



Digital Guidelines, Tips and Tricks

Updated October 2026

This resource is intended for volunteers, employees and board members.

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The following guidelines are to help ensure the safety of your personal information, your organization, promote professionalism and help to streamline your work with digital technologies.

Email

In this section we will look at several email functions in Gmail and Outlook. However, most email providers have the same features. If your email app isn't listed here, you can easily search the name of these features to find out how to set them up in your email.

Organizational Email addresses

All organizational correspondence and work should be handled through organizational email addresses. While personal email addresses can be easier to remember at first, they pose a lot of risks for your organization. We recommend that you never use your personal email for work. The benefits of organizational email addresses can include but are not limited to:

1. Consistency & Succession Planning
 - a. Email addresses like *info@yourmuseumname.ca* can be passed to future employees and maintain consistency for visitors and community partners. This also means that if a role is in transition, any messages sent to the former employee can be picked up by the incoming employee. This is especially important for your main contact addresses.
 - b. If you work with a Google workspace or another similar system where email addresses are used to access a shared drive, this address can be passed to future employees (after the password and name associated is changed) and then file access will be maintained. This also means that you'll have fewer accounts to manage.
2. Decreased phishing risk
 - a. Maintaining a domain name means it is harder for hackers and scammers to replicate your email address, whereas it's a lot easier to replicate a personal one with a generic domain (ex. I could easily recreate *fionastevens@gmail* by swapping around one letter to *fioanstevens@gmail*).
 - b. If everyone uses a recognized email address (such as *director@museumname*, *info@museumname*, *treasurer@museumname*, etc.), scams are easier to spot.
3. Data breach
 - a. If a personal account is compromised, all of your organization's files could be as well. Using organizational addresses that are only used for organizational purposes will also reduce exposure to dangerous sites.
 - b. The inverse is also true. If there is a data breach at your organization, your personal information attached to your personal email account should still be safe.
4. Professionalism
 - a. Individuals contacting your organization will make assumptions about your organization based on how you handle correspondence. As an organization, it comes off as unprofessional if your staff aren't using work email addresses.
 - b. Since a lot of email scams come from quickly made email addresses, an organizational address (especially one with a customized domain name) appears more trustworthy.
5. Password management
 - a. Work email passwords can be stored through your organization's password management system. If something happens to an employee, the organization will have a record of that password and can recover files.
 - b. **Do not share your passwords with anyone.**
 - c. [See more information on Passwords.](#)

In summary, you should never use your personal email at work and you should never use your work email outside of work. This makes sure that your organizational reputation is upheld and your organizational data is safe.

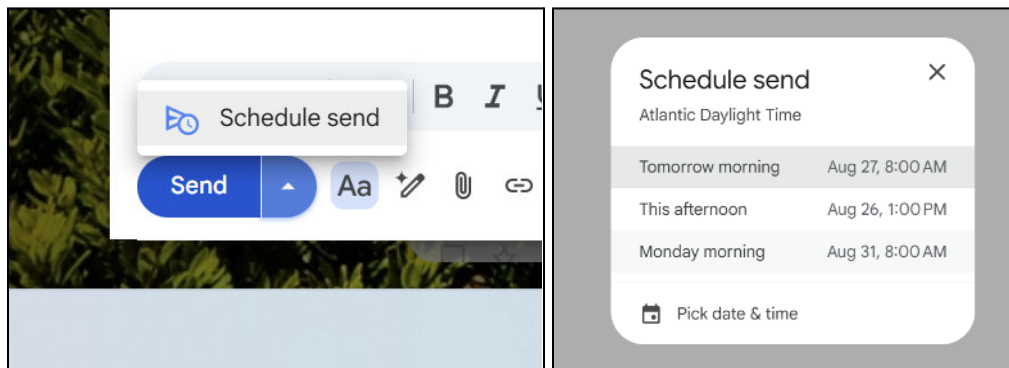
Schedule Sending

Most contemporary email services allow you to schedule when an email is delivered. This is a great tool to use to respect both your working hours and those of your contacts. For example, you may want to send yourself an email at 8:30 AM on Monday so you have a reminder to do something when you start a new week. Or, maybe you thought of a great idea one evening for your organization, and you'd like to share it with your colleagues without interrupting their time off.

