



# SMTP feature overview

Last Modified on 03/11/2025 1:03 pm EDT

Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) is an internet protocol that allows mail servers to send and receive email messages. Within KnowledgeOwl, SMTP is used as a way to send email messages generated within/by KnowledgeOwl to your own mail server for relaying and sending them to your readers.

SMTP is required for [Subscriptions](#) and is optional for [Reader emails](#).

## Why you should use SMTP

Using your own SMTP service has these advantages:

- Avoid having email programs quarantine or spam filter emails sent directly from KnowledgeOwl.
- Create a much stronger brand identity and make communications from KnowledgeOwl seem more official to your readers.
- Remove the reference to KnowledgeOwl from reader emails (by default, reader emails are sent from support@knowledgeowl.com, for example).
- Make your security/IT teams happier if they like having in-house control and visibility into things.

## Create and use SMTP services

To create and manage SMTP services, go to [Account > SMTP](#).

Define an SMTP service once for your account and then you can select which features and/or knowledge bases use the service.

If needed, you can create multiple SMTP services for use by different knowledge bases' Subscriptions feature. (All reader emails use the same SMTP service).

Within KnowledgeOwl, there are three "flavors" of SMTP services:

- **Unauthenticated:** The SMTP service doesn't require a username/password combination.
- **Basic authentication:** The SMTP service uses a username/password (or username/app password).
- **OAuth2:** The SMTP service uses an OAuth2 authentication flow, which is a more secure authentication type than basic authentication. It requires a client/secret combination and its own authorization flow.



### OAuth2 SMTP

KnowledgeOwl currently supports Microsoft OAuth2 only. If you need us to add OAuth2 for another provider, please [contact us](#) and let us know which provider you're interested in.

