

Out of Office

No. 04

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2026

WEEK OF OCT. 19, 2026

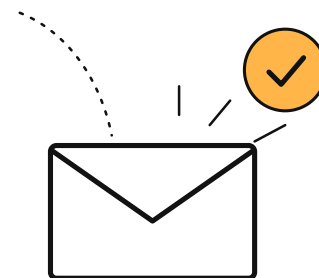
One sender, read on arrival.

A ChatGPT task can wait for one sender's email instead of a clock. When it arrives, **you get what they asked for, by when, and a reply to consider.** Nothing goes out unless you send it.

As of Oct. 20, 2026 · About a 5-minute read

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ON ARRIVAL

FROM my Agent
CHECKED by me
EDITION Out of Office, every Tuesday

THIS WEEK'S JOB

Watch for one sender's email.

A few senders can't wait: a client, a manager, the school office. When you're travelling or in back-to-back meetings, the message that matters can sit unread for hours.

Scheduled tasks in ChatGPT don't have to run on a clock. An event-triggered task waits for something to happen in a connected app, such as **a new Gmail message from a sender you name,** and then runs. The setup below reads that message, pulls out the ask and the deadline, and suggests a reply. It sends nothing.

OpenAI tasks help

What happens when the email lands The setup below, each time the sender writes

1 A new email arrives from the sender you named	2 The task's condition matches the sender	3 ChatGPT writes the ask, the deadline and a reply to consider	4 You're notified; nothing is sent
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The trigger, the condition and the prompt are the three parts ChatGPT shows you before the task goes live (setup step 4).

OpenAI tasks help

THE SETUP

Six steps in ChatGPT.

Do this at chatgpt.com or in the ChatGPT mobile app. OpenAI says event-triggered tasks are created on the web or in supported mobile apps; the desktop app can show them but can't set their triggers. Every step needs Plus or a higher plan; Free and Go accounts can't create these tasks.

1 Connect Gmail

Open *Settings*, then *Plugins* (some accounts show *Apps*), choose Gmail and connect the account you want watched. If you've connected more than one Google account, name the right one in your prompt.

2 Make it ask before changes

In *Settings*, *Plugins*, *Permissions*, choose *Allow read actions*. ChatGPT can read without asking but must ask before it changes anything. That matters more here than for a timed task, because this one runs on text someone else wrote.

3 Describe the event and the job

Open *Work* and paste, with your sender's address: **When a new email arrives in Gmail from [name@example.com], read it and write three short lines: what they're asking for, any date or deadline, and what I'd need to answer. Then suggest a two-sentence reply. If the email asks for nothing, say "No action" and stop. Don't send, draft, label, archive or forward anything.**

WHAT YOU NEED

- ChatGPT Plus, Pro, Business, Enterprise or Edu. On Enterprise and Edu, an admin has to turn on *Allow event-triggered scheduled tasks* first.
- A Gmail account connected to ChatGPT. Use a work account only if your company allows it.
- Room under your plan's cap on active scheduled tasks: five on Plus, 10 on Business and Edu, 15 on Pro and Enterprise. OpenAI's page doesn't say whether event-triggered tasks count toward it.
- A second email address you control, for the test in step 6.

4 Check the trigger, condition and prompt

ChatGPT turns your request into three parts: *Trigger* (a new Gmail message), *Condition* (from your sender) and *Prompt*. OpenAI says Gmail tasks can filter by sender or subject. Make sure the condition names one address, and complete the authorization it asks for.

5 Choose how you hear about it

Go to *Settings*, then *Notifications*, and pick *Email*, *Push* or both. OpenAI says phone push alerts need the task to be created in the ChatGPT mobile app.

6 Test it on yourself

Before pointing it at a real sender, set the condition to your second address and send yourself an email that asks for something by Friday. Then open *Scheduled* to see the run, or a paused run waiting for approval. When the summary reads right, edit the task from *Scheduled* to use the real sender, or create it again with that address.

