

Ciela

User Guide

Version 0.2.26 · May 2026

Your email stays on your computer.
No cloud. No accounts. No ads. No subscriptions.

Contents

- 1 Welcome to Ciela 3
 - 1.1 What Ciela does 3
 - 1.2 What Ciela does not do 3
- 2 Before You Begin 4
 - 2.1 System requirements 4
- 3 Connecting Your Account 5
- 4 Your First Scan 5
 - 4.1 What you will see during the scan 5
- 5 The Dashboard 6
 - 5.1 Category overview 6
 - 5.2 Dormant Subscriptions 6
 - 5.3 Inbox History 6
- 6 Understanding Your Results 7
 - 6.1 Reading a sender row 7
 - 6.2 Correcting a category 7
 - 6.3 The twelve categories 7
 - 6.4 Sender detail 8
- 7 Cleaning Your Inbox 10
 - 7.1 Searching and filtering 10
 - 7.2 Trashing a sender's emails 10
 - 7.3 Recommended cleaning order 10
- 8 Disconnecting and Rescanning 11
 - 8.1 Disconnecting 11
 - 8.2 Rescanning 11
- 9 Frequently Asked Questions 11
- 10 A Note on Privacy 13

1 Welcome to Ciela

Ciela is a free desktop application that helps you clean up your Gmail inbox. It connects to your Gmail account, scans your mailbox entirely on your own computer, organises every sender into a clear category, and gives you the tools to remove years of unwanted email in a few clicks.

Everything happens on your device. Ciela never sends your email — or any information about your email — to any server. The only network traffic is between your computer and Gmail's own API.

1.1 What Ciela does

- Connects to Gmail using Google's standard sign-in process — one click, no credentials to paste
- Reads only the **sender**, **subject line**, and a short **snippet** of each email — never the full content
- Groups your senders into twelve categories so you can see at a glance what is filling your inbox
- Separates senders who send multiple types of email — for example, Amazon's receipts and Amazon's marketing appear as distinct rows so you can clean one without touching the other
- Lets you move all emails from a sender row to Trash in one click, with an optional date filter to protect recent messages
- Remembers your scan results between sessions — your inbox list reappears immediately the next time you open Ciela

1.2 What Ciela does not do

- Read, store, or transmit your email content
- Permanently delete email — everything goes to Gmail's Trash, where it stays for 30 days before Gmail removes it automatically
- Run in the background or send you notifications
- Require you to create an account or pay a subscription

2 Before You Begin

2.1 System requirements

- **Operating system:** Windows 10 or Windows 11
- **Internet connection:** Required during the scan (to fetch from Gmail) and during sign-in
- **Gmail account:** Any personal Gmail account (gmail.com)

3 Connecting Your Account

When you open Ciela for the first time, you will see a single **Connect Gmail** button. No credentials to paste — everything is handled automatically.

- 1 Click **Connect Gmail**. A browser tab will open showing Google's standard sign-in page.
- 2 Sign in with your Gmail account and click **Allow** when Google asks for permission.
- 3 The browser tab will close automatically, and Ciela will begin scanning your inbox.

Ciela remembers your sign-in between sessions. The next time you open the app, you will go straight to your inbox list without signing in again.

If your browser does not open automatically, check that a default browser is set in Windows Settings → Apps → Default Apps. Ciela uses your system browser — it cannot use an embedded browser window for security reasons (this is a requirement from Google).

4 Your First Scan

After connecting, Ciela immediately begins scanning your inbox. Depending on how many emails you have, this can take anywhere from a few minutes to over an hour.

A mailbox with 50,000 emails typically takes 20–30 minutes on a first scan. Ciela fetches up to 100 emails per request in batches, staying within Gmail's speed limits. After your first scan, subsequent scans only check for new mail since your last visit and typically complete in seconds.

4.1 What you will see during the scan

While scanning, Ciela shows you:

- A **progress bar** with the number of messages scanned and an estimated percentage complete
- A **live category breakdown** that updates in real time as emails are classified
- **Rotating tips** about how to get the most out of Ciela

The scan can be safely interrupted at any time — just close the app. When you reopen Ciela and connect again, the scan will resume from where it left off rather than starting over.

5 The Dashboard

When the scan completes, Ciela opens the **Dashboard** — a summary of what is in your inbox.

5.1 Category overview

The main panel shows one card per category, with the number of emails and senders for each. Click any card to open a filtered sender list for that category.

5.2 Dormant Subscriptions

Below the category overview, Ciela lists newsletters you have not opened in five or more months. Each entry shows the sender and an **Unsubscribe** button that opens the stored unsubscribe link in your browser. Ciela tracks whether the sender actually stops emailing after you click Unsubscribe, and reports back as “Confirmed ✓” or “Still sending.”

