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Connecting n8n to e-mail: SMTP and IMAP

Automation & n8n

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Connecting n8n to e-mail: SMTP and IMAP

Automation & n8n Created on **October 10, 2026** 3 min read



For n8n to **send** e-mail you use **SMTP**; to **read** it, **IMAP**. Either way n8n signs in to a mailbox like any e-mail program: it needs the server, the port, the full address and the password. The logic is the same for a mailbox with us and for any other provider.

What each credential needs

Item	Sending (SMTP)	Reading (IMAP)
Server	The outgoing mail server of the account.	The incoming mail server of the account.
Port and encryption	On our mailboxes, 465 with SSL.	On our mailboxes, 993 with SSL.
User name	The full e-mail address.	The full e-mail address.
Password	The mailbox password.	The mailbox password.

The server name and the right ports for your account are in the connection details cPanel shows for each mailbox. See **how to create an e-mail account in cPanel**. If the mailbox is with another provider, the details come from their help pages.

Building the workflow

1. **Create a mailbox just for n8n**, for example `automation@asuaempresa.co.mz`. That way you do not put a person's password inside a workflow, and you can change it without affecting anyone else.

2. **Create the credential** in n8n with the data from the table. To send, use the e-mail sending node; to read, the IMAP trigger node. The exact names and fields depend on the version: see the official n8n documentation.

3 **Test by sending to yourself first.** If it arrives, SMTP is fine. If not, check the spam folder and then **why your e-mail is not sending or receiving**.

4 **To read, choose what the trigger picks up** (for example only what has not been read yet). Without that rule the workflow handles old messages again.

5 **Avoid the loop.** If the workflow answers e-mails arriving in the very mailbox it reads, it can end up answering its own replies, or a robot on the other side. Filter by sender and by subject.

When it fails

Error	Likely cause
Authentication refused	Wrong user name or password. Use the full address, not just the part before the @.
Timed out	Wrong port, or the server n8n runs on cannot reach that port. See **which ports are open**.
Certificate error	The server name you typed does not match the certificate. Use the mail server name the account gives you.
Sends but lands in spam	SPF, DKIM or DMARC is missing on the domain. See **SPF, DKIM and DMARC**.
Gmail or another provider refuses the password	Some providers require an app-specific password for outside programs. Check their help.

A badly built workflow sends a lot, fast.
A loop that fires hundreds of messages can put your domain on spam lists. Test with a few recipients and respect the limits: **how to write an e-mail that does not land in spam**.

For internal alerts
(an order came in, a server stopped) always send to an address of yours and use the subject as a filter. It is easy to sort in the inbox.

RECOMMENDED
Need professional mailboxes on your own domain?
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SEE ALSO

- How to create an e-mail account in cPanel
- POP or IMAP: which to choose
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