

# Managing Apple Mail with Rules

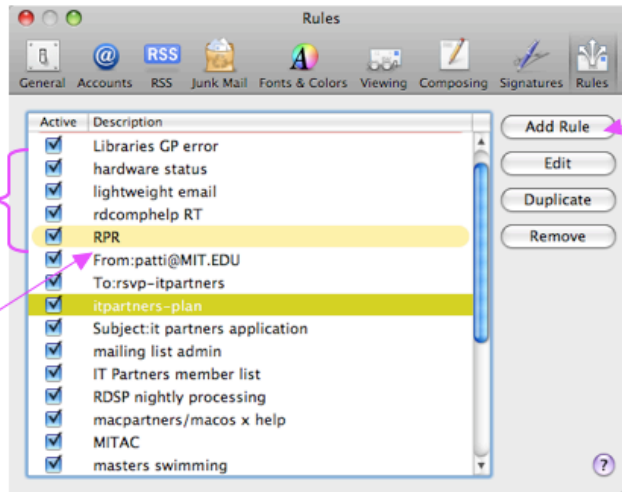
## Managing Apple Mail with Rules

Apple Mail can perform actions based on criteria you define. These criteria are known as rules. Rules can help you organize your messages. If you find yourself overwhelmed by the number or type of messages you get, and all you seem to do is move messages between mailboxes, use a Rule instead.

1. Inside Apple Mail, go to the **Mail** menu, choose **Preferences**. Click on **Rules**.

Checked box indicates that the rule is automatically applied. **Uncheck** to deactivate the rule

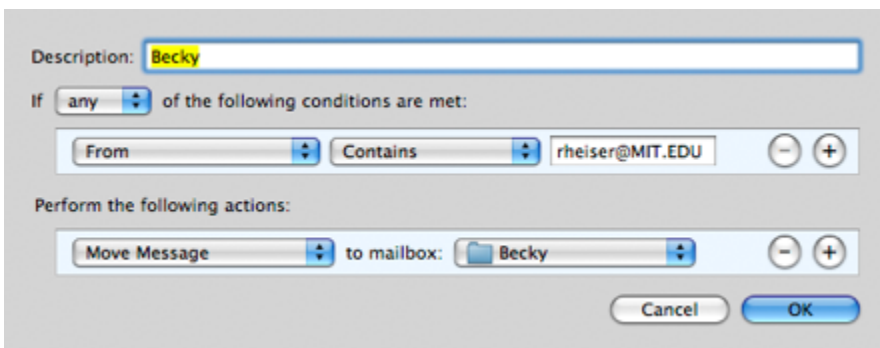
Rule that appears with a background color indicates that color is applied by the Rule



Click to add a new Rule

Drag to make the window larger or smaller

2. Click on the **Add Rule** button to add a new rule.
3. In the Description box, enter a name for the Rule. Set your criteria in the first section, and then specify what actions to perform in the second section. The criteria populates based on what message was selected before you opened Preferences.



You can filter based on sender, recipient, Subject, Priority, or a number of other criteria. In this example, any messages coming From "rheiser@mit.edu" will be moved to a mailbox called "Becky". You can choose whether you want the message to be moved to a local or IMAP mailbox. You can also use a Rule to play a sound, bounce the Mail icon on the Dock, or set messages to a particular color.

When you configure a Rule, you can set multiple conditions before an action is performed. For example, From a particular sender and To an email list. Choose either "any" or "all" for conditions (highlighted above) to narrow or widen the criteria. Likewise, Mail can perform multiple actions, both moving (or copying) the message to another mailbox, as well as playing a sound.

Note that your Rules are processed in the order listed in the Rules window in Preferences. Click on a Rule description and drag it up or down to change the processing order.

If you use a program other than Apple Mail to read your email, you must apply Rules manually the next time you launch Apple Mail. Select the messages, go to the Message menu and choose Apply Rules, or press **Command + Shift + L**.