Note: if you get into a habit of responding outside of your working hours, people will assume they can reach you at all times. Remember to respect your own boundaries and enjoy your time away from work!

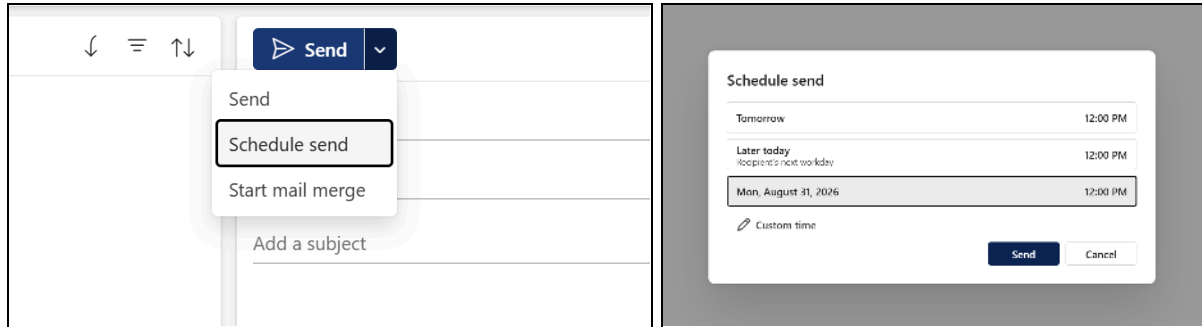
Gmail

In Gmail for desktop, there is a dropdown arrow beside the 'send button'. When you click here, there is just one button to click, "schedule send". After clicking on this, a pop-up will appear and you'll be able to choose the date and time you'd like the email to be delivered. Gmail will usually suggest a couple times such as "tomorrow morning at 8 AM", or you can manually pick a date and time. Once you have clicked on a time, the message will move to your 'Scheduled' folder. You can edit the message again before the message is delivered by clicking on the message, clicking 'Cancel send' and then editing the message. You will have to reselect the time you would like the email to be delivered.



Outlook

In Outlook for desktop, there is a little dropdown arrow beside the 'Send' button. When you click here, there are a few options. Choose "Schedule send". After clicking on this, a pop-up will appear and you'll be able to choose the date and time you'd like the email to be delivered. You can either choose the time that it suggests, or choose a custom time. Once you have selected a date and time, click "Send". Once you have scheduled a message, it will stay in your Drafts folder until it is delivered. If you would like to edit the message, click on the draft and then 'Cancel send'. After making your edits, you will have to reselect the time you would like the email to be delivered.

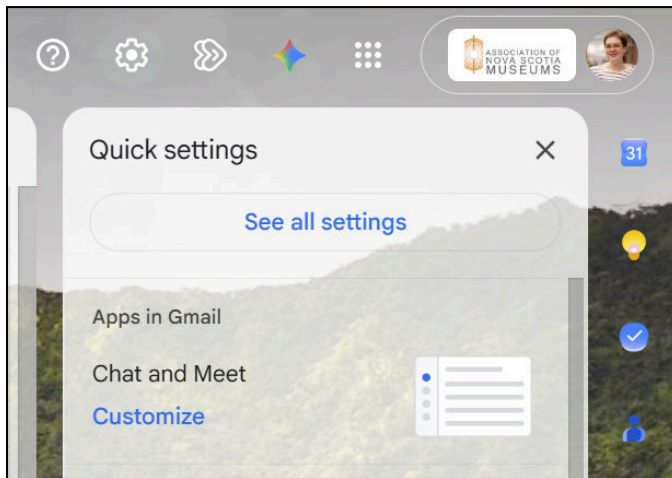


Vacation Responder

You can also set-up a vacation responder so that if you're going to be away, the people trying to reach you know when to expect a reply.

