

Overdracht

Setting up Brevo

Create your sending account, authenticate your domain and connect your agencies. No technical knowledge required.

Contents

1. Before you start

1. What you are about to do
2. What to have to hand
3. Why this step is compulsory

2. Creating your Brevo account

3. Authenticating your domain

1. Understanding it in one minute
2. Getting the three records
3. Adding them in Namecheap
4. With another provider
5. Getting Brevo to verify

4. Declaring your sender

5. Creating the API key

6. Entering the key in Overdracht

7. Checking that it works

8. Common problems

9. Short glossary

1 Before you start

Brevo is the service that actually delivers e-mails and SMS to your customers. Overdracht writes the messages, Brevo sends them.

1.1 What you are about to do

Five steps, in this order. Allow about thirty minutes of hands-on work, plus a waiting time that is out of your control.

Step	Action	Time	Where
1	Create the account	5 minutes	Brevo website
2	Authenticate the domain	15 minutes, then waiting	Brevo, then your domain provider
3	Declare the sender	2 minutes	Brevo
4	Create the API key	2 minutes	Brevo
5	Enter the key	2 minutes	Overdracht

Step 2 is the only one that needs care. The rest is copy and paste. If you have to stop part way, stop after step 2: that is the one with the waiting time built in.

1.2 What to have to hand

- **Your domain name**, for example `myagency.com`. It is what comes after the @ in your e-mail addresses.
- **Access to wherever you bought that domain**: Namecheap, OVH, GoDaddy, Gandi, Cloudflare or another provider. Username and password.
- **A business e-mail address** on that domain, the one that will appear as the sender of your notifications.
- **Your Overdracht administrator credentials**, for the last step.

If you do not have access to your domain, stop here and get it. It is often held by the person or supplier who built your website. Without that access, authentication is impossible and your notifications will not go out.

1.3 Why this step is compulsory

When Brevo sends a message on your behalf, your customers' mail providers, Gmail, Outlook, Yahoo, quite reasonably ask whether that send is authorised. With no proof, they file the message as junk or reject it outright.

Authenticating your domain means lodging that proof, once and for all. It is the difference between a customer who receives their pick-up QR code and a customer who never sees it.

Since 2024, Gmail and Yahoo have required it for any bulk sending. It is not a recommendation.

2 Creating your Brevo account

- 1 Go to www.brevo.com and click **Sign up free**.
- 2 Enter your **business e-mail address** and a password. Avoid a personal address at gmail.com or hotmail.com: use your company one.
- 3 Confirm your address by clicking the link you receive by e-mail.
- 4 Fill in your company details. Brevo asks for the name, the industry and a phone number.
- 5 Brevo may ask for **account validation**, sometimes by phone, before allowing you to send. This is a normal anti-fraud measure. Answer that you send transactional notifications to your own customers, which is exactly the case.

Is the free plan enough?

Brevo's free plan allows **300 e-mails per day**, with no time limit and no credit card.

Those 300 sends are a **global cap**: they cover both your automatic notifications and any marketing campaign you send from Brevo. If you use 250 on a campaign, only 50 notifications are left for your customers that day. Unused sends do not carry over to the next day.

To size your needs, count roughly **three to four e-mails per shipment**: creation, availability, payment confirmation, delivery. An agency handling 100 shipments a day will therefore outgrow the free plan. SMS are charged per message on every plan.

Each agency can have its own Brevo account, or they can all share one. One account per agency keeps quotas and statistics separate, which is clearer if your agencies have very different volumes.

3 Authenticating your domain

The step everything else depends on. You are going to copy three lines from Brevo and paste them at your domain provider.

3.1 Understanding it in one minute

Your domain name has a **public record** that any server in the world can look up. It is called the DNS zone. Think of it as a directory page: it says where your website is, where your mail goes, and who is allowed to speak in your name.

You are going to add three lines to it. Each one answers a question that your recipient's mail provider asks.

