

Claude + Gmail: it drafts replies in your real inbox

Connect Claude to Gmail once and it becomes your inbox assistant. You type one plain-English sentence, Claude reads the actual email, gets the context, and writes the reply, then drops it as a draft right in Gmail. You check it and hit send. Emails used to eat my first hour every morning. Now it is about ten minutes.

I did this whole thing on my phone. Claude talks to Gmail through a connector, so once they're linked, any chat can work your inbox: Claude finds the email, reads the real thread, writes a reply in your voice, and saves it as a Gmail draft. Nothing gets sent without you. You open Gmail, read what it wrote, and send it yourself.

Before you start: you need the Claude app and a Gmail account. If you don't see Connectors in Claude, update the app. Everything below works on the phone, and the same flow works on desktop too. Claude only ever creates drafts, so you always get the final say before anything sends.

The 4 steps

1. **Connect Claude to Gmail, once.** In the Claude app, open *Connectors* (tap the + next to the message box, or go to *Settings* → *Connectors*). Find *Gmail*, tap *Connect*, and tap *Allow* to sign in. It's one tap, and you only ever do it once.
2. **Give it one job.** Start a new chat and type one sentence: who the email is from and what reply you want. Mine is below, steal it and swap the name.

3. **Let it read and write.** Claude finds the latest email from that person, reads the real thread for context, and writes the reply. It lands as a draft in your Gmail.
4. **Check it and send.** Open Gmail, read the draft, tweak anything you want, and hit send. That's it.

THE EXACT PROMPT FROM THE VIDEO

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Find the latest email from [name] and draft a polite reply that says no to the meeting but offers two times next week
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The pattern is: find the email, plus who it's from, plus exactly what the reply should say. Naming Gmail-style intent ("find the email", "draft a reply") is what makes Claude reach for the connector and work your real inbox instead of guessing.

Good next prompts

- "Summarize the unread emails from today and tell me which three actually need a reply."
- "Find the latest email from [name] and draft a warm reply that says yes and asks for the invoice."
- "Find the email about [topic] and draft a short reply that pushes the deadline to next Friday."

What you need

- The Claude app (phone or desktop).
- A Gmail account.
- About ten seconds to connect it, once. No code.

That is the whole trick. If it was useful, the newsletter is where I send the next one before it hits YouTube.

