

Getting Started with Thunderbird™

What is Thunderbird?

Thunderbird is a free, open-source and cross-platform mail client—a program that allows you to access, send and manage your email. It also helps you manage email-related information such as address books.



Thunderbird Icon

Thunderbird supports IMAP (Internet Message Access Protocol), which allows you to retrieve and manage messages while still storing them on the mail server. It also supports the more common POP (Post Office Protocol), which requires downloading them to the local computer. Thunderbird supports HTML mail formatting so you can view most messages as the sender intended. You do maintain control over what images are loaded and, by default, will NOT run any scripts or “executables” included in any message, regardless of format.

Getting Thunderbird

Since it is a mail client, you must install the program on your computer to be able to use it, but the program is free. You can download and install the most recent version of Thunderbird from www.mozilla.org/thunderbird.

Getting Started

Launch Thunderbird as you would launch any other application. In Windows, go to the Start button, select **All Programs** and then click on **Mozilla Thunderbird**. On the Mac, locate and click on **Thunderbird** in your **Applications** folder.

The first time you use Thunderbird, you will need to enter some information such as your full name, your email address, and your password. After that the only information you’ll need to enter is your password (figure 1).

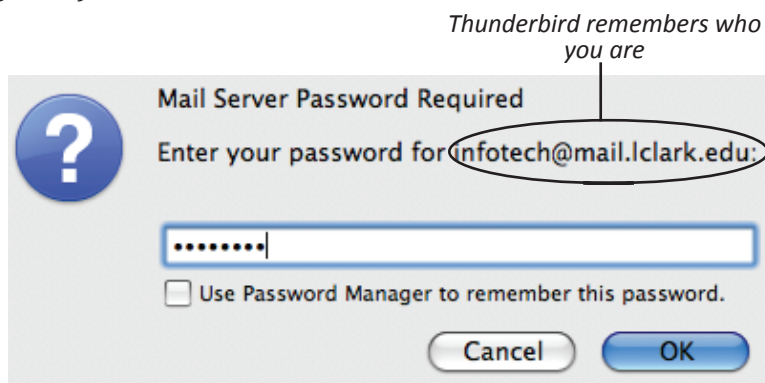


figure 1

The Main Window

In the main Thunderbird window (figure 2), your folders are displayed on the left. The contents of the selected folder are displayed in the upper right. The selected message appears below the contents of the mailbox. You can resize the various panes by dragging the dividers with your mouse. You can rearrange the panes or hide the Message pane by going to the **View** menu and selecting **Layout**.

