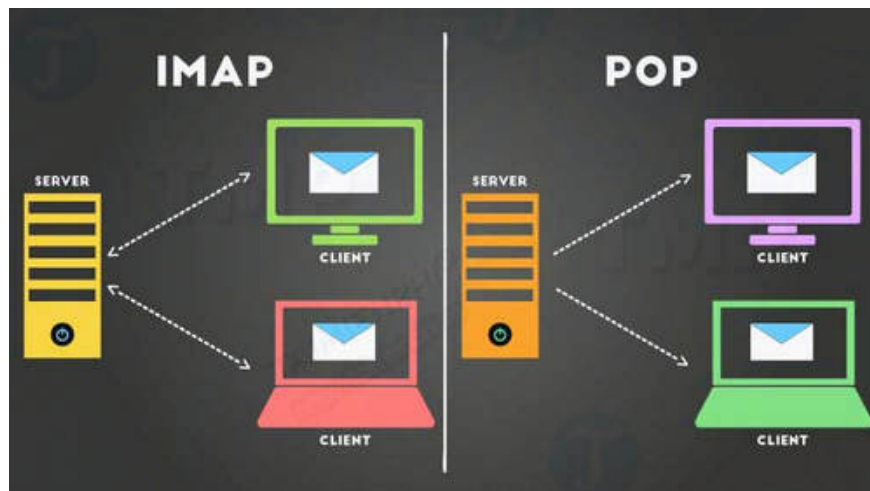
IMAP (Internet Message Access Protocol) and POP (Post Office Protocol) are two email protocols. They allow you to read emails on applications such as Outlook, Thunderbird, Eudora, GNUMail, and Mail (Mac).

## Distinguishing between POP and IMAP when setting up Gmail and Outlook.

POP first appeared in 1984, allowing users to download emails from a server to their devices.

IMAP, introduced in 1986, allows remote access to email without downloading it. POP stores emails locally, while IMAP keeps them on a server, only temporarily storing them on the device—similar to cloud storage.

- Download [Gmail for Android](#)
- Download [Gmail for iPhone](#)



# How to distinguish between POP and IMAP when setting up Gmail and Outlook.

These two protocols differ in how they operate.

## **How POP works:**

- Connect to the server.
- Download all emails.
- Save locally as a new email.
- Delete the email from the server.
- Disconnect.

By default, POP deletes emails from the server, but most applications allow you to keep a copy.

## **How IMAP works:**

- Connect to the server.
- Extract the necessary content and temporarily save the email list, summary, or email content.
- Handling user actions such as marking emails as read, deleting emails, etc.
- Disconnect.

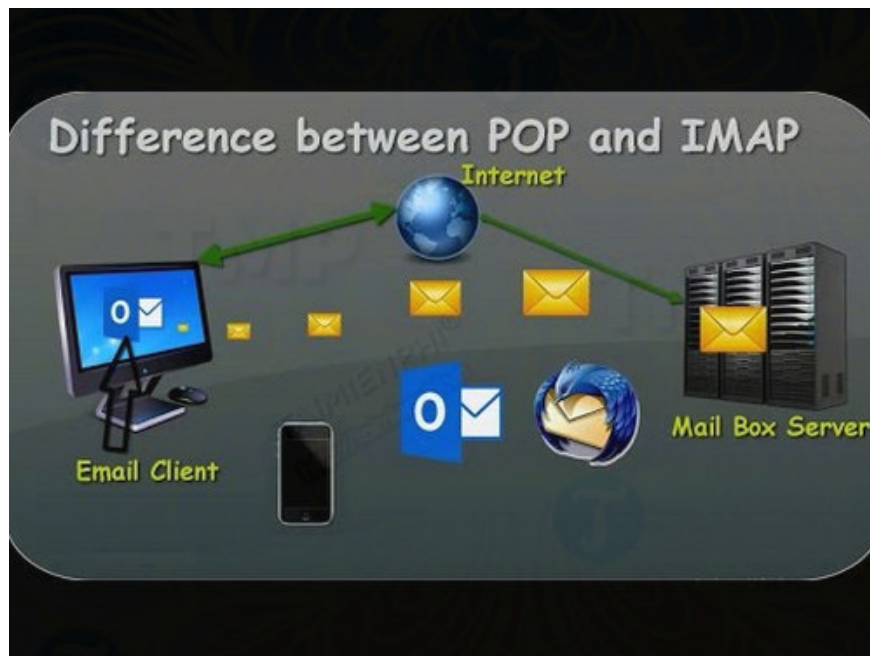
IMAP is more complex, storing emails on a server and only keeping a temporary copy on the device. However, you can store a permanent copy if you wish.



## **Advantages of POP:**

POP is designed to allow a client to access and store emails locally, offering several advantages:

- Emails are saved on the device and can be viewed even without an internet connection.
- You only need an internet connection to send or receive emails.
- Free up server space.
- Allows keeping or deleting copies of emails on the server.
- Merge multiple email accounts into a single inbox.



## Comparing POP and IMAP when setting up Gmail and Outlook.

### **Advantages of IMAP:**

IMAP allows remote email access, enabling multiple devices or users to manage the same inbox. When logged in from any device, you'll see the same emails and folders, as they are stored on the server and synchronized instantly.

- Emails are stored on the server and can be accessed from anywhere.
- Internet access is required to view email.
- Faster email loading and display.
- Emails are automatically backed up if the server is well managed.
- Saves device storage space.
- You can choose to save emails locally.

## Should you choose POP or IMAP?

Select **POP** if:

- Use only one device to access email.
- Want to read emails even without an internet connection.
- Limited server capacity.

Select **IMAP** if:

- I want to access my email on multiple devices.
- Have a stable internet connection.
- We need emails to load quickly.
- Device memory is limited.
- Concerns about backing up emails.

If you're unsure which protocol to choose, IMAP is a better option. It's a modern, flexible protocol that automatically backs up emails on the server. Additionally, you can still archive important emails locally if needed.

The above explains how to distinguish between POP and IMAP when setting up Gmail and Outlook. Which protocol are you using? With the popularity of web email like Gmail, POP and IMAP are no longer as common as they once were.

Besides these two protocols, there's also Microsoft Exchange. Let's explore **the differences between POP3, IMAP, and Exchange** with TipsMake !

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