

**Platform:** Unix

**Level of Difficulty:** Intermediate

*This document will teach you how to use Pine to read, write, and manage email.*

**Introduction: What is Pine?**

Pine is an application frequently used at Rutgers to read, write, and manage email. Pine offers an easy to use menu driven interface, a convenient address book, on-screen alert messages, customizable options, and extensive on-line help. Pine can be run from a shell on any Unix/Linux based system. To access it on a Macintosh or PC you will need a program capable of an ssh connection. Since Pine is a Unix application, all commands are entered with the keyboard, not the mouse.

**Starting Pine**

**If you are using menus:**

- ◆ At the main menu, type **mail**. Once in the mail menu, type **pine**.

**If you have an er% prompt:**

- ◆ At the prompt, type **pine**.

If this is the first time Pine has been used on your account, a greeting text will appear. Simply press “enter” and you will be at Pine’s main menu.

**The Main Menu**

After starting Pine, the Main Menu appears. Each menu in Pine has a similar layout: at the top: the screen name and other pertinent notes; in the middle: the work area, then the message prompt line; and at the bottom is a list of available commands for this screen.

---

PINE 4.21 MAIN MENU screen name Folder: INBOX 6 Messages

?	HELP	-	Get help using Pine
C	COMPOSE MESSAGE	-	Compose and send/post a message
I	MESSAGE INDEX	-	View messages in current folder
L	FOLDER LIST	-	Select a folder OR news group to view
A	ADDRESS BOOK	-	Update address book
S	SETUP	-	Configure Pine Options
Q	QUIT	-	Leave the Pine program

short-cut key

message prompt line

Copyright 1989-1999. PINE is a trademark of the University of Washington.

? Help	P PrevCmd	R RelNotes
O OTHER CMDS > [ListFldrs]	N NextCmd	K KBlock

available commands

The arrow keys can be used to navigate the list, or the shortcut letter can be used. (For example, “c” to compose a message)

### Getting help from Pine

The available commands for any screen in Pine are listed at the bottom of the screen. In most areas of Pine, pressing either “?” or “ctrl”+”g” will bring up Pine’s online help. The help screen that appears shows help on the feature of Pine that is in use. The “e” key will exit help.

### Writing a message

The first option in the main menu is “C –Compose Message.” Selecting this will bring you to the Compose Message screen, where you can write and send email. Pressing “c” at almost any time in Pine will bring you to this screen; you do not have to be at the main menu.

---

PINE 4.21 COMPOSE MESSAGE Folder: INBOX 6 Messages

To :  
Cc :  
Atchmnt:  
Subject :  
---- Message Text ----

Type your message here.

This symbol before a letter in the command list means to hold “ctrl” while you hit the letter.

**^G Get Help ^X Send ^R Rich Hdr ^Y PrvPg/Top ^K Cut Line ^O Postpone  
^C Cancel ^D Del Char ^J Attach ^V NxtPg/End ^U UnDel Line ^T To AddrBk**

---

In the command menu above, the “^” character is used to indicate the control key. This character means you must hold down the control key while you press the letter for each command.

#### To:

In this field, type the email addresses of your recipient(s). Separate multiple addresses with commas. When you are finished, press “enter”. Always check the addresses in both the To: and Cc: fields for accuracy and completeness before you send a message.

#### Cc:

In this field, type the email address(es) of the person(s) to whom you want to send copies. Separate multiple addresses with commas. When you are finished, or if you don’t want to send any copies, press “enter”.

#### Attachment:

This is an advanced Pine feature that allows you to attach files, including word processing documents, spreadsheets, or images that exist on the same computer from

which you are running Pine. If you do not want to attach a file, press “enter”. For more on attaching files, see *Sending an attachment* on page 11 of this document.

*Subject:*

In this field, enter a one-line description of your message. Recipients appreciate a short, pertinent description, since this is what is seen when they scan their index of messages. When finished press “enter”.

