



our favorite

TIMESAVING TOOLS

travel agents can use every day

(bonus: they're all free!)



Grammarly - <https://www.grammarly.com>

My mom was an English major so my grammar's actually pretty good most of the time. BUT I don't know all of the rules, and I hate making embarrassing mistakes like using the wrong form of there, their, or they're. I know the difference, but sometimes my fingers just have a mind of their own and I feel like an idiot when something with a mistake like that goes out.

Grammarly is a great tool that catches most of these mistakes for me. Not just spelling mistakes, though, it catches grammar mistakes, too. It's like having my mom over my shoulder all the time. ;-)



It's a browser extension and is compatible with all of the major browsers - Chrome, Safari, Firefox, Internet Explorer, and Internet Edge. Just add it to your browser and it will automatically check almost everything you type online.

It doesn't work within every program, though, Google Docs being one of them. It does work with Gmail, though, which is weird.

For those programs that it doesn't work with you can download the program for Mac or Windows (for free), or use the web app version <https://app.grammarly.com/>. Just copy and paste your content in there

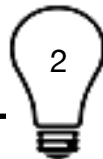




for a quick check.

TIP - You don't have to follow every rule! Sometimes Grammarly is wrong, and sometimes it's so correct that it just doesn't sound right. So, in the end, use your own judgement. It's better that it sounds like you, than for everything to be perfectly correct.

The premium version is pretty costly - from \$140 per year if you pay for a year at a time, to \$30 per month if you pay month to month. But, I don't think it's really necessary. I don't want to come off sounding like an idiot, but I'm not writing academic papers and other documents where following every single rule is that important. And, there are a lot of other, more useful tools I can spend that money on, so I think the free version is fine.





Follow Up Then - <https://www.followupthen.com/>

Follow up then has saved my bacon SO many times.

I'm terrible at following up with people. If I email someone asking them to do something - answer a question, schedule something, etc. - I put it out of my head, as if the ball is in their court now, and I don't have to think about it again until I hear back from them. Other times I think I'll just remember to follow up if I don't hear from them. Want to know how many times that's worked for me?

And yes, I know I could set reminders in my calendar and other programs, but.. that's too much work! I have to open up another program, set the date, type in a detailed description... Nope. Not going to happen.

I don't have to do ANY of that with Follow Up Then. It SO easy to follow up with people that I almost love it now!

Here's how it works: When you're sending an email to a client reminding them of a payment date, or a supplier to ask about hotel availability, you'll simply add an email address to the BCC field like - 3days@followupthen.com. And Follow Up Then will reply to that email (just to you, not your customer)





in 3 days to remind you to follow up. No software needed, no apps, and no detailed descriptions, because it's replying to your original email so it's all right there for you.

Now, just because it's simple and doesn't involve downloading anything doesn't mean it's not powerful. I honestly didn't even know everything Follow Up Then could do before I started researching it more for this list.

It's too much to include here, but here are the basics:

You can schedule a reminder for almost any time you can imagine - 5 minutes, 2 hours, 3 days, 5 weeks, 6 months, every Tuesday, every 3rd of the month...

But, what if you're not sending an email but still need a reminder about something? Or what if you sent the email, but forgot to set the reminder?

Easy, just send an email directly to march3@followupthen.com, add a description in the subject line and body of the email, and send it off. Follow Up Then will send you a reminder, just as if you had sent it as a BCC.

This whole time I've been going to the Follow Up Then website and creating the reminder manually, which, ya'll, that's way too much work for me! I had no idea I could just send an email directly to Follow Up Then. I can't even tell you how excited I am about this.





unroll.me - <https://unroll.me/>

How's your inbox? Is it at Inbox Zero? Do you loooove checking it because you know every email is something you're excited about seeing?

No?

Mine didn't used to be much of a joy, either. I've been in the travel industry for years and was subscribed to a TON of email lists. Some from suppliers and companies I don't even recognize, and some from suppliers I love and work with, but who sent a lot of useless sales emails I don't have time to read.

I got so sick of it at one point that I decided to unsubscribe from everything. But I didn't want to spend a whole day finding and unsubscribing from every list. Honestly, it would have taken weeks to find it all and unsubscribe from each one. So I started just unsubscribing from about 5 every day. And it was NOT happening fast. My inbox was STILL unmanageable.

Then I discovered Unroll Me and within 30 minutes I had unsubscribed from all of those junky lists cluttering up my inbox.

