

SETTINGS • VACATION RESPONSE

Set up an away message

Heading out this summer? Turn on a vacation response so anyone who emails you gets an automatic reply letting them know you're away and when you'll be back — and set it to switch itself on and off so you don't have to remember.



Quick Steps

- 1 Click the **Settings** gear. In the left margin, scroll to the **Set up** section and click **Vacation response**.
- 2 Turn on **Enable vacation response**.
- 3 In **Respond with this message**, type the note people should receive while you're away.
- 4 Set **From** and **Until** dates so it starts and stops on its own (or leave **Now** / **Forever**).
- 5 That's it — there's no Save button. Your reply is active for as long as the toggle is on.

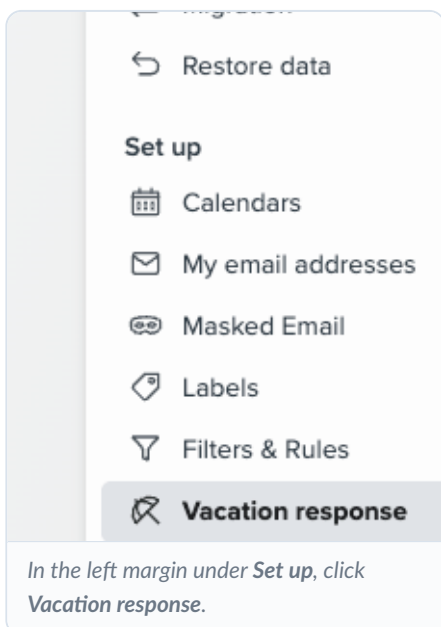
! There's no "Save" button — and Fastmail reminds you it's on.

Your settings take effect as you make them; the response is live whenever the toggle is on. While it's active, Fastmail shows a banner at the top of your mail with a shortcut to switch it off, so you won't forget it's running.

Illustrated Walkthrough

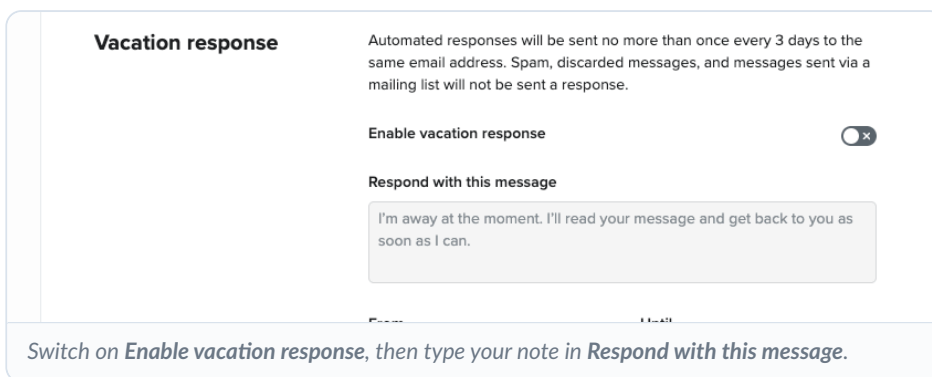
1 Open Settings and choose Vacation response

Click the **Settings** gear in the top-right corner of Fastmail. Settings reopens wherever you were last time, so you may land on a different page — that's normal. In the **left margin**, scroll down to the **Set up** section and click **Vacation response**.



2 Turn it on and write your message

Click the toggle next to **Enable vacation response** so it switches on. Then, in the **Respond with this message** box, type the note you want senders to receive. Fastmail starts with a simple draft you can replace — we'll cover what to write further down.



3 Set when it starts and stops

This is the part worth getting right for a trip. Under **From**, choose **Now** or **The start of** a date; under **Until**, choose **Forever** or **The end of** a date. Pick your travel dates and Fastmail turns the reply on the morning you leave and off when you're back — no need to remember to switch it off.

From	Until
☒ Now ☐ The start of	☒ Forever ☐ The end of
Fri, May 22, 2026	Fri, May 22, 2026

Set From → The start of your first day away and Until → The end of your last day away.

4 Choose who receives it (optional)

By default the reply goes to anyone who emails you. Turn on **Only send a response to my contacts** if you'd rather strangers not get one. Below that, Fastmail lists your addresses — tick the ones that should send the away reply. If you only use one address, you can leave these as they are.

Only send a response to my contacts

☒

Send the response to any message sent directly to or cc

Optional: limit replies to your contacts, and choose which of your addresses reply. (Addresses blurred for privacy.)

Write a good away message

A helpful away message answers the three questions every sender has: **Are you getting my email? When will you reply? Who do I contact if it's urgent?** Keep it short and warm.

ALWAYS INCLUDE

- That you're **away** and email may be delayed
- The **date you'll be back** (or back online)
- An **urgent contact** — a name, email, or phone

NICE TO ADD

- A friendly opening line
- Whether you'll have **any** access to email
- Your name and business sign-off

Two examples to copy

SIMPLE & PROFESSIONAL

Thank you for your email. I'm out of the office until **Monday, July 7** with limited access to email, and I'll reply as soon as I can after I return. For anything urgent, please contact **[name]** at **[email]**. — Robert Bourdage

IN THE "DR. BOB" VOICE

Thanks for reaching out! Dr. Bob is away from the keyboard and will be back on **[date]**. I'll return your message as soon as I'm back at my desk. If your computer is sick and it can't wait, please call the office at **(817) 994-7111** and leave a message. — Robert Bourdage, Bourdage Consulting

ⓘ Good to know about how it behaves.

Fastmail sends your reply to the same person **no more than once every 3 days**, so no one is flooded with duplicates. It only replies to mail with your address in the **To** or **Cc** line, and never to spam, mailing lists, or forwarded mail.

⚠ Two gotchas worth knowing.

First, the vacation reply needs **Spam Protection** turned on to work — it is by default, so leave it on. Second, Fastmail won't auto-reply to messages from **your own account**, so to test it, send yourself a message from a **different** email address.

📅 Pair it with your calendar.

A nice habit: block your time off on your calendar as well, so colleagues see you're away when they look for a meeting slot. We'll cover the calendar — including sharing it with your team — in an upcoming QuickStart.



Provided to you free of charge, courtesy of **Bourdage Consulting**

(817) 994-7111 · bourdage.net · *If your computer is sick... call Dr. Bob.*