Gmail

Click the gear icon (Quick settings) and then click on "See all settings". Scroll down to 'Vacation responder'. From here you can select the dates you will be away and customize the message. Click Save Changes.



Vacation responder:
(sends an automated reply to incoming messages. If a contact sends you several messages, this automated reply will be sent at most once every 4 days)
[Learn more](#)

☐ Vacation responder off

☒ **Vacation responder on**

First day: Last day: ☒

Subject:

Message:

Sans Serif
T
B
I
U
A

[Link] [Image] [List] [Text] [Quote] [Code]

[← Plain Text](#)

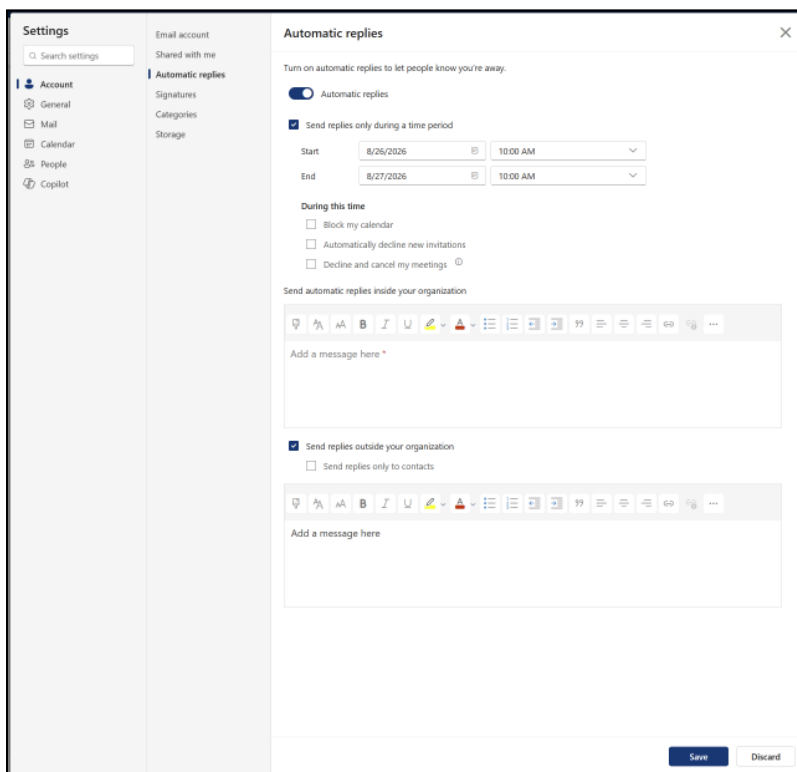
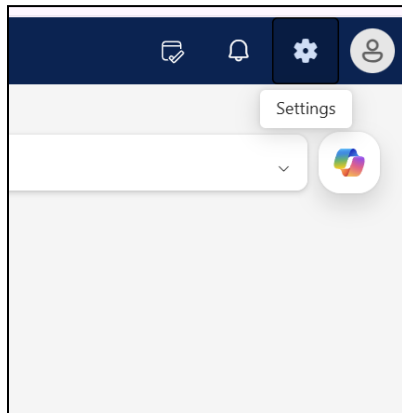
Thank you for your email. Please be advised I am out of office August 27-30. I will return Monday, August 31 and I will get back to you as soon as I can.

☐ Only send a response to people in my Contacts

☐ Only send a response to people in Association of Nova Scotian Museums

Outlook

Click the gear icon (Settings) , and then click on 'Account', followed by 'Automatic replies'. Toggle automatic replies on, then select 'Send replies only during a time period'. Choose a start and end date for this response. You can also choose to block your calendar during this time, automatically decline new invitations, as well as decline and cancel meetings during this time. Additionally, you can customize the responder to people inside your organization and those outside the organization. Once you have selected the dates, settings and written your message, click save.



