Outlook Tweaks and Tips

The Basics

Using Run

This guide relies on the use of the "Run" command. To access the "Run" window:

Click "Start" -> Type "Run" in your start search bar

You can then type in the command and click "OK" or press "Enter". Alternatively you can access recently used commands by clicking on the dropdown arrow on the right.
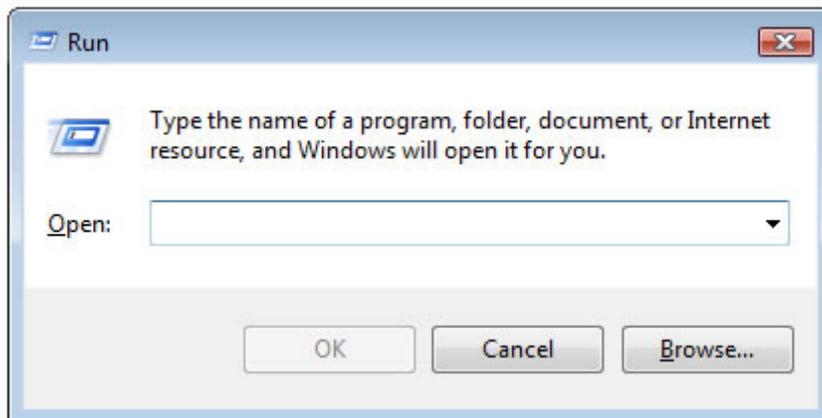
Opening and Using the Registry Editor

Many of the tweaks and hacks in this guide rely on the registry editor so you will need to get familiar with this tool.

A WORD OF CAUTION: The Registry Editor is very powerful and can cause severe damage to your PC if not used correctly. Before doing any registry edits, you must backup your registry. Any edits to the registry **at your own risk** and we take no responsibility for any problems that may occur and we do not guarantee that any of the following tweaks will work. You MUST backup the registry first.

To open the registry editor:

Open "Run" then type in "regedit" and click "OK" or press "Enter"
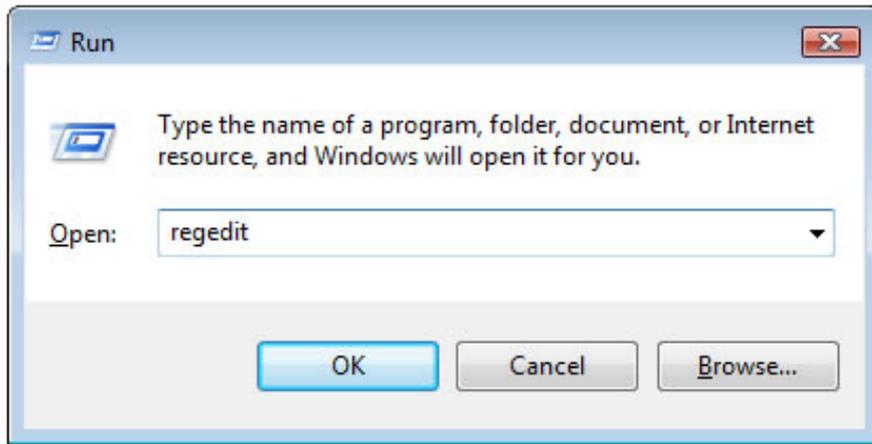
A quicker way to open the registry editor is by typing "regedit" in the "Start Search" box and then press "Enter".
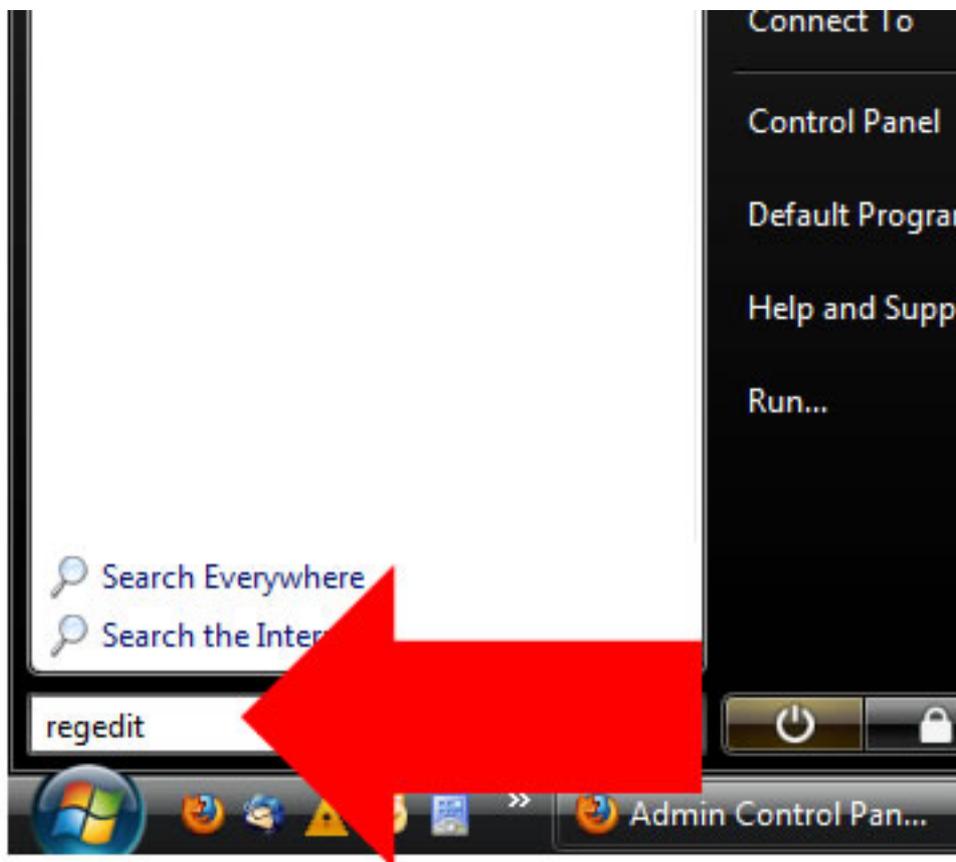
The Registry Editor

The Registry Editor is very easy to navigate. The initial view shows the five main keys that make up the registry. You can expand and collapse the keys just as you would any other folders in Windows Vista.

