SMTP (Simple Mail Transfer Protocol)

SMTP is the de facto standard for email transmissions across the Internet. SMTP is a relatively simple, text-based protocol, in which one or more recipients of a message are specified (and in most cases verified to exist) along with the message text and possibly other encoded objects. The message is then transferred to a remote server using a procedure of queries and responses between the client and server. Either an end-user's email client, a.k.a. MUA (Mail User Agent), or a relaying server's MTA (Mail Transport Agents) can act as an SMTP client.

An email client knows the outgoing mail SMTP server from its configuration. A relaying server typically determines which SMTP server to connect to by looking up the MX (Mail eXchange) DNS record for each recipient's domain name (the part of the email address to the right of the at (@) sign). Conformant MTAs (not all) fall back to a simple A record in the case of no MX. Some current mail transfer agents will also use SRV records, a more general form of MX, though these are not widely adopted. (Relaying servers can also be configured to use a smart host.)

The SMTP client initiates a TCP connection to server's port 25 (unless overridden by configuration). It is quite easy to test an SMTP server using the telnet program.

SMTP is a "push" protocol that does not allow one to "pull" messages from a remote server on demand. To do this a mail client must use POP3 or IMAP. Another SMTP server can trigger a delivery in SMTP using ETRN.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smtp