# Gmail Labels

Labels are used in Gmail to organize email messages. They are similar to file folders on your computer with one important difference. Each file on your computer is in exactly one folder while each email message can have one or more Gmail labels.

Labels are normally shown as little label icons on the top of an email.
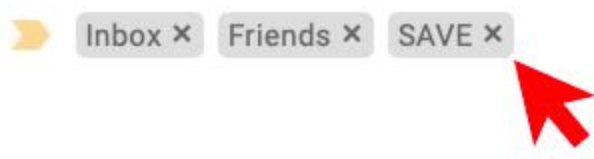
For example, this email has three labels:
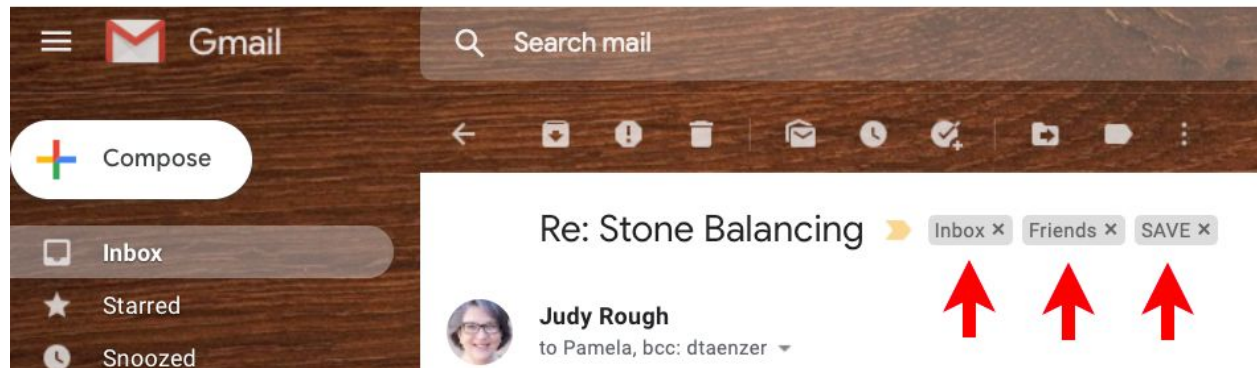
1. **Inbox** - this message is in the Inbox
2. **Friends** - a new label called "Friends"
3. **SAVE** - a new label called "SAVE"

You can see all the messages with a label by clicking on it (e.g. **Inbox**)

You can remove a label by clicking on the "X" next to the name:

Types of Labels

There are three types of labels that are shown on the left side of the Gmail window:

- **System Labels** - special labels that come with Gmail (e.g. **Inbox**)
- **Categories** - categories that Gmail automatically assigns to emails
- **Your labels** - labels that you have added to Gmail

If you are looking at your **Inbox** and see a list of messages, you can drag the message directly to a label. This removes the **Inbox** label from the message and adds the destination label (the label you dragged it to).

You can also use the Move To and Labels buttons to add or remove labels when you are looking at an email message. These are explained below.

Creating a New Label

Let's say that you want to add a **Senior Planet** label to a message from Senior Planet. When you do that, the label will appear in the left side-bar and you can click on it to see all the messages with that label.

