

The Sylpheed-Claws User Manual

The Sylpheed Claws Team
(<http://claws.sylpheed.org/>)

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Introduction

What is Sylpheed-Claws?

Sylpheed-Claws is an email client aiming at being fast, easy-to-use and powerful. It is mostly desktop-independent, but tries to integrate with your desktop as best as possible. The Sylpheed-Claws developers try hard to keep it lightweight, so that it should be usable on low-end computers without much memory or CPU power.

What Sylpheed-Claws is not

Sylpheed-Claws is not a full-featured Personal Information Manager like Evolution or Outlook, although external plugins provide these functionalities. Sylpheed-Claws will not let you write and send HTML emails or other kind of annoyances, hence it may not be the software you need in some business environments.

Main features

Sylpheed-Claws sports almost everything a perfect email client needs. Mail retrieval over POP3, IMAP4, local mbox, over SSL; support for various authentication schemes. It has multiple accounts and mailboxes, powerful filtering and search functionality, import/export capabilities using a number of formats, support for GnuPG (digital signatures and encryption). It supports plugins, customisable toolbars, spell checking, a number of guards to prevent any data loss, per-folder preferences, and much more. A complete list of features can be found at <http://claws.sylpheed.org/features.php>.

History of Sylpheed-Claws

Sylpheed-Claws has existed since April 2001. The primary goal of Sylpheed-Claws was to be a test-bed for potential features of Sylpheed (<http://sylpheed.good-day.net/>), so that new features could be tested thoroughly without compromising Sylpheed's stability. Sylpheed-Claws developers regularly synchronised their codebase with Sylpheed's codebase, and Sylpheed's author, Hiroyuki Yamamoto, took back the new features he liked once they were stabilised.

Originally both Sylpheed and Sylpheed-Claws were based on GTK1. The work on the GTK2 versions started in early 2003, and the first modern (GTK2-based) Sylpheed-Claws was released in

March 2005. Since about this time, Sylpheed and Sylpheed-Claws' goals started to diverge more, and Sylpheed-Claws became an entity of its own.

Useful URLs

Website: <http://claws.sylpheed.org/>

Latest News: <http://claws.sylpheed.org/news.php>

Extra Plugins: <http://claws.sylpheed.org/plugins.php>

Icon Themes: <http://claws.sylpheed.org/themes.php>

Tools: <http://claws.sylpheed.org/tools.php>

Users' Mailing List: <http://lists.sourceforge.net/lists/listinfo/sylpheed-claws-users/>

Bugtracker: <http://www.thewildbeast.co.uk/sylpheed-claws/bugzilla/>

Project: <http://sourceforge.net/projects/sylpheed-claws/>

Getting started with Sylpheed-Claws

The initial wizard

The first time that you start Sylpheed-Claws, you will be asked a few questions in order to set up an account. These questions are easy to answer and grouped in several short pages.

First you will be asked to fill in your name, (*usually guessed from the operating system*), your email address, and the name of your organisation, (*optional*).

The following page will allow you to enter details of how to retrieve your mail. The format of the page will be determined by the "Server type":

POP3

If you choose POP3, you will need to enter the server address, username, and password. The password is optional, if you don't provide it here then you will be prompted for it each time it is needed.

IMAP

If you choose IMAP, you will need to enter the server address, username, password, and IMAP server directory. The password is optional, if you don't provide it here then you will be prompted for it each time it is needed. The IMAP server directory is also optional, often it is not needed and can be left empty.

Local mbox file

If you choose Local mbox file, you will need to enter the location of your local mailbox spool file.

On the next page you will enter the address of your SMTP server, (*sometimes referred to as "Outgoing server"*). You will also be asked whether to authenticate when sending mail; this is often not the case if you're using an ISP to connect to Internet, and often the case if you are configuring a professional account.

If you chose either POP3 or Local mbox file, the next page will ask you where you want to save your mail on disk. The default, “Mail”, is usually ok and will save your mails in a directory called “Mail” in your home directory.

If Sylpheed-Claws is built with support for OpenSSL, you will next see the “Security” page, here you will be able to choose to use SSL encryption to send and receive your emails. Most ISPs do not enable this, but many companies do; if you’re unsure about it, you can leave them unselected.

You can now click on the Save button, and start enjoying Sylpheed-Claws.

Getting mail

Retrieving your email can be done from the toolbar button named “Get mail” or from the “Receive” submenu of the “Message” menu.

If you want Sylpheed-Claws to check your mail automatically at regular intervals, you can ask it to do so from the “Mail handling: Receive” preference page which you’ll find in the “Configuration/Preferences...” menu. Just click the “Auto-check new mail every [...] minutes” checkbox, and set the interval to your liking.

Reading your mail

Once you have retrieved your emails, the Inbox folder will contain them. The total number of emails in a folder is shown at the right of the folder’s name, along with the number of unread and new emails in it. To see them, click on the folder row in the folder list, and the list of emails in that folder will be displayed in the Message List pane. You can then select an email using the mouse, or by using the Up and Down keys to navigate through the list, and the Space bar to display and scroll emails. You can use other keys to navigate through emails, like P and N (previous and next).

Writing your first mail

When clicking on the “Compose” button of the toolbar, a composition window will open. This window contains different fields which you should be able to recognise easily: if you have multiple accounts, the From field can be used to select which account you want to use for this email; the To field is for recipient of the email. When you fill it in, a second To field will appear, so that you can send the email to multiple recipients. You can also change the To field to a Cc field or other types of fields, by using its dropdown menu, or by typing in the field that you require. After that, you will be able to set the subject of your email, then type its body.

A little note about an email’s subject: Sylpheed-Claws will ask you for confirmation if you attempt to send an email with an empty subject. This is because it can be annoying for the recipient to receive emails without a subject, as it doesn’t help in handling email.

Sending your first mail

When you have finished writing your first email, you can either click the “Send” button to send your email immediately, or use the “Send later” button to queue the message for later sending. When using “Send”, the composition window will close itself when the mail has been sent; it will stay open if there is an error. When using “Send later”, the composition window will immediately close, and your

email will be stored in your Queue folder. It will then be sent when you click the “Send” button in the main window’s toolbar.