The keys contain subkeys and each of these has a value that can be edited.
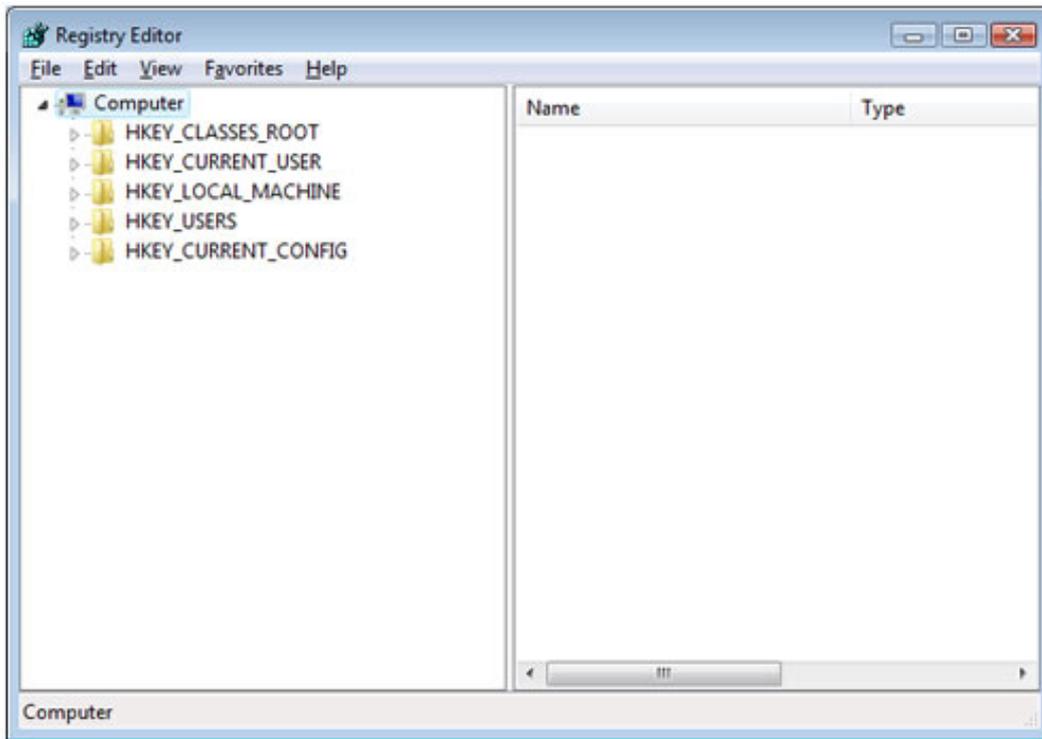
You can browse to any subkey simply by expanding the folders.
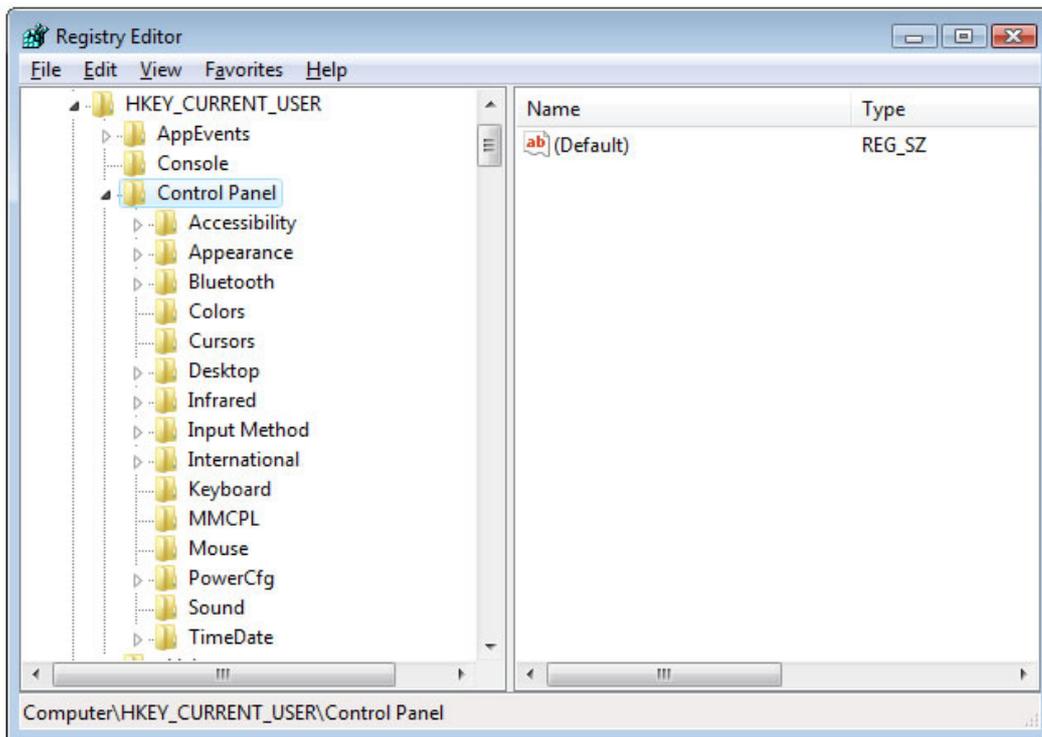
New keys or values can be created by right-clicking on an existing key or you can right click anywhere in the right side of the registry window.

You can view and modify existing values by double clicking on its name in the right side of the window.

Backup the Vista Registry

Make sure to backup the Windows Registry before attempting any edits. It is also a good idea to keep a backup anyway, just in case something goes wrong, you can always roll back to a properly working registry.

OK, here is a quick way to backup your registry:

- Open registry editor,
- Click file > export
- Give the file a name (eg. reg-backup-date)
- Change export range to all
- The backup will take a few moments
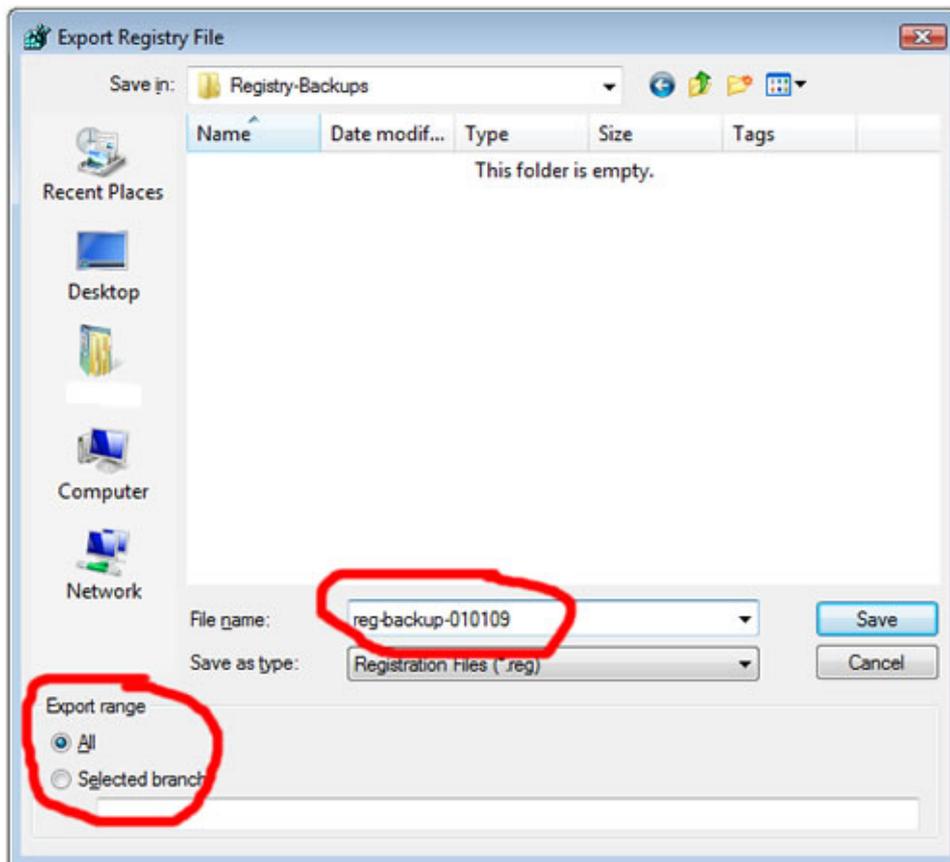
That's it; your Windows Vista Registry is now backed up!!

Outlook Settings

Change Your Outlook Startup Folder

OK, so by now you are probably sick of the default startup folder set in Outlook. The good news is that you can change this quite easily.

You can either turn off Outlook Today, or you can set a default folder to open in.