The easiest way to add a new label is to use one of these special buttons:
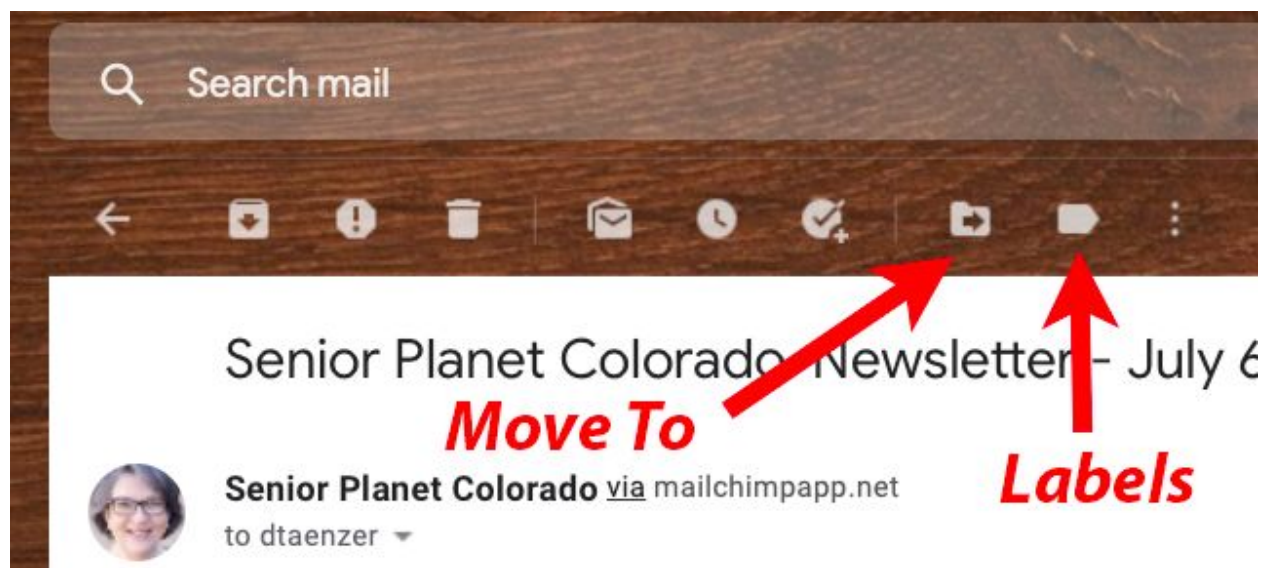
The Move To button looks like a folder icon with a right arrow in the middle. It is used for adding a label to a message in your **Inbox** and then removing the **Inbox** label.
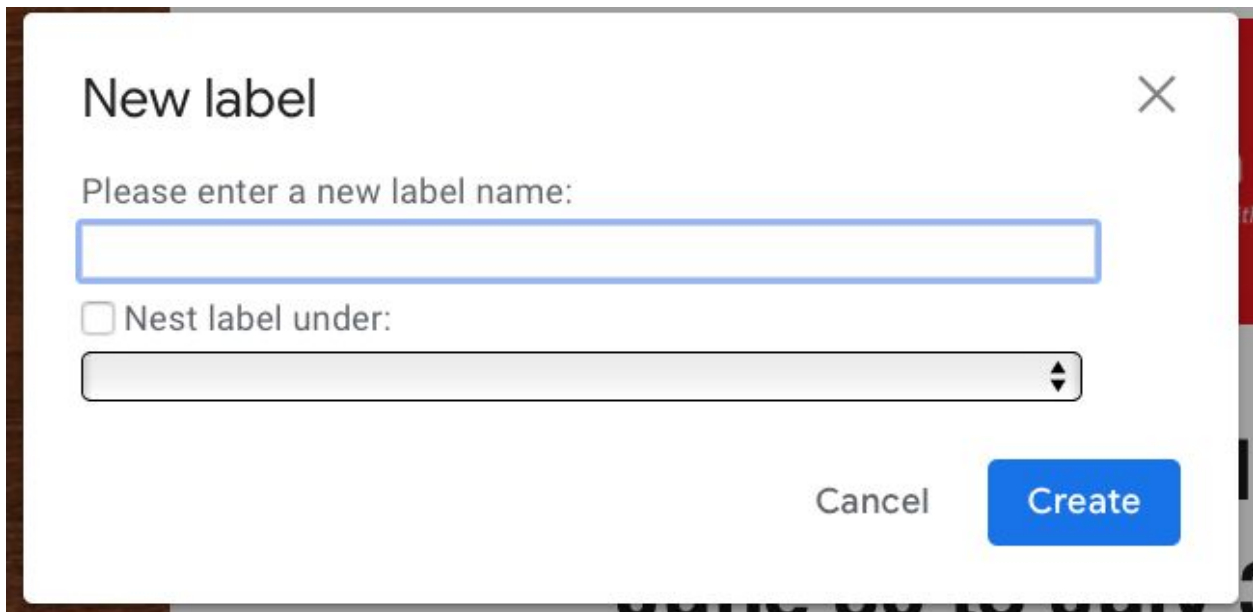
The Labels button looks like a wide right arrow and is just to the right of the Move To button.
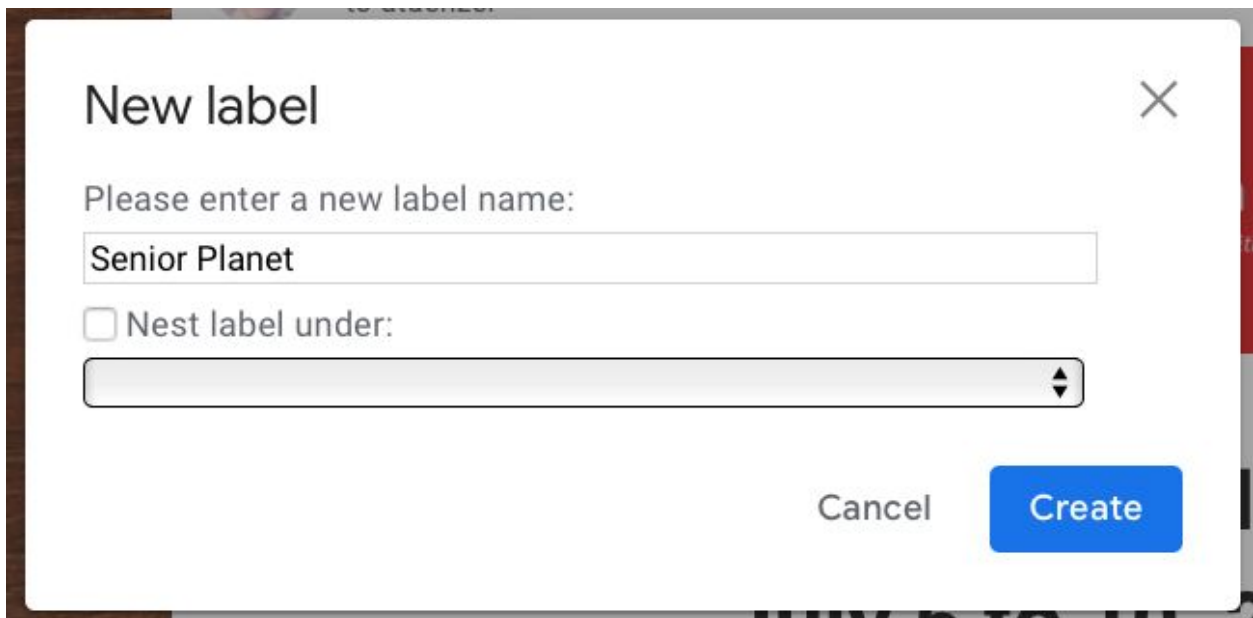
The Move To button brings up a menu like this:
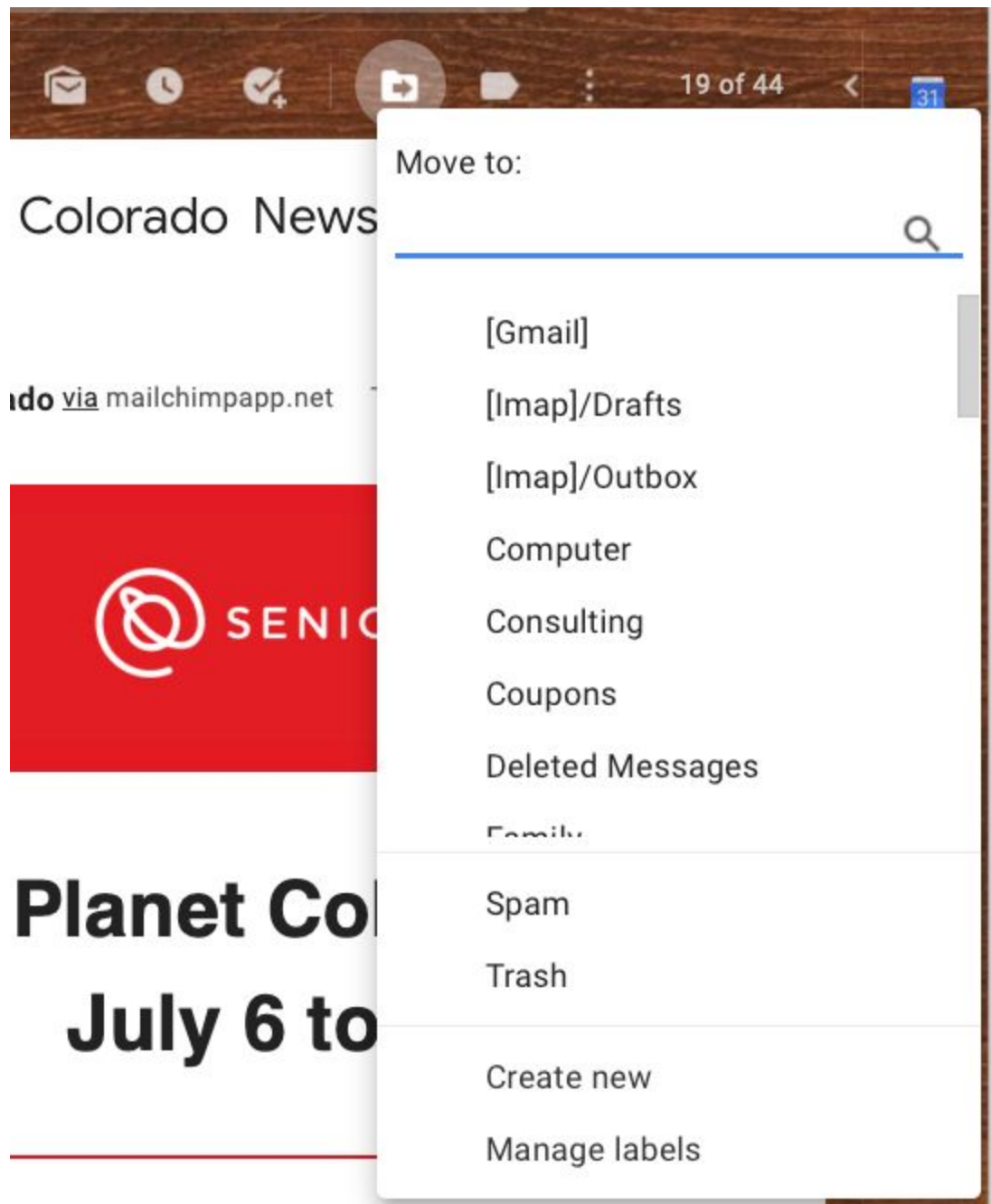
You can "move" your email to an existing label by clicking on it (or typing in at the top on the blue line. The gives that label to the email and removes the **Inbox** label (which makes it disappear from the **Inbox**).

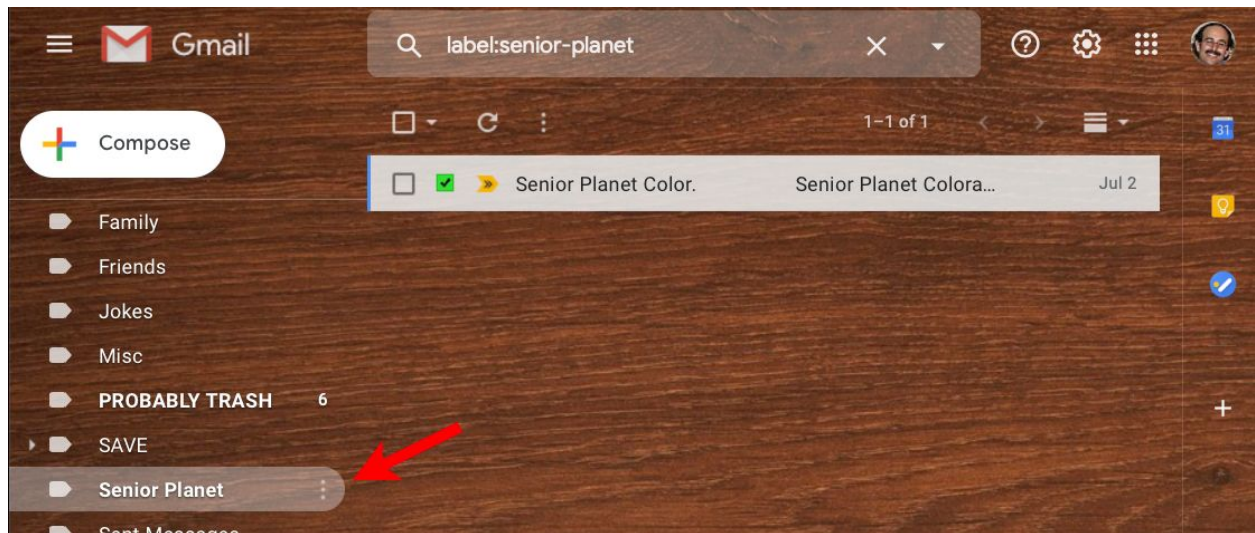If you want to create a new label, you click on the Create new option which brings up this pop-up window:

In this case, we will enter "Senior Planet" for the new label name and click the blue **Create** button:

