Civics Playbook

Google

Whether you are in the government, political, or non-profit space, this playbook is a roadmap to boost your productivity with Google AI tools, establish and enhance your presence on Google and YouTube, and protect and secure your account.

The Google Civics Outreach Team utilizes this playbook and these methods to train candidates, government offices, campaigns, and organizations on best practices for Google products and tools.

Connect with the Civics team
civics-outreach@google.com
civicsresources.withgoogle.com

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Table of Contents

Boost Creativity & Productivity with AI

✦ Gemini

Visit gemini.google.com to get started

As we continue to incorporate AI into more Google experiences, we know it's imperative to be bold and responsible, together.

Visit gemini.google.com or download the Gemini app for iOS or in the Play Store.

Chat with Gemini

Supercharge your creativity and productivity with Gemini.

To draft a statement, extract key insights, or generate ideas for an itinerary, build a great prompt using these elements:

[Give a role] [Define the goal] [Specify audience] [Set restrictions/style] [Format the result]

Gemini Deep Research

Save hours of work with Deep Research as your personal research assistant. Gemini now has the ability to upload your own files to guide research and transform reports into interactive content in Canvas.

Gemini Live

Talk it out Live with Gemini. Gemini Live is a more natural way to chat with Gemini. Go Live to brainstorm and organize your thoughts, or share a pic, video, or file, and get real-time, spoken responses. Gemini is now available to mobile users in 45+ languages and over 150 countries.

Image Generation in Gemini

Imagine yourself in any world you can dream up. With Nano Banana in the Gemini app, you can turn a single photo into countless new creations. You can even upload multiple images to blend scenes or combine ideas. And with an improved understanding of your instructions, it's easier than ever to bring your ideas to life.

Video Generation in Gemini

Create high-quality, 8-second videos with Veo 3.1, our latest AI video generation model. Simply describe what you have in mind or upload a photo and watch your ideas come to life with native audio generation.

Canvas in Gemini

Simply describe your idea and watch Canvas generate the code that brings your idea to life as a working, shareable app or game.

Draft and Refine in Gemini

Elevate your writing by generating compelling drafts, perfecting its tone, fine-tuning key sections, and getting instant, insightful feedback.

◈ NotebookLM

Visit notebooklm.google.com to get started

NotebookLM is your ultimate research and thinking partner, enabling you to get critical insights faster, grounded only in the information you provide.

Try NotebookLM to get up to speed on dense or complex reading material quickly, get started with briefing memos or communications docs, create an audio overview, and more.

Getting started with NotebookLM

Upload Your Sources

Upload PDFs, websites, YouTube videos, audio files, Google Docs, or Google Slides, and NotebookLM will summarize them and make interesting connections between topics, all powered by Gemini 2.0's multimodal understanding capabilities.

Listen and Learn On the Go

Our new Audio Overview feature can turn your sources into engaging audio discussions with one click.

Instant Insights

With all of your sources in place, NotebookLM gets to work and becomes a personalized AI expert in the information that matters most to you.

See the Source, Not Just the Answer

Gain confidence in every response because NotebookLM provides clear citations for its work, showing you the exact quotes from your sources.

Video Overviews

Video Overviews transform the sources in your notebook into a video of AI-narrated slides, pulling images, diagrams, quotes, and numbers from your documents. They distill complex information into clear, digestible content, providing a comprehensive and engaging visual deep dive of your material.

Grow and Amplify Your Online Presence

Build a YouTube Channel

Use YouTube to reach your audience where they are, whether that's on mobile, desktop, or at home on their TVs. Share your organization's work and personality through videos on the issues that matter most to your audience.

Follow these steps to help build your YouTube channel. Make sure you're logged into your organization's shared Google account before building the channel.

1   Find your channel at youtube.com

2   Change your channel name, icon, and description to reflect your organization

3   Add channel art that reflects your community

4   Add your full team of admins to your channel using their Google Accounts

5   Upload a one-minute channel trailer speaking directly to the camera about your position

6   Email youtube-civics@google.com for channel verification and changes to your handle

Visit our Creator Academy for a guided tutorial to set up your channel: yt.be/creatoracademy-quickstart

Enhance Your YouTube Presence

Build your brand, reach new audiences

Own your voice with the freedom to shape and share your messages on YouTube where they are discoverable by diverse audiences at every moment.

Channel trailers allow you to provide a preview of your channel to new viewers.

Channel sections allow you to organize content to help viewers choose what to watch.

Video thumbnails act like billboards, helping to attract viewers to watch your content.

Title & description helps viewers find your videos more easily through search.

End screens can be added to the last 5-20 seconds of your video with an accompanying call to action.

Deepen your connections with your audience

Engage and serve audiences more deeply by bringing them together around shared interests and passions. YouTube offers communication tools and formats to help your messages break through.