To switch off Outlook Today: When Outlook opens in the Outlook Today window, just click on "Customize Outlook Today".
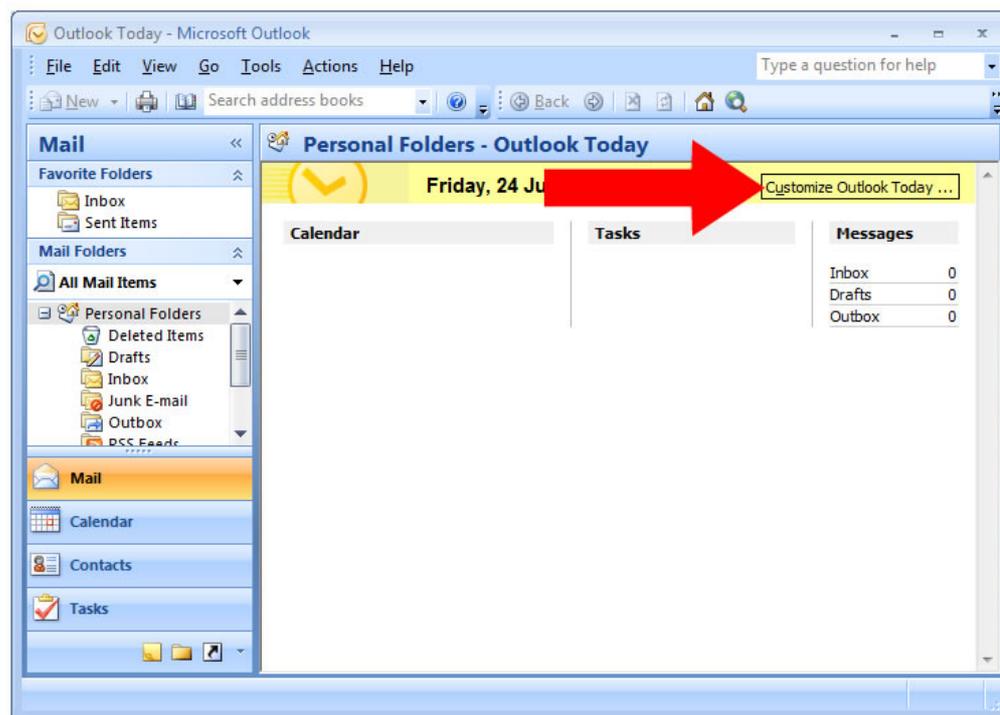
Uncheck the box that says "When starting, go directly to Outlook Today".

To set a default opening folder:

- Open Outlook
- Click "Tools" -> "Options"
- Click the "Other" tab
- Click the "Advanced Options" button
- You can now click on the "Browse" button to change the "Startup in this folder"

Change the Font in Outlook

Unless you are very fond of the 10 pt Arial font you may from time to time want to change it up a bit, here is how you do it;

Outlook 2003

- Click tools > options
- Click the mail format tab
- Click the fonts button
- You can now change your font here
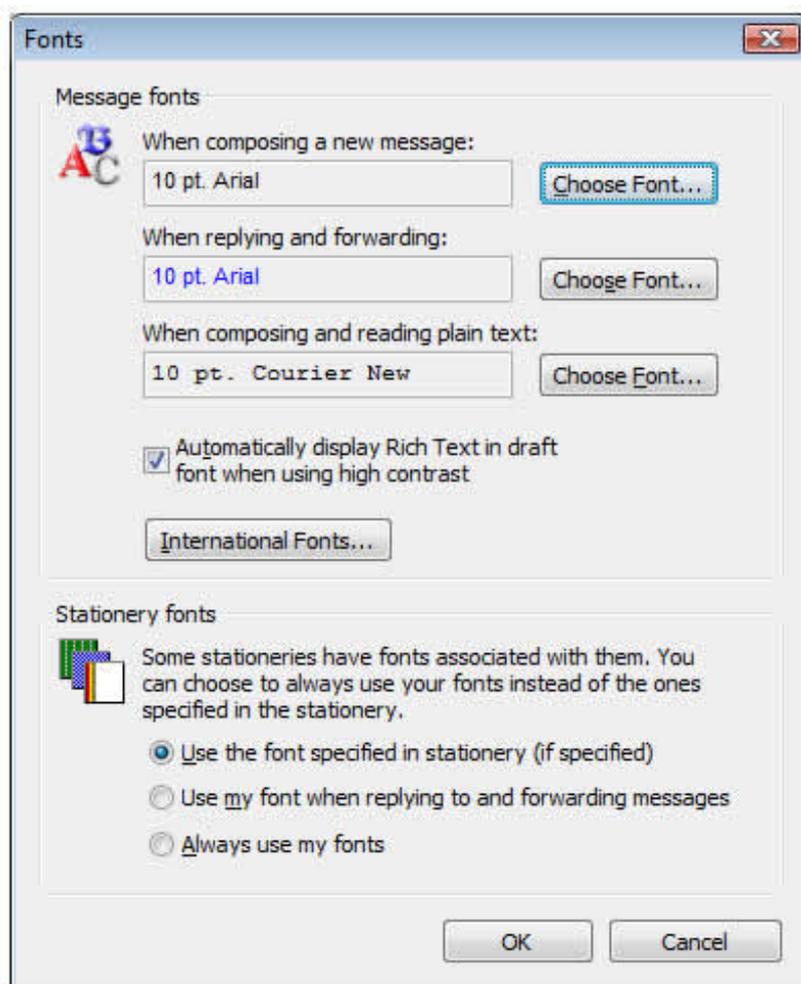
Outlook 2007

- Click tools > options
- Select the mail format tab
- Click stationery and fonts
- Click the personal stationery tab
- Click font
- You can change your font here

Clean Up Your Inbox With Mailbox Cleanup

This tweak should really help out people that receive large numbers of emails daily, so if you only receive a few you should easily be able to control your inbox manually.

To start up mailbox cleanup and clean up your inbox just;

- Click tools and select mailbox cleanup
- You now have several options to choose from

Switch off Desktop Email Notifications

This tool is extremely handy to notify you when you receive new emails (rather than opening up Outlook all the time), but if you receive heaps of mail each day you may find it really annoying.

Here is how you can switch off the desktop email notifications;

