

The mutt mail client

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Outline

❖ Outline

- ❖ The basics
- ❖ What?
- ❖ Why?
- ❖ vs. alpine
- ❖ What else?
- ❖ Reading Mail
- ❖ Messages
- ❖ Searching
- ❖ Configuration
- ❖ IMAP config
- ❖ POP3 config
- ❖ Local config
- ❖ Header caching
- ❖ Outgoing mail
- ❖ Colors!
- ❖ Setting up hooks
- ❖ Attachments
- ❖ Other
- ❖ Links
- ❖ Questions?

Should you remain here, the next N minutes of your life will contain

- a discussion of the basics of how email works
- a list of the differences between mutt, pine, and other mailreaders
- an overview of the capabilities of mutt
- information on how to make mutt connect to GT PRISM accounts (IMAP)
- mutt configuration for parsing through mail
- basic mutt commands
- an overview of the `.muttrc` file
- a list of further references

The basics

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A whiteboard discussion.

MTA: mail transfer agent

MDA: mail delivery agent

MUA: mail user agent

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A whiteboard discussion.

MTA: mail transfer agent

MDA: mail delivery agent

MUA: mail user agent

Mail delivery protocols:

POP3: push-then-delete

IMAP: server-side storage

Exchange: life is bad for you.

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- mutt is a “small, but very powerful text-based mail client for Unix operating systems”

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- Based largely on the elm mail client

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- Highly customizable: keybindings, macros, etc.

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- IMAP, POP3 support (plus maildir and mbox)

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- MIME, DSN, PGP support, plus further extensibility

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- IMAP, POP3 support (plus maildir and mbox)
- MIME, DSN, PGP support, plus further extensibility
- ncurses-based! Use it with GNU screen (along with irssi)

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- Lightweight, fast, and simple

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- You are me.
- Lightweight, fast, and simple
- Can run inside screen
- No need for a mouse—everything is controllable by keybindings
- It looks cool (-Ryan, 2008)

Comparison with alpine

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mutt : vim :: alpine : nano

What else have we got?

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- alpine
- gnus (in Emacs)
- nmh
- Thunderbird
- Evolution
- Zimbra...?

Reading Mail

The important commands:

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(up/down arrows)	select message
PgUp / PgDn	page up / down
Enter	display message
r	reply to selected message
g	group reply
m	begin composing mail
q	quit / return to message listing
d	delete message
u	undelete message
F	flag message
\$	commit changes (if IMAP)
?	help

Reading messages

Useful commands when you are looking at a message:

Enter	scroll down a line
Backspace	scroll up one line
PgUp / PgDn	scroll up/down a page
Space	next message
h	view full headers
a	create alias from a sender
/	search within message
^	jump to top of message
v	show attachments

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Searching mail

Mutt supports regular expressions in its searches. To search through messages use `/` or use `l` to limit messages. More complicated queries:

`~f ryan@ratml.org` matches all messages from `ryan@ratml.org`

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<code>~A</code>	all messages
<code>~b</code>	in message body (careful!)
<code>~f</code>	from
<code>~t</code>	to
<code>~l</code>	mailing list
<code>~F</code>	flagged messages
<code>~N</code>	new messages
<code>~d</code>	date (accepts a range)
<code>~Q</code>	replied-to messages
<code>~s</code>	in subject line

Basic configuration

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Basic Mutt setup:

```
set from='ryan@ratml.org'  
set realname="Ryan Curtin"  
set use_form=yes  
set sort=threads  
set sort_aux=last-date-received  
set visual="vim"  
set editor="vim"  
set signature=/usr/bin/fortune |
```

Configuring mutt for IMAP

Here is an example of how Mutt can be configured to connect to GT PRISM IMAP accounts. Setup for other IMAP servers will be very similar.

```
set spoolfile=imaps://imap.mail.gatech.edu/INBOX
set folder=imaps://imap.mail.gatech.edu/INBOX
set imap_user=gth671b
set imap_keepalive=40
set imap_servernoise=yes
```

Also useful is `imap_authenticators` if you want to specify the methods of authentication mutt will try.

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Configuring mutt for POP3

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Simple configuration to connect to a POP3 mailserver:

```
set pop_host=pops://pops.server.com/  
set pop_user=username  
set pop_reconnect=yes  
set pop_checkinterval=1  
set pop_delete=yes
```

Similar to IMAP, a `pop_authenticators` option also exists.

Configuring mutt for local mail

For local mail (some of these options may be unnecessary):

```
set mbox_type=(mbox | Maildir | MH | MMDF)
```

```
set spoolfile=/path/to/spool/
```

- spoolfile is only necessary if \$MAIL is not correct

```
set mbox=/saved/mail/dir/
```

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Setting up header caching

Mutt (since 1.5.7) supports header caching by default.

```
set header_cache=/location/of/header/cache/
```

Mutt must be compiled with the `--enable-hcache` option passed to the configure script.

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Setting up outgoing mail

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Mutt is not an MTA; you must configure your own for Mutt to use.

```
set sendmail=/location/of/mta
```

An example with nbsmtp:

```
set sendmail="/usr/bin/nbsmtp -d gmail.com -h  
smtp.gmail.com -f user@gmail.com"
```

sendmail defaults to /usr/bin/sendmail.

Colors!

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Formatting:

```
color object foreground background [ regexp ]
```

Some examples:

```
color index brightyellow default "~s Package Receipt  
Notification"
```

```
color index green default "~t  
lug- (announce|chat)@lists.lugatgt.org"
```

```
color body green default "(ftp|http)://[ ^ ]+"
```

```
color quoted red default
```

```
color signature cyan default
```

Setting up hooks

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[X] -hook: Execute an action when doing [X]

[X]-hook regexp **command**

Types of hooks: send-hook, charset-hook, fcc-hook, fcc-save-hook, folder-hook, mbox-hook, iconv-hook, message-hook, pgp-hook, save-hook, send-hook

Some examples:

```
folder-hook junk set sort=threads
```

```
send-hook '~t gatech.edu' 'set realname="George P. Burdell"'
```

```
message-hook '~f ryan@ratml.org' 'color body brightyellow  
default'
```

Dealing with attachments

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v - view attachments

The `.mailcap` file specifies external commands mutt will use to view attachments.

To set up mutt for HTML mail:

In `.mailcap`:

```
text/html; links %s; nameplate=%s.html
```

In `.muttrc`:

```
auto_view text/html
```

Any MIME attachment type can be viewed by having mutt call an external program.

Other things you can configure

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Key bindings and macros:

```
bind map key function  
macro menu key sequence
```

```
bind pager j next-page  
macro pager k jjjjj
```

Links

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Mutt reference:

<http://www.mutt.org/doc/manual/>

- The Mutt manual; fully comprehensive and detailed

<http://www.linux.com/articles/58760>

- "Training Your Mutt": useful article on basic Mutt configuration

Other useful links:

http://www.dotfiles.com/index.php?cat_id=12

- List of other people's .muttrc files (also includes other mail clients)

http://www.dotfiles.com/files/27/263_.muttrc

- .muttrc that reconfigures mutt to use pine's default keybindings

Questions?

Questions? Comments? Flamewars?

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