Here's how it works - Sign up with your email address on the home page and give permission to work





magic on your inbox. Unroll.me will then spit out a list of all of the email lists you've subscribed to. Then just decide if you want to unsubscribe, keep, or rollup.

If you select unsubscribe, it does just that - unsubscribes you from those email lists. If you choose keep, you'll continue to see those emails right in your inbox. And if you choose rollup, you'll get a daily digest with the emails that have come in from those lists in that time.

Your inbox can now be a place where you can find the important stuff instead of being overwhelmed with 200 emails every day that are just distractions.

One word of warning - the emails that you've decided to roll up will be tagged and archived, so you won't see them unless you read that digest that comes in. It becomes almost another form of spam folder and sometimes will catch things that you want. If you make it a habit to just read the headlines in that daily digest, though, you'll be fine.

It currently works with Google, Yahoo, Outlook, and AOL. (Who's still using AOL??? Any of you? I didn't even know that was possible...)

There's also an Android and iPhone app, which I haven't used, because I just set it up on my desktop and don't have to mess with it much now, BUT it looks pretty cool, swipe left, swipe right, swipe up... I kind want to go subscribe to a bunch of things so I can use it!





LastPass - <https://www.lastpass.com/>

THIS is my favorite! And the one I really resisted for a long time.

LastPass is a keyword manager. It stores your passwords for you and, if you have the browser extension installed, autofills your username and password for you when you visit a site.

I've resisted using one of these for a long time because it felt like a badge of courage to try to remember my passwords all by myself.

But here's the truth - I couldn't. I was constantly having to reset passwords because I forgot them, and spent countless hours (not even kidding) trying every possible password combination I had ever used. Then waiting for my account to be unlocked. And waiting for the "reset password" email to show up in my inbox...

And, since we're being honest, my passwords weren't really secure. I used the same few on almost every site I had an account on, and they weren't super complicated because they had to be simple enough for me to remember.

But at my latest job they made me use LastPass and I haven't looked back. Now I have super complicated, unique passwords for all of my sites and I don't feel panicked visiting certain sites, you know, the ones I NEVER knew my password for.





Here's how it works:

You create an account with ONE central password and add the LastPass extension to your web browser. Then, anytime you log into a site it will ask you if you want to have LastPass store your username and password. If you select YES, the next time you log in, Lastpass will automatically populate that username and password for you.

If you're like me and haven't been using very secure passwords, you can even have LastPass create really complicated and really secure passwords for your existing accounts like this:

P6km0vUGJbj

Yes, it's difficult to remember, but it's also difficult to hack. Just log into the site, (with your crappy password), change your password, and LastPass will remember it for you forever. <3

But what if you're trying to check your bank balance or pay a clients deposit when you're not at home? (You know, on one of those fabulous free trips travel agents are always invited on.)

If you're on a shared computer (a hotel or cruise ship business center) you can log into LastPass and retrieve your passwords that way. However, if you do this you want to make sure you close out the page when you're done and clear the cache so your password isn't stored for someone to find later.





There is also an app for your phone. You can view your usernames and passwords from within the app (to enter on a computer, or in the browser on your phone) Or you can visit sites within the LastPass app and have the app autofill your username and password for you.

I'll demonstrate this in the YouTube tutorial, too.

Nothing's perfect, of course, and there is a flaw in this perfect password system - if LastPass gets hacked, or if someone gets ahold of your LastPass password and accesses your account, they will have access to ALL of your sites, usernames, and passwords

That's terrifying, right?

I'm with you on that. However, I've talked to several security experts who say that using a program like LastPass is MUCH safer and more secure than using the same, easy to hack passwords on multiple sites. They use LastPass themselves, which makes me feel much better about it.





AND THERE YOU HAVE IT!

Those are our favorite free tools that we really do use every day. Well, almost all of our favorites. Google Drive/Gmail is our absolute favorite, but that's literally a book of it's own, so we'll save that for another day.

Are you already using some of these tools? Are you going to start now after reading our thoughts on them? Did we miss your favorite free tool? Shoot us a quick email at hello@travelgeniuses.com and tell us what you think!

And if you liked this list, please share it with someone you think would find it useful, too. Just have them visit : <https://travelgeniuses.com/favorite-free-tools-sign-up/> to receive their own copy.

(Please don't just forward them the email. Having them sign up themselves helps us track the popularity of lists like this so we know what to make more of in the future. AND we'll be able to let them know when we add new tools to the list. :-)

THANKS A BUNCH!