Sample message:

Thank you for your email. I am away from my desk until 8:00 am on Tuesday, May 29. Once I am back I will get back to you as soon as I can. If you have any urgent requests, please contact [email of someone else at organization].

Best,
[your name]

Optional: Setting up an Email Signature

Customizing your email signature is an easy way to enhance the professional quality of your correspondence. This can help your contacts understand who you are and your role at the organization. For example,

First Name Last Name (Pronouns)

Job Title

Museum/Organization Name

T: (123) 456 7890

E: curator@example.ca

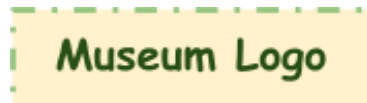
[Website address and Organizational Social Media]

Visit us:

Street address, Nova Scotia

Hours:

[times], Monday-Friday



From this signature, we know who emails are going to and what that person does at the museum, when and where to reach them, as well as additional contact information.

Note: these are all optional additions to a signature. The only thing your emails must include is the way you wish to be addressed by others.

Gmail

Go to Settings, 'See all settings', and then scroll down to 'Signature'. Click 'Create new' and then give the signature a name. If more than one person uses this email, you should name each signature with each user's name. Once you have edited the text, scroll to the bottom of this page and click 'Save Changes'.

Signature:
(appended at the end of all outgoing messages)
[Learn more](#)

Emilie Surette

Test Signature  

+ Create new

First Name Last Name (pronouns)

Job Title
Organization
(insert logo)

Sans Serif         

Signature defaults

FOR NEW EMAILS USE

ON REPLY/FORWARD USE

Test Signature

No signature

☐ Insert signature before quoted text in replies and remove the "--" line that precedes it.

Outlook

Go to Settings, then 'Account' and click on 'Signatures'. Click 'Add new signature' and give this signature a name. If more than one person uses this email, you should name each signature with each user's name. Once you have edited the text, click 'Save'.

Settings

Q Search settings

Account

General

Mail

Calendar

People

Copilot

Email account

Shared with me

Automatic replies

Signatures

Categories

Storage

Signatures

You can add and modify signatures that can be added to your emails. You can also choose which signature to add by default to your new emails and replies.

+ Add signature

Default for new messages

No signature yet

Default for replies and forwards

No signature yet

No signature yet

Create your first signature.



Edit signature

Format text Insert

Undo Redo Text Color Background Color Bold Italic Underline Strikethrough Link

Add a signature name

☒ Include a link to my bookings page in my signature

☐ Set default for new messages ☐ Set default for replies and forwards

Save Cancel

Passwords

Strong Passwords

Using strong passwords is the professional standard to ensure the safety of your organization's files and data. Each software or application may have different requirements for passwords, but generally, a strong password should have a mix of capital and lowercase letters, at least one number and one special character.

The point of creating a strong password is that it is hard to hack, so with that in mind, a strong password might look something like this:

WxT7&!b3y5Ap

but this password would not be as successful:

Password!1

It is also best practice to use a different password each time so that if one password is compromised, your other accounts should still be safe.

Several password managers or apps can autogenerate strong passwords for you, including the Google Chrome browser and the iPhone Passwords app.

Changing Passwords

After an employee leaves the organization, all password protected access should be changed. Even if the person leaving your organization is trustworthy, set a standard to ensure the security

of your systems. Organizational email addresses, file sharing and database access should all be changed. Contact ANSM to change database access in CollectiveAccess.

Password Management

Password Manager software can be used at an organization to safely store a list of passwords for various accounts. This is especially helpful to remember strong passwords and to pass on accounts to new workers.