Line to add	What it says
Brevo code	"This domain really is mine." It is the proof of ownership Brevo requires before agreeing to send on your behalf.
DKIM	"Here is my signature." Every message goes out signed, and the mail provider checks the signature against this line. This is the central mechanism.
DMARC	"Here is what to do with a message claiming to come from me without a valid signature." Always start with a monitoring policy.

You have nothing to invent: Brevo generates these three lines for you. Your job is simply to copy them to the right place without changing a single character.

3.2 Getting the three records

- 1 In Brevo, click **your name at the top right**, then **Senders, Domains & Dedicated IPs**.
- 2 Open the **Domains** tab, then click **Add a domain**.
- 3 Enter your domain **without www and without https**: type `myagency.com` , not `www.myagency.com` .
- 4 Choose the **manual** setup if Brevo offers you the choice. The automatic setup only works with certain providers and shows you less of what is happening.
- 5 Brevo then displays a table of three lines. **Leave that page open in a tab**, you will come back to it for each copy.

The table looks like this. The values are specific to your account, the ones below are only examples.

Type	Name (or host)	Value
TXT	@	brevo-code:a1b2c3d4e5f6a7b8c9d0
TXT	mail._domainkey	k=rsa;p=MIGfMA0GCSqGSIb3DQEBAQUAA4GNADCBiQKBgQ...
TXT	_dmarc	v=DMARC1; p=none; rua=mailto:rua@dmARC.brevo.com

Copy the values with Brevo's copy button rather than by dragging the mouse. A manual selection often picks up a

stray space at the start or the end, and the record is then refused with no clear explanation.

3.3 Adding them in Namecheap

The example below uses Namecheap. If you are with another provider, the logic is the same and only the screen names change: see the next section.

Getting to the DNS zone

- 1 Sign in at `namecheap.com`.
- 2 In the left-hand menu, click **Domain List**.
- 3 Find your domain in the list and click the **Manage** button on the right.
- 4 Open the **Advanced DNS** tab.

First check, on the **Domain** tab, that the **Nameservers** section shows **Namecheap BasicDNS**, **PremiumDNS** or **FreeDNS**. If it shows anything else, for example Cloudflare servers or your web host's, then your DNS zone is not managed here and whatever you add on this page will have **no effect**. Go to the service named there instead.

Adding each line

Repeat the following three times, once per line in Brevo's table.

- 1 In the **Host Records** section, click **Add new record**.
- 2 In the **Type** column, choose **TXT Record**.
- 3 In the **Host** column, copy the name given by Brevo.
- 4 In the **Value** column, paste the value given by Brevo.
- 5 Leave **TTL** on **Automatic**.
- 6 Once all three lines are entered, click **Save all changes**. Until you click, nothing is saved.

The three traps to know about

Trap	The rule
Typing the domain into Host	Namecheap appends your domain by itself. Enter <code>mail._domainkey</code> and never <code>mail._domainkey.myagency.com</code> , or the line ends up at the wrong address.
Not knowing what to put for the root	When Brevo shows your domain on its own as the name, type the <code>@</code> character into Host. In Namecheap, <code>@</code> means "the domain itself".
Adding quotation marks	Never wrap the value in quotation marks. Namecheap handles that. Paste the raw text exactly as Brevo gives it.

The special case of DMARC

Before adding the `_dmarc` line, check that one does not already exist. **A domain must carry only one DMARC record**. If there are two, authentication fails. If a `_dmarc` line is already there, do not duplicate it: keep it and move on to verification.

3.4 With another provider

The screens differ, the work is the same. Here is where to look.

Provider	Path to the DNS zone
OVH	Customer area, then Domain names, your domain, DNS zone tab, Add an entry button
Cloudflare	Select the domain, then DNS, then Records, Add record button
GoDaddy	My Products, then DNS next to the domain, Add button
Gandi	Domains, your domain, DNS Records tab, Add button
Google Domains, Squarespace	Domains, your domain, DNS, Custom records

The wording varies: "Host" may be called Name, Subdomain or Hostname; "Value" may be called Content, Target or Data. The meaning is identical.