- To get started click on tools
- Click options
- Click email options
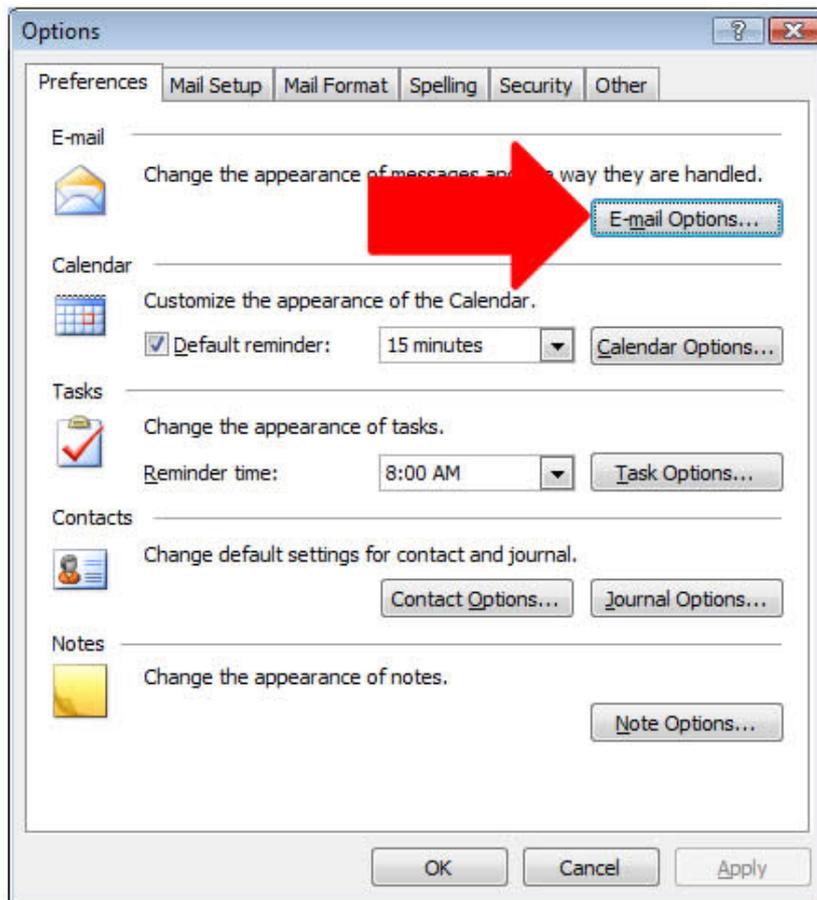
- Now click on advanced email options
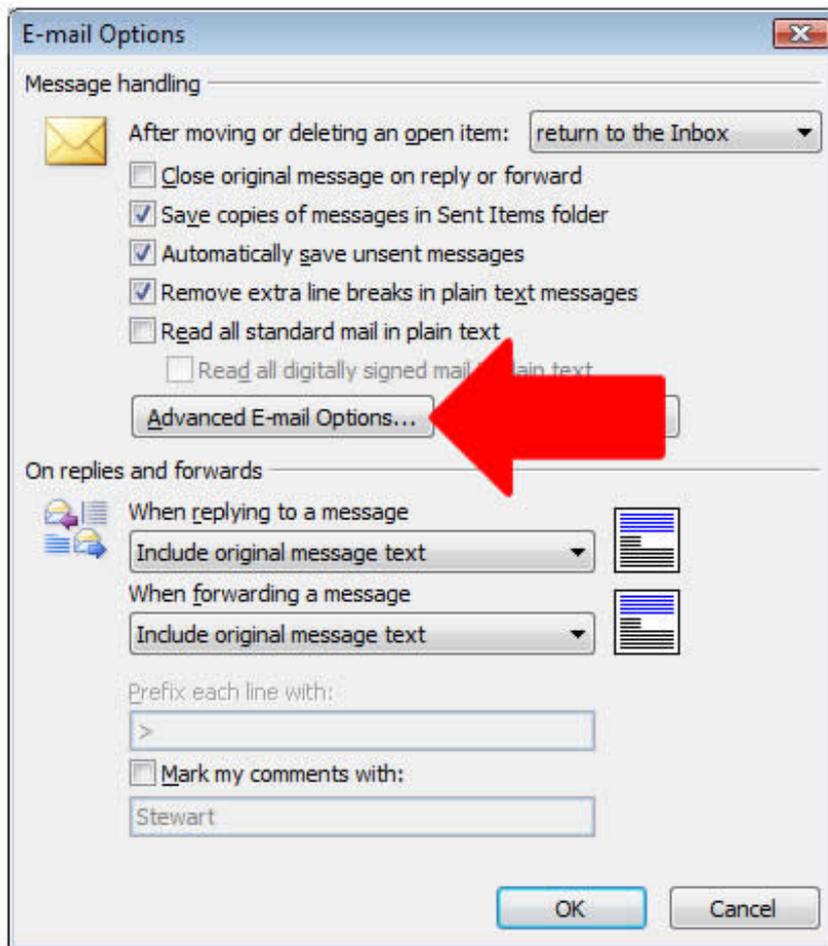
- Now uncheck display a new mail desktop alert
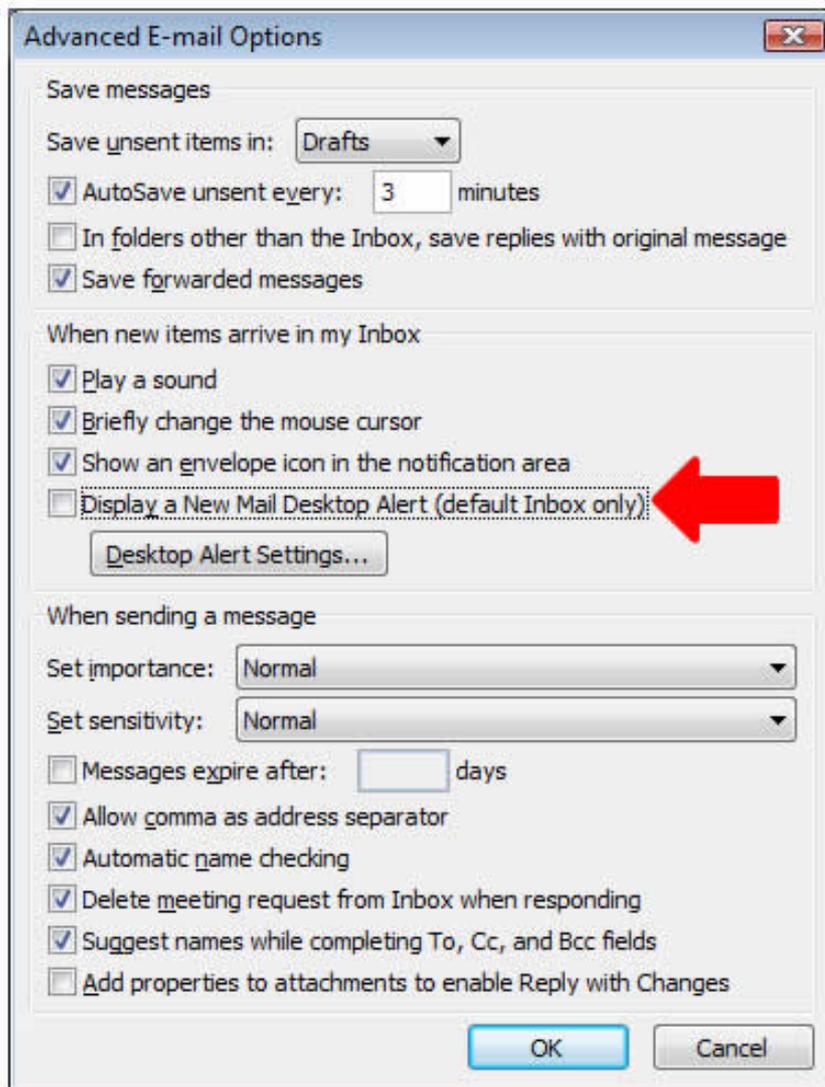
- Click OK

Mark a Message as Unread

You may have noticed that when you click on a message to read the message loses its boldness and becomes marked as read.

For any reason you may not want that message to be marked as read, here is how you change it to be marked as unread.

- Simply right click the message and click mark as unread

Automatically Empty Deleted Items

You can manually empty the items you have deleted on Outlook, but you can also automatically make it empty all the deleted items every time you exit Outlook;

- Click tools > options

- Click the other tab
- Make sure 'Empty the deleted items folder upon exiting' is checked
- Click apply
- Note: By doing this you cannot retrieve items you accidentally delete after you exit
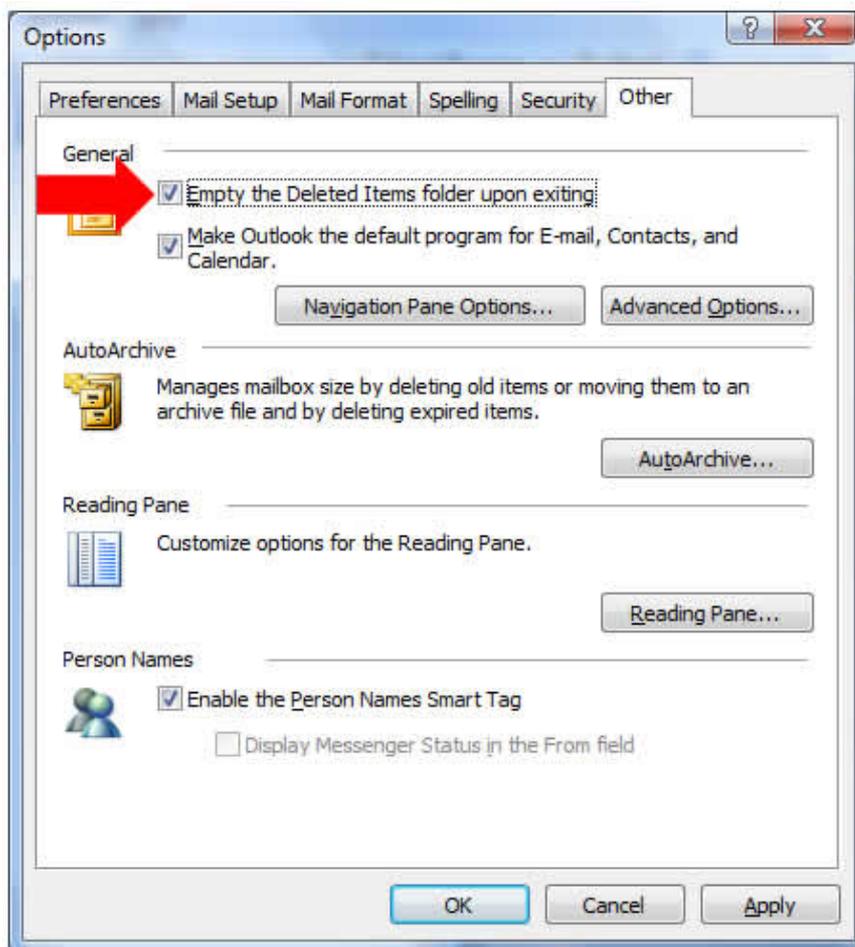
Send Outlook to System Tray When Minimized

