

How to tell everyone on Gmail if you're in – or not

Recently, a friend who has been on Gmail for a long time suddenly noticed the chat availability settings in the upper right of the web app. This notice was actually added to the Gmail page about two years ago when Google Chat was integrated into Gmail. It notifies anyone whom you've ever used Chat with that you're at your computer (or phone) and available – or not.

Even though most people may not receive notification of your availability (especially if you don't tend to use Google Chat), you may find the idea that somebody may know when you're using your account... irritating. (At least, my friend did, and I can sympathize.) However, you can turn the notification off – or, at least, mark yourself “away” so that your presence will not be obvious to anyone who has access.

To adjust your chat availability, first look for the button to the right of your search box. If you haven't accessed it yet, it will probably show a green dot and read **Active**. Click on the box to see all your options for chat availability. These include:

```
a:hover]:text-black      [&>a:hover]:shadow-underline-black
dark:[&>a:hover]:text-gray-e9    dark:[&>a:hover]:shadow-
underline-gray-63          [&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-13
dark:[&>a]:shadow-underline-gray-63">You can set your own
custom status.
```

You can also set your availability and create your own custom notice on your phone using the Gmail app for iOS or Android. Note that wherever you set your status, it will be reflected

in all the devices that are using that same Google account.

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