In Cloudflare a **Proxy status** column appears. It does not apply to TXT records and stays on "DNS only". Do not change it.

3.5 Getting Brevo to verify

- 1 Wait.** Allow about thirty minutes with Namecheap. Some providers take several hours. This is your lines spreading to servers around the world, and nobody can speed it up.
- 2** Go back to the Brevo tab you left open and click **Verify configuration**.
- 3** All three lines should turn green. If one stays red, read it again: it is almost always a copying mistake or a domain wrongly added in the Host field.
- 4** If everything looks right but the button still refuses, wait another thirty minutes and try again. Propagation is sometimes slower than advertised.

This authentication is done **once per domain**, not once per agency. If all five of your agencies use addresses at @myagency.com , one authentication covers all five.

4 Declaring your sender

The address that will appear in your customers' inbox.

- 1 In Brevo, open **Senders, Domains & Dedicated IPs**, then the **Senders** tab.
- 2 Click **Add a sender**.
- 3 Enter a **name**, the one your customers will see, for example the agency name.
- 4 Enter the **e-mail address**, which must be on the domain you have just authenticated.
- 5 Brevo sends a confirmation e-mail to that address. Click the link it contains.

The sending address **must be on the authenticated domain**. An address at `@gmail.com` or `@yahoo.com` will always be rejected or filed as junk, whatever else you have set up.

Choosing the address well

Address	Verdict
<code>notifications@myagency.com</code>	Recommended. Clear, impersonal, and it survives staff turnover.
<code>contact@myagency.com</code>	Acceptable, provided the mailbox is monitored: your customers will reply to it.
<code>noreply@myagency.com</code>	Avoid. Mail providers are suspicious of it, and a customer who replies gets nothing back.
<code>john.smith@myagency.com</code>	Avoid. The day John leaves the company, your notifications stop.

Overdracht automatically sets the agency address as the reply-to. A customer replying to a notification therefore writes to the relevant agency, even though the visible sender is generic.

For SMS

If you intend to send SMS, Brevo also asks for an **SMS sender name**: a short piece of text, **11 characters maximum**, with no spaces or accents, shown in place of the number on the recipient's phone. A shortened version of your agency name works well.

5 Creating the API key

The password that lets Overdracht send through your Brevo account.

- 1 In Brevo, click **your name at the top right**, then **SMTP & API**.
- 2 Open the **API keys** tab.
- 3 Click **Generate a new API key**.
- 4 Give it a name that will still make sense in six months, for example `Overdracht – Douala agency`.
- 5 **Copy the key immediately** and paste it into Overdracht, or into a password manager while you get there.

This page is shown **only once**. If you close the window without copying the key, it is gone for good and you have to generate a new one. Not serious, but worth avoiding.

Two tabs on this page look alike: **API keys** and **SMTP keys**. Overdracht needs the **API key**. An SMTP key will not work.

One key per agency

Generate a separate key for each agency, even when they share the same Brevo account. You can then revoke one agency's access without disturbing the others, and you will know where a problem comes from.

Treat this key as a password

- Never send it by e-mail or instant messaging.
- Do not write it down in a shared file.
- If you think it has been passed around, delete it in Brevo and generate another. It takes two minutes.

In Overdracht the key is never shown again once saved, not even to you. That is deliberate.

6 Entering the key in Overdracht

- 1 Sign in to Overdracht with an administrator account.
- 2 Open **Settings**, then the **Agencies** tab.
- 3 Click **Edit** on the agency concerned.
- 4 Scroll down to the **Email notifications (Brevo)** block.
- 5 Fill in the fields below, then save.