The emails that you send are saved in the Sent folder of your mailbox, so that you can recall what you wrote to whom, or use an already sent email as a template to write another.

Basic mail handling

Mail folders

If you receive a lot of emails, you will probably soon find that your Inbox folder is growing to the point where you have a hard time finding an email again, even if you received it just a few days ago. This is why Sylpheed-Claws, like most good mail clients, provides you with multiple possibilities in organising your mails.

You can create as many folders and subfolders as you need. For example, one folder for your family, one folder for friends, folders for mailing-lists, archive folders for old mails that you still want to have available, etc. To create a new folder, simply right-click on its parent folder and choose “New folder...” from the drop-down menu. If you want to create a folder ‘Friends’ inside your Inbox folder, for example, just right-click on the Inbox folder, choose “New folder...”, and type in ‘Friends’ in the dialogue that appears. Click the OK button, and the new folder is created.

Folder organisation

Now that you have created folders, you can manipulate them and their contents using menu items or drag ‘n’ drop. Moving one folder into another, for example, can be done by right-clicking on the folder you want to move, choosing the “Move folder...” menu item, and selecting the destination folder. This will move the folder, with the mail it contains, to a subfolder of the chosen folder. Alternatively, you can drag a folder to another one by clicking on it, keeping the mouse pressed, moving the mouse cursor over the destination folder and releasing the button.

If you want to remove a folder and the mail it contains, simply right-click on the folder and choose “Delete folder...”. As this is potentially harmful, (the mails in the folder will be deleted and not recoverable), you will be asked for confirmation.

In the same manner that you move a folder to another one, you can move emails from one folder to another. The same method applies for this: either drag ‘n’ drop emails to a folder, or choose “Move...” after right-clicking on the mail. You can select multiple emails by using the Control or Shift key while clicking on them. You can also copy emails to another folder by pressing the Control key when drag’n’dropping, or by choosing “Copy...” from the email’s contextual menu.

Filtering

Once you have a nice folder hierarchy in place, you’ll probably want Sylpheed-Claws to sort your incoming emails automatically, in order to avoid having to move messages manually each time they arrive. For this you can use the Filtering feature.

You will find the filtering preferences via the “Configuration” menu, “Filtering” item. From this dialogue you will be able to define new rules, modify or delete existing rules, and re-order them. Filtering

rules are defined by three things: a name, a condition, and an action. The name format is optional, it's there to help you identify your existing rules. The condition format is an expression defining what Sylpheed-Claws should look for when filtering emails, for example: 'to matchcase sylpheed-claws-users' is for messages sent to any address containing 'sylpheed-claws-users'. You can easily define conditions by clicking the "Define..." button at the right of the field. The third part of a filtering rule is the action, which instructs Sylpheed-Claws what to do with emails matching the condition we just defined. For example, 'mark_as_read' marks the mail as read as soon as it arrives in your inbox, or 'move #mh/Mailbox/Friends' moves the mail to your 'Friends' subfolder. Here, too, a "Define..." button is available to help you define the action to take.

Once you have defined the rule, you can add it to the list of rules with the "Add" button. Don't forget that the order of the rules is important: if Sylpheed-Claws finds a rule suitable for an email that either moves or deletes the email, it will stop looking for further rules for that email. This is why, at the right of the rules list, you will find four buttons allowing the re-ordering of rules. The rules can also be reordered by drag 'n' drop.

There is also a quick method of creating filtering rules based on the selected message. After selecting a mail of the type you want to filter, choose "Create filter rule..." from the "Tools" menu, and choose a type from the submenu: "Automatically" mainly helps for mailing-lists posts, "by From" creates a filter based on the sender of the email, "by To" creates a filter based on the recipient, and "by Subject" creates a filter based on the subject. Each one of these types of filtering has its advantages, it's up to you to find out what would be the more practical. Usually, "by From" is nice to sort out your regular contacts' mails, whereas "by To" is more useful to sort mails sent to your different accounts.

Searching

There are several methods for searching your emails.

One of them is relatively standard, and can be found in the "Edit" menu, it's the "Search folder..." item. This will open a window where you can specify one or more fields to search in: From, To, Subject, and Body. After having specified your criteria, click on the "Back" or "Forward" buttons to navigate through the matching emails, or use "Find all" to select all the matching emails at once. Be aware that searching for text in the body of emails is much slower than searching in its headers, because the body of emails isn't cached by Sylpheed-Claws.

If you're looking at a large email and want to find a particular part of it, you can use the "Find in current message..." item of the "Edit" menu. This works like search in a text document.

The last way of searching for emails is using Quick Search, which you can display or hide using the little magnifying glass under the Message List. It's also accessible from the "Quick Search" item of the "Edit" menu. Quick Search is more powerful than the normal search as it can search in standard headers (From, To, Subject) or in "Extended" mode using just about any criteria you can think of. When in "Extended" mode, the "Extended symbols" button is visible, enabling you to see the search syntax. A "..." button is also available which allows you to quickly create a rule. You can also configure the Quick Search to search recursively through the subfolders, and whether it should reset itself when you change folders.

When you hit Enter after having specified the search string, the Message List will shrink to present you with only the matching messages. If you set the search to be recursive, any subfolder of the current one that has matching emails will change its icon to a magnifying glass icon. This way, you can search in your whole mailbox at once. If the search is in Sticky mode, the filter will stay applied when you go to another folder. This can be disturbing at first, as you can forget about it, but is useful in some cases, for example if you want to search in the body of emails and are not sure of which

folder contains the searched email: a recursive search on the body of emails in a whole mailbox can be really slow.

Account customisation

Basic preferences

The first tab of the account preferences, Basic, contains, as its name indicates, basic account data. In this tab you can specify your name, email address, organization and basic connection information. The name of the account is just the name Sylpheed-Claws will use when referring to this account, for example, in the account switcher at the lower right-hand corner of the main window. The server information lets you specify the receiving protocol to use (which is not modifiable for existing accounts), the server(s) used to receive or send your emails (usually pop.isp.com and smtp.isp.com) and your login on the receiving server.

In the Receive tab you are able to change the default behaviour of Sylpheed-Claws. For example, leaving messages on the server for a while, preventing downloading of mails that are too large, or specifying whether you want the filtering rules to apply to this account's mails. The "Receive size limit" is used to limit the time spent downloading large emails. Whenever you receive a mail larger than this limit, it will be partially downloaded and you will later have the choice to either download it entirely or delete it from the server. This choice will be presented to you while viewing the email.