YouTube Shorts are an excellent opportunity to reach a new audience, build a Channel from scratch, and experiment with new content. Try it for yourself: goo.gle/YTshorts

Live streams allow you to interact and react in real-time with your community around key moments, like debates or conventions. Enable and start live streaming at yt.be/civics-livestream

Community posts can allow you to connect with your audience outside of video uploads. Posts can include polls, GIFs, text, images, and video via the Community tab, and may show on Home or the Subscriptions feed. goo.gle/YTcommunitytab

Explainer videos can help viewers understand complex political topics, oftentimes via strong animations.

1:1 Interviews with people such as candidates or experts are a great way to open up a more intimate conversation between your audience and the interviewee.

Learn more creative best practices at: creatoracademy.youtube.com

Amplify Your Online Presence

Google offers tools to improve and amplify your online presence.

Get Verified to Run Google Election Ads

Google requires verification for advertisers who want to run United States Election Ads.

To get started and verified to run political ads, visit:
goo.gle/ ElectionAdsVerification

With the information you provide during the verification process, Google will:

- Verify your identity and eligibility to run US Election Ads.

- Generate, when possible, an in-ad disclosure that identifies who paid for your ad.

- Publish a publicly available Political Advertising transparency report and ads library with data on funding sources for election ads, the amounts being spent, and more.

Get Verified to Run Google Election Ads

With the information you provide during the verification process, Google will:

1. Sign into your organization's shared Google Account.

2. Go to google.com/business and click Start Now.

3. Enter the name of your business (example: Office of ___ or Organization Name) and click Next. Note: You can also select your business from the suggestions that appear as you enter information.

4. Choose a verification option to complete your listing and customize your profile.

A comprehensive help center on managing your business profile can be found at support.google.com/business

Key Steps to Protect and Secure Your Account

Make Your Account More Secure

We keep more people safe online than anyone else in the world with products that are secure by default, private by design, and put you in control. We have additional safeguards for users with high visibility and sensitive information. To protect your Google Account, we strongly recommend taking these steps regularly.

Take the Google Security Checkup

Visit g.co/securitycheckup to get personalized and actionable recommendations to help strengthen the security of your Google Account.

- Add or update account recovery options

- Turn on 2-Step Verification

- Remove risky access to your data

- Turn on screen locks

Check the strength and security of all of your saved passwords with a Password Checkup at passwords.google.com. Learn if any of your saved passwords for third-party sites or accounts have been compromised and easily change them if needed.

Take the Google Security Checkup

One of the best ways to protect your account is to have an extra form of verification in place. 2-step verification, also called 2-factor authentication, helps keep out anyone who shouldn't have access to your Google account by requiring a second step after you enter your password.

Types of 2-factor authentication include:

- **Passkeys** are a safer and easier alternative to passwords. With passkeys, users can sign into apps and websites with a biometric sensor (such as a fingerprint or facial recognition), PIN, or pattern, freeing them from having to remember and manage passwords.

- **A security key** is a type of authentication that uses a key to protect your Google Account. You can buy a physical key from the Google Store or a trusted retailer. Physical keys are thumb drives with NFC capability and can be used with most devices.

You can check the status of your account's 2-Step Verification at g.co/2SV.

Results About You

When you use "Results About You," you can find out if your personal contact information including your home address, phone number, or email address shows up in search results.

Update your software

If your browser, operating system, or apps are out of date, your software might not be safe from hackers. Keep your software updated to help protect your information.

# Protections for High-Risk Users

Advanced Protection Program

The Advanced Protection Program (APP) is Google's strongest security offering, designed to safeguard the personal and professional Google accounts of those most at risk of targeted attacks including journalists, activists, business leaders, and political campaign teams. New protections are automatically added to defend against today's wide range of threats. Get started at g.co/advancedprotection.

Making Elections Safer

To make political organizations safer with Advanced Protection, we've partnered with Defending Digital Campaigns to provide free Titan Security Keys as a form of 2-factor authentication. See if your team is eligible for free keys by emailing info@defendcampaigns.org.
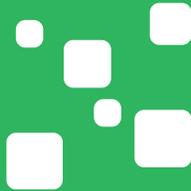
Google Workspace
for Organizations

