Labels vs Folders

Actually, Gmail doesn't use folders. To help you organize your mail more effectively, Gmail uses labels instead.

Here's why we think labels are better than folders:

Labels	Folders
A conversation can have more than one label	You can only put a message in one folder
A conversation can be in several locations (Inbox, All Mail, Sent Mail, etc.) at once, making it easier to find later	You have to remember where you filed a message to retrieve it
You can search conversations by label	You can't always do folder-specific searches

Create a label
Here's how to create a label that you can add to any of your messages:

1. On the left side of the page, click **More** at the bottom of your labels list. (If you don't see "More," grab the gray dividing line with your cursor and drag it down to show more labels.)
2. Click **Create new label**.
3. Type the name of your new label and click **Create**.

You can also create a new label for a message in your Inbox by selecting the box next to the message, clicking the **Label** button above your message list, and then clicking **Create new**.

Apply your label to messages
You can add a label to your messages in several ways:

- When viewing your Inbox, select the checkbox next to those messages, click the **Labels** button, and click the label you want. (Or check the boxes next to several labels and click **Apply**.)
- When viewing a message, click the **Labels** button to add a label to the message. You can also click and drag a label from the left side, and drop it on the message.
- When writing a new message, use that button to add a label before sending your message.

Edit or delete a label
Hover your cursor over the label on the left side of your Gmail page, and click the down-arrow that appears next to that label. A menu appears where you can change the label's color and edit the its settings, or click **Edit** to change the label's name. In that menu, you can also click **Remove label** to delete the label from your list and remove it from all messages that were tagged with that label. You can also edit and delete labels in the Labels tab of your Gmail Settings.

Organize your labels
You can control some of the settings for your labels on your Labels tab. Get there by clicking the gear icon ⚙, select **Settings**, then **Labels**. Here are a few examples:

RESOURCE: http://support.google.com

Choose which labels appear in your list on the left: In the "Show in label list" column, click the "show" or "hide" link next to each label to choose whether it will be shown in the left panel of your Gmail pages. You can also set labels to appear only when they contain unread messages (otherwise, they will be hidden).

Choose which labels appear on your messages: In the "Show in message list" column, you can choose whether you'll see each label displayed next to its messages' subject lines. Click **hide** if you don't want to see that label name when you look at the messages it contains.

Delete labels: If you see a label that you don't want anymore, click **remove** in the "Remove label" column. (You'll have to confirm that you'd like to remove the label by clicking **Delete**.)

Create sub-labels: You can add a sub-label beneath a label to create a hierarchy. For example, if you have a label for your vacations, and want to create another specifically for a trip to Hawaii, you can nest the "Hawaii" label inside your "Vacations" label. Just add a slash to your label name to have it live inside another label: in this case, you'd name the Hawaii label "Vacations/Hawaii."

Note: If you have more than 500 labels, you may find that your Gmail experience is slower. We suggest removing the labels that you might not be using anymore (this action won't delete the messages that were assigned those labels).