



Using Trigger Nodes in n8n for Automated Workflows

Overview

This SOP explains how to use trigger nodes in n8n to automate workflows. Trigger nodes are the starting point of any automation in n8n; they wait for an event (like a scheduled time, webhook, or email) to start the rest of the workflow. This guide details the different types of trigger nodes, practical examples, and step-by-step instructions to build two automated workflows: one for sending a daily summary of pending leads and another for auto-responding to agency inquiries received by email. By following these steps, you will be able to automate repetitive tasks, respond to clients faster, and manage business processes more efficiently.

Step-by-Step Guide

Understanding and Selecting Trigger Nodes in n8n

1. Open n8n and Start a New Workflow

2. Add a Trigger Node

- a. Click the "+" button.
- b. Search for and select a trigger node relevant to your workflow:

- Schedule Trigger
- Webhook Trigger
- Gmail Trigger
- Manual Trigger
- Error Trigger
- IMAP Email Trigger
- MCP Server Trigger

- **n8n Trigger**
 - Others as listed in n8n.
-

Example 1: Daily Lead Summary Sender

1. Add a Schedule Trigger

- Choose **Schedule Trigger**.
- Set "days between triggers" to **1** (for every day).
- Set the trigger time to **07:00** (7 a.m.).

2. Fetch Rows from Google Sheets

- Add the **Google Sheets** node.
- Choose **Get Rows** action.
- Connect to the correct Google Sheet (e.g., **removal form**).
- Select the appropriate sheet (e.g., **Sheet1**).

3. Filter for Pending Leads

- Add a **Filter** node.
- Set the filter: Column = **status**, Value = **pending**.

4. Aggregate Filtered Rows

- Add an **Aggregate** node.
- Combine all filtered rows into a single array item.

5. Format Data for AI Agent

- Add an **AI Agent** (OpenAI, Gemini, etc.).
- Set the user prompt using the aggregated list.
- Convert the array to a JSON string if required.
- Paste the system message template (for HTML email generation).

6. Send Summary Email

- Add an **Email** node.
- Set recipient to your own email or worker email.
- Use the AI agent's HTML output as the email message.

- d. Optionally, set sender name (e.g., "Leads to Call").
-

Example 2: Automated Response to Email Inquiries

1. Add a Gmail Trigger

- a. Choose **Gmail Trigger**.
- b. Set it to poll for new emails (e.g., every minute).
- c. Disable "simplified output" to access full message.

2. Classify Email Type

- a. Add a **Text Classifier** node (using an AI model).
- b. Set categories (e.g., **inquiries**, **others**).
- c. Drag and drop the email text into the classifier.

3. Extract Email Fields

- a. Add a **Set** node.
- b. Extract and map: sender's email, subject, message text, sender's name.

4. Generate a Personalized Reply

- a. Add an **AI Agent** node.
- b. Set prompt using extracted fields.
- c. Paste the system message and HTML template for replies.

5. Send Automated Reply

- a. Add a **Gmail Send Message** node.
 - b. Set recipient to sender's email.
 - c. Set subject as **RE: <original subject>**.
 - d. Use HTML output from AI agent as the message body.
 - e. Optionally, set sender name (your agency or personal name).
-

Warnings and Notes

- **Credentials:** Ensure all connected accounts (Google Sheets, Gmail, AI provider) are authenticated correctly, or the workflow will fail to execute.

- **Array Aggregation:** If you skip the aggregation step, the workflow may send multiple emails (one per item), instead of a single summarized message.
- **Trigger Timing:** Be careful with schedule and polling intervals. Too frequent polling (e.g., every few seconds) may exhaust API quotas or cause unnecessary load.
- **Email Formatting:** Test the HTML output in different email clients to ensure formatting remains consistent.
- **Error Handling:** Consider adding error triggers or fallback workflows for failed automation steps.
- **Data Privacy:** Never expose sensitive credentials in templates or workflow exports.

System Prompts:

Workflow 2:

▼ Prompt

You are a helpful assistant writing HTML emails using this template of our company info, pricing, services to our potential clients considering their request. Output the filled HTML only:

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
<style>
body {
font-family: Arial, sans-serif;
color: #333;
line-height: 1.6;
}
.container {
width: 100%;
max-width: 600px;
margin: 0 auto;
padding: 20px;
border: 1px solid #e0e0e0;
box-shadow: 0 0 10px rgba(0,0,0,0.05);
background-color: #ffffff;
```

```

border-radius: 8px;
}
.header {
background-color: #007bff; /* A professional blue
/
color: white;
padding: 20px;
text-align: center;
border-top-left-radius: 8px;
border-top-right-radius: 8px;
}
.header h2 {
margin: 0;
font-size: 24px;
}
.content {
padding: 20px;
}
.content p {
margin-bottom: 15px;
}
.section-title {
color: #007bff;
font-size: 20px;
margin-top: 25px;
margin-bottom: 10px;
border-bottom: 1px solid #e0e0e0;
padding-bottom: 5px;
}
.button-container {
text-align: center;
margin-top: 20px;
margin-bottom: 20px;
}
.button {
display: inline-block;
background-color: #28a745; /
A friendly green for the button /

```

```

color: white !important; /
Important to override Gmail's link styling */
padding: 12px 25px;
text-decoration: none;
border-radius: 5px;
font-weight: bold;
}
.footer {
margin-top: 30px;
text-align: center;
font-size: 0.85em;
color: #777;
padding-top: 15px;
border-top: 1px solid #e0e0e0;
}
a {
color: #007bff;
text-decoration: none;
}
a:hover {
text-decoration: underline;
}
</style>
</head>
<body>

<div class="container">
<div class="header">
<h2>Thank You for Your Work Request!</h2>
</div>

