

Email Commands

Members and administrators may use email commands to subscribe and unsubscribe, change member settings, and retrieve list and member information.

Early email list management software programs did not have a web interface to facilitate list and member management; all administration was performed by sending email commands to the server.

The ListManager web interface allows members and administrators to interact with ListManager without email commands, but email commands are still useful in situations where the web interface is not available. The email commands may also be used by scripts to add, edit or delete members.

How Email Commands Work

Email commands may be sent in one of two formats:

1. Commands may be sent to the listmanager@server command address: listmanager@theserverhostname. The commands the sender wishes to perform are part of the body of the message, e.g., join listname. Many commands may be included in one message. This method is generally used by list administrators adding, editing or unsubscribing members, but may also be used by members who wish to edit their settings.
2. Commands may be sent in the email address itself, so a sender may send a message to join-listname@theserverhostname and be added to the specified list name without a message body.

When ListManager receives a command via email, it looks at the email address the message was sent From: and performs the request if its list and server rules permit. It then sends a response to the requestor unless the *quiet* command is used to suppress the response.

Invalid Commands

When ListManager sees an invalid command, it takes note, and moves to the next line. If more than ten lines in an email message are invalid, the message processing stops.

For example, consider an administrator who sends a series of commands to ListManager, but the administrator misspells one of the commands. In such a case, the correctly spelled commands will be executed, and an email message will be sent to the person indicating which commands were successfully processed and which lines in the email message did not appear to be ListManager commands.

If you are having problems sending email commands to ListManager, try sending the message in plain text. HTML formatting may add extra lines to the beginning of the message, and may change the commands so they are illegible to ListManager.

Signature Detection

Since so many people on the Internet use signatures, ListManager has a built-in signature detection mechanism. The purpose of this mechanism is to stop processing the message, which prevents signature lines from generating errors in the response email ListManager sends out. Detecting a signature is analogous to issuing the "end" command.

This mechanism looks for either of these character strings: "--", "***", or "==" . Once one of these strings is encountered, ListManager stops processing the message immediately. Please note that this mechanism is not fully activated in a MIME-encoded message, because in that case the "--" *may* be a content type separator, and in that case the message still needs to be processed. The exception is if the MIME type is "text/plain", in which case the parser still check for "---", since it isn't oddly encoded.

Subscribing

subscribe-listname

To subscribe to a list, send an email with no message to *subscribe-listname@yourserver* or *listname-subscribe@yourserver*.

For example:

```
subscribe-jazztalk@example.net  
jazztalk-subscribe@example.net
```

The following words may be used instead of *subscribe*:

- sub
- join
- on
- signon
- subscribe
- subscibe (a common misspelling)
- suscribe (a common misspelling)

ListManager will automatically determine, by receiving the email, that the person wants to subscribe to a list called "jazztalk", and it will automatically determine their email address and name.

Note: If your list is password protected, then users cannot use this form of subscribing, and must instead send mail to *listmanager@yourserver* or send mail to *listname-request@yourserver*.

Subscription Options

Members may specify their membership type (that is, the kind of mail they would like to receive) when they subscribe by specifying the option in place of the word subscribe.

Example:

```
digest-jazztalk@example.net
```

The following may be used instead of *subscribe* to join a list with the specified membership type:

- digest
- mimedigest
- index
- nomail

Subscribing with the Listmanager@ Command

You can subscribe to a mailing list by sending a subscribe command to the *listmanager@yourserver.com* address. The *listmanager@* address is referred to as the "ListManager" address in this documentation.

When sent to the ListManager address, any of the following subscribe syntaxes are acceptable:

```
subscribe listname  
subscribe listname password  
subscribe listname "your name"  
subscribe listname "your name" password  
subscribe listname password "your name"
```

The *password* syntaxes are only applicable if the mailing list is password protected, and in such a case the password must be specified at subscription time in order to be accepted. In the cases where the person's name is specified next to the Password, ListManager is able to extract the password from the text, and correctly understands that what remains is the person's name.