When choosing a password manager, consider the following safety features. A good password manager should:

- Have multi-factor authentication (MFA)
 - This can include sending a code to an email or phone number, answering a security question or more
- Integrate with your organization's devices and be easy to use
- Notify you if a password has been associated with a known data breach

[The Government of Canada's Get Cyber Safe](#) page also recommends that password managers have notifications when a password is reused or weak, and prompts to change old passwords.

Take extra care to protect your master password, the password to access your password manager.

Short Cuts

Here you'll find a list of keyboard shortcuts on both Mac and PC computers to quickly conduct useful actions.

PC

Ctrl C - Copy
Ctrl X - Cut
Ctrl V - Paste
Ctrl A - Select All
Ctrl Z - Undo
Ctrl F - Find on page
Ctrl + - Zoom in
Ctrl - - Zoom out
Windows Key prt sc - screenshot

Mac

Command⌘ C - Copy
Command⌘ X - Cut
Command⌘ V - Paste

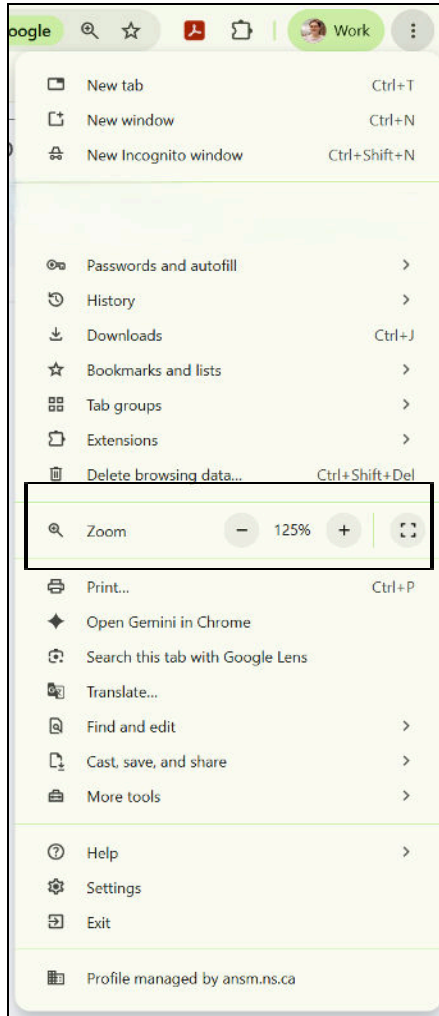
Command⌘ A - Select All
Command⌘ Z - Undo
Command⌘ F - Find on page
Shift Command⌘ 3 - Screenshot
Command⌘ + OR Option⌘ Command⌘ + - Zoom In*
Command⌘ - OR Option⌘ Command⌘ - - Zoom Out*

**Zoom in and out shortcuts on Mac may not automatically be enabled. To add this short cut, go to your Mac's system settings, then click on accessibility. From here, go to "Zoom" and select "Use Keyboard Shortcuts to Zoom".*

Browser tips

Zooming In/Out

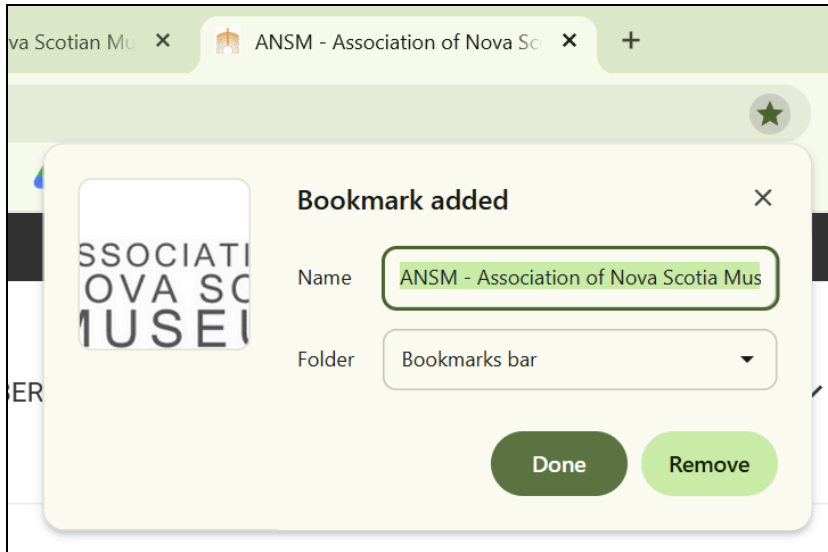
If you'd like a closer look at a webpage or you'd like to read with a larger font, one option is to increase the zoom. On Chrome, you can zoom in on a page by going to the three dots in the top right corner, going down to 'zoom' and then clicking the '+' or '-' to zoom in or out. You can also use the shortcuts Ctrl + or Ctrl - to zoom in or out on PC, or Command⌘ + or Command⌘ - on Mac.



