



## Gmail: Sort messages using keyword search

You're probably used to sorting messages in your Inbox by name, subject, date, and so on, and wondering how to do the same in Gmail. Fortunately, it's really easy! Instead of sorting messages, you search for them. Searching is easy, and it's much more powerful than sorting—once you learn a few tricks. Let's take a look at using keyword searches to help you quickly find messages from a specific person or with a specific subject.

### Perform a basic keyword search

Let's warm up with a basic search. Say you want to find messages from a specific person, like Murthy. You could search for the word "Murthy" and find messages from him. But you'd probably find a lot of other messages, too. Specifically, you'd find :

1. Messages from anyone named Murthy
2. Messages you've sent to Murthy
3. Messages containing the word "murthy"
4. A notice that your Trash has messages to, from, or containing the word "murthy."

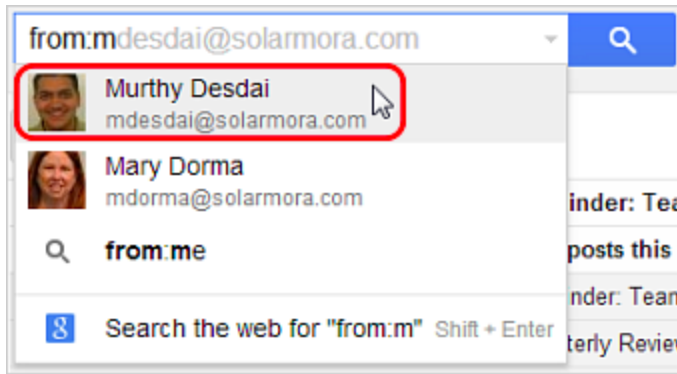
The screenshot shows a Gmail search interface with the search term "Murthy" entered in the search bar. The search results are displayed in a list format. Annotations 1 through 4 highlight specific features:

- 1:** A red box highlights the sender names in the search results: "Murthy Desdai", "Murthy (2)", "me, Murthy (3)", and "Murthy, me (2)".
- 2:** A red box highlights the "Google+" label in the search results.
- 3:** A red box highlights the search bar containing the word "Murthy".
- 4:** A red box highlights the "Deleted messages match your search. View them or go to Trash to delete forever." message at the bottom of the search results.

### Search for messages from an individual

But you don't want to find all those *other* messages; you just want the ones from Murthy. To narrow down your search, you can use **keywords**. The keyword **from:**, for example, lets you find messages from a specific person (just as if you were sorting messages in your old mail system).

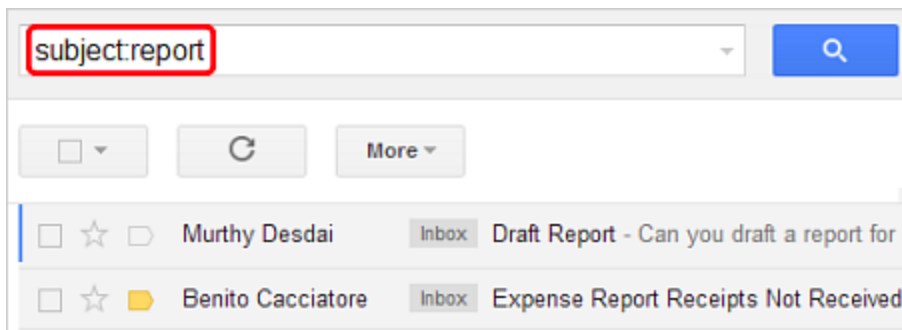
To begin, type **from:** in the Gmail search bar. As you type, Gmail opens a list of matching keywords. Select a result from the list or just keep typing. Next, begin typing the person's email address or name. If it's someone you've emailed in the past, Gmail lists matching addresses so you don't have to type the whole thing. Otherwise, just keep typing the entire name or email address. You don't have to capitalize the name but can enter upper- or lowercase letters.



To find all messages *you* sent, including drafts, enter **from:me** in the search field. You can also view the messages you've sent but not deleted in the *Sent Mail* label and all drafts in the *Drafts* label.