*Message Text:*

Type your message. To move around, use the arrow keys. To delete a character, press “backspace” or “delete”. To delete a line, type “ctrl”+”k”. To justify text, type “ctrl”+”k”. (To undelete a line or to unjustify text, type “ctrl”+”u”.) To check spelling, type “ctrl”+”t”.

*Sending a Message:*

After the message is composed, type “ctrl”+”x”; then press “y” or “enter”. The message is sent, and a copy is placed in the sent-mail folder. If a message cannot be delivered, it is eventually returned to you. If you want to re-send a message, you can use the F (forward) command. For more information about forwarding, see *Forwarding a message* on page 5.

*Changing Your Mind:*

If you change your mind after typing “ctrl”+”x” to send a message, press “n” instead of “y” to continue to work on the message. While writing a message, type “ctrl”+”o” (postpone) to hold your message to work on it later. The next time you enter the composer it will ask if you wish to continue typing the message. Typing “ctrl”+”c” (Cancel) cancels the message entirely.

**Writing a test message**

For practice, it may be a good idea to send a test message to yourself.

To do this, follow these steps:

1. Press “c” to enter the Compose Message screen.
2. In the TO: field enter your email address.
3. In the CC: field, press “enter”.
4. In the Attachment: field, press “enter”.
5. In the Subject: field, type a short subject such as **Test**.
6. Below the message text line, type a short message to yourself, such as **This is a test**.
7. Press “ctrl”+”x” to send the message.
8. You will be asked, “Send Message?”. Press “y”.

The message is sent and a copy is saved to your sent mail folder. (If you press “n” (no) the message is not sent, and you can continue to work on it.)

You have now sent a test message. It should arrive in your INBOX folder shortly.

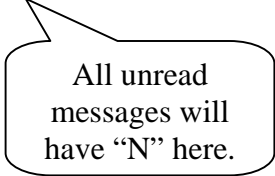
## Listing and viewing messages

To see a list of the messages you have received in your INBOX folder, press “i” (Message Index) at the Pine Main Menu.

---

PINE 4.21 MESSAGE INDEX Folder: INBOX Message 2 of 2 NEW

+A 1 Jun 9 John Smith (6,879) Re: Hello.  
+N 2 Jun 9 Talulah Gosh (8,611) Coffee on Tuesday?



All unread messages will have “N” here.

[Folder "INBOX" opened with 2 messages]

---

? Help < FldrList P PrevMsg - PrevPage D Delete R Reply  
O OTHER CMDS > [ViewMsg] N NextMsg Spc NextPage U Undelete F Forward

---

## The Message Index

The selected message is highlighted. The first column on the left is blank, or shows a “+” if the message was sent directly to you (i.e. it is not a Cc.) The second column may be blank, or it may contain:

“N” if the message is new (unread)

“A” if you have answered the message (with the reply command)

“D” if you have marked the message for deletion. [Note: If you answer a message as well as mark it deleted (in either order), you only see the “D”.]

The rest of the columns in the message line show you the message number, date sent, sender, size, and subject. Most of the commands you need to handle your messages are visible at the bottom of the screen. Pressing “o” will display Other Commands that are available. These other commands do not need to be on the screen to be used.

## Reading a message

At the Message Index screen, use the up and down arrow keys to highlight the message you wish to view. Press “v” (ViewMsg) or “enter” to read a selected message. To read the next message, press “n” (NextMsg). To read the previous message, press “p” (PrevMsg). To return from your message to the message Index, press “i” (index).

## Replying to a message

To reply to a message that you have selected at the message index screen or that you are viewing, press “r” (Reply).

Pine will ask if you want to include the original message in the reply. In addition, if the original message was sent to multiple recipients, Pine will ask if you wish to reply to all of them. Be sure to check the list of addresses in the To: and Cc: fields before sending a message to see who will receive it.

