

Differences between using POP3 and IMAP mail accounts:

1- If used IMAP what you have local is the same on the server, as both of them syncs together each time you send / receive mails, so if you for some reason lost all your local data , you will have all of them on the server and you can restore them, also you will be able to see all your folders from the web mail not only from your local machine, the big downside of the IMAP that if you delete any mail from the local machine , it will be deleted also from the server and then you lost it totally, Also the mails don't downloaded to your local machine unless you open it "just sends the headers only", then when you click to open it, it starts to download it to your local device, so if you don't open a mail and go offline for any reason you will not able to open it as it is not downloaded yet, you have to go online and click on the mail to open it.

All your folders are on the server and you can see them from any device.

2- The POP3 in this case, all your local folders are on your local device and it doesn't found on the server , the server receives your mails and forward it to you when you check the mail, you can save a copy of your inbox mails on server , you can delete all mails from the server after receiving them or delete them when you delete them form local machine, or delete them after a period of time., on the server there are no folder except the inbox only, in POP case all mails downloaded to your local machine or device when you start to send and receive mail.

All your folders are on your local machine or device "except inbox" and you can only see them from a single machine.

BASIS FOR COMPARISON	POP3	IMAP
Basic	To read the mail it has to be downloaded first.	The mail content can be checked partially before downloading.
Organize	The user cannot organize mails in the mailbox of the mail server.	The user can organize the mails on the server.
Folder	The user cannot create, delete or rename mailboxes on a mail server.	The user can create, delete or rename mailboxes on the mail server.
Content	A user cannot search the content of mail for prior downloading.	A user can search the content of mail for specific string of character before downloading.
Partial Download	The user has to download the mail for accessing it.	The user can partially download the mail if bandwidth is limited.
Functions	POP3 is simple and has limited functions.	IMAP is more powerful, more complex and has more features over POP3.
Speed	Fast	Slow
Storage of content	Downloaded onto local device, unless 'keep a copy on the server' selected.	Always on server
Mail Syncing	No	Yes
Direction	One-direction - Changes made on device have no effect on server content.	Bi-directional - Whatever changes you make on server or device, the other side shows the changes too.
Offline Use (no internet connection)	Mails can be read offline once downloaded; device only needs to go online to download email.	Mails downloaded can be read or deleted when offline. Changes made on the device are synced with the server when device goes online.
Port used by server	Port 110	Port 143
Consolidation of multiple accounts	Yes	No
Keep messages on the server	Possible	Required
Current version	POP3	IMAP4rev1
Year of Creation	First specified in paper 1988 (RFC 1081)	IMAP 2 was first specified in 1990 (RFC 1176)
Previous versions	POP (POP1), POP2, POP3, POP4 (proposed)	IMAP, IMAP2, IMAP3 (never accepted), IMAP2bis (renamed IMAP4)