5.3 Inbox History

The **Inbox History** chart shows a bar for each calendar year your inbox contains email — from the oldest message to the present. Taller bars mean more email received that year. The chart is built from the timestamps Gmail attaches to each message and refreshes after every full scan.

The Inbox History chart appears after your first complete scan. It will not be visible until a full scan has finished.

6 Understanding Your Results

When the scan finishes, you will see a list of every sender in your inbox, sorted from most emails to fewest.

6.1 Reading a sender row

Each row in the list shows:

- **Sender name** — the display name the sender uses
- **Email address** — the actual address emails came from
- **Category badge** — a coloured label showing how Ciela classified this email type
- **Email count** — how many emails of this type are in your inbox
- **Trash button** — to move this category of emails from this sender to Gmail's Trash

Senders who send multiple types of email appear as separate rows — one per category. For example, a retailer that sends both order confirmations and promotional offers will appear as two rows: **Receipts & Orders** and **Active Marketing**. You can trash the marketing while keeping every receipt untouched.

6.2 Correcting a category

If Ciela has placed a sender in the wrong category, click the **category badge** on the sender row to open a dropdown of all twelve categories. Select the correct one and Ciela immediately moves the sender to the right place and remembers the correction — future scans will keep the sender in the category you chose.

After you reclassify a sender, Ciela looks for other senders in the same original category that share the same email domain. If any are found, a panel appears:

- 1 A modal lists the similar senders, all ticked by default. Each entry shows the display name, email address, and email count.
- 2 Untick any senders you want to leave in the original category.
- 3 Click **Apply to N senders** to reclassify all ticked entries at once. Click **Dismiss** to ignore the suggestions.

Similarity is based on the root domain of the email address — for example, reclassifying `promo@mail.amazon.com` will surface other senders at `amazon.com` or any subdomain of it. Senders on completely different domains are never included.

6.3 The twelve categories

Ciela assigns every sender to one of the following categories:

Category	What it contains
Personal	Emails from real people using personal email services like Gmail, Yahoo, or iCloud
Security & Auth	Login alerts, verification codes, password resets, and two-factor authentication messages
Finance	Bank statements, invoices, receipts, tax documents, and investment notifications
Travel	Flight bookings, hotel reservations, itineraries, and boarding passes
Receipts & Orders	Order confirmations, shipping updates, delivery notifications, and refunds
Notifications	App alerts, activity digests, reminders, and automated summaries
Subscription	Newsletters and curated email publications you have subscribed to
Active Marketing	Promotional emails from companies that are actively sending to you
Dead Marketing	Promotional emails from senders you have not engaged with in a long time – often the safest to clean up
Education	Schools, universities, and learning platforms – Canvas, Blackboard, school districts, and similar
Healthcare	Patient portals, appointment reminders, pharmacy notifications, and medical office communications
Unknown	Senders Ciela could not confidently classify – review these by hand and reclassify where needed

Classification is done locally on your computer using a set of rules. It is very accurate for bulk mail and very accurate for personal email. Occasionally a transactional email (a receipt, for example) may be classified as a notification or vice versa – use your own judgement when reviewing.

6.4 Sender detail

Click a sender's **display name** to open the sender detail screen. The detail screen shows everything Ciela knows about that sender – loaded instantly from your local database with no network connection required.

6.4.1 What you will see

- **Last opened blurb** – “You last opened an email from this sender X ago”, or a note if you have never opened one
- **Stats row** – total emails, unread count, open rate percentage, and the date of the first and last email from this sender
- **Frequency** – how many emails this sender sends per month on average (e.g. “4.2 per month”)
- **Volume gauge** – a five-bar signal gauge labelled Cold, Cool, Warm, Hot, or Flood, reflecting how heavily this sender fills your inbox relative to others

Level	Rate	What it means
Cold	< 1 per year	A rare sender – a one-off or very old contact
Cool	1–3 per month	Occasional sender – newsletters, infrequent alerts
Warm	4–14 per month	Regular sender – weekly newsletters, app notifications
Hot	15–49 per month	Frequent sender – daily digests, active marketing
Flood	50+ per month	Very high volume – likely a heavy promotional sender

- **Engagement chart** – vertical bars for each calendar year your inbox contains email from this sender. Grey shows total received; green shows how many you opened that year.
- **Subject list** – up to 500 recent messages, newest first, with date and subject line. Unread messages are shown in bold with a green dot.

6.4.2 Actions from the detail screen

The Unsubscribe, Protect, and Move to Trash actions work exactly the same as from the sender list. Clicking **Back** returns you to the sender list at your previous scroll position.