## Forwarding a message

To forward a message that you have selected at the Message Index screen or that you are viewing:

1. Press “f” (Forward). A copy of the message will open with the To: field highlighted.
2. Enter the address of your recipient and send the message as usual. Note that you can modify the original message if you wish, for example, to forward only a portion of it or add a message or notes of your own.

## Folders

Messages can quickly accumulate in your INBOX folder. If you use email often, soon you will have hundreds of messages. You need to delete messages you do not want and use folders to organize messages you wish to save. A folder is a collection of one or more messages that are stored so you can access and manage them.

## Organizing messages with folders

You can organize your email messages into different folders by topic, correspondent, date, or any other category. You can create your own folders, and Pine automatically provides three:

- ◆ The **INBOX** folder is where messages sent to you are put automatically. When you first start Pine and go to the Message Index screen, you are looking at the list of messages in your INBOX folder. Every incoming message remains in your INBOX until you delete it or save it to a different folder.
- ◆ The **saved-messages** folder is the default folder for saving messages to.
- ◆ The **sent-mail** folder keeps copies of messages you have sent.

## Keeping folders clean

Messages – whether they are in your INBOX or your other Pine folders – occupy disk space, which is limited. Check your email frequently to see if you have new messages. Do not keep too many messages in your INBOX folder. A large INBOX reduces performance; it takes longer to display large lists of messages when you start Pine, and it requires more time to move between messages. Delete your incoming messages right away if you do not want them, or save them to other folders. (See *Saving a message* on the next page.) Routinely delete obsolete messages from all of your Pine folders. You will get a message via Pine at the beginning of each month asking you about your sent-mail folders. First it asks you if you want to rename (and thus save) your current sent-mail folder by month. Then it asks if you want to delete any sent-mail folders (and all the messages they contain) from previous months. To conserve space, it is a good idea to delete any sent-mail folders you do not want.

## Moving between folders

From almost anywhere in Pine, pressing “l” will display the collection list of folders. When you start Pine and press “i” (Index) at the Main Menu, you see a list of messages in

your INBOX folder. If you want to see the messages in another folder, you need to change folders. To go to another folder:

1. Press “l” (ListFldrs). You see the Collection List screen.
2. If it is not already highlighted, use the arrow keys to highlight the Mail line and press “enter”. You see an expanded list of folders, in which your current folder is highlighted.
3. Use the arrow keys to highlight the folder you want.
4. To see an index of messages in that folder, press “>” or “enter”. When done press “<” to return to the previous screen.

### **Adding a folder**

To add a folder to store messages of a certain theme:

1. Press “l”. You see the Collection List screen, highlight the collection you want and press “enter”. You see a list of folders.
2. To add a folder, press “a”. You are prompted for the name of the new folder.
3. Type in a name for the folder and press “enter”.

### **Deleting a folder**

To remove a folder and all messages inside:

1. Press “l”. You see the Collection List screen, highlight the collection you want and press “enter”. You see a list of folders.
2. Use the arrow keys to highlight the folder you wish to delete.
3. To delete the entire folder of messages, press “d” (Delete). You are asked:  
*Delete “folder”?*
4. Press “y” (yes) if you want to delete the folder and all of its messages. The folder disappears.

### **Saving a message**

When you save a message, you are given a choice: you can store it in the saved-messages folder, or you can specify another folder. Once you save a message, the copy in your INBOX folder is automatically marked for deletion so that you will only have one copy. When you quit Pine, you are asked to confirm whether or not you want to expunge the copy from the INBOX folder. To conserve space, it is a good idea to do this.