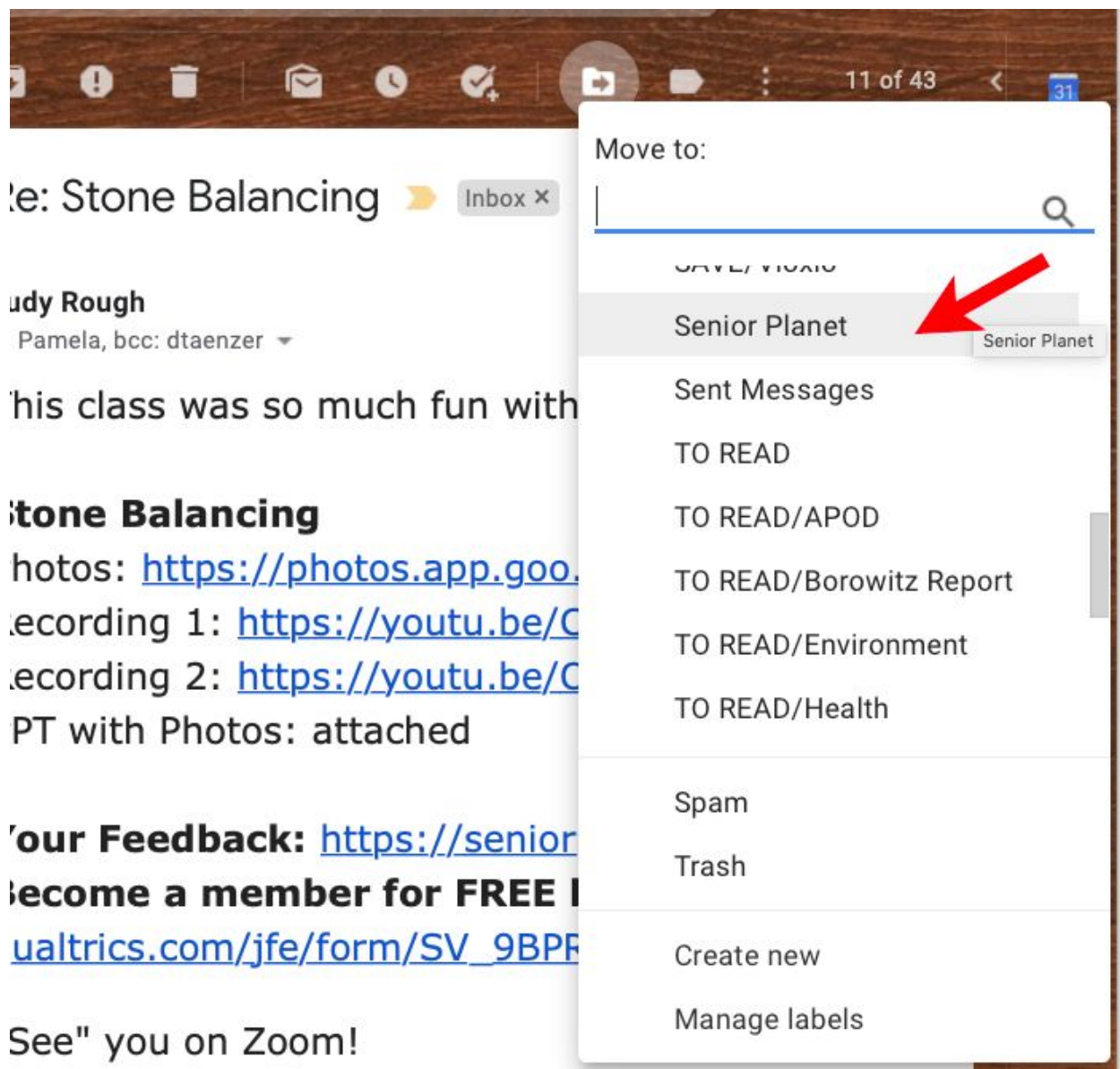A new **Senior Planet** label appears in the left side-bar and if you click on it, you can see the message we just moved:
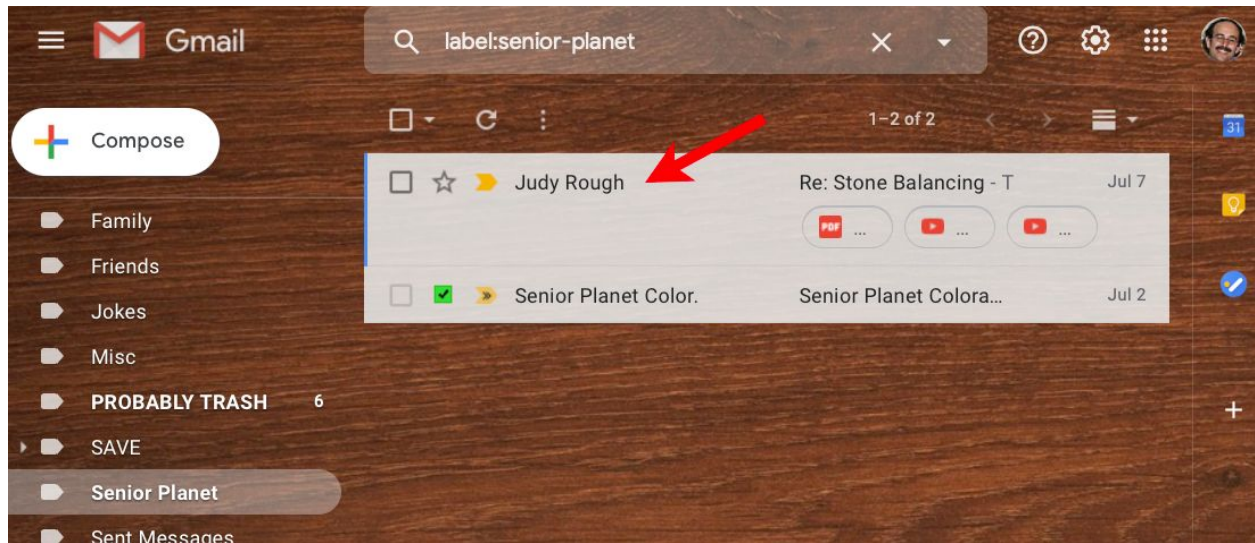

