talk Google Chat: Send instant messages
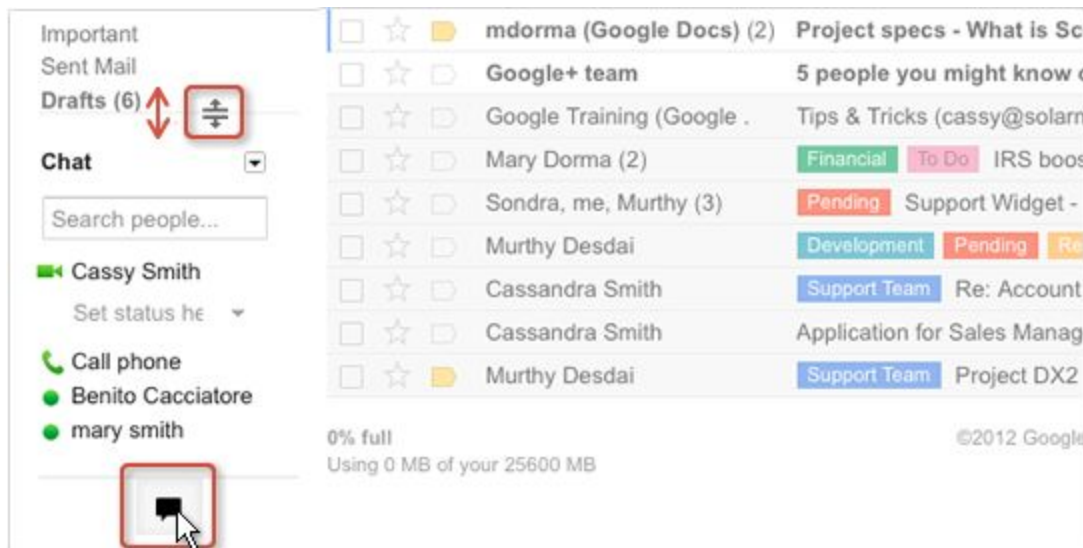
Gmail includes a built-in chat gadget that you can use to send and receive instant messages with other people in your organization. And if you also want to hear and see the person you're chatting with, install the voice and video chat plug-in to start having real conversations right in your Gmail window (see instructions below).

Using the Chrome browser? Install the Chat for Google Chrome extension that lets you send and receive instant messages *outside* of Gmail. With Chat for Google, you'll see incoming chats appear at the lower-right corner of your desktop whenever you receive a new message—even if Gmail isn't open. Get Chat for Google
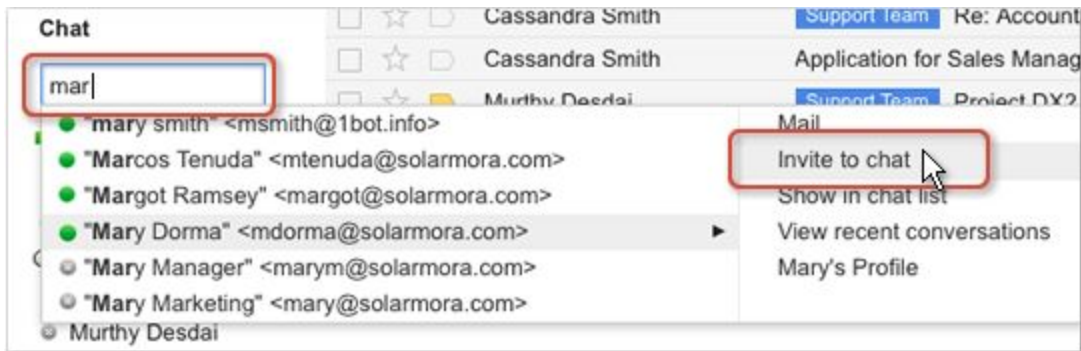
Show / hide the chat gadget

Click the **Chat icon** at the lower left of your Gmail window. You can also resize the chat area by dragging its top divider line.
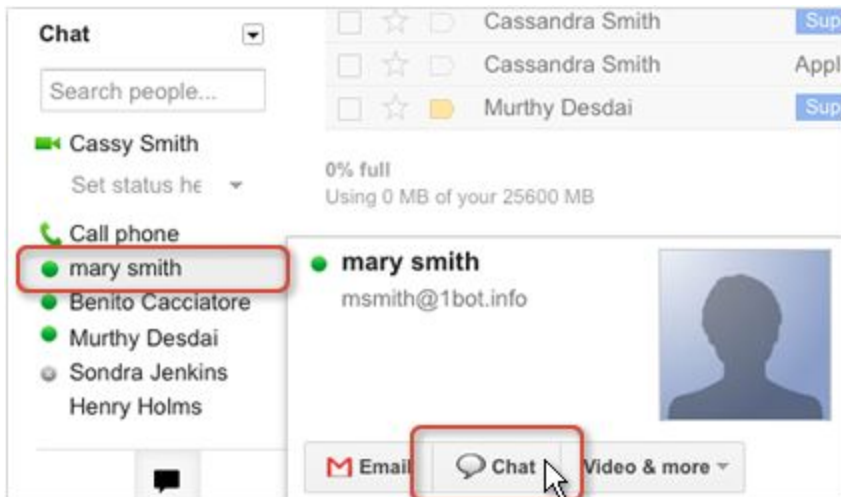

Invite a co-worker to chat

The Google chat gadget shows a list of people you've recently communicated with. You can also find anyone else in your organization by starting to type his or her name or email address in the **Search people...** field. If you haven't chatted with them before, click **Invite to chat**.

Start a chat

Once you've chatted with someone, you can find their name already listed in the chat gadget. In that case, point to this person and click **Chat**:

Note: A green dot (or green camera, if they've enabled video chat) appears to the left of a contact who is online and available.
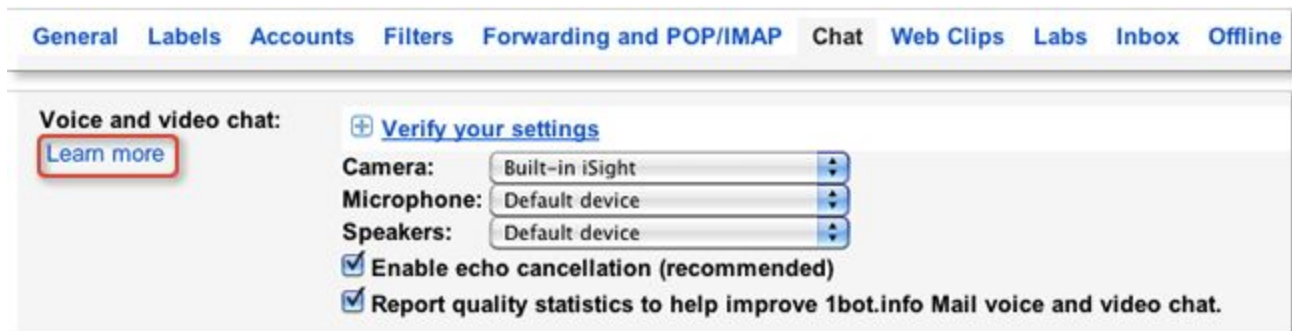
Chat outside your Gmail window

If you're chatting with someone, you can click the **Pop-out** arrow to use the Chat gadget outside of your Gmail window:

Install voice and video chat

1. Go to your Gmail **Settings** and open the **Chat** tab.
2. Under **Voice and video chat**, click **Learn more** to go to the page on which you can download the voice and video chat plugin:

Set up chat options

Go to your Gmail **Settings** and open the **Chat** tab. You'll see options for saving your chat history, sounds, emoticons, and more.