1. At the Message Index screen, use the arrow keys to highlight the message you want to save, or, at the Message Text screen as you view a message, press “s” (Save). You are asked if you want to save the message to the saved messages folder or another folder:

*SAVE to folder in <Mail...> [saved-messages]:*

2. Press “enter” to choose the default folder: [saved-messages]. Pine saves your message and you see the following:

*[Message # copied to “saved-messages” in <Mail...> and deleted]*

### **Saving a message to a folder you specify**

You will find it useful to create additional folders for storing messages on particular subjects. To save a message to a folder you specify:

1. At the Message Index screen, use the arrow keys to highlight the message you want to save, or, at the Message Text screen as you view a message, press “s” (Save) to save message. You are asked if you want to save it to the saved-messages folder or to another folder:

*SAVE to folder in <Mail...> [saved-messages]:*

2. Type a folder name and press “enter”. For example, to save a message to a folder named "papers", type **papers** and press “enter”. If this is the first time you have named this folder, you see the message:

*Folder "papers" in <Mail...> doesn't exist. Create?*

3. Press “y” or press “enter” to create the folder. Once you have created the folder, or whenever you type the name of a folder that already exists, you see a message like this one:

*[Message # copied to "papers" in <Mail...> and deleted]*

### **Deleting a message**

You keep your Pine folders clean by routinely deleting messages you do not want. There are two steps to deleting messages: marking it for deletion and then expunging it. To mark a message you do not want for deletion:

1. At the Message Index screen select the message you want to mark for deletion, or simply view the message.
2. Press “d” (Delete).

If you are looking at the Message Index screen when you mark a message for deletion, a “D” appears in the left column of the message line, and the next message, if there is one, is selected. If you are looking at the Message Text screen when you mark, a “DEL” briefly appears in the upper right corner of your screen, you get an on-screen message that the message has been deleted, and the next message, if there is one, appears.

### **Undeleting a message**

If you change your mind about a message you have marked for deletion, use the U (Undelete) command to remove the deletion mark any time before you expunge a message. Remember: after you expunge a message, Pine cannot get it back.

### **Expunging a message**

A message that is marked for deletion remains in Pine until you expunge it. You can expunge a message that is marked for deletion at any time, or you can wait until you quit Pine. Once you have a few messages marked for deletion, you may want to expunge them

before you continue to work, because it is easier to look through an index that contains fewer messages. To expunge a message:

1. At the Message Index screen, press “x” (eXpunge) You are asked:

*Expunge # message(s) from “foldername”?*

2. Press “y” (yes) or press “enter”. Messages marked for deletion disappear.

### **Using the Address Book**

As you use email, you can build a list of your regular email correspondents in your Pine address book. At the Pine Main Menu, press “a”. You may see the Address Book List screen. If so, your personal address book, .addressbook, will be highlighted. Press “enter”. You can use the address book to store email addresses for individuals or groups, to create easily remembered "nicknames" for these addresses, and to quickly retrieve an email address when you are composing a message. There are two ways to add addresses to your address book: you can add them manually or take them from messages. With either method, you specify nicknames for your correspondents. A single address book entry (or nickname) can point to just one email address, or, it can point to more than one. When it points to more than one, it is called a distribution list. Each distribution list has a nickname, a full name, and a list of addresses. These addresses may be actual addresses, other nicknames in your address book, or other distribution lists.

### **Adding single addresses or distribution lists manually**

To add single addresses or distribution lists manually:

1. Have ready the address or addresses you want to add.
2. At the Pine Main Menu, press “a” (AddrBook). You see the Address Book List screen, with .addressbook highlighted.
3. Press “enter”.
4. Press “@” (AddNew) and follow the instructions.

### **Taking single addresses**

To take a single address from a message you are viewing or have selected in the index:

1. At the Message Text or the Message Index screen, press “t” (TakeAddr). [Note: The “t” command is not visible on your screen unless you press “o” (OTHER CMDS), but you need not see this command to use it.] You see the Take Address screen. If there is more than one address to take, you see this message:

*[Single mode: Use "P" or "N" to select desired address]*

2. Use “p” (Prev), “n” (Next), or the up and down arrow keys to select the address you want, and press “t” (Take). At this point, or, if there is only one address to take, you see this message:

*Enter new or existing nickname (one word and easy to remember):*

3. Enter a nickname for your correspondent and press “enter”.
4. Follow the instructions. (Type “ctrl”+”g” if you need help.)

