

How To Send Mail From the MacOS Terminal

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```
<html> <section class=„dh di dj dk dl“><div class=„n p“ readability=„5“><div class=„z ab ac ae af
dm ah ai“ readability=„7“><p><h2 class=„aq ci ei et ek eu em ev eo ew eq ex av“>Automate email
sending &#8212; no installation necessary</h2></p><div class=„ey“><div class=„n ez fa fb
fc“><div class=„o n“><div><a rel=„noopener“
href=„https://medium.com/@mt_williams?source=post_page-----dad1756b166f-----“><img
alt=„Matthew Williams“ class=„r fd fe ff“
src=„https://miro.medium.com/fit/c/96/96/2*Kq_FcYPjWVrGAFLGqXneVg.jpeg“ width=„48“
height=„48“></a></div><div class=„fg ai r“><div class=„n“><div><div class=„fh n o fi“><a
class=„cm cn az ba bb bc bd be bf bg fp bj bk cq cr“ rel=„noopener“
href=„https://medium.com/@mt_williams?source=post_page-----dad1756b166f-----
“>Matthew Williams</a></div></div></div><div><a class=„cm cn az ba bb bc bd be bf bg fp bj bk
cq cr“ rel=„noopener“
href=„https://medium.com/better-programming/how-to-send-mail-from-the-macos-terminal-dad1756b
166f?source=post_page-----dad1756b166f-----“>Jan 15</a> <!--&#183;<!--<!--<!--
-->5<!--> min read<svg class=„star-15px_svg_svgIcon-use“ width=„15“ height=„15“ viewBox=„0
0 15 15“></div></div></div></div></div></div><div class=„gu“><div class=„n p“><div
class=„gv gw gx gy gz ha ae hb af hc ah ai“><figure class=„he hf hg hh hi gu hj hk paragraph-
image“><figcaption class=„av fj ib ic id da cy cz ie if aq ci“>Photo by <a
href=„https://unsplash.com/@webaroo?utm_source=unsplash&utm_medium=referral&utm_
content=creditCopyText“ class=„cm gi ig ih ii ij“ target=„_blank“ rel=„noopener
nofollow“>Webaroo.com.au</a> on <a
href=„https://unsplash.com/s/photos/email?utm_source=unsplash&utm_medium=referral&
utm_content=creditCopyText“ class=„cm gi ig ih ii ij“ target=„_blank“ rel=„noopener
nofollow“>Unsplash</a></figcaption></figure></div></div></div><div class=„n p“
readability=„10“><div class=„z ab ac ae af dm ah ai“ readability=„15“><p id=„4a1d“ class=„ik il
dp ar im b ei in ek io ip iq ir is it iu iv dh“>Have you ever been writing a script and wanted to receive
automated emails if the script fails? Or are you new to the command line, and looking for something
more exciting to do than just changing directories and listing files?</p><p id=„3c37“ class=„ik il dp
ar im b ei in ek io ip iq ir is it iu iv dh“>Well, if you&#8217;re working on a Mac, you have everything
you need to send an email directly from the command line to the inbox of your
choice.</p></div></div></section><hr class=„iw ci ix iy iz id ja jb jc jd je“/><section class=„dh di
dj dk dl“><div class=„n p“ readability=„14“><div class=„z ab ac ae af dm ah ai“
readability=„25“><p id=„6311“ class=„ik il dp ar im b ei jr ek js ip jt ir ju it jv iv dh“>Your Mac
should already be set up to send email out of the box, so you don&#8217;t even need to configure
anything. You just need to ensure you&#8217;re logged in to a user account, and the Mac will handle
sending the email.</p><p id=„6bd1“ class=„ik il dp ar im b ei in ek io ip iq ir is it iu iv dh“>To send
your first email, open up Terminal and run:</p><pre class=„he hf hg hh hi jw jx bz“>echo „Hello
World“ | mail -s „Test email“ someone@example.com</pre><p id=„ab83“ class=„ik il dp ar im b ei in
ek io ip iq ir is it iu iv dh“>Obviously, you&#8217;ll need to replace
```

kd ke kf jz b"

someone@example.com

with the actual email address you want to send the mail to.

After running the command above, check the account you sent the message to, and your email should have arrived. Make sure you check your spam inbox as well, as it's likely your email provider will assume the message is unsafe.

Easy as pie

There you have it; that's all it takes to get started. Now, let's dive a little deeper into some of the commands, so we can produce more in-depth emails in the terminal.

Command-line method

The simplest way of writing the email body is to simply call

kd ke kf jz b"

```
mail
```

and type it in line by line. When there is no predefined message given to mail; it'll default to Terminal's standard input.

You can add as many lines as you like by pressing enter, and when your message is complete, you finish by pressing

kd ke kf jz b"

```
Ctrl + D
```

(yes, Control, not Command).

The syntax to use this basic version is as follows:

```
mail someone@example.com
```

When using this default version, Terminal will prompt you to enter a subject line. It's important to note that the following methods won't prompt for a subject line, but one can still be added using an option discussed below.

Echo method

Believe it or not, if you ran the first example command, you've already used this method. Scroll back up, and take another look at the command. You can see it starts with

kd ke kf jz b"

```
echo
```

not

kd ke kf jz b"

```
mail
```

, and we used a pipe operator,

kd ke kf jz b"

```
|
```

, to send the message from the first part of the command into the second.

class=„ik il dp ar im b ei in ek io ip iq ir is it iu iv dh“>We can

kd ke kf jz b"

```
echo
```

whatever text we like and then pipe it into the email body using the

kd ke kf jz b"

```
mail
```

command:

```
echo „This is not the same message as before“ | mail -s „Echo test email“ someone@example.com
```

Cat method

Finally, since we now know we’re able to pipe results into the

kd ke kf jz b"

```
mail
```

command, we can use the

kd ke kf jz b"

```
cat
```

command to copy the contents of a file as the message. This could be really useful if you’re wanting to send error logs or something that’s already contained within a file.

To demonstrate, firstly, let’s create a new text file with some content:

```
echo „This is a
```

test file with a message to email" > file.txt</pre><p id="6ca5" class="ik il dp ar im b ei in ek io ip iq ir is it iu iv dh">After that, we’re able to pipe the results of

kd ke kf jz b"

```
cat
```

into

kd ke kf jz b"

```
mail
```

to send the file’s contents to our email:</p><pre class="he hf hg hh hi jw jx bz">cat file.txt | mail -s „File test email“ someone@example.com</pre><p id="c1ec" class="ik il dp ar im b ei in ek io ip iq ir is it iu iv dh">Checking the message in our inbox, we can see that the file has successfully been copied into the body of the email.</p></div></div><div class="gu"><div class="n p"><div class="gv gw gx gy gz ha ae hb af hc ah ai"><figure class="he hf hg hh hi gu hj hk paragraph-image"><figcaption class="av fj ib ic id da cy cz ie if aq ci">Works like a charm!</figcaption></figure></div></div></div></section><hr class="iw ci ix iy iz id ja jb jc jd je"/><section class="dh di dj dk dl"><div class="n p" readability="12"><div class="z ab ac ae af dm ah ai" readability="20"><p id="5fce" class="ik il dp ar im b ei jr ek js ip jt ir ju it jv iv dh">An important aspect of any email is the subject line. As mentioned earlier, though, the echo and cat methods don’t prompt you for a subject. For those who’ve been watching closely, you’ll have seen the email examples above all have different subject lines due to the different values we have passed into the

kd ke kf jz b"

```
-s
```

option.</p><p id="1956" class="ik il dp ar im b ei in ek io ip iq ir is it iu iv dh">This option allows us to easily create the subject line for an email, and again, we can change it to be whatever we like using the following syntax:</p><pre class="he hf hg hh hi jw jx bz">mail -s „Enter your subject here“ someone@example.com</pre></div></div></section><hr class="iw ci ix iy iz id ja jb jc jd je"/><section class="dh di dj dk dl"><div class="n p" readability="14"><div class="z ab ac ae af dm ah ai" readability="24"><p id="b6b0" class="ik il dp ar im b ei jr ek js ip jt ir ju it jv iv dh">Sometimes, you’ll want to include more than one email address when sending mail. Terminal’s

kd ke kf jz b"

```
mail
```

functionality allows both carbon copies (CC) and blind carbon copies (BCC) to be sent using

command-line options.

CC someone in

In order to CC someone, add the

kd ke kf jz b"

```
- c
```

option followed by a comma-separated list of email addresses, like so:

```
echo „Hello World“ | mail -s „CC Testing email“ someone@example.com -c second@example.com, third@example.com
```

BCC someone in

In order to BCC someone, add the

kd ke kf jz b"

```
- b
```

option followed by a comma separated list of email addresses, like so:

```
echo „Hello World“ | mail -s „BCC Testing email“ someone@example.com -b second@example.com, third@example.com
```

So there you have it: a simple way to send mail from Terminal without needing to install or configure anything. Obviously, using the command line is not the most effective way to create and send email on a regular basis, and the setup shown here has issues regarding email encryption and validation that'll often get your messages sent to a spam inbox.

If, however, you want to whitelist the address and send yourself some automated emails from a script on a Mac, this is a simple method to get the messages sent. Likewise, if you just enjoy trying new things on the command line for fun, this is a very easy way to get started using Terminal for more than just listing files and directories.

Unfortunately, there aren't many online resources regarding the commands. You can, however, run

kd ke kf jz b"

```
man mail
```

to see what's possible.

If you find any other resources or any exciting uses of the commands, please drop them in the comments below for others to see.

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