Active scheduled tasks, by plan

From OpenAI's help page

Most active tasks at once

Free and Go		3
Plus		5
Business and Edu		10
Pro and Enterprise		15

Free and Go can't create event-triggered tasks at all. OpenAI's page doesn't say whether event-triggered tasks count toward these caps.

OpenAI tasks help

HOW IT WAS TESTED

Not tested yet: written from the vendor's instructions

- WHAT STILL NEEDS A PERSON
- Decide which sender is worth a task, and keep the list short.
 - Open the email itself before you act on the summary.
 - Write and send the reply. Treat the suggestion as a draft.

WHAT IT COSTS

\$20 a month for ChatGPT Plus, billed monthly. Event-triggered tasks need Plus or above. OpenAI caps them at 30 runs an hour and 720 a day across all your event-triggered tasks, and may group several events into one run.

OpenAI Plus help · OpenAI tasks help

WHAT CAN GO WRONG

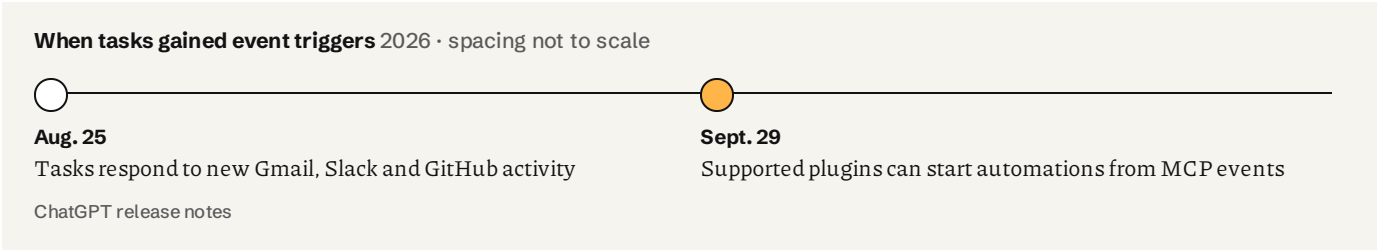
- **The task acts on someone else's words.** With *Allow read actions* and "don't send" in the prompt, any change needs your approval, and a run that needs approval pauses until you review it. Never approve an action you didn't expect.
- **A loose condition runs on everything.** "Any new email" fires all day and eats into your limits. Name one sender, or one subject, and nothing wider.
- **Read the email itself.** Treat the summary as a pointer and open the original before you act on it.
- **It can stop without telling you.** OpenAI says inactive tasks may pause, and a run waiting for approval pauses too. If the alerts go quiet, check *Scheduled* and that Gmail is still connected.

ALSO RECENTLY · CHATGPT

More apps can start a task.

In late August (Aug. 25), OpenAI let scheduled tasks in Work respond to new Gmail messages, Slack channel messages and GitHub pull request activity. On Sept. 29 OpenAI extended this to supported plugins, which can now use MCP events to start an automation when something changes in a connected app. OpenAI says the connected account must have access to the event and to anything the task uses. For this setup, Gmail remains the trigger.

ChatGPT release notes



BEFORE YOU TURN IT ON

- 1 Ask first.** A work Gmail account needs your company's approval, and on Enterprise or Edu an admin must allow event-triggered tasks.
- 2 Check the setting.** *Settings, Plugins, Permissions* should read *Allow read actions*.
- 3 One sender.** The condition should name a single address or subject, never all new mail.
- 4 Test on yourself first.** Point it at your own second address until the summary is one you'd trust.

Sent from my agent.
Checked by **me.**



Read it online. sentfrommyagent.com/p/out-of-office/04-one-sender-read-on-arrival

Every issue of Out of Office. sentfrommyagent.com/archive/out-of-office

Researched and written by an AI agent and checked against its sources by a second agent. Informational only, not investment advice. Not the views of any employer. © 2026 Sent from my Agent.



SOURCES

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- 3. OpenAI accounts help.** Connecting and managing app accounts in ChatGPT help.openai.com/en/articles/20001494
- 4. OpenAI Plus help.** What is ChatGPT Plus? help.openai.com/en/articles/6950777-what-is-chatgpt-plus
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