### **Taking multiple addresses to build a distribution list**

To take multiple addresses from a message you are viewing or have selected in the index:

1. Press “t” (TakeAddr). [Note: The “t” command is not visible on your screen unless you press “o” (OTHER CMDS), but you need not see this command to use it.] You see the Take Address screen and the following message:

*[Single mode: Use "P" or "N" to select desired address]*

2. Press “l” (ListMode).
3. For each address you want to take, use “p” (Prev), “n” (Next), or the up and down arrow keys to select it, and then press “x” (Set/Unset) in the box to its left.
4. Press “t” (Take). You see the following message:

*Enter new or existing nickname (one word and easy to remember):*

5. Enter a nickname for your list of correspondents and press “enter”.
6. Follow the instructions. (Type “ctrl”+”g” if you need help.)

### **Changing a single address or a distribution list**

To change a single address or a distribution list:

1. At the Pine Main Menu, press “a” (Address Book). You see your personal Address Book screen.
2. Use the arrow keys to select the single address or distribution list you want to change.
3. Press “>” (View/Update).
4. Press “u” (Update), then use arrow keys to get to the field where you want to make a change. Follow the instructions.

### **Using address book entries when composing email**

When composing a message, at the To or the Cc (Carbon copy) fields you can enter an email address either by typing the entire email address or by typing a nickname you have set up in the address book. For example, if it was in your address book, you could type the nickname **John** in the To: field. After you pressed “enter”, Pine will provide the full address for Rich from the address book as follows:

*To: Jonathan Smith <jsmith@eden.rutgers.edu>*

You can also select a name (or names) from the address book as you compose a message.

To send a message to one person:

1. Place your cursor in the To: or Cc: field and then type “ctrl”+”t” (To AddrBk).
2. Use the arrow keys to highlight the name you want.
3. Press “s” (Select) or press “enter”.

To send a message to several people:

1. Place your cursor in the To or Cc field and then type “ctrl”+”t” (To AddrBk).
2. Type “l” (List Mode).
3. Using the arrow keys, type “x” before each name you want.
4. Press “s” (Select) or press “enter”.

### **Printing messages from a PC or Mac**

1. From either the Message Index screen or the Message Text screen, press “% “ [“shift”+”5”] (Print).
2. Pine will ask if you wish to print using “attached-to-ansi”. Answer “y” (yes).

### **Printing messages from an X-Terminal**

To set up custom printing:

1. From the Main Menu go to Setup (“s”).
2. Select Config (“c”).
3. Check “print-offers-custom-cmd-prompt” under **Printer Preferences**.

Now anytime you want to print:

1. From either the Message Index screen or the Message Text screen, press % (print).
2. Pine will ask you if you wish to print using “attached-to-ansi”. Below this there will be an option, “C –Custom print.”
3. Type “c” for custom print.
4. Enter the Unix print command **lpr -P<printername>**.

### **Quitting and logging out**

To quit Pine, press “q” (Quit) at almost any screen. You are asked: *Really quit Pine?* Press “y” (yes) or press “enter” to quit.

### **Attachments**

Electronic mail is designed to transmit plain text, but it can send other files (sounds, pictures, executable programs, formatted documents) as “attachments.” These non-text files are “attached” to the text portion of the message, after being encoded into something that uses only plain-text symbols. When another mail program receives such a message, it sees special headers that tell it to call a program to decode the attachment, turning it back into the sound, graphic, etc. The file can then be detached or downloaded so that the appropriate application can open it.

### **Retrieving an attachment**

As a text-only mail reader, Pine can not display anything other than text. It can let you detach the attachment and save it to your UNIX account, where it assumes you have the appropriate program for viewing it, but that is the best it can do. When it detaches the file, it will show the MIME-type of the file, so you will know if it is a PostScript document or a sound file or a GIF picture, but you will then have to find the appropriate program to display it. If you are using a telnet connection, since telnet is a text-only communications method, you will have to download the detached file, as a binary, to your desktop machine, where you (hopefully) have something appropriate to display it.