Bookmarks

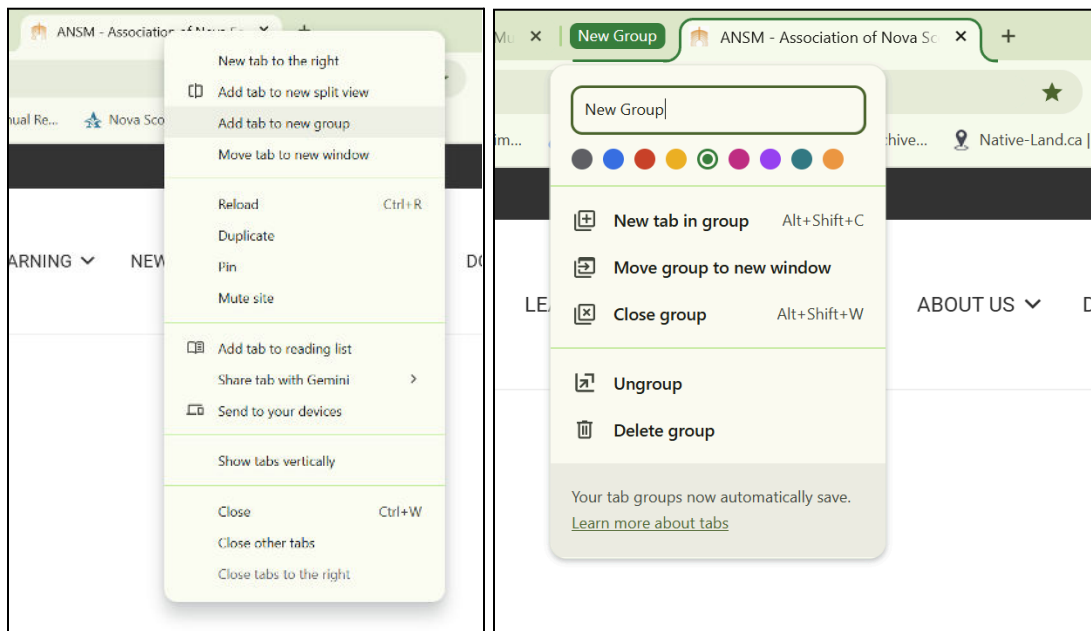
For CollectiveAccess users, we always recommend bookmarking your database and [NovaMuse.ca](https://novamuse.ca) profile in your web browser. You can also bookmark useful or frequently accessed websites so that you can just click on them at the top of your screen without having to search for them every time.

To create a bookmark in Chrome, head to the website you'd like to save and click the star icon at the far right of the search bar. This will create a bookmark that you can rename and save to your bookmarks bar. This is the same process in Microsoft Edge and Safari, except instead of bookmarks these are called favourites. They work exactly the same way.



Grouping tabs

In Chrome, you can organize your tabs so that you can keep track of your research while you work on multiple projects. Right click on an open tab and click 'Add to group' and then 'New group'. This will create a group that can expand to show multiple tabs or compress so that you don't need to look at all these open tabs at the same time.