If we click on the message to open it, we will see the new **Senior Planet** label:
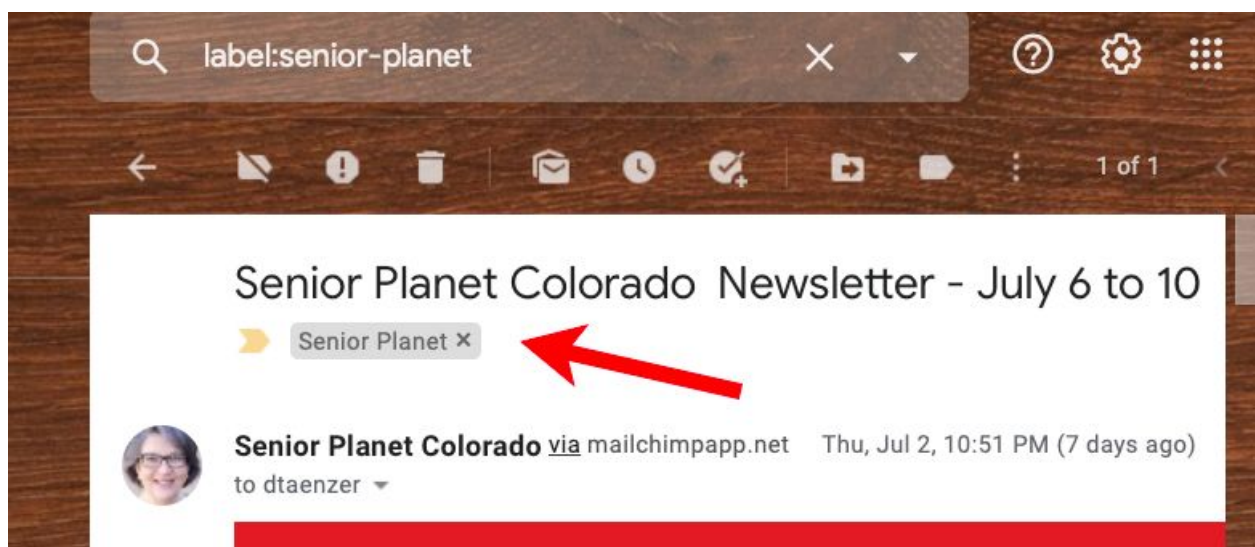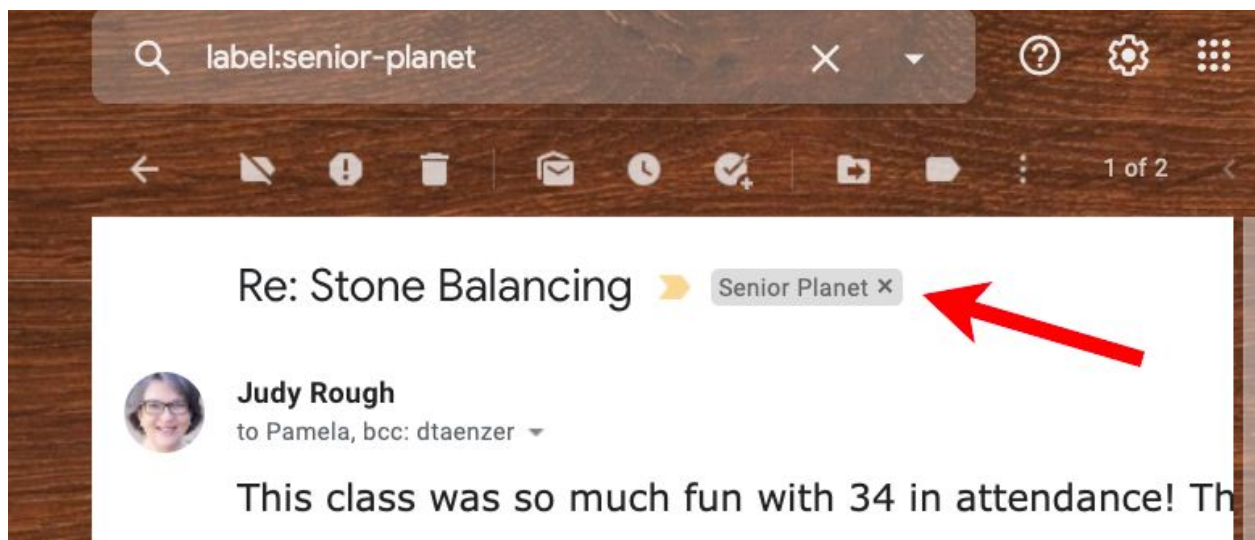
If we click on another message in the **Inbox** that we want to move to this label and click the Move To button, we will see the **Senior Planet** in the options (labels) list:
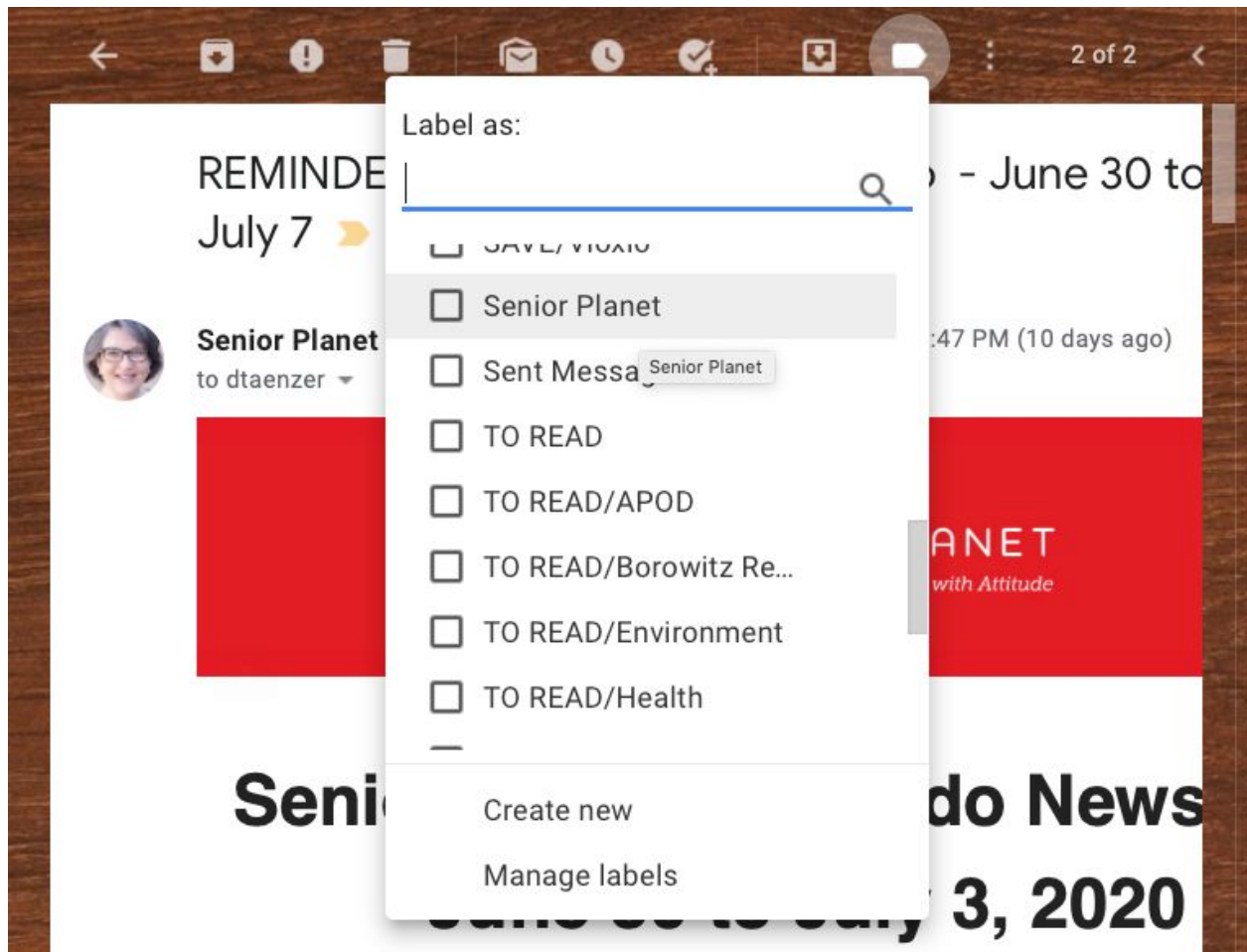

If we click on this option, the message will disappear and be in the **Senior Planet** label:

If we click on that message now, it will also have the **Senior Planet** label:
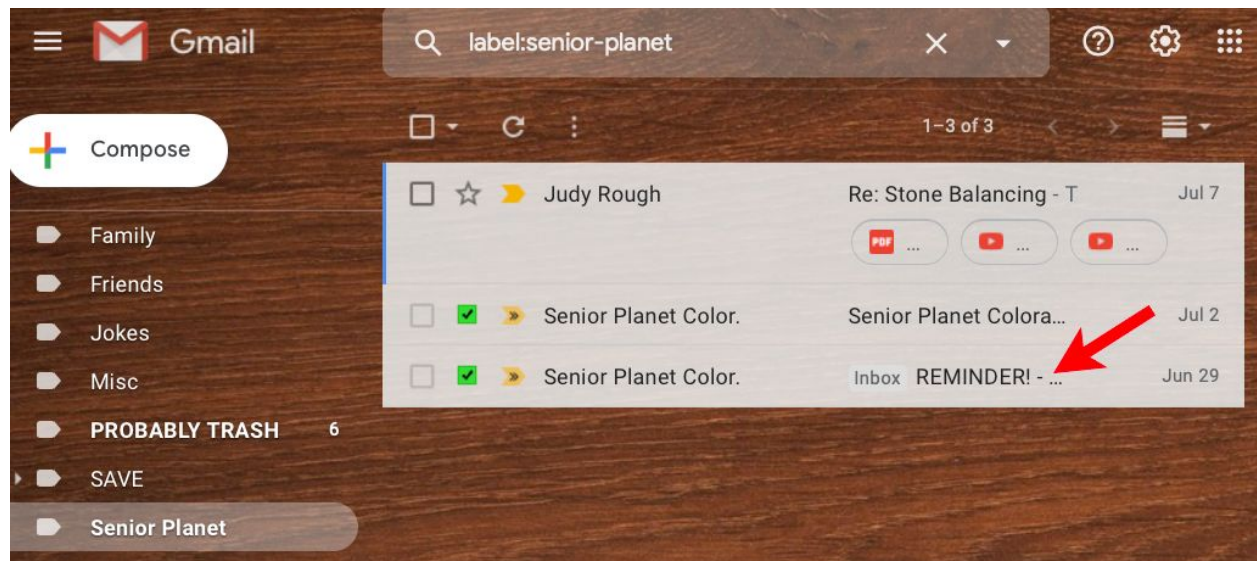
If we use the Labels button (instead of Move To) on another message, it will now have the newly created **Senior Planet** label as an option:

When we click on it will see see both of **Inbox** and **Senior Planet** labels because we used the Labels button, not the Move To button:

Now, even though you can see this message in the Inbox, it will also appear in the **Senior Planet** label:

This is what it means to have a message with multiple labels. You can see it in multiple places.