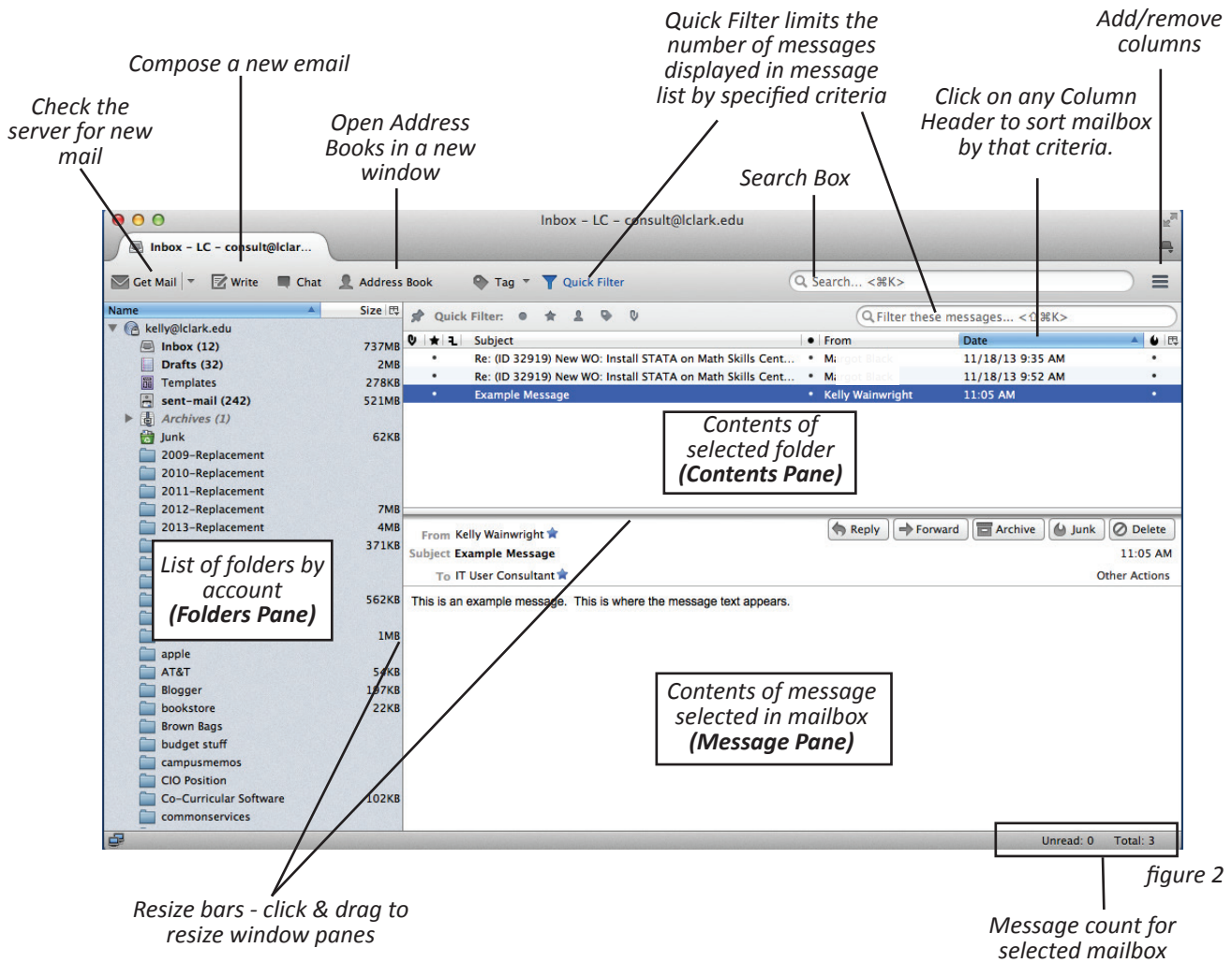


figure 2

Incoming Mail

All incoming email is automatically routed to your inbox. When you select Inbox in the left-hand **Folders Pane**, the contents of your inbox are displayed in the **Contents Pane** on the right. Single-click on a message in the Contents Pane to view the message in the Message Pane (figure 3).