Here is a quick registry hack that will send your Outlook 2000/2002/2003/2007 icon to the system tray when you minimize it;

- Open regedit
- Navigate to this location
    - HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Office\12.0\Outlook\P references
- Create a new DWORD – MinToTray
- Set the value to 1
- Done

Note: The 10.0 value in the location will be different for the different Outlooks, this is what they will be;

- 9.0 - Outlook 2000

- 10.0 - Outlook 2002
- 11.0 - Outlook 2003
- 12.0 – Outlook 2007
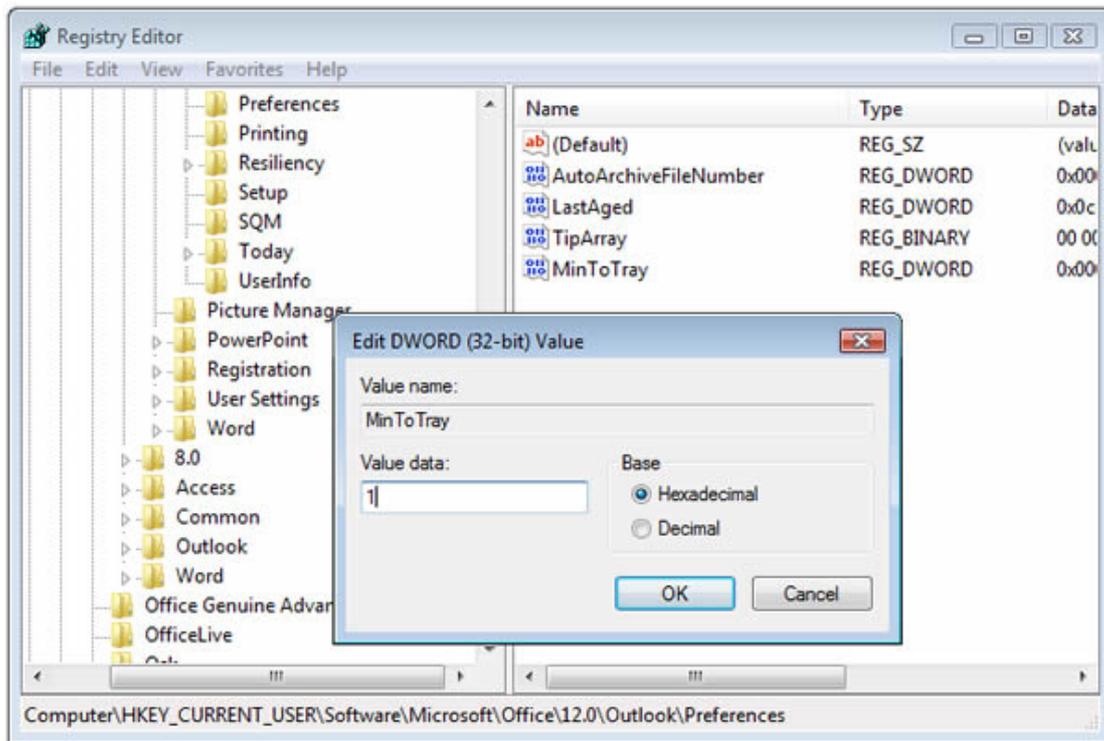
Rename an Email Folder

You may want to rename a folder in your Outlook for any reason (sort them by alpha etc.), well here is how you do it;

- Display the folder list
- Click on the folder you want to rename
- Click file > folder > rename folder
- Rename your folder
- Done

You can also rename a folder in the folder list by right clicking on it and selecting rename folder.

Outlook Fun Stuff

Add a Background Picture to any Outlook 2007 Email

This tweak will allow you to set any picture as the background to any email you send in Outlook 2007. Just don't go overboard as the background image will add to the overall size of the email;

- Open up a new email in Outlook 2007
- Click the options tab
- Click the page color drop down
- Click fill effects
- Here you can select a background color from the options (textures, gradients etc) or you can select your own picture
- Go to the picture tab and browse your files till you find your picture
- Don't make the picture too big
- And try to make the picture light in color as the text is written over the top
- Done

Note Colors in Outlook

Here is the simple way to change the color of notes in Outlook;

- Click on Notes on the Navigation pane
  - o   (or you can simply use your down arrow and scroll down to Note)
  - o   (or Keyboard Shortcut is CTRL+SHIFT+N)
- Write any information you want in the note
- You must now close the note
- Right click on the closed note
- Select the arrow by Color
- Here you can choose any new color you want
- All Done!

Use Voting in Outlook

Did you know that you can add a voting button to any Outlook email you send, this means you can send a multiple email out asking everyone the same question and track the results.

This is how you setup the voting on the outgoing emails;

- Create a new message
- Click options > options
- Check use voting buttons
- Now using the dropdown select what voting button to use
  - o   Approve;Reject

- o Yes;No;Maybe
- o Yes;No
- o Custom (Outlook 2007)
- Try and make your email sound like a voting question
- Click send

Now you can track all your results of the vote (if you sent only a few emails then you can manually track it);

- Click on your sent items
- Open the voting message
- Go to ribbon
- Go to show then tracking
- You should see the results here
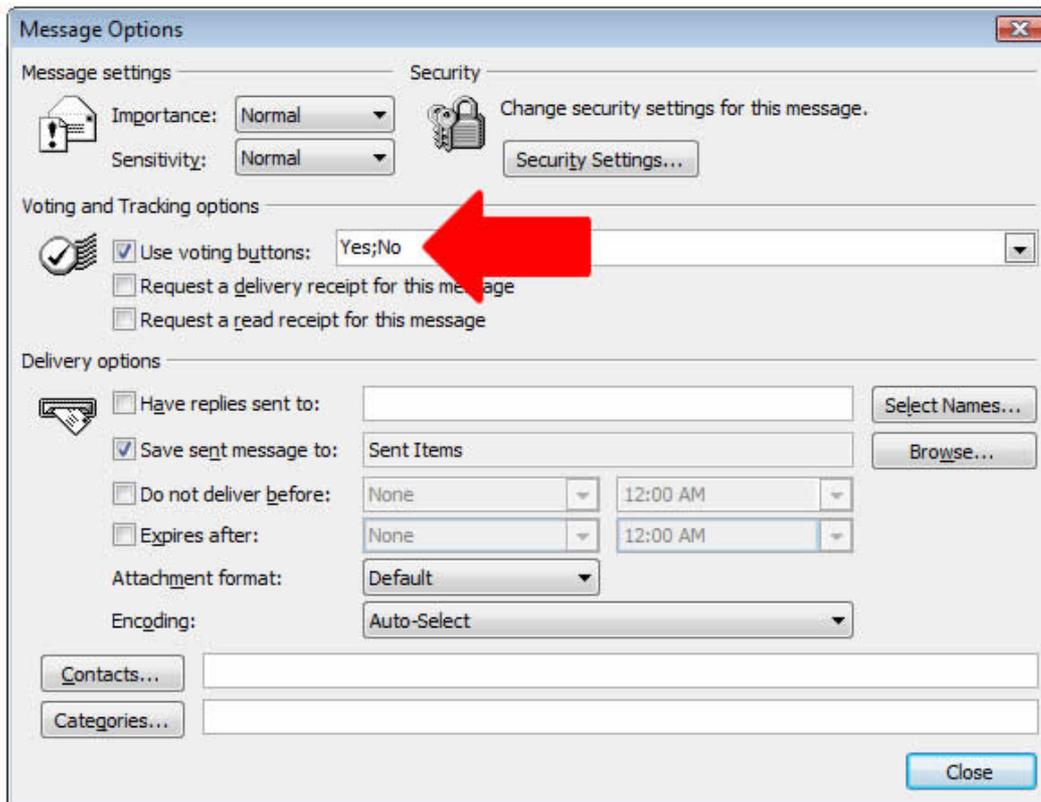
Outlook Backups

Quick and Easy Outlook Mail Backup

Unfortunately most people still don't backup anywhere near as often as they should, while some don't backup at all.