Learn more at **workspace.google.com**
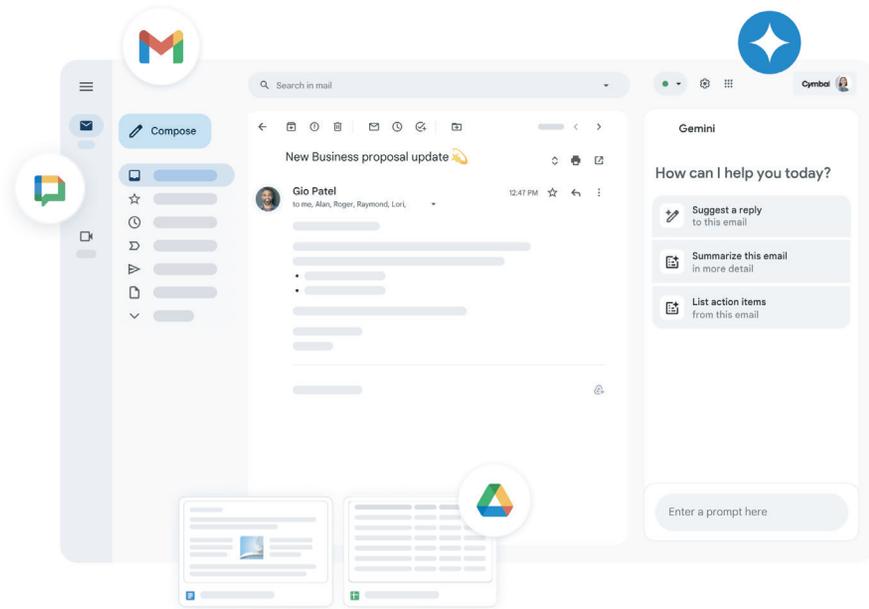
If you are a Member of Congress or Congressional staff, you can now purchase Google Workspace Enterprise Plus with your official email address through the Senate Sergeant at Arms (SAA) or House Information Resources (HIR).

Google Workspace plans now include access to NotebookLM and Gemini in Docs, Meet, Calendar, and more. Gmail is not included in Workspace plans for Congressional offices at this time. The productivity apps in Google Workspace provide a secure foundation for real-time collaboration with a Zero Trust approach, built-in controls, encryption, and verification that enables employees to work from anywhere.

Switch to Workspace to gain access to:

- Drive for seamless file sharing and enhanced collaboration

- Docs for online, collaborative documents

- Gemini to boost creativity and productivity

- NotebookLM, your AI research and thinking partner

...and more!

To learn more, register your interest at goo.gle/HOR-Workspace and Google-certified deployment specialists will contact you to schedule a discovery call to ensure Google Workspace is a good fit for your office.

Set up a Google Account for your organization

It can be helpful to use a central Google Account to manage your organization's digital presence on Google Search and

YouTube. This simplifies your work across multiple Google tools and makes it easy for you to share access with multiple people.

How to use a Google Account to manage your organization's digital presence on Google and YouTube:

- Log into your Google Account in the upper righthand corner of google.com or create a new Google Account at accounts.google.com/SignUp.

- If necessary, you can recover access to your Google Account at accounts.google.com/signin/recovery.

- If your organization is using Workspace, contact your Workspace administrator to set up a new Google Account.

- If you are a Member of Congress or Congressional staff, check with the Senate Sergeant at Arms (SAA) or House Information Resources (HIR) to create a Google account with your official email address.

Guidelines for Bulk Email Senders

Learn more at **goo.gle/gmail-top-ten**

When you send a high volume of emails (more than 5,000 recipients), it's important to follow the email sender guidelines and applicable regulations and to respect recipients' inboxes. To manage an effective email campaign, your messages should connect you and your recipients in a meaningful way.

Use Postmaster Tools

Measure and monitor your email deliverability to Gmail users using Postmaster Tools. Postmaster Tools have dashboards with detailed information about your configuration, spam rates, message authentication rates, and delivery errors.

Authenticate Your Outgoing Email

Set up SPF and DKIM authentication for all of your sending domains and add a DMARC policy to prevent other senders from impersonating your domain or organization.

Respect User Choice

Make sure recipients explicitly opt into getting messages from the address you use to send email. To help prevent high spam rates, we recommend implementing one-click unsubscribe and honoring users' unsubscribes.

Maintain Consistent Sending Volumes

Pace your email traffic to send at consistent volumes throughout the day and over several days to avoid random spikes in email sending volume. Consistent sending volume is critical for your sending domain's long-term email delivery success, especially for new domains as they establish their sending reputation.

Prevent High User-Reported Spam Markings

Keep spam rates reported in Postmaster Tools below 0.1%. Maintaining a high spam rate can result in increased spam classification for your messages.

Don't Ramp up Too Quickly

Increasing your sending volume too quickly can result in delivery issues. Increase your sending volume gradually and use Postmaster Tools to monitor email delivery. If messages are bounced, deferred, or not authorized, reduce your sending volume until the SMTP error rates drop. Then slowly increase your sending volume.

Limit Sharing of IP Addresses and Domains

Using the same IP address or domains for multiple senders can result in a low domain or IP address reputation, or poor deliverability for all senders using the domain or IP address.

Avoid Misleading Display Names and Subject Lines

Don't use emojis or other non-standard characters to imitate graphic elements in messages. Don't use emojis or images to imply the sender has been verified in some way.

Don't use misleading content in message headers. Don't include Re: or Fwd: in the subject header for messages that aren't actual replies or forwards, and don't use display names to imply a threaded conversation with the recipient.

Notes

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