

Troubleshooting Login Issues with Proton Mail and Proton Mail Bridge

TechRounder PDF Edition

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By Vipin PG | Published June 28, 2024 | Updated January 4, 2026 | Format: Article | 5 min read

In brief

Proton Mail is a secure, encrypted email service that prioritizes user privacy. While it generally works smoothly, users may occasionally encounter login issues, either when accessing their account through a web browser or when using the Proton Mail Bridge app to connect with a third-party email client.

Proton Mail is a secure, encrypted email service that prioritizes user privacy. While it generally works smoothly, users may occasionally encounter login issues, either when accessing their account through a web browser or when using the Proton Mail Bridge app to connect with a third-party email client. This guide will walk you through the most common causes of login problems and provide step-by-step solutions to get you back into your Proton Mail account.

Web Browser Login Issues

1. Incompatible or Outdated Browser

Proton Mail relies on modern web technologies to provide a secure, encrypted email experience. Some older browsers, such as Internet Explorer versions prior to 11 and Safari versions prior to 6, do not support the necessary cryptography libraries. Additionally, using an outdated version of a supported browser can lead to login issues. To resolve this:

- Check if your browser is on the list of supported and recommended browsers for Proton Mail.
- Ensure your browser is updated to the latest version.
- If you're still having trouble, try logging in using a different supported browser.

2. Browser Extensions and Plugins

Certain browser extensions and plugins can interfere with Proton Mail's functionality, preventing successful logins. Known problematic extensions include Random Agent Spoofer, which must have "Disable Authorization headers" unchecked for Proton Mail to work. To troubleshoot extension-related issues:

- Log in using your browser's Private or Incognito mode (except for Safari).
- If this works, disable your extensions one by one, testing the login process each time to identify the problematic extension.
- Once identified, you can report the issue to Proton Mail's support team, who will work on making the extension compatible.

3. JavaScript, sessionStorage, and Cookies Disabled

Proton Mail requires JavaScript, sessionStorage, and cookies to be enabled in your browser. Some plugins may disable these features, preventing Proton Mail from functioning properly. To fix this issue:

- Ensure that JavaScript, sessionStorage, and cookies are enabled in your browser settings.
- Check for any plugins that may be disabling these features, and adjust their settings or disable them if necessary.

4. Incorrect Login Credentials

Proton Mail allows users to log in using either their username (e.g., dannysmith) or their full email address (e.g., dannysmith@proton.me). However, it's essential to use the correct domain name (@proton.me or @protonmail.com) associated with your account. If you're unsure about your account's domain name:

- Try logging in using both @proton.me and @protonmail.com variations of your email address.
- If you still can't log in, contact Proton Mail's support team for assistance in determining your correct domain name.

For users with custom domain addresses (e.g., john@company.com), log in using either your Proton Mail username or the full custom domain address.

5. Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) Issues

If you have enabled two-factor authentication (2FA) for your Proton Mail account, login issues may arise due to problems with your 2FA code-generating device or app. To resolve 2FA-related login issues:

- Use one of the emergency recovery codes provided when you set up 2FA.
- Ensure that your device's clock is set correctly, as a time difference of more than 2 minutes can cause 2FA to fail.
- If the issue persists, contact Proton Mail's support team for further assistance.

6. Browser Cache and Cookies

A corrupted browser cache or cookies can sometimes cause login issues. Clearing your browser's cache and cookies can often resolve these problems. To clear your cache and cookies:

- Follow the instructions for your specific browser to clear its cache and delete cookies.
- Restart your browser and attempt to log in again.

Proton Mail Bridge Login Issues

Proton Mail Bridge is an application that allows you to use your Proton Mail account with third-party email clients, such as Microsoft Outlook or Apple Mail, using the IMAP protocol. Users may encounter an "IMAP Login failed" error when attempting to connect their email client to the Bridge app.

1. Not Signed in to Proton Mail Bridge

The most common cause of the "IMAP Login failed" error is not being signed in to the Proton Mail Bridge app. This can happen if you manually signed out of the app or were automatically signed out due to a technical issue. To fix this:

- Open the Proton Mail Bridge app and click "Sign in".
- If prompted, enter your IMAP password, which can be found in the Bridge app under "Mailbox details" -> "IMAP" -> "Password".

2. Incorrect IMAP Password

If you've signed in to the Proton Mail Bridge app but still encounter the "IMAP Login failed" error, you may be using an incorrect IMAP password in your email client. To resolve this:

- Open the Proton Mail Bridge app and navigate to "Mailbox details" -> "IMAP" -> "Password".
- Copy the IMAP password and paste it into your email client's settings when prompted.
- Save the settings and attempt to connect again.

Additional Troubleshooting Steps

If none of the above solutions resolve your login issues, try the following:

1. Log in using the Proton Mail mobile apps for iOS or Android.
2. Reset your account password, keeping in mind that this may make your existing messages unreadable due to the encryption used to protect your data.
3. If you've reset your password and need to recover your emails and encrypted files, follow the data recovery instructions provided by Proton Mail.

Contacting Proton Mail Support

If you've tried all the troubleshooting steps and still can't log in to your Proton Mail account, don't hesitate to contact Proton Mail's support team. They can provide further assistance and investigate the issue more deeply. When contacting support, be sure to include:

- A detailed description of the issue you're experiencing
- The troubleshooting steps you've already attempted
- Any relevant screenshots or error messages
- Information about your browser, device, and operating system

By providing as much information as possible, you'll help the support team resolve your login issues more quickly and effectively. In conclusion, while login issues with Proton Mail can be frustrating, most can be resolved by following the troubleshooting steps outlined in this guide. By ensuring that you're using a compatible browser, disabling problematic extensions, enabling necessary browser features, and verifying your login credentials, you can get back to securely sending and receiving emails with Proton Mail.