

Email & online accounts | Easy | 2 min read

How to set up an out-of-office reply

An out-of-office reply (also called an automatic reply) tells people you are away and when you will be back. It saves you from a pile of worried follow-up messages.

Menus change between versions, so use the closest wording if yours looks different.

Decide what to say

Keep it short and clear. Include the dates you are away, who to contact in the meantime, and when you will reply. Avoid sharing details such as where you are going or that your house is empty. That information is useful to scammers and burglars.

A simple example: "Thank you for your email. I am away until Monday 20 October and will reply when I return. For urgent matters, please contact the office on the usual number."

Outlook (Microsoft 365)

1. In Outlook, look for **File** then **Automatic Replies**, or in the new Outlook and Outlook on the web look in **Settings** for **Automatic replies**.
2. Choose **Send automatic replies**.
3. Tick the option to send only during a time period and enter the start and end dates.
4. Type your message. You can write one for people inside your organisation and one for outside.
5. Click **OK** or **Save**.

Gmail

1. Click the cog icon and choose **See all settings**.
2. Scroll down to **Vacation responder** (it may be labelled **Out of office**).
3. Turn it on, set the dates, and add a subject and message.
4. Click **Save Changes**.

Check it works

Ask a friend to send you a test email. Remember it replies once to each sender, not to every message.

Turn it off

If you did not set an end date, remember to switch it off when you return. Leaving it on can make you look unresponsive.

Staying safe

Do not include your mobile number or home details in a message that goes to everybody.

When to get more help

Contact us if the reply is going to the wrong people, if it will not switch off, or if you want automatic forwarding set up while you are away. Forwarding work email to a personal account may be against your employer's rules, so check first.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.