To detach an attachment in Pine:

1. Read the message.
2. Press “v” to View the attachment.
3. Use the arrow keys to move to the attachment, if it hasn't been selected automatically.
4. Press “s” to Save it.
5. You will be prompted with a filename. Press “enter” if you accept that name or change the name and press “enter”.  
If you think you might already have a file by that name, press “ctrl”+”t” to see what files already exist, to be sure you don't overwrite an existing file
6. You will get a message with the full path name where the file has been written. Note this path name.
7. Press “e” to Exit the Attachment Index.
8. You will be back at the message.

Please note that the file has only been saved to your RCI or Eden account, not to your desktop machine if you are using a Macintosh or PC. After you quit Pine, you can transfer the detached file to your desktop machine. The FTP program is usually the best method (see “FTP” document for help). Once the file has been transferred to your desktop computer, you can use an appropriate local program to display it.

### **Sending an attachment**

Before you send a file as an attachment, you must transfer it to your RCI or Eden account. Netscape, Webdrive, WSFTP, and Fetch are the available FTP programs that can be used for this. Once the file has been copied to your account, you can start Pine. When you compose the message in Pine, just add the file name to the "Attchmnt:" header. For example: Attchmnt: econpaper.doc

If you misspelled the file name, Pine should tell you immediately that it cannot find the file. If you can not remember the name of the file, “ctrl”+”t” will display the files on your account. Select the file you wish to attach. When you send the message, Pine will find the file listed in the "Attchmnt:" header, automatically encode it, and send it off with the message.

### **Setup options**

These variables are kept on your account in a file called .pinerc, which is read by Pine each time it starts. You can change them through the Config item in the Setup command in the Main Menu.

Suggested changes:

◆ *editor=/usr/local/bin/emacs*

Tells Pine to use the emacs text editor instead of Pico (Pine's default editor), when an editor is requested.

◆ *speller=/usr/local/bin/ispell*

Tells Pine to use the named spell checker, ispell, instead of the default. (ispell is generally considered friendlier than the standard Unix spell checker, *spell*)

The variable *feature-list* contains a number of sub-variables that can be toggled on and off. They are all off by default. It is recommended you enable the following, though you may choose others as well. To get a description of the feature, press “?” while the feature is highlighted.

◆ *enable-suspend*

Allows you to press “ctrl”+”z” to suspend Pine and access the Unix system prompt. Type **fg** at the prompt to resume Pine.

◆ *enable-full-header-command*

While reading a message, gives you the command (“h”) to see all the headers of that message, not just the standard Date:, From:, To:, and Subject: headers.

◆ *enable-aggregate-command-set*

Gives Pine a command (;) to operate on groups of messages (e.g. save more than one message at a time into the same folder.) rather than single messages only.

◆ *enable-alternate-editor-command*

Gives Pine a command (“ctrl”+”\_”) to bring up the alternate editor specified in the editor variable.

◆ *enable-bounce-command*

Gives Pine a command (“b”) to let you re-send an email message you have received to a third person, as though the original sender sent it to that person directly.

◆ *signature-at-bottom*

Pine includes the contents of a .signature file, if it exists, in every outgoing message. It adds this at the start of a message, to remind you to delete it if you do not want a signature on that message. If you rarely change your signature, or if you are just tired of moving the signature to the end of the message you should select this option

◆ *print-offers-custom-command-prompt*

This option allows easy printing from x-terminals by adding the custom print command to the print menu. When you print, there will now be a “C – Custom print” option. If you do not wish to print “attached-to-ansi”, select “c” and then type the Unix print command **lpr -P<printername>**

### Where to get more help...

- Press either “?” or “ctrl”+”g” at almost any location in Pine will bring up online help.
- Univ. of Washington, Pine information Center: <http://www.washington.edu/pine/>
- Ask a Consultant on Duty at any of the CCF computing labs.