The Send tab contains preferences for special headers that you might want to add to your outgoing emails, like an X-Face, and authentication information for sending emails. Most of the time, your ISP allows its subscribers to send email via the SMTP server without authenticating, but in some setups, you have to identify yourself before sending. There are different possibilities for doing that. The best one, when available, is SMTP AUTH. When not available, you'll usually use POP-before-SMTP, which connects to the POP server, (which is authenticated), disconnects, and sends the mail.

The Compose tab holds options for changing the behaviour of the Composition window when used with the account. You can specify a signature to insert automatically, and set default Cc, Bcc or Reply-To addresses.

In the Privacy tab you can choose the default level of paranoia for your account. You might want all outgoing emails to be digitally signed and/or encrypted. Signing all outgoing emails, not only important ones, will for example allow you to protect yourself from faked mails sent on your behalf to coworkers. This can help solve embarrassing situations.

The SSL tab is also security related, although this time its settings apply to the transport of your emails and not their content. Basically, using SSL encrypts the connection between you and the server, which prevents people from snooping on your connection and being able to read your mails and your password. SSL should be used if it is available.

Finally, the Advanced tab allows you to specify ports and domains if the defaults are not used. Normally you can leave these empty. You can also specify folders for sent, queued, draft, and deleted messages here.

Account types

We saw earlier that once an account is created, you can't change its type (protocol) anymore. This is because preferences for these different types are not quite the same, most of the POP3 related options

are irrelevant for IMAP, for example.

POP3

POP3 is one of the two most used protocols and is available at almost every ISP on Earth. Its advantage is that it allows you to download email to your computer, which means that accessing your mail will be really fast once you have it on your hard disk. The disadvantage of POP3 is that it is more difficult to keep your mail synchronised on multiple computers, (you'll have to keep the mail on the server for a few days), and you won't be able to easily keep track of which mails you have read, or which mails you have replied to, etc., when using another computer.

Mail received from a POP3 account will be stored in an MH mailbox in the folder tree.

IMAP

IMAP is the second most used protocol and its goal is to address the shortcomings of POP3. When using IMAP your folder list and your emails are all kept on a central server. This slows down navigation a little as each mail is downloaded on demand, but when you use another computer, or email client, your emails will be in the same state that you left them, including their status (read, unread, replied, etc.).

When you create an IMAP account an IMAP mailbox is created for it in the folder tree.

News

News (NNTP) is the protocol for sending and receiving USENET articles. Messages are held on a central server and downloaded on demand. They cannot be deleted by the user.

When you create a News account a News mailbox is created for it in the folder tree.

Local

The 'Local MBOX file' type of account can be used if you run an SMTP server on your computer and/or want to receive your logs easily.

Mail received from a Local account is stored in an MH mailbox in the folder tree.

SMTP only

The account type 'None, (SMTP only)' is a special type of account that won't retrieve any mail, but will allow you to create different identities that can be used to send out emails with various aliases, for example.

Multiple accounts

You can easily create multiple accounts in Sylpheed-Claws. For POP accounts, you can choose to store all email from your different accounts in the same folder(s), using the Receive tab preference. IMAP and News accounts each get their own mailbox in the folder tree.

You can choose which accounts get checked for new mail when using the "Get All" command (or "Get Mail" in the toolbar) by checking the relevant box in the Receive tab of their preferences or in the 'G' column of your accounts list.

More filtering

The filtering rules are global. This means that mails from various accounts can be filtered into another account's folders, for example a mail received by POP3 could be filtered into an IMAP account's folder, and vice-versa. This is either a useful feature or an annoying one, depending on what you want to do. If you'd rather avoid that, but still want to automatically sort your incoming mail, the best thing to do is to disable Filtering on the accounts, and use Processing rules in the various Inbox folders you specified. Processing rules are applied when entering the folder.

Address book

Basic management

The address book is accessible via the "Tools/Address book" menu. It is arranged in different sections: the "Address Book" and its subsections, which contain the contacts that you added locally; the vCard sections, which contain imported vCards; and, if support for them was built into Sylpheed-Claws, the LDAP and jPilot sections, containing contacts from your LDAP servers or handheld devices.

In the "Address Book" section, you can create multiple address books; each one is able to contain addresses and/or folders. This can help you in organising your contacts by category. In addition to this, you can create groups of addresses, which can be used from the composition window to send mails to multiple people at once. The menus in the address book window allow you to do all of this. For example, you can create a *Family* folder inside your "Personal Addresses" address book, using the "Book/New folder" menu when "Personal Addresses" is selected, or by right-clicking on it. In the same way, you can add contacts to an address book or folder by using the "Address" menu, or by right-clicking an item in the list in the right-hand part of the window. When adding a contact, a new window will appear, where you'll be able to specify the details of the contact in the first tab (*Display Name, First Name, ...*), and a list of email addresses in the second tab.

A simpler way to save your contacts to your address book is to save them when reading one of their emails, using the "Tools/Add sender to address book" menu, or by right-clicking on an email address in the message view.

Exporting and importing addresses

Sylpheed-Claws can import address books easily from the majority of email programs. From the "Tools" menu in the address book, you will be able to import Pine or Mutt address books. As these formats are not so widespread, you can also import LDIF files. LDIF is a widely-used format, so most other email programs can export their address book to this format. Importing an LDIF file is done via "Tools/Import LDIF file" and is a three-step operation: select the file to import and an address book name, check the fields you want to import if the defaults do not please you, then use the "Save" button.

Advanced features

Using LDAP servers

LDAP servers are used to share address books across networks. They are often available in companies. Enabling an LDAP server in Sylpheed-Claws is quite straight forward. Choose “Book/New LDAP server” in the “Book” menu, then choose a name for this LDAP server. Enter the hostname of the server (e.g. “*ldap.sylpheed.org*”), its port, if necessary (*the standard port is 389*). You can then either fill in the “Search Base” yourself if you know what to use, or click on “Check Server” to have Sylpheed-Claws attempt to guess it automatically. If your server requires authentication, you can set it in the “Extended” tab. When you close this window by clicking “Ok”, the server appears in the address book’s sources list on the left-hand side. When selecting the server, you will see an empty list of contacts at the right, which can be surprising at first. This is to avoid doing full searches on the server without you explicitly asking for it. You can now search for names using the “Lookup” form at the bottom of this list. If you want a full listing, just search for “*”.