Field	What to enter
Brevo API key	The key copied in chapter 5.
Sender email	The address declared in chapter 4, character for character.
Sender name	The name your customers will see, for example the agency name.
SMS sender	Your short name, 11 characters maximum. Leave empty if you do not send SMS.
Notification channels	Tick Email, and SMS if you use them. An unticked channel sends nothing.

The block shows **Key configured** once saved. To change the address or the name without touching the key, **leave the key field empty**: it will be kept.

Repeat for each agency. An agency with no key sends no notifications at all, and a banner in the agency list will remind you.

7 Checking that it works

Do not assume it is fine. Run the test, it takes three minutes.

- 1 Create a **test shipment** using, as the sender, an e-mail address you can check yourself.
- 2 Confirm the shipment.
- 3 Open the **Notifications** module in Overdracht. Your message should appear with the status **Sent**.
- 4 Check your inbox. Look in the junk folder as well.

Result	What it means
Status Sent and message in the inbox	Everything is correct, you are done.
Status Sent but message in junk	Sending works, your domain's reputation is simply new. It improves with volume. Check that all three DNS lines are green in Brevo.
Status Failed	The reason is shown next to it. See the next chapter.
Nothing in the log	The Email channel is not ticked on the agency, or the contact has no e-mail address.

Remember to delete your test shipment afterwards, while it is still a draft.

8 Common problems

Brevo will not verify my domain

Three causes, in order of frequency. You typed the full domain into the Host field instead of just the prefix. You did not wait long enough. Your nameservers point somewhere other than the provider where you added the lines, so your changes were never published.

Overdracht shows "Invalid or missing Brevo key"

The key was copied badly, often clipped at the start or the end, or you used an SMTP key instead of an API key. Generate a new one and paste it again.

Overdracht shows "Sender not verified in Brevo"

The address entered in Overdracht does not match a confirmed sender in Brevo exactly, or the confirmation e-mail was never clicked. Go back to the Senders tab in Brevo and check that the address is listed with a green marker.

Overdracht shows "Brevo quota reached"

You have used your 300 sends for the day. The counter resets tomorrow. If it happens again, move to a paid plan: your customers are not being informed in the meantime.

Overdracht shows "Recipient contact missing or invalid"

The problem is not with Brevo but in your contact record: a missing or misspelt e-mail address, or a phone number in the wrong format for SMS. Correct the contact record.

E-mails go out but land in junk

First check that all three lines are green in Brevo. Then bear in mind that a domain that has never sent e-mail starts with a neutral reputation, which builds over a few weeks of regular sending. Avoid sending marketing campaigns from the same domain early on.

I lost my API key

It cannot be recovered, which is normal. Delete it in Brevo, generate a new one and enter it on the agency concerned.

I changed domain name

Start the authentication again for the new domain, declare a new sender, then update the sending address on each agency in Overdracht. The API key stays valid.

9 Short glossary

The words you will come across, explained without jargon.

Term	In plain words
Domain name	What follows the @ in your e-mail address, and what identifies your website. Example: <code>myagency.com</code> .
DNS	The public directory of your domain. It says where your website is, where your mail goes, and who may write in your name.
DNS zone	The page holding all those lines, at your domain provider.
TXT record	A line of free text in that zone. Brevo's three lines are all of this type.
Host, or Name	The column that says where in the domain the line applies. @ means the domain itself.
Propagation	The delay before a change is known everywhere in the world. From thirty minutes to a few hours.
Nameservers	The servers that are authoritative for your DNS zone. They decide which provider you must make your changes with.
DKIM	The signature added to every message, proving it really comes from you and has not been altered.
SPF	The list of servers allowed to send for your domain. Brevo does not require it, DKIM is enough.
DMARC	The instruction given to mail providers for messages that fail the checks.
API key	The password that lets Overdracht send through your Brevo account.
Transactional	A message triggered by a specific action, such as a parcel becoming available. That is what Overdracht sends, as opposed to marketing campaigns.