Of course when everything comes crashing down, the first thing 99% of users want to recover, is their email. Let's take a look at a quick and dirty backup for your Outlook mail.

Note: The procedure to backup mail in Outlook is the same concept in Outlook 2002, 2003 and 2007, but it may vary slightly in the menu options and location of buttons etc. The files you want to backup are your .pst files. You can access these through Windows explorer (if you know the location), but generally it's easier to find them via Outlook.

Backup Outlook 2007 Mail

1) Fire up Outlook 2007
2) Go to **File -> Data File Management**
3) You will now see a window with all of your data files and their location
4) Click on a data file that you want to backup and then click **Open Folder.** This will open the location in Windows Explorer. You can now copy the .pst file and backup to another drive/cd/dvd etc.
5) If you have multiple data files, repeat the process above for each file that you want backed up.

That was pretty simple. Now if your hard drive crashes, you don't have to worry about losing all of that valuable email. Just be sure to backup on a regular basis. It is very easy to forget, so you will need to make it a priority.

Outlook Synchronization

Accessing Hotmail From Your Outlook Account

Many of you may in the past have been using your Outlook Express account to send and/or receive email from your hotmail account, but recently may have been having problems or errors when you try to do so.

You may have received this error;

- Unknown Error

When you click Details on this error you would have received the following details;

- HTTPMAIL: 10:09:18 [rx]
- HTTP/1.1 402 Access to Hotmail via Outlook & Outlook Express now requires a subscription. Please sign up at http://join.msn.com/hotmailplus/overview

Although if you are running a computer with Microsoft Windows XP Service Pack 2 you may have received these errors;

- Could not connect to Hotmail as username@hotmail.com
- Hotmail no longer allows email access via Outlook Express for free Hotmail/MSN accounts

The reason you will get either of these two errors when you try to access hotmail from your Outlook Express account is simply as the last error says, you can no longer access hotmail from your Outlook account using a free Hotmail account.

If you want an easy fix to this problem you can just get a paid hotmail account, or if you don't want to do that you can do the follow to solve your problem.

Outlook 2003 and Outlook 2007

To access hotmail from these accounts you have to get a Windows Live Hotmail account, to find out more about these click here.

Access Your Gmail Account in Outlook

Note: You need to make sure your Gmail account is setup to enable POP before you synch with Outlook.

- Open Outlook
- Click the tools menu
- Select email accounts
- Click add a new email account and click next

- Select POP3 as the server type, click next
- You now need to fill in the following details
    - Your name (what you would like to see in the 'from' field)
    - Email address (eg. yourname@gmail.com)
    - Incoming mail server (POP3): pop.gmail.com
    - Outgoing mail server (SMTP): smtp.gmail.com
    - User Name: Enter your Gmail username
    - Password: Enter your Gmail password
- Click more settings
- Click the outgoing server tab
- Check 'my outgoing server (SMTP) requires authentication'
- Leave use same settings as my incoming mail server selected
- Click the advanced tab
- Check 'this server requires an encrypted connection (SSL)' under both incoming server (POP3) and outgoing server (SMTP)
- Make sure 465 is set for outgoing server (SMTP)
- Make sure 995 is set for incoming server (POP3)
- Click next and finish
- Done

Outlook Speed Tweaks

Disable Addins You Don't Use in Outlook 2007

By disabling all of the addins that you will never use in Outlook 2007 you will find a slight increase in the performance of your Outlook, here is how to do it;

- Go to tools
- Go to trust center
- Click addins
- Disable all the addins you don't use
- Done

Compact PST Files

All of your emails in Outlook are stored in a personal folders file which over time can get rather large and can affect the speed of your Outlook.

You can easily compact the size of your personal folder file by doing this;

- Click file
- Select data file management
- Now click on personal folders (only once)
- Click settings
- Now click compact now
- A message will pop up saying compacting
- Done
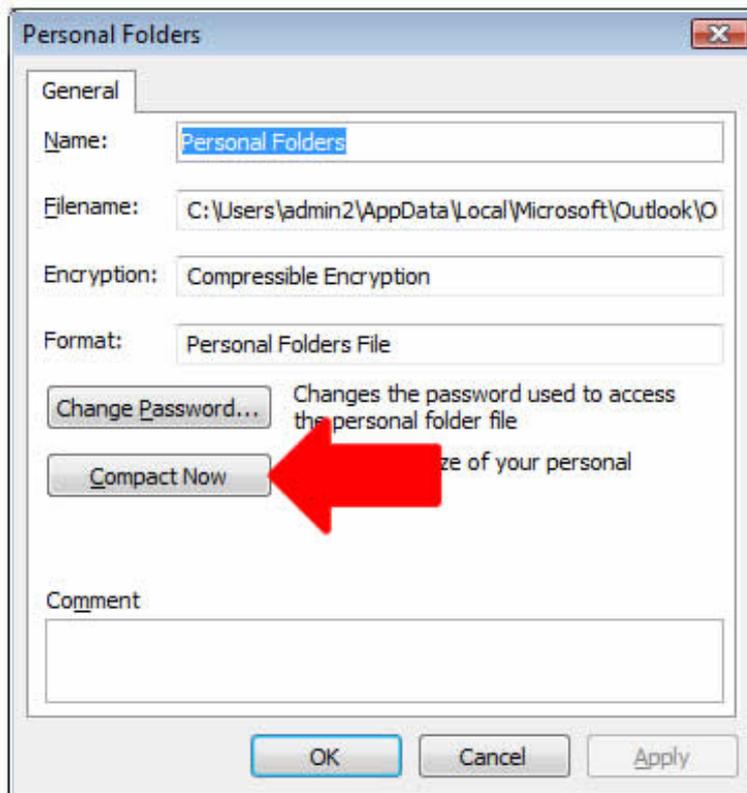
Remove RSS Feeds from the Default Send/Receive Configuration

If you use Outlook to read all of your RSS feeds you may notice that your Outlook would be very sluggish, that is because the RSS feeds affects the performance of Outlook.

If you do read RSS feeds then I suggest you use a third party RSS reader, this will clear up Outlook of the slow RSS reader.

Either way I suggest that you remove the RSS Feeds from the default send/receive configuration in your Outlook for better performance;

- Click tools
- Select options
- Click mail setup
- Click send/receive
- Select all accounts and click edit
- Check include the selected account in this group
- Uncheck the RSS feeds
- Click OK
- Done

Install all Outlook Updates

The updates are made to fix up errors in Outlook as well as tweak things so that you get a better performance from your Outlook, so you should always make sure you always get the latest updates from Microsoft.

You will find the latest information on updates on Outlook 2007 here.