In the above prototypes, the *your name* labels are place holders where the person subscribing can insert their name. The person's name does not need to be two words—all the words in double quotes will be understood as the person's name.

For instance, the following subscribe command is valid:

```
subscribe jazz-discuss "Mr. James Barton Smith"
```

If the subscriber does not specify their name on the subscribe command line, ListManager will attempt to determine the person's name from their email address. For example, if their email message says:

```
From: James Smith <jsmith@acme.com>
```

ListManager will extract the name *James Smith* and apply it as part of this member's subscription settings.

The *quiet* modifier

If you add the word "quiet" to the *subscribe* command, ListManager will not send a confirming message back, unless the subscription fails for some reason. For instance, for a list called "jazztalk", you could join it with this command:

```
subscribe jazztalk quiet
```

The public domain list server "majordomo" uses a "listname-request@yourserver.com" address, and ListManager supports this convention for compatibility.

When sent to the *listname*-request address, any of the following subscribe syntaxes are acceptable:

```
subscribe  
subscribe password  
subscribe "your name"  
subscribe "your name" password  
subscribe password "your name"
```

All these ways of joining a mailing list is equivalent. It is up to you which method you decide to tell your users to use. There is no "Best Way", just a way that you are most comfortable with.

Posting to a List or Segment

Contributing to a List

Members can post to the list by sending their message to: *listname@yourserver*

For example:

```
jazztalk@lists.example.com
```

Contributing to a Segment

To send a message to a particular segment, the address is the listname, followed by a period, the subset name, and the name of the server. For example, if the list name is "jazztalk" and the segment name is "events", and the server is named "example.com", you would write to the following address:

```
jazztalk.events@lists.example.com
```

Unsubscribing

leave-listname

To unsubscribe from a list, send an email message to *leave-listname@server* or *listname-leave@server*. Example:

```
leave-jazztalk@lists.example.com  
jazztalk-leave@lists.example.com
```

The following words may be used instead of *leave*:

- unsub
- uns
- unsubscribe
- unsubscribe (a common misspelling)
- signoff
- leave
- remove
- off

ListManager will look at your email address, determine if you are a member of the mailing list, and remove you from the mailing list.

Unique Unsubscribe Address

If you are using the mail merge tag `%%email.unsub%%`, a unique unsubscribe email address will be generated for each recipient. See [Mail Merge Short Tags](#) for more information. Example:

```
leave-jazztalk-354-5684q@lists.example.com
```

This unique address includes the message ID of the mailing so ListManager can track which mailing a member unsubscribed from. It also includes the member ID and a check character so ListManager can unsubscribe the member even if the message is forwarded to another email address. The check character ensures that recipients cannot simply change the member ID and unsubscribe another member.

Unsubscribing When Using the Listmanager@ Command Address

You may also unsubscribe by writing to the `listmanager@` command address. To do so, send a message to *listmanager@yourserver* with the command *unsubscribe listname*. ListManager will unsubscribe the address the message is from.

You may request ListManager unsubscribe a different email address or member by member id with the syntax *unsubscribe listname emailaddress*:

```
unsubscribe jazztalk jane@example.com  
unsubscribe jazztalk 234654
```

Whenever this method is used, for security purposes ListManager will send a notification to the address with your original request attached so that you are notified whenever someone who does not appear to be you attempts to unsubscribe you.

Purge

To unsubscribe from all the ListManager mailing lists on a server, send the *purge* command to `listmanager@`:

```
purge
```

The *purge* command is also available as a Command address, by sending mail to

```
purge@hostname...
```

Resuming a Held Membership (unhold)

If your email address has been bouncing email for several days, ListManager may put your membership on "hold" and stop sending you electronic mail. In such a case, send the "unhold" command to the [ListManager listmanager@ address](#), and ListManager will return any "held" subscriptions back to "normal." The format of the unhold command is:

```
unhold
```

Or, send a message to unhold@listmanagerhostname.