Integration with jPilot

Sylpheed-Claws can use addresses stored on your handheld device.

vCard support

Sylpheed-Claws can import vCards of your contacts by using “Book/New vCard”.

Advanced features

Actions

Actions allow you to use all the power of the Unix command-line with your emails. You can define various commands, taking parameters such as the current email file, a list of emails, the currently selected text, and so on. In this way, you’ll be able to perform various tasks such as editing a raw mail in your text editor, “hide” what you mean using ROT-13, apply patches contained in emails directly, and so on. The only limit is your imagination. You can configure Actions via the Tools menu.

Example 1. Simple “Open With...”

Menu name: *Open with/kate* Command Line: *kate %p*

Opens the file of the selected decoded MIME part (*%p*) with the *kate* text editor.

Example 2. Spam management using Bogofilter (<http://bogofilter.sourceforge.net/>)

Menu name: *Bogofilter/Mark as Ham* Command Line: *bogofilter -n -v -B "%f"*

Marks the currently selected mails (*%f*) as ‘not spam’ using *Bogofilter*.

Menu name: *Bogofilter/Mark as Spam* Command Line: *bogofilter -s -v -B "%f"*

Marks the currently selected mails (%f) as 'spam' using *Bogofilter*.

Example 3. Search Google using an external script

Menu name: *Search/Google* Command Line: */path/to/google_search.pl*

Searches Google for the currently selected text (l) using the external script *google_search.pl* (<http://claws.sylpheed.org/tools.php>).

Templates

Templates are used in composition windows, and act as a model for emails. Templates can be filled with static text and dynamic parts, such as the original sender's name ("Dear %N, ..."), the date, etc. When applying a template, the dynamic fields will be replaced with the relevant values. You can configure templates via the Tools menu.

When applying a template, you will be asked to "Insert" or "Replace", the difference between replacing and inserting is only concerned with the message body. "Replace" will replace the current composition window message body with the body defined in the template, clearing it if the template body is empty. "Insert" will insert the template's body, if set, at the current cursor position.

Whether you choose to Insert or Replace, any To, Cc or Bcc field that is defined in the template will be appended to the compose window's recipients list. If it is defined, the template's Subject will always replace the compose window's Subject.

Symbols can be used in all parts of the templates and will be substituted with their respective dynamic value if possible, otherwise no value will be used. This often makes more sense if you apply a template when a replying or forwarding. There is no restriction on which symbols can be used in template parts, even if inserting the body (%M or %Q) may make no sense in common situations.

When applying a template, the body is processed first, then the To, Cc, Bcc and Subject fields follow.

Further information and examples of usage can be found in the user-contributed FAQ on the Sylpheed-Claws website <http://claws.sylpheed.org/faq.php>

Processing

Processing rules are the same as Filtering rules, except that they are applied when entering a folder and apply only to this folder. You can use them to automatically move old mails into an archive folder, or for further dispatching of emails, and more. You can set each folder's Processing rules by right-clicking on it.

Processing rules are accompanied by Pre-processing and Post-processing rules. Like Processing rules, they apply only when opening a folder, but like Filtering rules, they are shared accross all folders. You can configure them from the Tools menu. Pre-processing rules are executed before the folder's specific Processing rules, while Post-processing rules are executed afterwards.

Colour Labels

Colour labels can be used to denote a message as having a particular significance. To set a colour label simply right-click a message in the Message List and use the “Colour label” submenu.

Colour labels are user-configurable. Both the colour and the label can be set by the user. Preferences can be found on the “Configuration/Preferences/Display/Colours” page.

Plugins

Plugins are the mechanism for extending Sylpheed-Claws’ capabilities. For example, imagine that you want to store your mails in a remote SQL database. In most mailers out there this is simply impossible without reworking the internals of the mailer. With Sylpheed-Claws you can simply write a plugin to achieve the task.

This is just an example of the possibilities. A good number of plugins developed for Sylpheed-Claws already exist, and more are to come. The Extending Sylpheed-Claws section gives details of them.

Deploying Sylpheed-Claws

The initial configuration wizard tries to guess various fields using information gathered from the system, such as username, hostname, and more. As it is oriented towards general use, the default values often have to be fixed. However, this wizard is customisable, in a manner designed to allow system administrators to deploy Sylpheed-Claws easily over various users of one machine, or even over multiple machines installed via some replication tool.

The first part consists of creating a wizard configuration template and setting the various default parameters of a new Sylpheed-Claws installation.

- Start with a new user who does not have a `~/.sylpheed-claws` directory, ideally a new user.
- Start Sylpheed-Claws and go through the wizard. The values you fill in will be of no use for the future deployment, so you can click next-next-next.
- Once the wizard is finished and you have Sylpheed-Claws’ main window opened, configure the various defaults you want to have in the master. You can load plugins, add people or LDAP servers in the addressbook, create filtering rules, and so on.
- If needed, and if the deployed Sylpheed-Claws will use MH folders, you can create subdirectories in the mailbox.
- Next, quit Sylpheed-Claws.
- Now, edit the newly created wizard template file, `~/.sylpheed-claws/accountrc.tmpl`. In this file, you will see different variables, corresponding to the wizard’s fields. You can leave some commented, in which case the usual default will be used, or specify values or variables. Not all fields can contain variables; for example, `smtpauth`, `smtpssl` and `recvssl` are booleans, either 0 or 1, and `recvtype` is an integer value. The other fields, like `name`, `email`, or `recvuser`, are parsed by the wizard and the variables they contain are replaced by values. This allows you to specify everything as needed for your site, even if you have strange server names or server logins.
- Save this file, and delete both `~/.sylpheed-claws/accountrc`, (which contains your dummy account) and `~/.sylpheed-claws/folderlist.xml`, (so that the folder tree will be correctly parsed for new users). Recursively copy `.sylpheed-claws` to `/etc/skel/`; if the deployed Sylpheed-Claws will use MH fold-

ers, also copy the created Mail directory. chown all of /etc/skel/.sylpheed-claws and /etc/skel/Mail to root:root for security reasons.

