Hello, I'm Sarah and I'm here to get you started with email. We will be following along with Amy, who is setting up a Gmail account. Let's begin by talking about what email is and how it works.
If you’ve never heard of e-mail before, it’s just like mailing someone a letter at the post office, except that the letter is mailed digitally through the Internet and the person receives the letter instantly.

You can include all kinds of things in an e-mail In addition to a letter. You can include pictures, documents, videos and other computer files.
You can send an e-mail to multiple people at the same time and you can access your e-mail on any device that has the Internet, like your computer or your mobile phone.

Best of all, sending an e-mail is free, so there is no need to pay for postage.
In order to receive e-mails, you will have to have your own private e-mail account, which is an electronic mailbox just for you.

You also need to have your own e-mail address so that people will know where to send you an e-mail.
Like a real address, the e-mail address has to be typed in correctly, or the other person will not receive their mail.

An email address will always have three parts:

- The first part of the email address is the person’s username. This is similar to the name you write on a regular address.

- The second part is the @ symbol (pronounced “at”). Just like you may send mail to someone at work or at home, the @ symbol connects the person and the location fields of the email address because email addresses can’t have spaces in them.

- The third part of the email address is the location. It could be the name of an email provider, the organization the person works for, or a website that the person is associated with.

To recap, an email address is made up of who you are sending the email to, @, and the location for their email, just like a regular address is made up of who and where.
Your e-mail account is protected by a password of your choice, so that the only person who has access to your e-mail is you.

Think about your password as the key to your mailbox. This provides you with protection and privacy.
If you don’t have an e-mail account, you can easily set one up for free. You can do that with a variety of different e-mail providers, such as Gmail, Yahoo! or Hotmail.
Let's follow along with Amy as she sets up a Gmail account. First, she will open her Internet browser and go to the address bar.

In the address bar, Amy will type gmail.com and then press enter to go to the Gmail website. Now she can start setting up her account.
On the right side of the screen there is a red button that say “CREATE AN ACCOUNT”. When Amy clicks on this button, a form will appear.
At the top of the form, Amy will begin by typing in her first and last name.

Next, Amy will choose a username, which will become a part of her email address.

Here is a tip on usernames: Since usernames become a part of your email address, you will want to use something that is appropriate to share with anyone you may give your email to, including those who are hiring if you are a jobseeker. You want your email address to be professional.

In Amy’s case, she would want to choose something with her name over something like RedHotRedHead.

Also, keep in mind that usernames are unique to each user so it may be hard to find something that is not already taken. This means that you may have to be creative with your username and add numbers or other identifying factors to it.
Amy will also have to choose a password for her account.

Passwords are secret because they are like the lock to your mailbox. To keep your password secret, it will be masked with symbols as it is typed so that others watching can’t see the characters.

When setting up an account, it is important to remember your password since you need to enter it in order to access your account later.

When entering her password, Amy is prompted to type it in one more time; this confirms that it was typed correctly by making sure both entries are the same.

Amy then adds her date of birth and selects her gender in the gender field.
There are two fields on the form that are optional and do not need to be completed: the “mobile phone” field and the “your current email address” field. Amy skips over those.

Amy also clicks to deselect the “Set Google as my default homepage” as she does not want Google to be the first page that opens when she uses the Internet.

In order to make sure that everyone who signs up for an email account is a person, Google will ask you to type the strange words under “Prove you’re not a robot” into the box under “Type the two pieces of text”. Sometimes, those words can be pretty tough to read, so if you have trouble reading them, you can press the refresh button to get other words or the sound button to listen to an audio recording.
Finally, Amy agrees to Google’s Terms of Service and Privacy Policy.

Now that Amy is done completing this form, she clicks the “Next Step” button.
Google will now show Amy her profile.

If she wanted to add a profile photo, she could do that on this page, but for now she moves on by clicking the “Next step” button.
Amy’s email is now all set up and she gets a welcome message from Google.

She clicks on the blue button that says “Continue to Gmail” and goes to her inbox for the first time.
Amy has been using Gmail for a little while now and is about to login to check her email account.

She types gmail.com into the address bar of her browser and hits enter.

On the Gmail login page, she will type the first part of her email address (the part that comes before @) into the box labeled username.

Next, Amy types in her password.

Once Amy has entered her username and password, she clicks on the blue button that says “Sign in”.
The first thing that Amy sees when she logs into her account is the Inbox.

Each email will list the name of the sender, the subject of the message, a preview of the message, and finally, the date of when the message was sent.

The newest e-mails will always be at the top of the Inbox because they are organized by date.

Amy sees that she has a new e-mail from Sandy, her best friend.
Amy clicks on the email to open it and reads Sandy’s message.

Amy is going to reply to Sandy’s email.

She can do this through two different ways:

- By clicking on the arrow on the right hand side of the message.
- By clicking on the reply link in the box right below the message.
Once Amy hits reply, she begins to type her message in the large box under the recipient’s name.

When Amy is done typing her message, she hits the send button and her reply is sent to Sandy.
Once the reply is sent, a notification appears at the top of the screen and the new email will appear before the first message from Sandy.
If you want to send an email without replying to one you already received, you can do that by composing a new message.

Amy wants to send a new email so she will click on the red “COMPOSE” button on the top right next to the inbox.
When you click on compose, a message box will appear.

In the “To” field, Amy types in the email address of the person to which she wants to send this email.

This message can be sent to one recipient or multiple people. If there is more than one recipient, just type each email address into the “To” field, separated by commas.

Next, type in a subject to let people know what the message is about.

Once the email address and the subject are entered, type in the body of the message.

Finally, click the “Send” button to send the email.
Once the reply is sent, a notification appears at the top of the screen and Amy will be able to access the message in the sent folder.