Chrome Extensions

You can customize your browser to add accessibility features or some extra functionality. To add or remove extensions, you can head to the three dots in the top right corner and then scroll down to extensions. You can click 'Manage extensions' to see which extensions you have

enabled, delete any unwanted extensions and read more about them. If you click 'Visit Chrome webstore', you can browse free and paid extensions to add.

Some examples of extensions you can use:

- Text to speech screen readers
- Citation generators
- Dyslexia fonts
- Focus timers
- Translators
- Colour picker

You can also add some fun extensions to your browser like changing the shape of your cursor, changing your launch screen to different images, animations and more.

Web safety and misinformation

Keeping your organization's data safe goes beyond strong passwords. Cyber safety also includes web safety habits like:

- Only accessing sensitive information over private networks
 - Public wifi networks like those available at coffee shops or community centres are more likely to be intercepted by cyber criminals. Avoid opening any files or webpages containing financial or personal information while using public wifi.
- Keeping your devices and software updated
 - Software updates can often include safety features to keep out viruses or other malicious attempts to hack into your data.
- Downloading from trusted sites
 - If you are not sure if a website is legitimate, do not download anything. Sometimes cyber criminals will include viruses in downloads to hack into your data.
- Only click on links from trusted sites
 - Sometimes links will lead you to dangerous websites or download viruses in the background.
- Locking your devices
 - In case a stranger gets a hold of your device, make sure to lock your devices with a password so that they cannot access your files.
- Changing your lockscreen to your organization's logo or name
 - In case your organization's devices are lost, having the logo as the lockscreen allows a stranger to see who the device belongs to and gives them the opportunity to return it to the organization.

Misinformation

Misinformation can be hard to spot, especially in the age of generative AI. To prevent the spread of misinformation, think before you share information you read online. Consider these questions:

- Where did you see this posted? Where did they get their information? If you can't find sources, it could be an opinion.
- Can you find this information anywhere else? If not, it might not be true.
- When was this information posted? Are they using up-to-date information? The headline could be no longer relevant.
- Does this information serve a certain bias? Consider how your point of view, life experience and concerns might impact your judgement.
- For images:
 - Does the image look too good to be true?
 - Too silly or cute?
 - Consider the time period.
 - Would someone have been around to take this picture?
 - Would the image look like this or would it be less clear?
 - Are people dressed in a way you would expect for this time?
 - Does the image make sense?
 - Do objects in the photo blend into one another?

Tips:

- Talk to an expert like a librarian or a fact checking website.
 - [The CBC](#) has a fact checking series that covers a lot of popular myths, conspiracy theories and misunderstandings.
- If you can't verify information, don't share it.
- Get the full picture. Make sure to read beyond the headlines. Sometimes headlines can include 'clickbait'.

File Management

This section is discussing internal file organization. For information on collections management, [visit our website](#).

Naming your files:

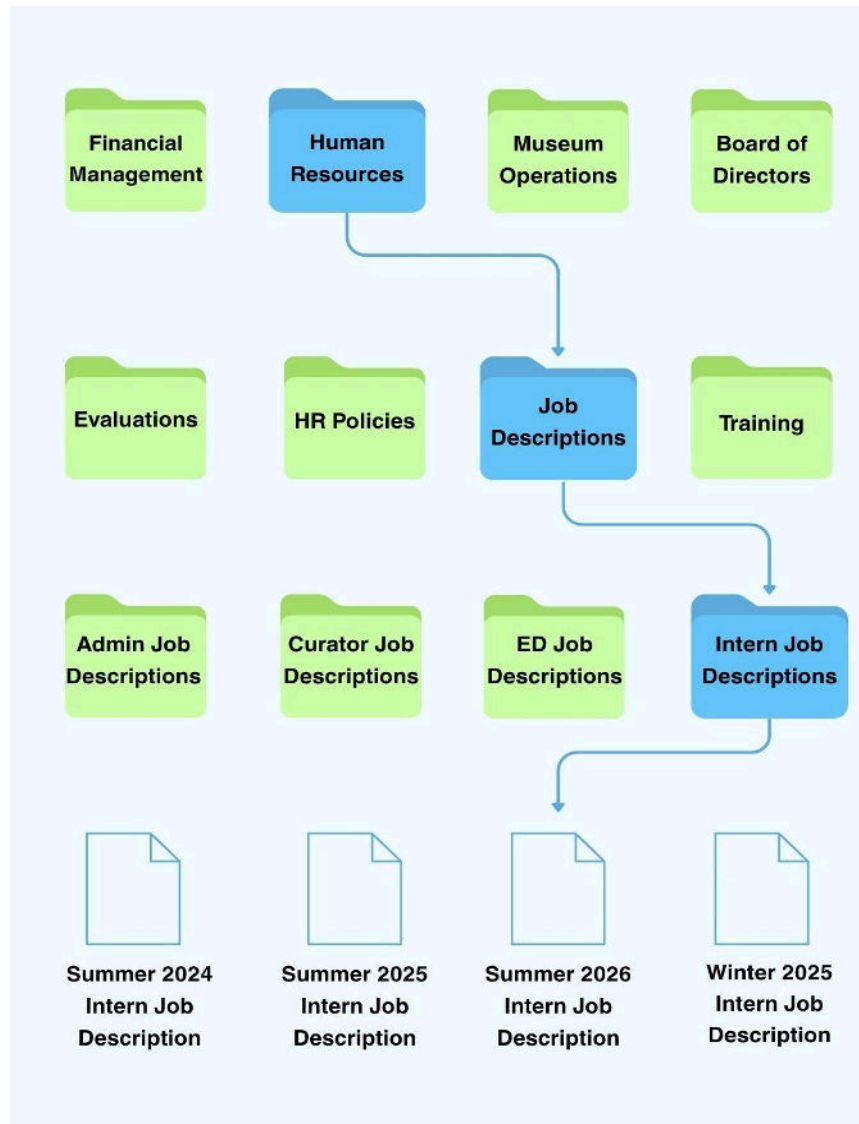
File names should include the title and the date they were created. If files will be shared outside your organization, they should also include the name of your organization. For example,

ANSM Strategic Plan 2026
 ANSM Communications Plan 2026
 2026-09-04 ANSM Meeting Notes

Storing Your Files

Files should be stored in such a way that everyone who needs to access them, can access them easily. A shared drive is a great way to ensure that everyone has access to files. Some popular options are OneDrive (Microsoft) and Google Drive (Google).

Files should be kept in labeled folders so that everything is easily accessible. We recommend creating a hierarchy of folders that is only a few layers deep (typically no more than five). For example, if I was looking for an intern job description, I may have a set up like this:



Additional Resources

Creative Commons Licensing

- [Attribution Generator](#)

Cyber safety

- [Get Cyber Safe | Government of Canada](#)

- [How to change your settings to make yourself less valuable to Meta | Last Week Tonight with John Oliver](#)
- [Protect Stanford Digital Assets from Online Video Scrapers | University IT](#)

Digital Ethics

- [ICOM Code of Ethics 2026](#)

Digital preservation

- [Digital Preservation Policy Framework for Museums and Galleries | Government of Canada](#)
- [Digital preservation recommendations for small museums | Government of Canada](#)

Learning

- [Google Workspace Courses | Google Cloud Training](#)
- [Online Training – Learn New Technology Skills | Microsoft](#)
- [Skill Building – Digital Nova Scotia – Leading Digital Industry](#)
- [SkillsOnlineNS](#)
- [Workplace Education | novascotia.ca](#)

Typing resources

- [Keybr](#)
- [Typing resources | NSCC](#)
- [Typing.com](#) for adult learners

Translation

- [DeepL Translator | World's Most Accurate Translator](#)