<div class="content">
<p>Dear [Client Name],</p>
<p>Thank you for reaching out to [Your Agency Name]! We appreciate your
interest in our services.</p>
<p>This automated response confirms that we've received your work
request. To help you get started, here's some information about our pricing,
agency, and a link to schedule a consultation.</p>

```

```

<h3 class="section-title">Our Pricing & Packages</h3>
<p>We offer flexible pricing models tailored to meet diverse project needs.
Our standard packages include:</p>
<ul>
  <li><strong>Basic Package:</strong> Ideal for small projects and
startups. [Brief description of what's included, e.g., "Includes 10 hours of
design work and 2 revisions."]</li>
  <li><strong>Standard Package:</strong> Our most popular choice,
offering a balanced set of services. [Brief description, e.g., "Includes 40
hours of development and dedicated project manager."]</li>
  <li><strong>Premium Package:</strong> Comprehensive solutions for
large-scale and complex requirements. [Brief description, e.g., "Full-service
solution with ongoing support and priority access."]</li>
</ul>
<p>For a detailed breakdown of our services and pricing tiers, please visit
our dedicated pricing page:</p>
<div class="button-container">
  <a href="[Link to Your Pricing Page]" class="button">View Our
Pricing</a>
</div>

<h3 class="section-title">About [Your Agency Name]</h3>
<p>[Your Agency Name] is a leading [Your Industry, e.g., digital marketing,
web development, creative design] agency dedicated to helping businesses
like yours achieve their goals. With [Number] years of experience, our team
of experts specializes in [mention 2-3 key services, e.g., SEO, bespoke web
design, brand strategy].</p>
<p>Learn more about our mission, values, and the results we deliver for our
clients:</p>
<div class="button-container">
  <a href="[Link to Your About Us Page]" class="button">Learn More About
Us</a>
</div>

<h3 class="section-title">Schedule a Consultation</h3>
<p>We'd love to discuss your project in more detail and provide a
personalized quote. Please use our calendar link below to book a
convenient time for a free consultation:</p>

```

```

<div class="button-container">
  <a href="[Link to Your Calendar/Booking Page]" class="button">Book a
  Free Consultation</a>
</div>

<p>We look forward to connecting with you soon!</p>
<p>Best regards,<br>The Team at [Your Agency Name]</p>

</div>

<div class="footer">
<p>[Your Agency Name] | [Your Website URL] | [Your Phone Number]</p>
<p>© [Current Year] [Your Agency Name]. All rights reserved.</p>
</div>
</div>
</body>
</html>

```

Workflow 1:

▼ Prompt

You are a helpful assistant writing HTML emails using this template to me every morning with our hot leads which are pending to processed Output the filled HTML only:

```

<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
<style>
body {
font-family: Arial, sans-serif;
color: #333;
}
.container {
width: 100%;
max-width: 700px;
margin: 0 auto;
padding: 20px;
border: 1px solid #ddd;

```



```

box-shadow: 0 0 10px rgba(0,0,0,0.1);
background-color: #fff;
}
h2 {
color: #4CAF50; /* Reverted to green for the heading
/
text-align: center;
}
table {
width: 100%;
border-collapse: collapse;
margin-top: 20px;
}
th, td {
padding: 12px 15px;
text-align: left;
border-bottom: 1px solid #ddd;
}
th {
background-color: #4CAF50; /
Reverted to green for table header /
color: white;
}
tr:nth-child(even) {
background-color: #f2f2f2; /
Reverted to light grey for even rows /
}
tr:hover {
background-color: #ddd; /
Reverted to light grey on hover */
}
.footer {
margin-top: 30px;
text-align: center;
font-size: 0.9em;
color: #777;
}
</style>

```

```

</head>
<body>

<div class="container">
<h2>Pending Leads for Follow-up</h2>
<p>Dear [Your Name],</p>
<p>Here are your leads with "Pending" status that require your immediate
attention. Please review and contact them as soon as possible to ensure
smooth progression.</p>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<!-- Lead 1 →
<tr>
<td>
<u>john.doe@example.com</u></td>
<td>123-456-7890</td>
<td>123 Main St, Anytown, USA</td>
<td>10 miles</td>
<td>Need to move 3 boxes and a small desk.</td>
</tr>
<!-- Lead 2 →
<tr>
<td>
<u>alice.williams@example.com</u></td>
<td>111-222-3333</td>
<td>101 Elm St, Greentown, USA</td>
<td>50 km</td>
<td>Transporting a large antique cabinet.</td>
</tr>
<!-- Lead 3 →

```

```

<tr>
<td>
grace.hall@example.com</td>
<td>999-000-1111</td>
<td>606 Willow Ct, Forestville, USA</td>
<td>12 miles</td>
<td>Moving contents of a 1-bedroom apartment.</td>
</tr>
<!-- Add more rows here as needed for future pending leads →
</tbody>
</table>

<p>Please remember to update the status of these leads once contacted.
</p>

<div class="footer">
<p>This is an automated reminder. Please do not reply to this email.</p>
<p>© [Current Year] Your Company Name. All rights reserved.</p>
</div>
</div>

</body>
</html>

```

Visual Diagram

flowchart TD

```

Start1([Start: Schedule Trigger])
GetRows1([Get Rows from Google Sheets])
Filter1([Filter for Pending Leads])
Aggregate1([Aggregate Rows])
AIAgent1([Format for AI Agent])
SendEmail1([Send Summary Email])

```

```

Start2([Start: Gmail Trigger])
Classify2([Classify Email Type])
Extract2([Extract Fields])
AIAgent2([Generate Personalized Reply])

```

SendEmail2([Send Automated Reply])

Start1 → GetRows1 → Filter1 → Aggregate1 → AI Agent1 → SendEmail1

Start2 → Classify2 → Extract2 → AI Agent2 → SendEmail2