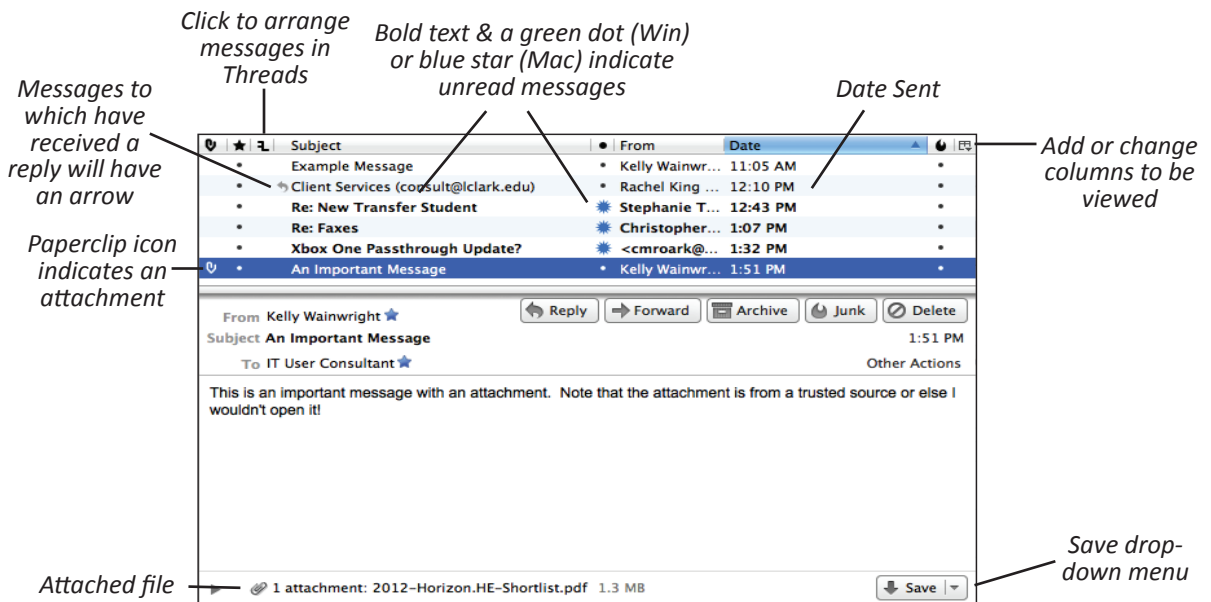


figure 3

Reading Messages

Thunderbird has integrated HTML decoding so you can view messages sent as web pages. As a safety precaution, Thunderbird requires your permission to display images not attached to the message. Once you have given permission for a particular message, Thunderbird will remember and display the images when you re-open that message.

Saving and Viewing Attachments

If there are any files attached (images, Word documents, PDFs, etc.) you will see them listed at the bottom of the Preview pane.

Use the **Save** dropdown menu (figure 3) to choose if you want to save the file to your downloads folder, **Save As** which allows you to change the file name and/or save location, or **Open with**. If you choose to **Open with**, you will receive a dialog box (figure 4) that allows you to choose the software to use for viewing the file.

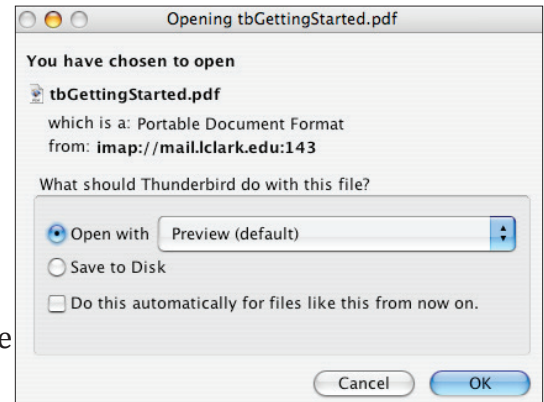


figure 4

Replying to a Message

While you're reading your messages note that messages addressed just to you offer a Reply button; if there are more recipients you will also have a Reply All option (figure 5).

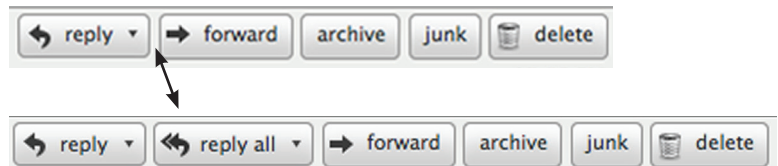


figure 5

If you select Reply, you will get a compose window with the original message quoted and addressed only to the sender of the original message. If you want your reply to go to other recipients of the original message, use Reply All.

Organizing Messages

You can organize messages you want to save by placing them in another folder. To move a message, drag the message from the Contents pane to the desired folder in the Folders pane.

To create a new folder:

1. Go to the **File** menu, select **New** and then **Folder**
2. Type a name for the new folder (figure 6). If you want to make a folder into which you can put sub-folders, type a forward slash (/) after the name, i.e. - "newfolder" creates a folder to store messages while "newfolder/" creates a folder to store folders.
3. Use the dropdown menu to confirm where Thunderbird will create the folder.
4. Click OK.

