What is Email?

Email providers
Email is a fantastic way to stay in touch with people. It’s fast and it’s as easy to email someone on the other side of the world as it is someone on the other side of the room. You may get your email account through the same people who provide your internet service - or you may sign up to one of the dedicated email providers, such as Hotmail, Gmail, or Yahoo!

One difference between using email software and using webmail is that you usually have to login to a webmail account each time you use it. You will need your email address and a password to do this. Webmail is free but is paid for by advertising, so you may also have to get used to small adverts on screen when you use it.
Email clients
There are a couple of different ways to access your email, depending on which provider you join, but usually it'll be through an email program installed on your computer or you can access your email online through a web browser. In both cases there should be an icon on your desktop. Click the email icon now.
Some mobile phones will also let you access your email. Smartphones are newer, advanced mobile phones and these have built-in software for sending and receiving email. Other types of mobile phone may also allow you to view and send email but with older models this is less likely.

Creating an email account
When you set up your email account you'll need to choose an email address and a password. Your email address is your public face when sending emails, so make sure that it's something other people will remember. And make sure your password is something you will remember but no one else will guess. Click the email address box now to see an example email address.
Like phone numbers, every email address is unique. When choosing an email address you may find that your chosen address is already taken. If this happens then you’ll be prompted to take another. You may need to add numbers after your name if this happens but remember that spaces aren’t allowed in an email address.

Why not try the Sending and receiving email topic next.