- Test! Create a new user, login as that user, run Sylpheed-Claws. If you filled everything as you wanted, this user will just have to fill in his passwords.
- Now, if you're creating a master for a site-wide deployment, you can continue with this process. If you were just doing it for one machine, you're done!

Here are the different variables of the accountrc.tmpl file:

domain

Your domain name (example.com). If not set, it'll be extracted from the hostname.

name

The user's name. If not set, it'll be extracted from Unix login information, which is usually ok.

email

The user's email. If not set, it'll be extracted from \$name and \$domain.

organization

Your organization. If not set, it'll be empty.

smtpserver

The smtp server to use. If not set, it'll be smtp.\$domain

smtpauth

0 or 1. Whether to authenticate on the SMTP server. If not set, it'll be 0.

smtpuser

The login on the SMTP server. If not set, it'll be empty (same login as for reception)

smtppass

The password on the SMTP server. If not set, it'll be empty (if smtppass is empty but smtpuser is not, the user will be asked for the password).

recvtype

The type of server to receive from. 0 for POP3, 3 for IMAP4, 5 for a local MBOX file. If not set, it'll be 0 (POP3).

recvserver

The reception server. If not set, it'll be (poplimap).\$domain, depending on \$recvtype.

recvuser

The login on the reception server. If not set, it'll be extracted from the Unix login information.

recvpass

The password on the reception server. If not set, it'll be empty (the user will be asked for it once per session).

imapdir

The IMAP subdirectory. If not set, it'll be empty, which is often sufficient.

mboxfile

The MBOX file to receive from if \$recvtype is 5. If not set, /var/mail/\$LOGIN.

mailbox

The MH mailbox to store mail in (for \$recvtype 0 or 5). If not set, it'll be "Mail".

smtpssl

0 or 1. Whether to use SSL for sending mail. If not set, it'll be 0.

recvssl

0 or 1. Whether to use SSL for receiving mail. If not set, it'll be 0.

Here are the different variables you can use in the domain, name, email, organization, smtpserver, smtpuser, smtppass, recvserver, recvuser, recvpass, imapdir, mboxfile and mailbox fields:

\$DEFAULTDOMAIN

The domain name as extracted from Unix hostname information. Often wrong.

\$DOMAIN

The domain name as set in the domain variable, the first of the template file.

\$USERNAME

The user's real name.

\$LOGIN

The user's Unix login.

\$NAME_MAIL

The user's real name as set in the name variable of the template field, in lowercase and with spaces replaced by dots. "Colin Leroy" becomes "colin.leroy".

\$EMAIL

The email address as set in the email variable of the template field.

Be sure not to use a variable before defining it.

Hidden preferences

There are a number of hidden preferences in Sylpheed-Claws, preferences that some users who we wanted to please couldn't live without, but which did not have a place in the GUI in our opinion. You can find the following, and change them while Sylpheed-Claws is not running in ~/.sylpheed-claws/sylpheedrc.

bold_unread

show unread messages using bold font in Message List

cache_max_mem_usage

the maximum amount of memory to use to cache messages, in kB.

cache_min_keep_time

the minimum time to keep a cache in memory, in minutes. Caches more recent than this time will not be freed, even if the memory usage is too high.

compose_no_markup

don't use bold and italic text in Compose dialogue's account selector

enable_hscrollbar

enables horizontal scrollbar in Message List

enable_rules_hint

enable alternate lines in GtkTreeViews

enable_swap_from

display sender's email address in To column in Sent folder instead of recipient's

folderview_vscrollbar_policy

specify the policy of vertical scroll bar of folder view

hover_timeout

time in milliseconds that will cause a folder tree to expand during drag 'n' drop when the mouse cover is held over it

skip_ssl_cert_check

Disables the verification of SSL certificates

statusbar_update_step

update stepping in progress bars

textview_cursor_visible

display the cursor in the message view

thread_by_subject_max_age

number of days to include a message in a thread when using 'Thread using subject in addition to standard headers'

toolbar_detachable

hide handles in the toolbars

utf8_instead_of_locale_for_broken_mail

use UTF-8 encoding for broken mails instead of current locale

warn_dnd

display a confirmation dialog on drag 'n' drop of folders

Extending Sylpheed-Claws

Provided plugins

Sylpheed-Claws' capabilities are extended by plugins. It comes with the plugins listed below included, all of which are built automatically if the required libraries are present.

Plugins are installed in `$PREFIX/lib/sylpheed-claws/plugins/` and have a suffix of `“.so”`. To load a plugin go to “Configuration/Plugins” and click the “Load Plugin” button. Select the plugin that you want and click OK.

If you don't find the plugin you're looking for, it is possible that your GNU/Linux distribution provides it in a separate package. In this case, search for the plugin in your package manager.

Clam Antivirus

Enables the scanning of message attachments in mail received from a POP, IMAP or LOCAL account using Clam AntiVirus. It can optionally delete the mail or save it to a designated folder. Preferences can be found in “Configuration/Preferences/Plugins/Clam AntiVirus”. Clam AntiVirus is available from <http://clamav.sourceforge.net/>.

Dillo HTML Viewer

Enables the viewing of html messages using the Dillo web browser, version 0.7.0 or newer. It uses Dillo's `--local` option by default for safe browsing. Preferences can be found in “Configuration/Preferences/Plugins/Dillo Browser”. Dillo is available from <http://www.dillo.org/>.

PGP/Core, PGP/Inline and PGP/MIME

Handles PGP signed and/or encrypted mails. You can decrypt mails, verify signatures or sign and encrypt your own mails. Uses GnuPG/GPGME, <ftp://ftp.gnupg.org/gcrypt/gpgme/>.

SpamAssassin

The SpamAssassin plugin comes with two major features:

The ability to scan incoming mail received from a POP, IMAP or LOCAL account using SpamAssassin. It can optionally delete mail identified as spam or save it to a designated folder. Mail scanning can be turned off, which is useful if your email is scanned on your server.