You can click on this message and then click on the "X" on the **Inbox** label to remove it from the **Inbox**:
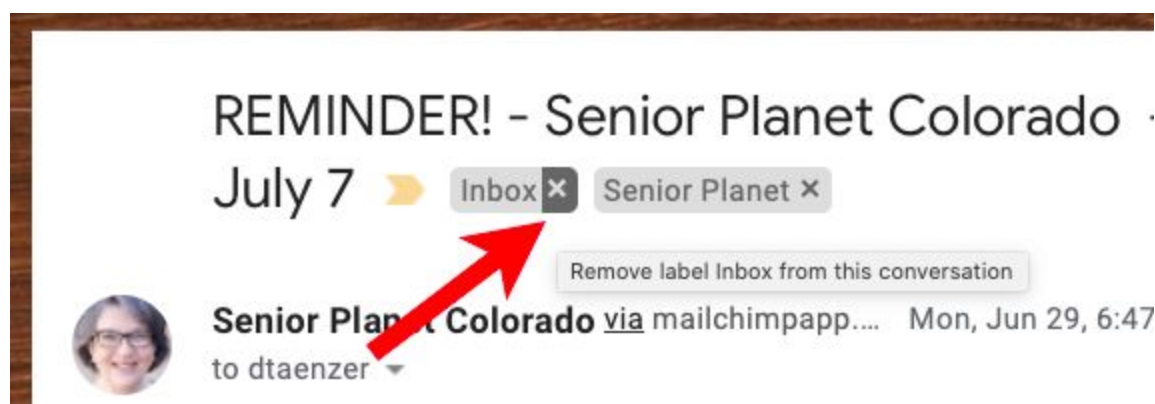
If I want to move all the emails from Judy Rough to the new label, this is also easy.

Start by typing into the Search Mail area at the top

from:judy@seniorplanet.org

In this case, I have 45 such messages:
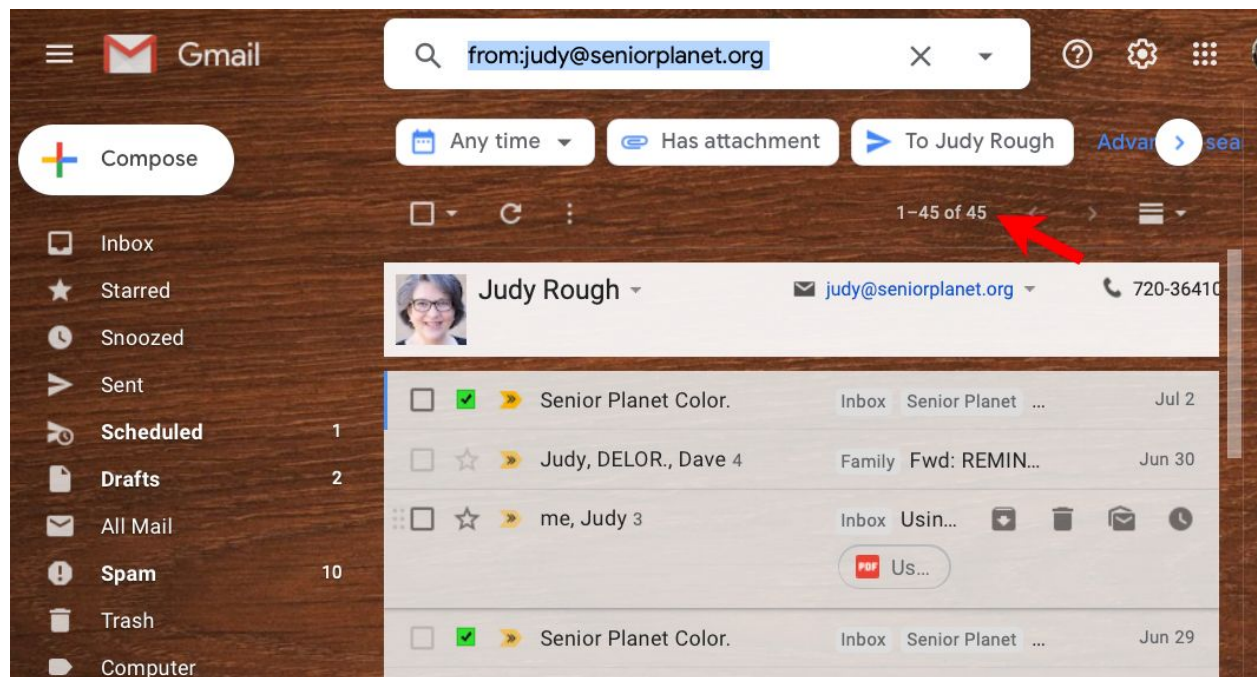
Click on the checkbox above the emails to select all of them:

They will change to blue background to show that they are selected.

Click the Labels button to add the new label. I typed "senior" in the top search area to find the **Senior Planet** label:
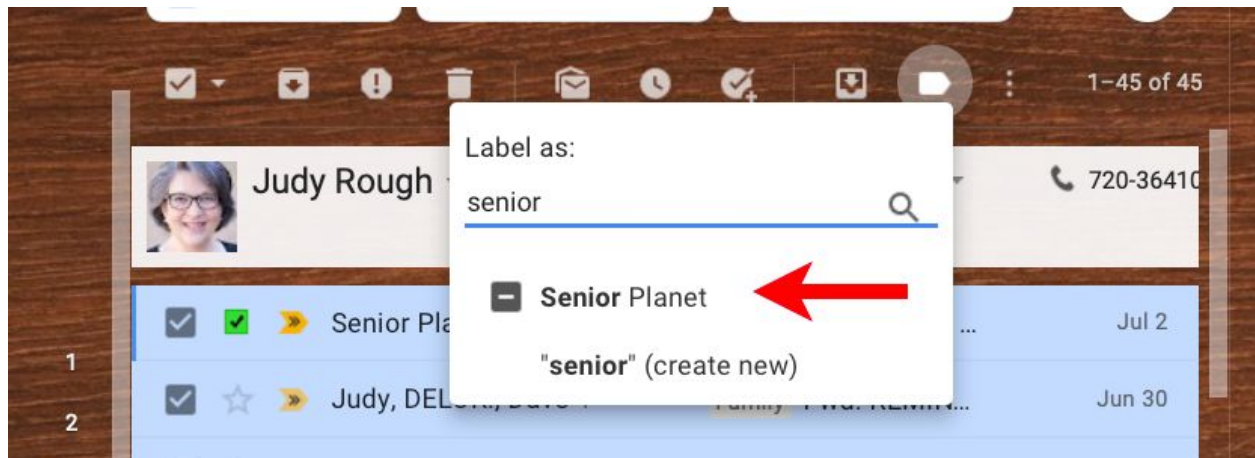
And then click Apply

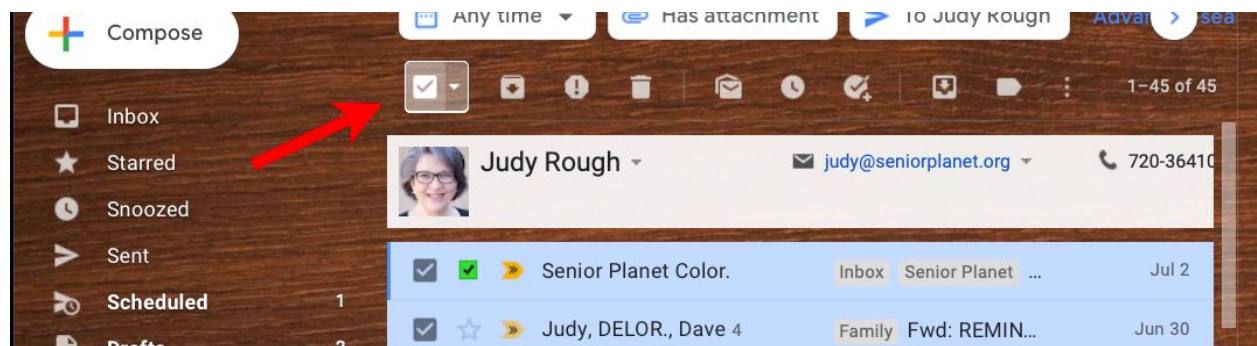You will now see all of these in the **Senior Planet** label:

I can now repeat the same thing for the 70 emails from "@oats.org" email addresses:

This is how to organize emails with new labels.

