

Gmail Tip #60: Deleting A Message And Moving To The Next

This tip comes from a question asked by a site visitor, Daree: *"I was wondering how you can delete an email and advance to the next email in your folder. Currently when I delete an email I am reading, it takes me back to the inbox. Yahoo has this option but it seems that Gmail doesnâ??t offer it from the Settings link at the top."* The function that Daree asks for is not specifically available, but there is a partial solutionâ??more of a workaround, actually. Read on to learn how to at least get close to this functionalityâ?¦.

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First, you need to have "Keyboard shortcuts" turned on. To do this, click the "Settings" link in the upper right of your Gmail screen, and look for the "Keyboard shortcuts:" section. Select "Keyboard shortcuts on", and than click the "Save Changes" button.

Now, while viewing a message, simply press the "#" key (thatâ??s shift-2 on US keyboards) and the message will be deleted. But wait, it takes you back to the list, right? Not exactly what we want. But notice that the message prior to the one you just deleted is now "indicated" by the black arrow next to it. Now, simply press either the "o" key or the "Enter" key, and that indicated message will open up.

While this isnâ??t exactly the functionality we are looking for, and it does require an extra keypress, the end result is that you are where you want to be, and it is all be done from the keyboard without having to grab the mouse. It also opens up some other (hopefully) powerful functions making things more flexible. For example, to further expand on the above, once you are back at the message list after deleting a message, pressing the "k" and "j" keys will move you up and down respectively through the list of messages. You should notice the black arrow on the left of the list moving up and down when you press those keys. Pressing "o" or "Enter" will opens the indicated message.

Further, if you see a message in the list that you want to delete without opening, you can just delete it using the "#" keyâ?¦well, almost. In this case, as with using the mouse, the message is "indicated" by the black arrow, but it is not "selected" (ie: the checkbox is not checked) so just first press the "x" key to select the message and the checkbox toggles. You can open it, delete it, archive it, or a host of other things.

Gmail packs a LOT of power, but unfortunately, not all of its functions are intuitive. That said, check out Gmailâ??s "Keyboard Shortcuts" help screen found hereâ?¦

http://mail.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=6594

â?¦where youâ??ll find lots of useful (but not always intuitive) keyboard shortcuts.

Finally, if you feel that this functionality would benefit the Gmail community, consider suggesting it to the Gmail developers by following this link:

http://mail.google.com/support/bin/request.py?contact_type=suggest

Gmail is very powerful, and comparisons with competing solutions are inevitable. While not all features will ever match up exactly, there are often solutions that can provide similar function.

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