7 Cleaning Your Inbox

7.1 Searching and filtering

At the top of the sender list you will find:

- **Search box** — type any part of a name or email address to narrow the list
- **Category filter** — choose a category from the dropdown to show only senders in that group

7.2 Trashing a sender's emails

- 1 Find the row you want to clean up and click the red **Trash** button.
- 2 A confirmation box will appear showing the sender name and category. Check both to make sure you have the right row.
- 3 **Optional:** Use the “Only emails older than” dropdown to protect recent messages. For example, choosing **1 year** will move emails older than one year to Trash while keeping everything from the past twelve months.
- 4 Click **Move to Trash** to confirm. The button will show a live count (for example, **45 / 312...**) while Ciela works through the emails.
- 5 When finished, the row disappears from the list. Other rows from the same sender are not affected.

Trash, not Delete. Ciela never permanently deletes email. All emails are moved to Gmail's Trash folder. Gmail automatically removes items from Trash after 30 days. If you change your mind, open Gmail in your browser, go to Trash, and restore individual emails before the 30 days are up.

7.3 Recommended cleaning order

If you are not sure where to start, this order tends to work well:

1. Filter to **Dead Marketing** first — these are the safest to remove. Trash all of them using “All time.”
2. Move to **Active Marketing** and trash senders you no longer want to hear from.
3. Review **Subscription** — unsubscribe manually from newsletters you want to stop, then trash the backlog.
4. Leave **Personal, Security & Auth, Finance, Travel, and Receipts & Orders** alone unless you are sure you no longer need a specific sender's history.

8 Disconnecting and Rescanning

8.1 Disconnecting

Click **Disconnect** in the top-right corner of the sender list to sign out and return to the connect screen. Your scan results are saved locally — the next time you connect, your inbox list reappears immediately while a fresh scan runs in the background.

8.2 Rescanning

Click **Rescan** in the top-right corner to check for new mail. Ciela only fetches emails that arrived since your last scan, so this typically completes in seconds. Your existing results are merged with any new senders found.

If your counts look off or you want to start fresh, click **Full rescan** (the smaller link beneath the Rescan button). This re-reads your entire inbox from the beginning and replaces all results.

9 Frequently Asked Questions

How long will my first scan take?

It depends on how many emails you have. A mailbox with 10,000 emails takes roughly 8–12 minutes. A mailbox with 100,000 emails typically takes 35–45 minutes. You can leave Ciela running in the background — just do not close the window.

Can I stop a scan and come back to it?

Yes. You can close Ciela at any time. The next time you connect, Ciela will resume from where it left off.

Will Ciela delete my emails permanently?

No. Ciela only moves emails to Gmail's Trash. Gmail keeps items in Trash for 30 days before permanently removing them. You can restore emails from Trash in Gmail at any time during those 30 days.

Is it safe to trash Security & Auth or Finance emails?

Be careful with these categories. Login alerts and bank statements can be useful for reference — especially for tax purposes. We recommend keeping Finance and Security emails unless you are certain you no longer need them. The “older than 5 years” filter is a safer option if you want to clear old records.

What if an email is in the wrong category?

Ciela's classifier is accurate but not perfect. If you see a receipt classified as a Notification, just ignore the category and decide based on the sender name and count. Classification does not affect what gets trashed — only you decide which senders to clean up.

My browser did not open during sign-in. What do I do?

Make sure a default browser is set in Windows Settings → Apps → Default Apps. If a browser opened but nothing happened, try signing in to Google manually in your browser first, then return to Ciela and try connecting again.

Why does the same company appear in two rows?

Some senders use one email address to send multiple types of email – for example, order confirmations and promotional offers. Ciela separates these into distinct rows so you can remove the marketing without affecting your receipts.

How do I know Ciela is not sending my data anywhere?

Ciela has no servers and no cloud storage. The only outbound connections the app ever makes are to `gmail.googleapis.com` (Gmail's API) and `oauth2.googleapis.com` (Google's sign-in service). Everything else – classification, storage, display – happens entirely on your computer.

10 A Note on Privacy

Ciela was built on a simple belief: your email is yours.

Most inbox-cleaning services work by connecting your Gmail account to their own servers, where your email is read, indexed, and in some cases used to build a profile of you. Ciela does none of this.

Every email is fetched directly from Gmail to your computer. The classification runs on your computer. The results are stored in an encrypted local database on your computer — nothing is persisted to a remote server, because there is no remote server.

The only things Ciela ever sends over the network are:

- The OAuth token that proves to Gmail you have given permission (this is the same token your email app uses)
- The API requests to list and fetch your email metadata

That is it.