Outlook Security

Add an Email Address to the Safe Senders List

Here is the quick and easy way you can add an email address (or url) to the safe senders list;

- Open Outlook
- Click actions
- Click junk email
- Click junk email options
- Select the safe senders tab
- Type in the email address or domain name
    - info@example.com
    - example.com
- Click OK
- Done

How to Password Protect Outlook 2007 Folders

Here is the quick way to password protect your Outlook 2007 folders;

- Make sure your folder list is displayed
    - If not: View > Navigation Pane > Normal
- Right click the personal folder
- Click properties
- Click advanced in the personal folders properties box
- Click the change password button
- Set your new password
- Click OK

Outlook Hints and Tips

Show Total Number of Items in Your Inbox

You will have noticed that in Outlook you can only see the total number of unread emails in your inbox, but here is a tweak you can do that will show the total number (read and unread) of emails in your inbox;

- Open Outlook
- Right click on your inbox shortcut
- Go to the general tab
- Click properties
- Check 'show total number of items'
- Done
- Uncheck it to just see the number of unread messages

Send an Email at a Certain Time

Have you written out an email but don't want it sent till a specific time, well you can do that easily by following this;

- Hit new message
- Fill out your email/address etc
- Click options
- Check do not deliver before
- From the dropdown select the date and time
- Click close
- Click send
- Done
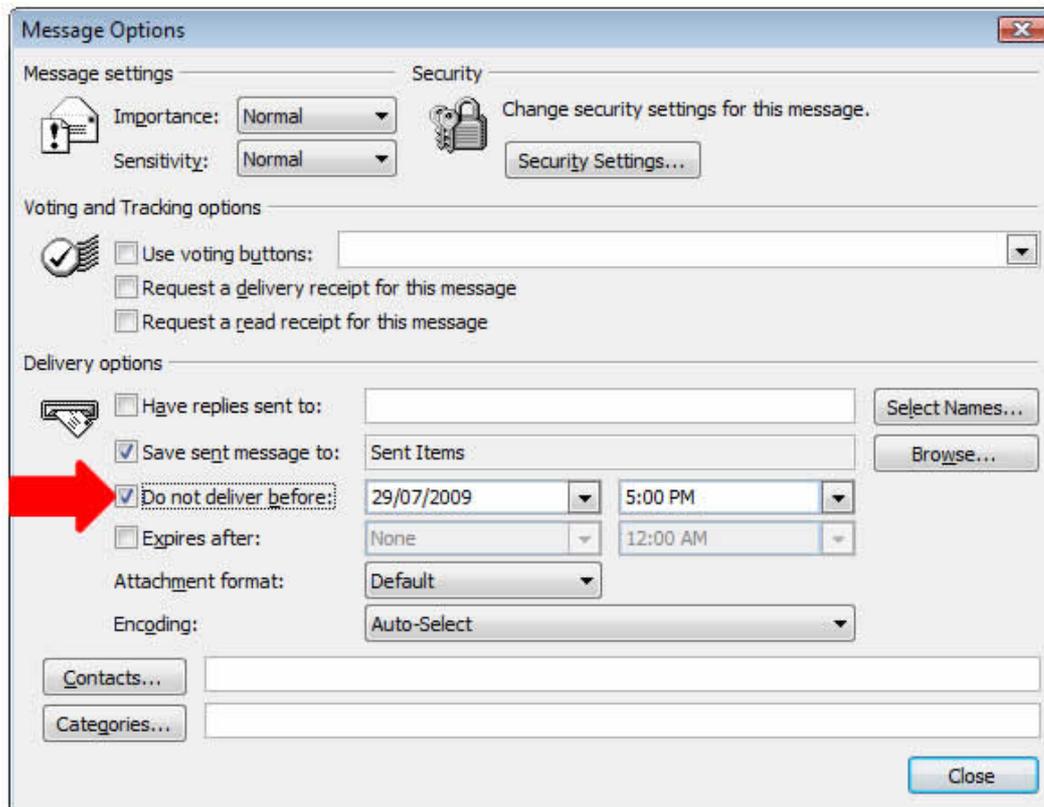
Always Send Emails in Plain Text to Specific Contacts

If you are sick of sending and receiving emails in rich HTML formatting then you can do this tweak to set it that you will always send plain text email to specific people in your contact list.

To do this just follow these points:

- Open Outlook
- Click go
- Click contacts
- Double click on the contact
- Make sure send plain text only is selected
- Done

Move an Email to the Task List

You may want to create different tasks in Outlook, and when you do you may want to move an email from your inbox to that task. This means that when you open up your task the email will be attached.

- Open Outlook
- Right click on the email
- Select move to folder
- Double click tasks

- Fill in the task details
- Done
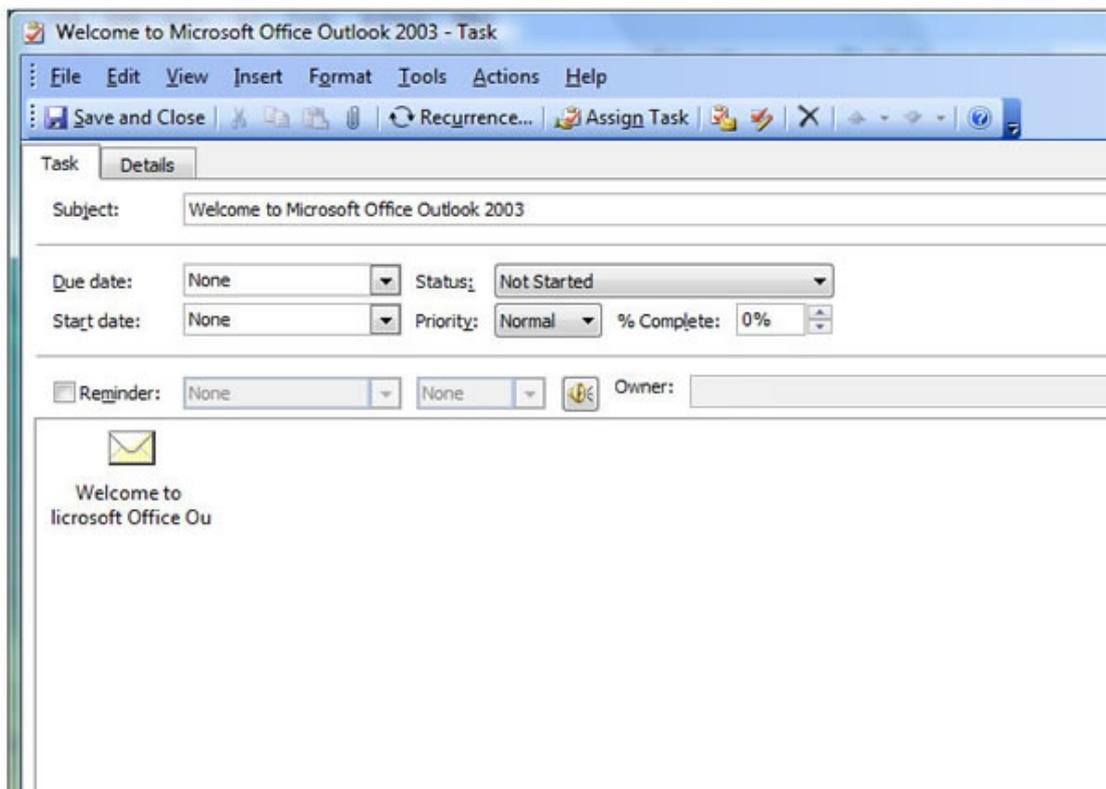
Attach a File to an Outlook Email

Many people attach files to Outlook emails everyday, but how exactly do you do it? If you want to attach a file in an Outlook email just follow these points:

Outlook 2007

- Open an email
- Click on the insert tab in the toolbar
- Click attach file

Outlook 2000-2003

- Open an email
- Click insert then file
- Find the file you want to attach
- Click the insert button
- Select insert as attachment
- Done

Show Time Zones in Outlook

You may travel often or work with people from time zones all over the world so Outlook allows you to show two different time zones.