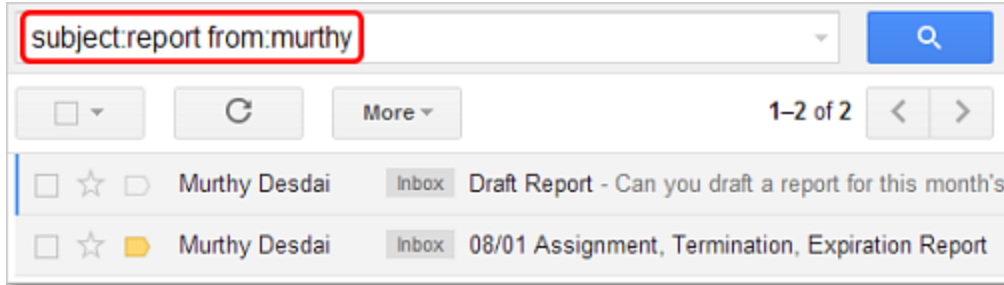
## Search for messages by subject

To find messages by subject, use the **subject:** keyword. For example, type **subject:report** to find all messages with the text "report" anywhere in the subject line.



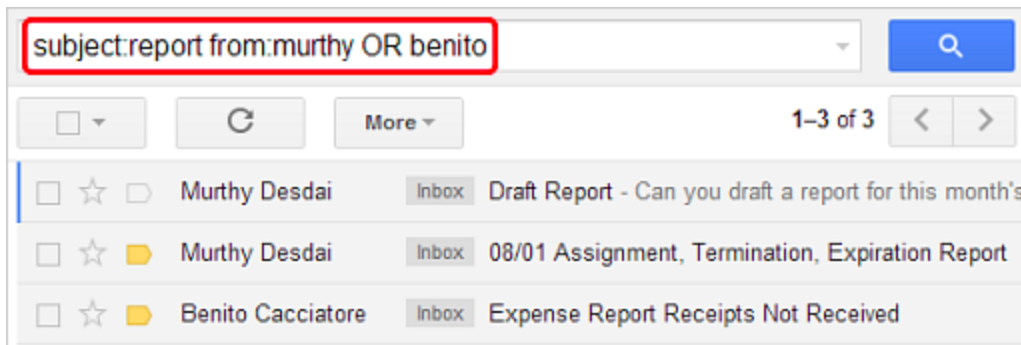
## Search for messages by subject *and* from a specific person

You can combine keywords to narrow down your search even further. This example searches for all messages with the word "report" in the subject line that are also from Murthy. Note that **subject:report** is separated from **from:Murthy** by a space. (Gmail automatically inserts an implicit "AND" between the two items.)



## Search for messages by subject *and* from one or another person

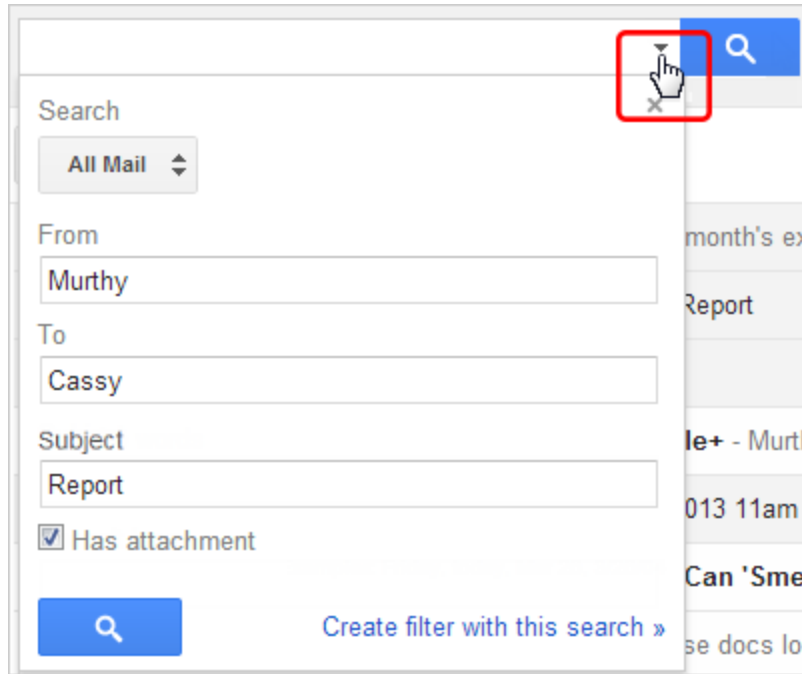
Now let's find messages with "report" in the subject that's from either Murthy or Benito. When searching for this person *or* that person, or this item *or* that item, enter the operator **OR**, which *must* be entered in uppercase letters.



## Easily learn search operators

Gmail can help you learn search operators if you open its search options box.

1. Click the small gray down-arrow at the right of the search bar.
2. Select search options in the various fields.
3. Click either search button.



Gmail then displays the equivalent search keywords in the search bar. In this example, you would see the search keywords **from:Murthy to:Cassy subject:Report has:attachment**.



You can also print out our handy [Search keywords reference sheet](#). The flip side contains Gmail keyboard shortcuts.