The ability for users to teach SpamAssassin to recognise spam or ham. You can train SpamAssassin by marking messages as spam or ham from the Message List contextual menu, or using the relevant toolbar button in the main window or the message window (see “Configuration/Preferences/Customize toolbars”). Messages marked as spam are optionally saved to a designated folder.

Plugin preferences can be found in “Configuration/Preferences/Plugins/SpamAssassin”.

SpamAssassin is available from <http://spamassassin.apache.org/>. Version 3.1.x or higher is required to use the learning feature in TCP mode.

Trayicon

Places an icon in the system tray that indicates whether you have any new mail. A tooltip also shows the current new, unread and total number of messages.

More plugins

Other plugins have been written too, which are available as separate downloads. At the time of this writing, there are a number of plugins available at <http://claws.sylpheed.org/plugins.php>:

Acpi Notifier

Enables new mail notification via the LEDs found on some laptops like Acer, Asus, Fujitsu and IBM laptops.

AttRemover

This plugin lets you remove attachments from emails.

CacheSaver

Saves the caches every 60 seconds (or user-defined period). It helps avoiding the loss of metadata if your computer (*or Sylpheed-Claws!*) crashes.

etpan! Privacy

Handles signature verification and decryption of encrypted messages in S/MIME, OpenPGP and ascii-armored PGP formats. Doesn't handle passphrases.

Fetchinfo

Inserts headers containing some download information, like UIDL, Sylpheed-Claws' account name, POP server, user ID and retrieval time.

GtkHtml Viewer

Like Dillo, enables the viewing of html messages, but in a nicer way (antialiased fonts).

Maildir

Provides direct support for Maildir++ mailboxes. With this plugin you can share your Maildir++ mailbox with other mailers or IMAP servers.

mailMBOX

Handles mailboxes in mbox format.

Perl

Intended to extend the filtering possibilities of Sylpheed-Claws. It provides a Perl interface to Sylpheed-Claws' filtering mechanism, allowing the use of full Perl power in email filters.

S/MIME

Handles S/MIME signed and/or encrypted mails. You can decrypt mails, verify signatures or sign and encrypt your own mails. Uses GnuPG/GPGME and GpgSM, <ftp://ftp.gnupg.org/gcrypt/gpgme/>.

SynCE

Assists in keeping the address book of a Windows CE device (Pocket PC/ iPAQ, Smartphone etc) in sync with Sylpheed-Claws' address book, with respect to email addresses.

vCalendar

Enables vCalendar message handling like that produced by Evolution or Outlook, and Webcal subscriptions.

RSSyl

Allows you to read your favorite newsfeeds in Claws. RSS 1.0, 2.0 and Atom feeds are currently supported.

If you're a developer, writing a plugin to extend Sylpheed-Claws' capabilities is probably the best and easiest solution. We will provide hosting to your code, and will be glad to answer your questions in the mailing-list or the IRC channel, #sylpheed on IRCnet.

Network access from the plugins

Some of the external plugins, for example RSSyl, vCalendar or GtkHtml Viewer, need Internet access for their operations (retrieving feeds in the case of RSSyl or vCalendar, and fetching images in the case of GtkHtml Viewer). These plugins use the Curl library. Hence, if your Internet access is restricted by a proxy, you will need to tell libCurl to use this proxy. This is done by setting an environment variable, `http_proxy`. For example, `http_proxy=http://user:passwd@myproxy.example.com:8080` will tell libCurl to connect to port 8080 of the machine myproxy.example.com, with the user "user" and password "passwd" to connect to the Internet.

You can either set this variable before starting Sylpheed-Claws, by using for example `http_proxy=http://user:passwd@myproxy.example.com:8080` in `sylpheed-claws`, or set it in your `~/.bashrc` file, by adding the following line: `export http_proxy=http://user:passwd@myproxy.example.com:8080` (you'll have to reconnect to have it taken into account).

A. The Sylpheed-Claws FAQ

What are the differences between Sylpheed-Claws and Sylpheed?

Sylpheed-Claws is the *extended* version of Sylpheed, therefore you will find that it has all the features that Sylpheed has and a lot more besides. It also includes some modified dialogues to enhance usability. Further information can be found at <http://claws.sylpheed.org/features.php>.

What does the word "Sylpheed" mean?

"Sylpheed" is a corruption of the word *Sylph*. Sylphs are invisible beings (spirits) of the air.

Does Sylpheed-Claws allow me to write HTML styled messages?

No. A discussion has gone on around this topic, and the outcome was that HTML mail is not wanted. If you really need to send HTML, you can of course attach a webpage to an email.

How can I submit patches, report bugs, and talk about Sylpheed-Claws with others?

Patches should be submitted via the SourceForge project Patch Tracker at http://sourceforge.net/tracker/?group_id=25528&atid=384600, but please follow the patch guidelines at <http://claws.sylpheed.org/devel.php>.

Bug reports should be submitted at our Bugzilla, <http://www.thewildbeast.co.uk/sylpheed-claws/bugzilla/>.

To talk to others, you should join the Sylpheed-Claws users' mailing list at <http://claws.sylpheed.org/MLs.php>.

Does Sylpheed-Claws have an anti-spam feature?

Yes. It has a SpamAssassin plugin. You can find details of it on the Extending Sylpheed-Claws chapter.

You can also use other spam filters via the "Filtering" and "Actions" features, such as Bogofilter. Instructions on how use Bogofilter with Sylpheed-Claws can be found on the Bogofilter FAQ (<http://bogofilter.sourceforge.net/faq.shtml#with-sc>).

Does Sylpheed-Claws support Return Receipts?

Yes. To request a Return Receipt use "Options/Request Return Receipt" in the Compose window. When you receive a message that requests a Return Receipt a notification area is shown just above the message view. You can either use the "Send receipt" button, or ignore the request - no receipts are sent automatically.

How can I make Sylpheed-Claws notify me when new mail arrives?

Go to "Configuration/Preferences", in the "Mail handling/Receive" section, use the settings for "Run command when new mail arrives". Alternatively, use the Trayicon plugin.

Why are special characters (e.g. umlauts) not displayed correctly?

In most cases, this is caused by emails with broken encodings. You can try to force it using the "View/Character Encoding" submenu.

Can I quote just a section of the original message when replying?

Yes, select the section in the message view and choose “Reply”.

Where can I find the answers to more FAQs about Sylpheed-Claws?

An enlarged, user-contributed FAQ can be found on the Sylpheed-Claws website, <http://claws.sylpheed.org/faq.php>

B. Default keyboard shortcuts

Motivations and general conventions

Although Sylpheed-Claws is a graphical application and can mainly be commanded with your mouse, it also requires the frequent use of the keyboard. Composing a mail is the most common of the tasks that require the use of the keyboard. For people who write a lot of mails, having to move hands from keyboard to mouse greatly reduces productivity, so Sylpheed-Claws provides keyboard shortcuts to allow faster operation.

This not only benefits power users by providing keyboard alternatives and keyboard navigation, it also enables people with disabilities, (who may not be able to properly control a pointing device), to use Sylpheed-Claws.

The most general convention is the `Escape` key. Focused dialogues or windows can be closed by hitting the `Esc` key.

There are other key combinations which are assigned by default to menu items. We won't list these here, as they are already shown on the righthand side of the menus themselves, so you can easily learn them with usage. Furthermore, if you don't like them, these shortcuts can be changed on the fly by focusing on the menu item and pressing the desired key combination, but only for key combinations that include the `Alt`, `Ctrl` and/or `Shift` modifier keys; single keys cannot be assigned. (This is a standard behaviour of GTK2 library based programs like Sylpheed-Claws. Note that this behaviour may be disabled by default on some desktops.)

In addition to these shortcuts there are others which vary from window to window, which are summarised in the following sections.

Main window

Shortcut	
<code>Ctrl+p</code>	Print...
<code>Ctrl+w</code>	Work offline

Shortcut

Ctrl+Shift+s	Synchronise folders
Ctrl+s	Save as...
Ctrl+q	Exit
Ctrl+c	Copy
Ctrl+a	Select all
Ctrl+f	Find in current message...
Shift+Ctrl+f	Search folder...
Ctrl+t	Toggle threaded display
n	Goes to next mail in Message List. The <code>Down</code> arrow does the same.
p	Goes to previous mail. The <code>Up</code> arrow is a synonym.
Shift+n	Goes to next unread mail.
Shift+p	Goes to previous unread mail.
g	Go to other folder...
Ctrl+u	Show message source
Ctrl+h	Show all message headers
v	Toggles the message view panel visibility. When invisible, Message List expands itself to fill the full window height and more summary lines are displayed.
/	Positions the cursor on the Quicksearch field, also opening the Quicksearch panel if needed.
Ctrl+Alt+u	Update summary
Ctrl+i	Get mail from current account
Shift+Ctrl+i	Get mail from all accounts
Ctrl+m	Compose a new message
Ctrl+r	Reply
Shift+Ctrl+r	Reply to all
Ctrl+l	Reply to mailing list
Ctrl+Alt+f	Forward message
Ctrl+o	Move...
Shift+Ctrl+o	Copy...
Ctrl+d	Move to trash
Shift+d	Empty all Trash folders
Shift+*	Mark message
u	Unmark message
Shift+!	Mark message as unread
Shift+Ctrl+a	Open address book
x	Execute
Shift+Ctrl+l	Open log window

Compose window

Shortcut

Ctrl+Return	Send
-------------	------

Shortcut

Shift+Ctrl+s	Send later
Ctrl+m	Attach file
Ctrl+i	Insert file
Ctrl+g	Insert signature
Ctrl+s	Save
Ctrl+w	Close
Ctrl+z	Undo
Ctrl+y	Redo
Ctrl+x	Cut
Ctrl+c	Copy
Ctrl+v	Paste
Ctrl+a	Select all
Ctrl+b	Move a character backward
Ctrl+f	Move a character forward
Ctrl+e	Move to end of line
Ctrl+p	Move a previous line
Ctrl+n	Move a next line
Ctrl+h	Delete a character backward
Ctrl+d	Delete a character forward
Ctrl+u	Delete line
Ctrl+k	Delete to end of line
Ctrl+l	Wrap current paragraph
Ctrl+Alt+l	Wrap all long lines
Shift+Ctrl+l	Toggle auto wrapping
Shift+Ctrl+x	Edit with external editor
Shift+Ctrl+a	Open address book

C. Acknowledgements

The Sylpheed-Claws manual was written by:

- Colin Leroy (<mailto:colin@colino.net>)
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- ...

D. Glossary

A

Account

An account represents an identity within Sylpheed-Claws. As such only one email address is associated with each account. However, the number of accounts you can setup is unlimited.

Action (filtering/processing rules)

An action is something that is performed on a message when it matches the rule conditions. A typical action is moving the message to a particular folder. See also *Condition (filtering/processing rules)*.

Actions

Actions are user-defined commands that can be applied to a message, or part of a message, using a special syntax. They are presented to the user in a customisable menu.

Address book

Storage for names, mail addresses and custom user attributes. Also provides access to *LDAP* servers and *vCard* files.

ASCII

American Standard Code for Information Interchange. A standard *Character encoding* using 7 bit. It's defined as an Internet standard in RFC 20 (<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc20.txt>).

Attachment

Additional file(s) included with a mail message. Some attachments can be displayed by Sylpheed-Claws, others require external programs. *Plugins* can provide additional functions for attachments.

C

Character encoding

A map between written symbols, like letters and other symbols, and the numbers used to represent them inside the computer. The most well-known character encoding is probably *ASCII*, but it has been superseded by others, such as *UTF-8*.

Compose

Create new a message text or a reply to a received mail in the Compose window.

Condition (filtering/processing rules)

The prerequisites that a mail message must fulfil in order for the rule's action to be executed. See also *Action (filtering/processing rules)*.

D

Digital signature (GPG)

A piece of data obtained from merging a message and a cryptographic key which ensures message authorship, in a similar way that a hand-written signature does in a document. This piece of data is sent with the message so the recipient can verify its validity.

E

Encryption (GPG)

Scrambling a message with a cryptographic key so that only the recipient and owner of the key password can unscramble it for reading.

F

Filtering rule

A *Rule* applied to incoming messages. Filtering rules can be also applied manually to the contents of any folder.

Folder

A folder is the primary message container. Folders can be local or remote, but they are managed in a uniform way by Sylpheed-Claws.

Forward

To send a copy of a received mail to another recipient, optionally adding your own message.

H

Headers

Machine readable lines which form the first part of a mail message. The purpose of headers varies; Typical headers are From and To which state the sender and recipient of the message, others are used by the mail system. Some headers are optional and are used to provide additional information, such as *X-Face*.

HTML

Hyper-Text Markup Language and was the standard language to encode web pages in the beginning of the WWW. Some mail clients use this language to encode the textual body of mails in order to craft special effects to text at the cost of multiplying the message size several times. HTML mail is also widely used by spammers to send *Spam*.

I

IMAP4

Internet Messaging Access Protocol (version 4). A protocol for accessing email on a remote server from a local client. All messages are stored in the remote server.

Immediate execution

When the “immediate execution” option is used, operations performed on messages, (like deletions or movements), are performed immediately. If the option is turned off, all operations performed on messages by the user are only carried out when the “Execute” button is pressed.

L

LDAP

Lightweight Directory Access Protocol. A protocol for accessing information directories such as organisations, individuals, phone numbers, and addresses.

LDIF

LDAP Data Interchange Format. A text file format widely used for moving data between *LDAP* servers and/or other programs.

Local mbox file

A local mailbox spool file in *MBOX* format.

Log window

A special window which records protocol operations in detail that are performed by Sylpheed-Claws. It’s a useful tool for debugging.

M

Mailbox

The root folder of the folder hierarchy.

Maildir

A mailbox format in which all mail is kept in separate files. Maildir++ is an extension to the maildir format.

Mark (message)

A tag that can be set on a message by the user in order to draw attention to the message. Marks are shown in the Mark column of the Message List.

MBOX

A mailbox format in which all mail is concatenated and stored in a single file. The mbox format supported by Sylpheed-Claws is mboxrd.

Message

A message is the basic piece of information handled by Sylpheed-Claws. A message is usually an email message, which is stored in *MH* format on disk. Other kinds of messages (and storage formats) can be handled through *Plugins*.

MH

A mailbox format in which all mail is kept in separate files. This is the default mailbox format used by Sylpheed-Claws.

MIME

Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions. Internet standards for representing binary data in *ASCII* text format, *Headers* encoding and *Attachment* s.

N

NNTP

Network News Transfer Protocol. The protocol used to post, distribute, and retrieve *USENET* messages, also called news articles or simply news for short.

Newsgroups

A set of hierarchical partitions of *USENET* messages on a *News server* . The *NNTP* protocol allows the user to subscribe to one or more newsgroups. New messages posted to the subscribed groups are automatically downloaded on connection.

News server

Server which provides access to *USENET* messages in *Newsgroups* through the *NNTP* protocol.

P

PGP Inline

Digital signing method which includes the signature data in the message body.

PGP MIME

Digital signing method which includes the signature data as a separate *MIME Attachment* .

Plugins

External modules which can be loaded and used by Sylpheed-Claws to extend its functionality.

POP3

Post Office Protocol (version 3). A protocol for retrieving email from a remote server. Messages can be automatically removed from server after downloading.

Privacy (GPG)

Privacy provides methods for both signing and encrypting mail messages you send and also for verifying and decrypting signed and encrypted messages that you receive.

Processing rule

A *Rule* or set of rules belonging to a folder which are executed on entering the folder.

Q

Queue

Temporary storage for messages which are waiting to be sent, either because they couldn't be sent due a network failure or because the user requested them to be sent later.

Quick Search

A powerful way to search for messages using almost any criteria that you can think of.

Quotation

When replying to a message the user will often include a quoted section of that message to provide the context. The quoted section is shown by the prepending of a common character, usually '>'.

R

Recursive (Quick Search)

A recursive *Quick Search* will also search in all subfolders of the selected folder.

Redirect

To send a copy of a received mail in its original form to another recipient.

Reply

Answer to a received message. As verb also the act of answering a message.

Rule

Logical structure comprised of one or more conditions (see *Condition (filtering/processing rules)*) and one or more associated actions (see *Action (filtering/processing rules)*). Rules are used for filtering mail messages.

S

SMTP

Simple Mail Transfer Protocol. A protocol for sending email to servers.

SMTP server.

A server which receives mail messages from other hosts and/or sends mail messages to other hosts using the *SMTP* protocol.

Source (message)

The full text of a message as it is transmitted over the network. This includes all headers, message body and encoded attachments if present.

Spam

Junk mail, unsolicited commercial emails.

Spell checking

Automatic verification of spelling while typing or after composition has finished.

SSL

Secure Sockets Layer. A protocol used to encrypt and protect data sent over a network.

SSL certificate

A certificate installed on a secure server that is used for identification.

STARTTLS

STARTTLS (Start Transport Layer Security) is a command used to initiate a secure connection between two servers using *SSL* .

Sticky (Quick Search)

When the sticky option is set on *Quick Search* the search terms are not cleared when changing folders.

Synchronisation (folder)

Making the contents of a local folder mirror those of an equivalent remote folder in the associated mail server.

T

Themes

Image sets for changing the appearance of buttons, folders and other graphical elements of Sylpheed-Claws.

Thread (messages)

A set of messages loosely relating to each other.

Toolbars

Sets of buttons arranged horizontally which provide access to all commonly used functions. Toolbars in Sylpheed-Claws can be customised.

U

USENET

User's Network. A bulletin board system of discussion groups, often called *Newsgroups* .

UTF-8

8-bit Unicode Transformation Format. A variable length character encoding capable of representing any universal character. An Internet standard defined in RFC 3629 (<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc3629.txt>).

V

vCard

File format standard for Personal Data Interchange, it can hold information such as address, phone numbers, etc., much like the information usually found in a business card. They are commonly found attached to mail messages.

W

Wrapping

Restructuring of the message text based on a user-defined maximum number of characters per line. Wrapping ensures that paragraphs are justified, which means that they are aligned to the left and right margins.

WWW

World Wide Web, the hyperlinked network of web pages accross the Internet.

X

X-Face

Specially coded black and white image (48x48 pixels) included in the message headers. Capable mailers like Sylpheed-Claws and others can decode and show it alongside the message text. Although they are not unique, they can help to quickly identify the message sender.

E. GNU General Public License

Version 2, June 1991

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