System Labels

These are the System Labels that are built into Gmail:

- **Inbox** - new emails
- **Starred** - emails you have added a star to
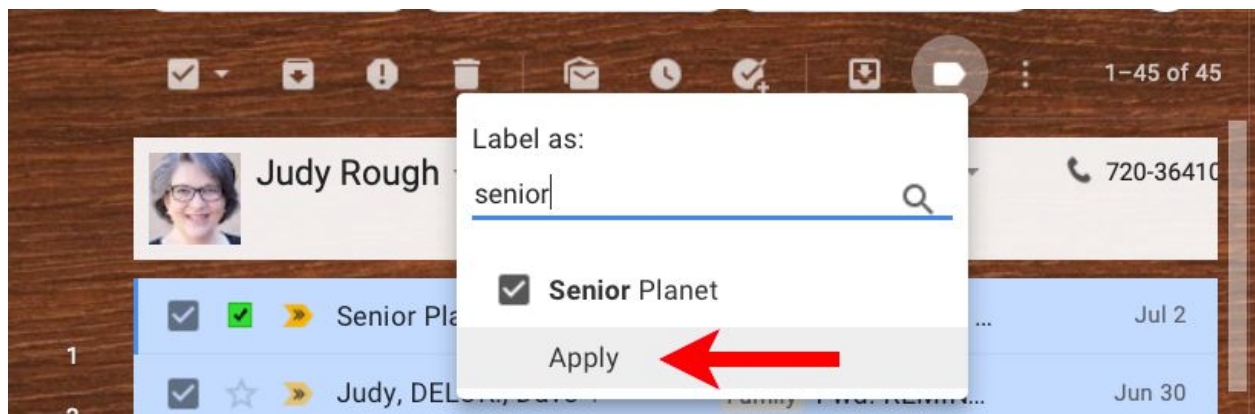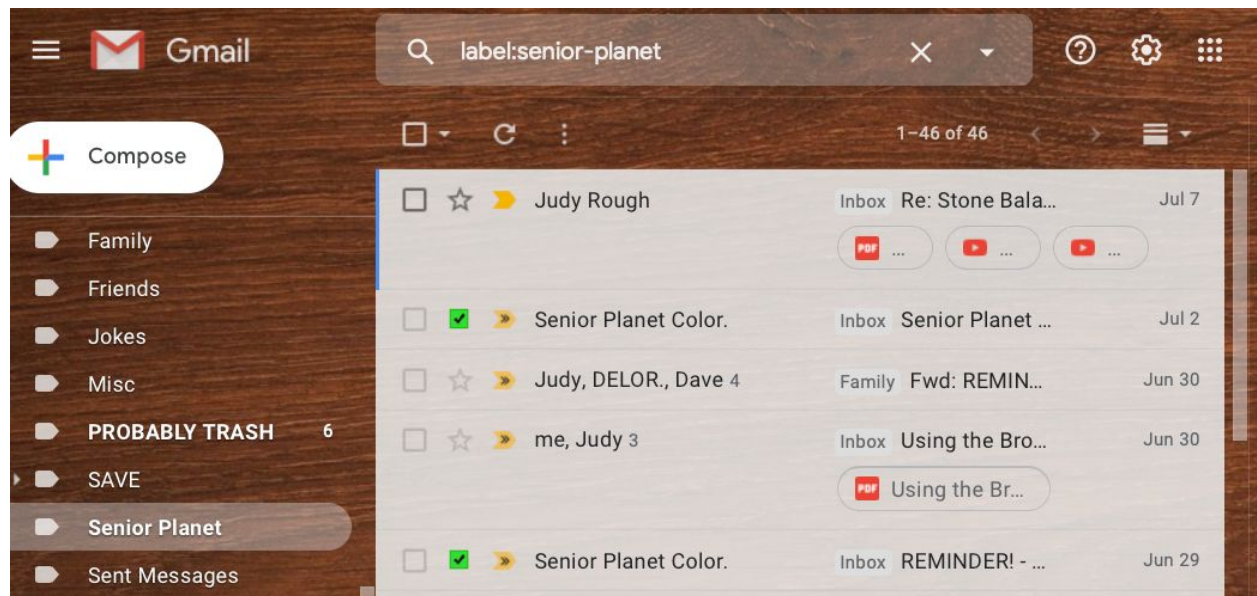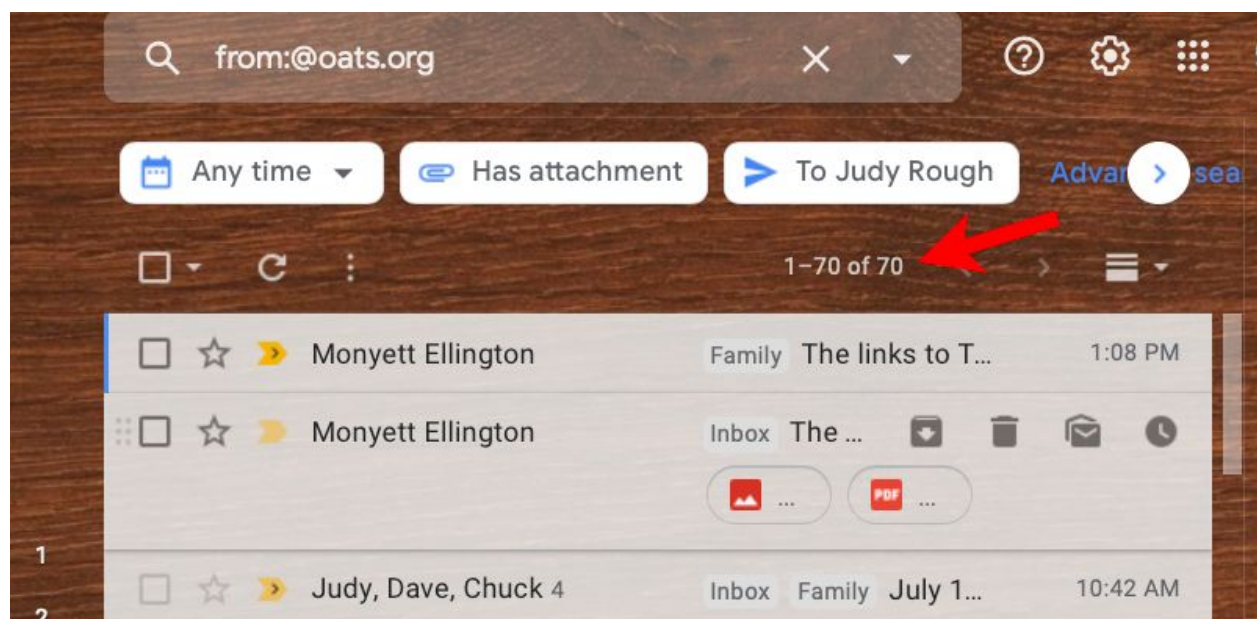- **Snoozed** - emails you have snoozed (with the clock button)
- **Important** - emails that Google marked as Important
- **Chats** - Gmail chats
- **Sent** - emails you have sent with Gmail
- **Scheduled** - emails you have scheduled to send
- **Drafts** - emails that you started to send but did not send
- **All Mail** - all emails not in the **Trash**
- **Spam** - emails marked as junk by Gmail
- **Trash** - emails you have deleted

The numbers to the right of each label indicate the number of unread emails with that label. This shows there are 10 unread messages in **Spam**:
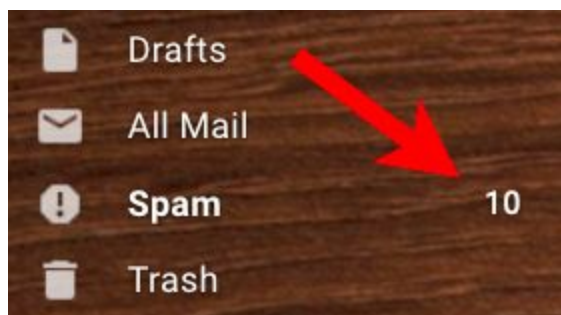
Starred Label

There is a special system label called **Starred**. If you click the Star button on an email message:

A green checkmark will replace the star and the message will appear if you click on the **Starred** label:

You can see these messages by clicking on the **Starred** label:
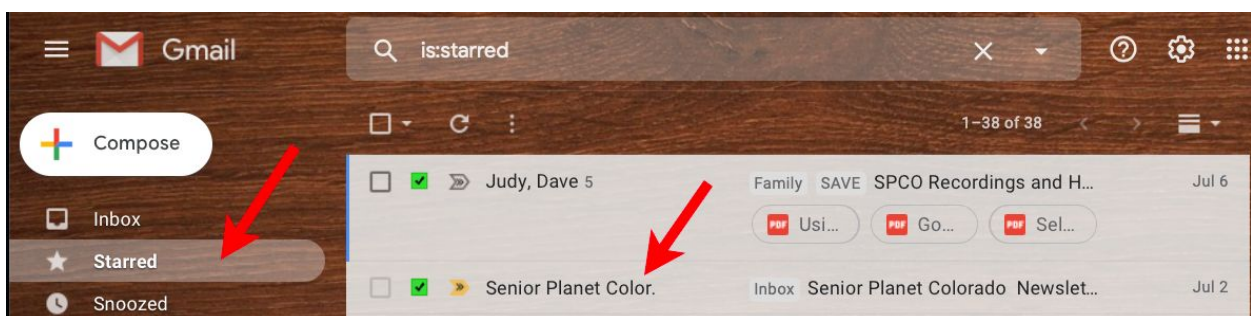
Snoozed Label

