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The MAIL FROM subdomain in E-mail Center: your own return path and SPF aligned for DMARC

SMTP Relay & Transactional

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The MAIL FROM subdomain in E-mail Center: your own return path and SPF aligned for DMARC

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The short answer: MAIL FROM is the **return path**, where bounces go. By default it is ours. If you set a subdomain of yours, such as `bounce.yourcompany.com`, SPF **aligns with your domain** and DMARC gets stronger. It is optional: the domain is verified and sends fine without it.

Two senders in one e-mail

Every e-mail has two sender addresses: the one the customer sees in the From field, and the return path, which only servers read. SPF checks the return path; DMARC wants that address on the same domain as From. With our return path, DMARC passes through DKIM. With a return path on your own subdomain, it passes through DKIM **and** SPF.

	No MAIL FROM of your own	Your own MAIL FROM
Return path	Ours	A subdomain of yours, like `bounce.yourcompany.com`
DMARC passes through	DKIM	DKIM and SPF
Extra records	None	One `MX` and one `TXT` on the subdomain

How to set it

1. **Pick a subdomain you use for nothing else**, such as `bounce`. Do not use the main domain: the subdomain MX is only for bounces and must not touch your company mail.

2. **Save it** on the domain in E-mail Center, or with `PUT /v1/email/domains/{domain}/mail-from` and the body `{"subdomain": "bounce"}`.

3 **Publish the two new records** that appear in `dns_records`: one `MX` and one `TXT`, on the subdomain.

4 **To go back to our return path**, save an empty value.

Leave the MX of your main domain alone.
The new MX record goes on the subdomain only. Put it on the main domain and the mail for your mailboxes stops arriving.

Want to know whether SPF aligns yet?
Send an e-mail to one of your own mailboxes, open the original and look at the SPF and DMARC results. How to do it is in **reading an e-mail header**.

NEED A HAND?

Want help setting MAIL FROM without touching your company mail? Get in touch.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Adding a sender domain to E-mail Center: the DKIM, SPF and DMARC records to publish**
- **Sender domain not verified in E-mail Center: propagation, the found field and usual mistakes**
- **Creating your DMARC record, and reading what it sends back**
- **Reading an e-mail header: did SPF, DKIM and DMARC pass?**
- **SPF, DKIM and DMARC: why your e-mail lands in spam**
- **Someone is sending e-mail in the name of your domain: what SPF, DKIM and DMARC do about it**

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