

What are Mailing Lists

By Tammy Payton

A mailing list is a wonderful communication tool that offers its members the opportunity to post suggestion or questions to a large number of people at the same time. When you submit a question or something that you want to share to the mailing list, your submission is distributed to all of the other people on that list.

Each mailing list targets pre-determined topics and discussions. Before submitting a query or a comment to the entire mailing list group, monitor the discussions. After a few days, you'll be able to tell what are acceptable submissions.

Each mailing list has two different addresses.

- **list address:** This is the address you use to submit a query or share knowledge with the entire group. This message will be distributed to all people on the mailing list. This is known as "sending mail to the list."
- **LISTSERVE address:** This is the address that you send commands to such as subscribing and unsubscribing.

Management Tips

1. **Keep a Copy of the Welcome Letter** When you successfully sign-up with a mailing list, they'll send you a welcome message. This letter will contain tips for sending your mail as well as how to unsubscribe from that mailing list. You should store this message either on your computer or print a hard copy and make a folder of mailing lists that you belong to.
2. **Check Your E-mail Daily** Some mailing list will send several messages daily. Others will send one message in the form of a digest . This is one long message containing several responses to the mailing list. Other mailing lists send messages weekly, and others are very sporadic. Regardless of how this mailing list shares information with the group, you need to make a commitment to check your e-mail daily. Remember that the webserver that stores your incoming e-mail messages only has so much disk space.
3. **Following Threads of Discussions** By signing up with a mailing list, you are not obligated to respond to all messages, or to any message. Pick and choose the topics that interest you. Look at the subject line of the incoming messages to see which thread of discussion is being addressed in that message. In large mailing lists, several different threads of discussions will be ongoing at one time.
4. **Help When You Can** The purpose of mailing lists is to share information. Help individuals in a query whenever you can, because someday you may want help locating information. Sometimes it is better to respond to just an individual rather than sending your message to the entire mailing list group.
5. **Unsubscribe If You'll Be Gone** If you plan on being gone for more than a week and will be unable to check your e-mail, you should unsubscribe from the list then you can resubscribe when you return.
6. **Use a Meaningful Subject Line** When people receive mail from a mailing list, one of the first pieces of information they look at is the subject line. Most

people will keep the same subject line when they respond to a particular thread of discussion. Some people will delete unread messages simply because the subject line announces a topic that they are not interested in. This saves time for many people. If you subscribe to a high volume mailing list, you'll appreciate those messages that have clear, meaningful subject lines.

7. **Sending Attachments** Never send attachments with e-mail messages to individuals or to the mailing list without prior permission from the recipient.
8. **Cross Posting** If you are posting the same message to several mailing lists, at the beginning of your messages state, "This message has been cross posted to (names of other mailing lists)."

Mailing Lists Definitions

1. **Attachment:** A file or group of files which is attached to an e-mail message and sent to a recipient.
2. **Flaming:** : This is when people send insulting, abrasive, or threatening remarks.
3. **Moderated List:** : A mailing list or newsgroup in which submissions are edited before being posted to the group.
4. **Spamming:** : This is the practice of sending unsolicited commercial e-mail messages in bulk or purposely overloading someone's mailbox with messages.
5. **Threads:** : A group of e-mail messages that are all responding to one original e-mail message.
6. **Emoticon:** A text-based icon created from the keyboard to give your e-mail message some emotional flavor.

:-) Smiley
;-) Winkey smiley
:-> Devilish grin
:-(Frowny face
8-) User wears glasses
(-: Left handed smiley
:-{) User has a mustache
[:-) User is wearing a walkman
%-) User's been staring at the screen too long

7. **Frequently Used Acronyms:** Often seen in e-mail messages, this is another way for expressing emotional flavor to messages.

AFAIK	As far as I know
BTW	By the way
FYI	For your information
HTH	Hope this helps
IMHO	In my humble opinion
IMNSHO	In my not so humble opinion
IMO	In my opinion
IOW	In other words
LOL	Laughing out loud

ROTFL	Rolling on the floor laughing
YMMV	Your mileage may vary
{g}	Grin
{BG}	Big grin