You snooze an email in your **Inbox** by clicking on the button that looks like a clock. This pops up a menu with various delay times:
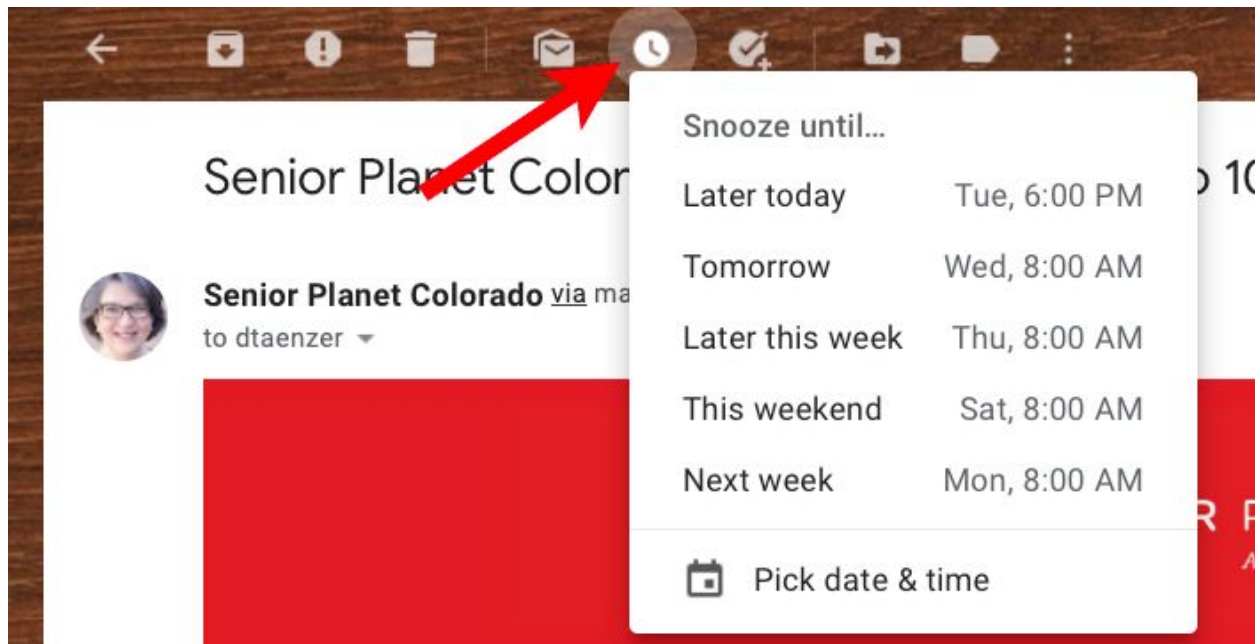
After you have snoozed an email it disappears from your **Inbox** and appears via the **Snoozed** label.
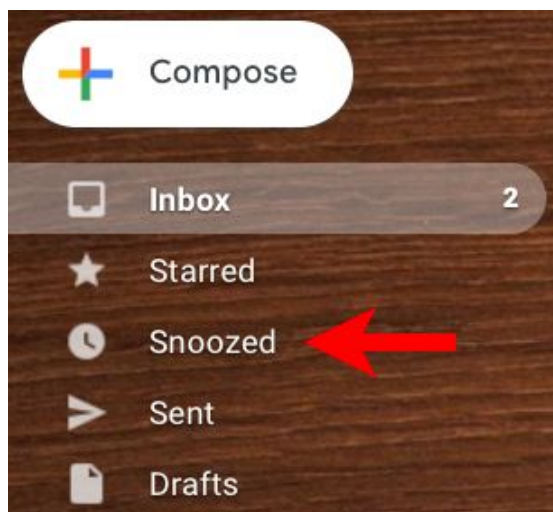
Drafts Label

If you start composing and email but never click the Send button, it will appear under the **Drafts** label. You can click on it to view the message and then send (or schedule) it.

Scheduled Label

When you are composing a new email, you can schedule it for later delivery by using the menu on the Send button:

If you click on Schedule send you will see this pop-up window:
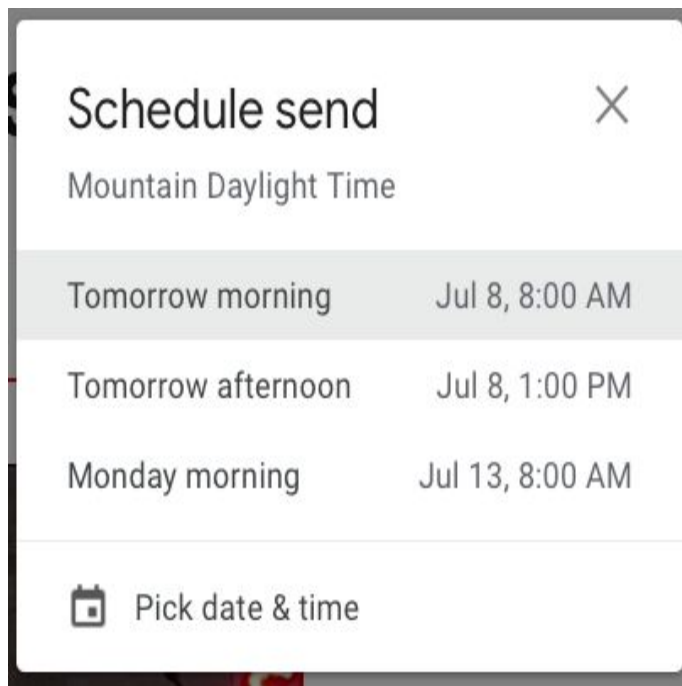
and the email will appear in the **Scheduled** label instead of the **Drafts** label
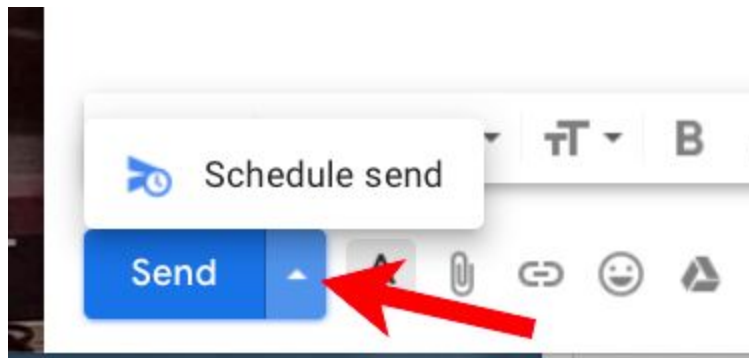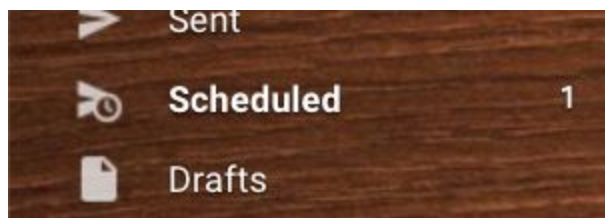

Spam Label

The **Spam** label is used for emails that Gmail thinks are dangerous or junk. They may contain hidden links or other items that make them look like a "phishing" email that is trying to get to you to follow a bogus link or open a dangerous file.

You can mark (label) an email in your inbox as **Spam** using the Spam button that looks like this:

This brings up a pop-up window that will look something like this:
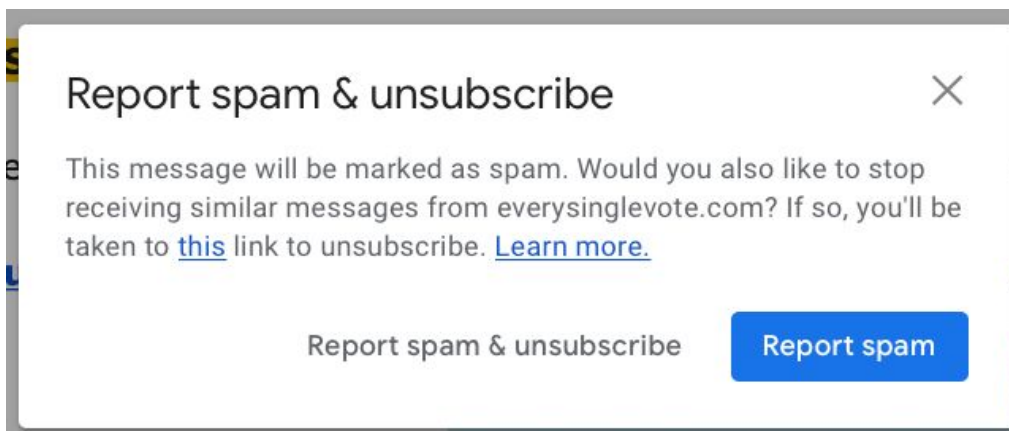
This will move it to the **Spam** label and you will see that label at the top of the email:

The pop-up window also gives you the option of reporting the email as spam and unsubscribing if it sees an unsubscribe link in it.

