

Make POP3 E-mail Work like IMAP

Dearest Collective:

I get my mail on at least three devices. All my mail is in POP3 accounts - which means I have to delete 3 copies of junk and that if I reply on one device then I don't get my responses on the other devices. I also like being able to read and reply to my e-mails while off line - its easier during the commute sometimes. Operating systems are Windows and Android.

Now, I have 3 email accounts that all act the same way: POP3 only, and I do not own two of the domains.

I tried googling this with no luck: Are there any ways to get a POP3 account to act like a IMAP account? GMail might do this, but everything has to be available offline.

Thanks

IMAP is a specific mail protocol, which means your mail server must accommodate this in order for the feature to work. If you want IMAP capabilities, I suggest moving your mail over to a hosted Exchange server or Google Apps for Work, since these are very easy to set up and maintain. Otherwise, talk to your email host about making an upgrade to an IMAP-capable mail server.

Personally, I use Google Apps for Work because I can (1) save money and effort, and (2) have all my email (or a period of time) available offline, if needed. Plus, since you're already using Android, setting up Google Apps for Work with your Android (or Windows) device is easy.

Remember that Google Apps for Work is different than a standard Gmail account.

Jeff Taylor, Oklahoma

I have zero control over two of the accounts, so I cannot change or upgrade them. I have to work within that framework.

I know that POP3 and IMAP are totally different protocols (I even know what they stand for and have written programs, long long ago) to manipulate them. I just get tired of deleting an email from my phone, my desktop and then my laptop. I was hoping someone smarter than me figured out how to trick them.

Does Google apps for work work with multiple e-mail accounts over different ISP's? and do I need to own the domain to set it up?

Bruce Wingate, New York

I would highly recommend that you consider moving your mail server to Zoho Mail, which offers free accounts with IMAP. Outlook is another alternative offering free accounts, though you no longer can use your own domain name with their free service. You can with Zoho, and they have a great Android app that you can use with their mail, or you can just use built-in or alternative email apps to download mail either as pop or IMAP. They are working now to develop exchange services. I do not work for them, I am just an avid user of Zoho after Outlook stopped offering domain hosting. It is also very easy to migrate your mail to their service.

Kevin M. Maloney

Friends don't let friends use POP3. For substantially the reasons you've discovered. POP3 isn't terribly reliable and it really starts to suffer when you try to synchronize multiple devices.

IMAP is somewhat better but, and I believe my friend Mr. Taylor has just offered the same advice...you

really would be a lot happier with either Exchange Server (as in Office 365) or with Google Apps for Business.

My personal preference is for Office 365 (and we use it ourselves), but I have clients who are successfully using Google Apps for Business as well. So really it's about what you like better.

Disclaimer: Still never been a lawyer.

Ben M. Schorr, Arizona

Yes, GAFW works with a number of different accounts -- you can use forwarding or change your MX records to handle the email: : <https://support.google.com/a/answer/33352?hl=en>. This is how I handle the email for a domain I own and a "vanity" email address I've used for a number of years. The email looks and appears

You will need to own the domain (purchase one with a GAFW account or port your own in), but that's not difficult to worry about. GAFW accounts cost \$50/year per user, but if you (or anyone else) would like a code to save \$10 off your first year, let me know.

Check out the information for GAFW: <https://www.google.com/work/apps/business/>.

Jeff Taylor

Jeff's right, but you should probably check to see if your current email providers can handle IMAP. POP3 is getting pretty long in the tooth and I haven't seen an email provider in a while that was POP3 only. Heck, even AOL permits IMAP access.

Kevin W. Grierson, Virginia

I think Bruce is saying he doesn't own or have administrator privileges to the accounts. Talk to the administrator for each account; if they won't or can't upgrade to IMAP, perhaps you can get them to implement mail forwarding to an IMAP account you own or set-up for that purpose. Kind of a Band-Aid solution, but it may solve some of the frustration.

Duke Drouillard, Nebraska

Another option - Office 365 can do "connected accounts" where you actually have Office 365 pull your email from the POP3 servers into an Office 365 mailbox...then you can access them from multiple devices there.

It adds a moving part to the process but generally works fine.

Disclaimer: Still never been a lawyer.

Ben M. Schorr

You can aggregate your email with one provider. Google for Business and Office 365 are both popular, although other approaches abound. Basically you have one location pull all the emails and you just check the one location.

Darrell G. Stewart, Texas

Ben Schorr set me up on MS Office 365 a couple years ago. Nirvana! Bliss! All devices sync email, calendar, and contacts instantly and automatically. Much better than any IMAP solution could be (I used several in the past).

Just do it.

Steven Finell, California