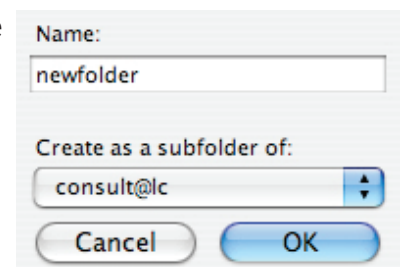


figure 6

Deleting Messages

When you delete a message it is moved to a special folder called Trash and it immediately disappears from the original folder: deleted messages will remain in your Trash folder until you quit/exit Thunderbird. As long as you have not quit Thunderbird, you can retrieve deleted messages by opening the Trash folder that you'll find near the top of your Folders pane.

If you want to empty your Trash sooner you can go to the **File** menu and select **Empty Trash**.

Finding Messages

The Search box (figure 7), located in the top right of your window, is set to automatically search all mailboxes, in all of your accounts. As you type in the search box a dropdown list will display possible matches for your term (such as email addresses that match the characters you have entered). When you select a search term and press the <Enter> or <Return> key, the results of your search open in a new tab. You can then filter your search even further using the options in the panel on the left.

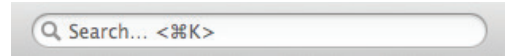


figure 7

Outgoing Mail

To compose a new message do one of the following:

- Click **Write** in the tool bar (figure 2)
- From the **File** menu, select **New** and then **Message**
- Press the appropriate keyboard shortcut combination:
Windows: Ctrl + m
Macintosh: ⌘ + Shift + m

You will receive a new message window (figure 8).

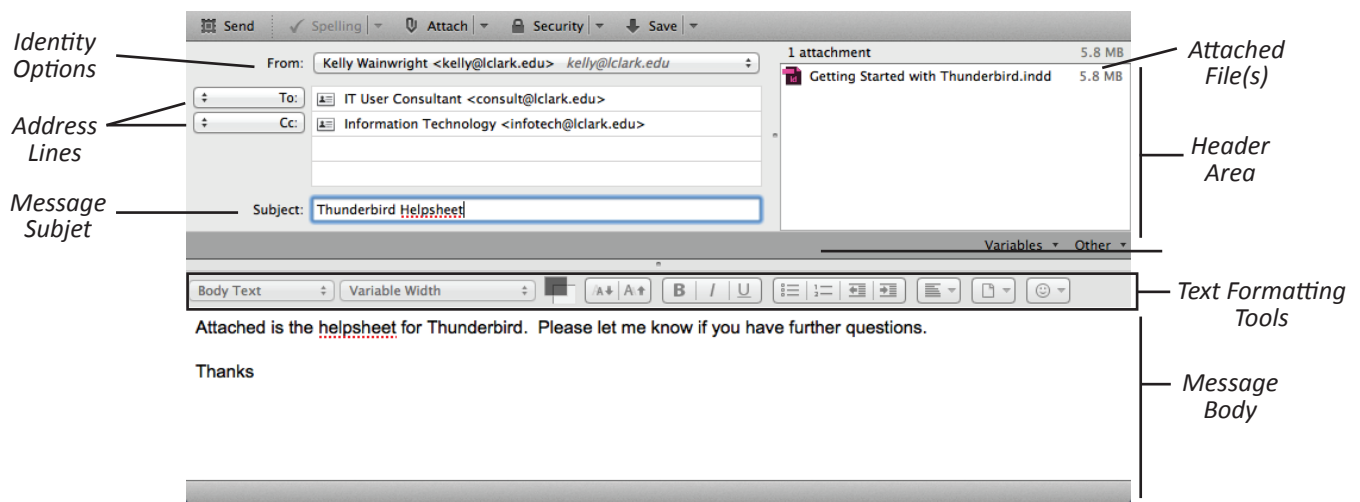


figure 8

Enter each email address on a separate **Address Line** in the header. Use the dropdown menu to the left of each Address Line to specify the type of recipient: To, Cc or Bcc. When you start typing

in the Address Line, Thunderbird will start suggesting possible address matches. When you see the appropriate person either press <Enter>/<Return> or click the name.