Showing and Hiding Labels

You can control which of the labels are displayed using the Labels page of the Gmail settings. First click on the gear button in the upper right part of the Gmail window:
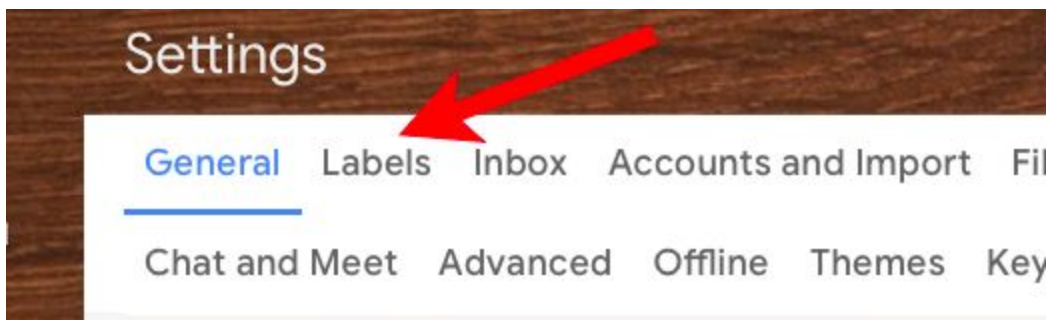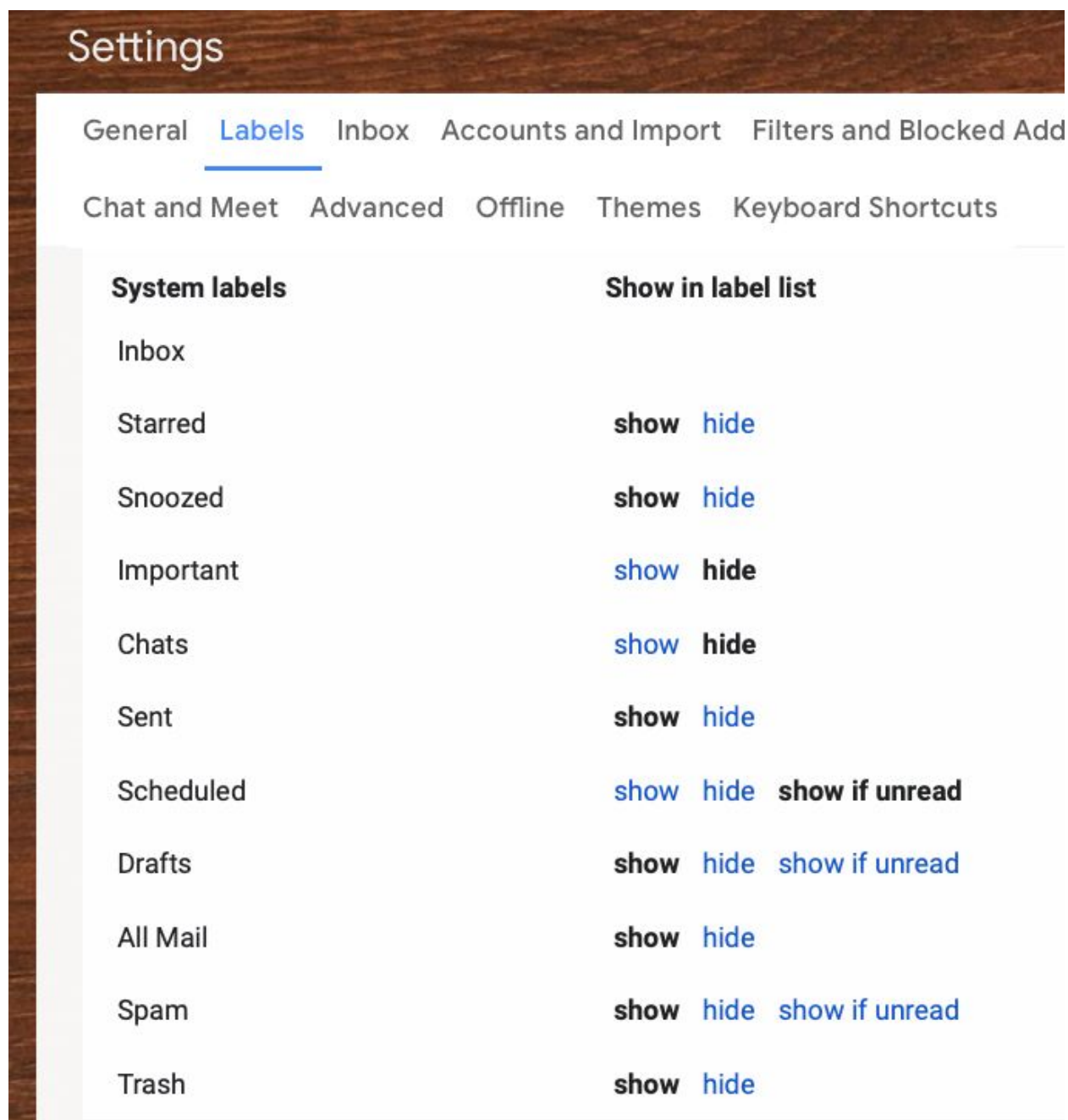

Then click on the See all settings link:
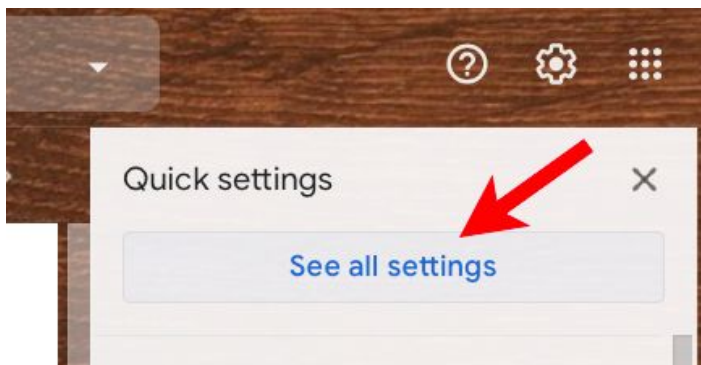
Then click on the Labels link at the top of the page:

At the top of the Labels page is the list of all the System labels:

System labels	Show in label list
Inbox	
Starred	**show** hide
Snoozed	**show** hide
Important	show **hide**
Chats	show **hide**
Sent	**show** hide
Scheduled	show hide **show if unread**
Drafts	**show** hide show if unread
All Mail	**show** hide
Spam	**show** hide show if unread
Trash	**show** hide

Click on any of the blue hide or show links to hide or show any of these labels.

The next section on the Labels page lets you show or hide the categories that Gmail automatically assigns to your emails:

Categories	Show in label list	Show in message list
Categories	show hide	
Social	show hide	show hide
Updates	show hide	show hide
Forums	show hide	show hide
Promotions	show hide	show hide

If you don't want to see these you can hide all of them and the Categories label will not appear in the labels column.

The section below the categories shows all the labels you have defined with buttons to show, hide, edit (rename) or remove them.

Labels	Show in label list	Show in message list	Actions	
Create new label				
[Gmail] 1 conversation	show hide show if unread	show hide	remove edit	☑ Sho
[Imap]/Drafts 9 conversations	show hide show if unread	show hide	remove edit	☑ Sho
[Imap]/Outbox 0 conversations	show hide show if unread	show hide	remove edit	☑ Sho
Computer 1013 conversations	show hide show if unread	show hide	remove edit	☑ Sho

If you remove a label, it does not remove the email messages with that label.

Nested Labels

When you create a new label, you have the option of putting it under another label. For example, I subscribe to a number of email newsletters and I have have these automatically moved to a **TO READ** label or one of its sub-labels, e.g. **News**:

This is done with Gmail Filters. I will go over the details of how to do this in another document.

Popup Menus

If hover your cursor to the right of one of your labels, a popup menu button appears:

This lets you change the color and many other settings for that label: