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SMTP Relay in Laravel and other PHP frameworks: the .env settings and a first test e-mail

PHP & Development

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SMTP Relay in Laravel and other PHP frameworks: the .env settings and a first test e-mail

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The short answer: in Laravel, SMTP Relay goes in the **.env** file, without touching the code: server, port 587, the credential username and password, and a sender on the verified domain. Clear the config cache, send a test e-mail from tinker and check it in the Email Center log. In other frameworks the idea is the same; only the variable names change.

The Laravel .env

```
MAIL_MAILER=smtp
MAIL_HOST=SMTP_HOST
MAIL_PORT=587
MAIL_ENCRYPTION=tls
MAIL_USERNAME=SMTP_USER
MAIL_PASSWORD=SMTP_PASSWORD
MAIL_FROM_ADDRESS=no-reply@yourcompany.com
MAIL_FROM_NAME="${APP_NAME}"
```

Replace `SMTP_HOST` with the server in the Connection card, and `SMTP_USER` and `SMTP_PASSWORD` with the credential details. In recent Laravel versions the `MAIL_ENCRYPTION` line is no longer read: on port 587 STARTTLS is negotiated automatically, and for port 465 you write `MAIL_SCHEME=smtps`.

The first test e-mail

```
php artisan config:clear
php artisan tinker
>>> Mail::raw('SMTP Relay test', fn ($m) => $m->to('you@example.com')->subject('Test'));
```

If there is no error, open the Email Center log: the e-mail must be there. If there is one, the message nearly always says whether it is the connection, TLS, login or sender: see **the common problems**.

Other frameworks

Framework	Where it is set
Symfony	In the `MAILER_DSN` variable, in the form `smtp://USERNAME:PASSWORD@SMTP_HOST:587`. If the password has special characters, URL-encode them.
CodeIgniter, CakePHP and others	In the e-mail configuration file: SMTP protocol, server, port 587, TLS encryption, username and password.
Plain PHP	With PHPMailer: see **sending with PHPMailer**. Why not the mail() function: **mail() or SMTP**.

The .env file must not be reachable.
It belongs outside the public folder of the site and outside the repository. A .env that opens in a browser hands the credential password to anyone: if that happened, see **leaked password**.

Send through a queue.
A page that waits for the SMTP server before answering feels slow. In Laravel, use `Mail::queue()` or classes with `ShouldQueue`, and keep a `php artisan queue:work` process running.

NEED A HAND?

Application still not sending? Open a ticket with the error message from the application log, without the password.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Sending e-mail from your own code with PHPMailer**
- **Sending e-mail from PHP: mail() or SMTP**
- **Sending through SMTP Relay from Node.js and Python: Nodemailer and smtplib, with STARTTLS**
- **SMTP Relay in any program: what Host, Port, Encryption, Username and From mean on each screen**
- **SMTP Relay not sending: connection, TLS, login, sender and recipient problems, one by one**

Using SMTP Relay and the e-mail API together: the same domains, log and blocked list →

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