The **Spelling** button is only active when your cursor is in the **Message Body**.

The **Attach** button allows you to navigate your hard drive and select a file to attach. You can also attach a file by dragging it from your computer to the attachment section of the Header Area..

The **Save** button allows you to save a copy of your email in your **Drafts** folder. You can then finish and send it later.

When you **Send** a message it is automatically copied to your Sent mail folder.

Signature

Your Signature is the automatic text that appears at the bottom of your email message. In **Account Settings** (figure 9) on the **Tools** menu, you can type it directly in your settings or choose to have Thunderbird pull your Signature from a separate file. If you use a separate file it should be saved as plain text (.txt), html (.html) or as an image file.

Address Book

Thunderbird stores your Address Book on your local computer. This makes accessing your address book faster and easier but also that the addresses only exist on your computer.

Filters

Filters are a way to perform an action on a group of emails with a common attribute. For example, you can move all the emails from a specific email address into a certain folder, or tag all emails with a given word in the subject with a different color.

To setup a filter:

1. From the **Tools** menu, select **Message Filters**. This will open the Filters window (figure 10).
2. Click on the **New** button to create a new filter, or the **Edit** button to edit an existing filter.
3. Give the filter a **Name**. This name should be descriptive for if when you choose to run or need to edit the filter.
4. Chose when you wish to apply the filter.
5. Select if you have multiple criteria to match.

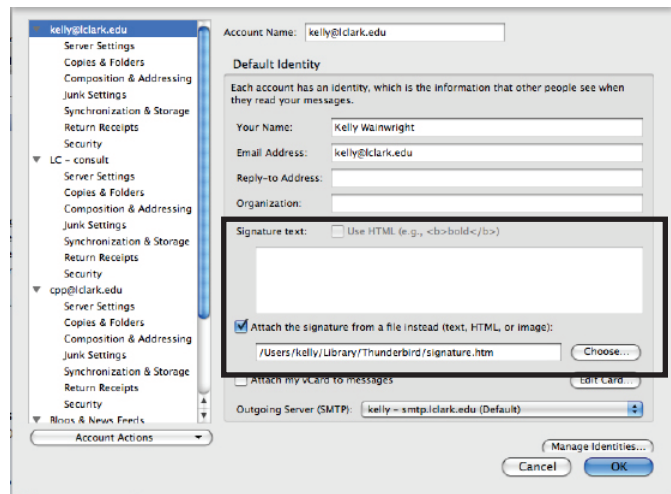


figure 9

figure 10

6. Set the criteria that you want to match.
 - a. What do you want to match? This can be anything from the recipient, the sender, the subject to the full body of the message.
 - b. How do you want it to match? Does it have to be a perfect match or simply contain the filter criteria?
 - c. Enter the word or address that you wish to base the filter on.
7. If you wish to add other search criteria, you can click on the plus button.
8. Set the action that you wish to perform for the group of filtered email.
 - a. Once you choose the primary action, the secondary menu will provide additional options. For example, if you choose to move your message, you can then designate a folder.
9. Click **OK**.

Tags

Tags can be used to tag messages with descriptive colored text in order to organize messages. While Thunderbird has some preset tags, you can create a tagging system that will be meaningful to you.

To set your tag preferences:

1. On a Mac, from the **Thunderbird** menu, select **Preferences** or on in Windows, from the **Tools** menu, select **Options**.
2. Click on the **Display** button.
3. Click on the Tags tab.
4. From here you can change the names of existing tags, change their colors and add new Tags.
5. When finished, click **OK**.

Once a tag is created, you can apply it to a single message by selecting that message and then going to the **Message** menu and choosing **Tag**. Or if you would prefer, you can add Tags to your Thunderbird toolbar. Finally, you can also apply a tag to multiple messages using a filter.

Further Information

More information about Thunderbird can be found on the Mozilla Web site at www.mozilla.org/thunderbird.