Follow these points to show two time zones;

- Click tools
- Click options
- Click calendar options
- In the advanced options click time zone
- Click show an additional time zone
- Set the new time zone
- Done

Print Names and Addresses in Outlook 2007

Here is a handy tip so that you can print out a list of all the names and addresses in your contacts in Outlook 2007;

- Open outlook
- Select contacts
- Under current view click address cards
- Select the fields you want to print
  - o Go to the view menu,
  - o Point to Current view
  - o Click customize current view
  - o Click fields
  - o Add or remove fields
- Go to the file menu
- Click print

Minimize Outlook 2002 to the System Tray

Here is a quick registry edit so that you can minimize Outlook 2002 to the system tray;

HKEY_CURRENT_USER\Software\Microsoft\Office\10.0\Outlook\Preferences

- Create a new DWORD
- Call it MinToTray
- Set the value to 1
- Restart your Outlook

Outlook Keyboard Shortcuts

Here is a list of some Outlook keyboard shortcuts;

- Jump to Mail: CTRL + 1 (Press "Control" button and "1″ button simultaneously)
- Jump to Calendar: CTRL + 2
- Jump to Contacts: CTRL + 3
- Jump to Tasks: CTRL + 4
- Jump to Notes: CTRL + 5
- Create a new email message: CTRL + Shift + M
- Create a new appointment item: CTRL + Shift + A or CTRL + Shift + Q
- Reply to sender: CTRL + R
- Reply to all: Ctrl + Shift + R
- Forward message: CTRL + F
- Send Message: CTRL + Enter or Alt + S
- Launch Advanced Find: F3
- Spell checker: F7
- Jump cursor to Find Contact textbox: F11
- Open address book: CTRL + Shift + B

I find that you should pick 2 or 3 shortcuts that you think you will need the most and perfect them.

Adding Events into Outlook

Scheduling events in you Outlook (97, 98, and 2000) can make life easier for you as you don't have to remember things (like anniversaries!), you just add the date to your Outlook and it reminds you.

You can add events as both a one off thing, or a recurring event by using the calendar in your Outlook. To add an event in Outlook just follow these points:

* Open the calendar in your Outlook
* Right click in the calendar and select New All-Day Event
* Type a description in the subject box
* Add a location if it is appropriate
* Enter any other notes in the box
* You now select if the event is recurring
* Click save and you are done
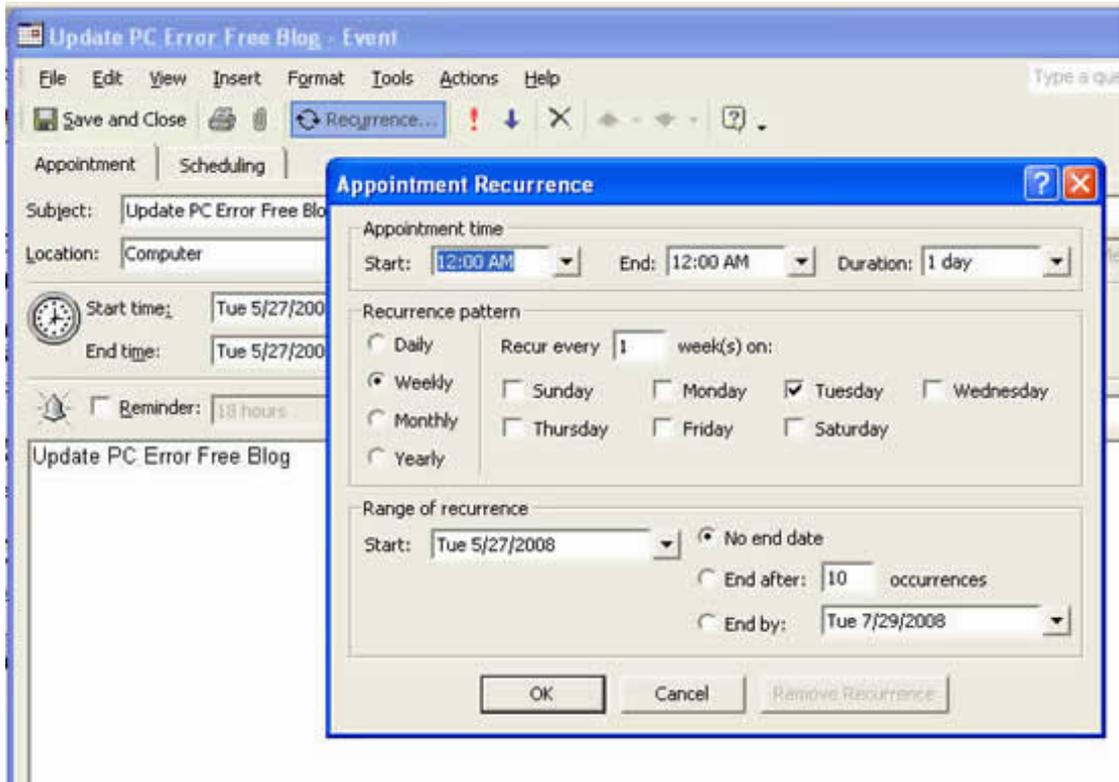
Outlook Error Repair

Repair PST Files

If you have ever used Outlook, you are too aware of how annoying PST files are. They are hard to find, have problematic file sizes and they often become corrupt. Besides that, Outlook is a great product.

Anyway, for too long the management of PST files within Outlook has been a real hassle. Rolling back to older versions and trying to repair existing PST files never works well.

We have recently been playing around with a new tool that is a PST file recovery program. So far we have been pretty impressed with the product. It does a good job and works quite fast. So if you have any PST issues at all, give this product a try. The download is free, so you can try it out and see what you think.

[Scan and Repair Your PST Files - Free Download](#)

Uninstall an Outlook 2007 Add-In

When you have tried to access an add-in you may have found that it cannot be loaded, the best way to get around this is to uninstall and reinstall the add-in.

To uninstall an add-in just follow this;

- Click tools and trust center
- Select the add-ins category
- Select either COM Add-ins or Exchange Client Extensions depending on the type of add-in you have
- Click go
- If the add-in is a COM Add-in
    - Select it and click remove
- If the add-in is an Exchange Client
    - Make sure the add-in on the list is not checked
- Click OK
- Done

Resolving Time Out Messages

Sometimes when you receive an error message in Outlook (something like 0×80040900) you may also receive a message beside it that says time-out error message. You may be able to totally fix this problem by increasing the server time-out setting, just follow these points below to resolve this problem;

Outlook 2000 (CW)

- Go to the Tools menu, click Services
- In the Services tab, select Internet E-mail
- Click Properties
- Click the Advanced tab
- Gradually increase the server time-out setting until the problem is resolved

Outlook 2000 (IMO)

- Go to the Tools menu, click Accounts
- Select the target account
- Click Properties
- Click the Advanced tab
- Gradually keep increasing the server time-out setting until the problem is resolved

Outlook 2002 and Outlook 2003

- Go to the Tools menu, click E-mail Accounts
- Click View or change existing e-mail accounts
- Click Next
- Click your POP3 account
- Click Change
- Click More Settings
- Click the Advanced tab
- Gradually increase the server time-out setting until the issue is resolved.

Outlook 2007

- Go to the Tools menu, click Account Settings
- Click to select the target POP3 account
- Click Change
- Click More Settings
- Click the Advanced tab
- You must now gradually increase the server time-out setting until the issue is fixed

Outlook Express 5.x and 6.0

- Go to the Tools menu, click Accounts
- Click the Mail tab
- Click your POP3 account
- Click Properties
- Click the Advanced tab
- You must now gradually increase the server time-out setting until the problem is fixed

Here is a quick screenshot of the advanced tab in Outlook 2007 where you can alter the time-out settings;

Recommended Downloads

These are some top downloads that we recommend for Outlook, Outlook Express and general PC maintenance.

PST Repair and Recovery
The easiest method for recovering and repairing PST files. You can instantly recover lost email, contacts, calendars and much more. If you ever have problems with a PST file or Outlook inbox, try this first.

Outlook Express Recovery
If you have lost email in Outlook Express or have a corrupt inbox or DBX file, then you need to try this. You can quickly and easily recover lost or corrupt messages.

RegCure PC Optimizer
RegCure repairs PC errors and cleans out the Windows Registry. This product will keep your PC running faster and smoother.

Driver Detective
Instantly update and fix any out-of-date or missing drivers. This software automatically manages all of your drivers so you never have to worry about missing drivers again.