

Outlook: Export to a .pst file

Note: The instructions in this guide are for Outlook client versions 2013 or above. This process cannot be followed in OWA (Outlook Web Access).

Why export Outlook content?

- If you are leaving the University, you may need to export some emails before your account is closed.
- If you need to export and pass on project emails.

What are .pst (personal storage) files?

.pst, or **p**ersonal **s**torage files, are Outlook archive folders. They are not stored on the Email Server, so they don't use up your file space allocation. They should **not** be used as additional storage for continuous, long term use as there is ample space in your mailbox quota.

Important to know

- *Limited Access:* **.pst** files are only accessible when you have a link to your H: drive, i.e. they are not available off campus or through OWA (Outlook Web App). You will need access to Outlook or other conversion software, to view your content.
- *Limited Size:* **.pst** files risk corruption if they exceed **2GB**.
- *Management:* **.pst** files may get lost or deleted if they are not given meaningful file names or backed up.

General guidelines

- ☒ Check file sizes; keep **.pst** files below **2GB**
- ☒ If a **.pst** file is too big, start a new one
- ☒ Give **.pst** files meaningful names
- ☒ Back up your **.pst** files
- ☒ Don't export items you will regularly require, or wish to access from other PCs
- ☒ Don't continuously add to a single **.pst** file

What to export

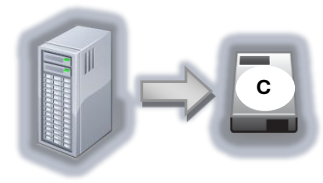
Export any messages that you rarely need to access but do not wish to delete. For example:

- ☒ Messages relating to a specific project that is now complete
- ☒ Documentation relating to a closed recruitment exercise

What not to export

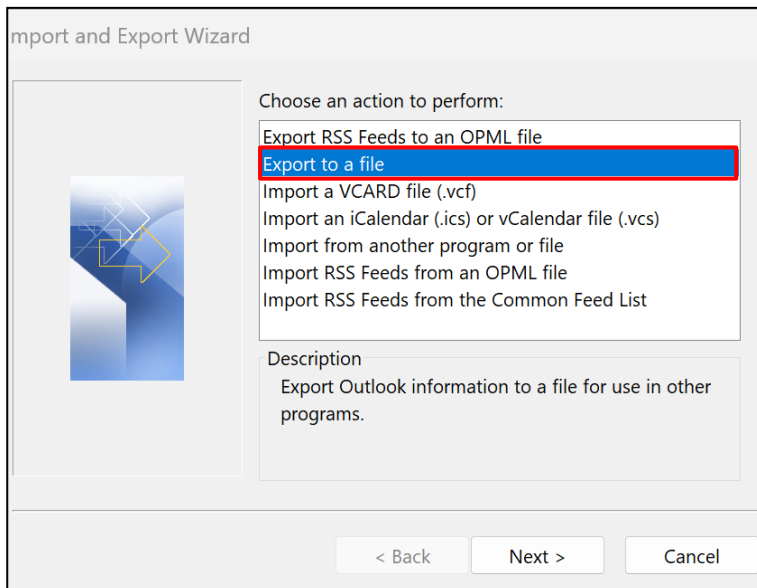
- ☒ Messages relevant to current projects
- ☒ Items requiring follow up


How to export a mail folder



Step 1 - Create a .pst file on C:

1. Click the **File** tab and choose **Open & Export**
2. Click **Import/Export**
3. Choose the **Export to a file** option

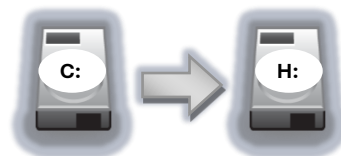


1. Click **Next**
2. Choose **Outlook Data File (.pst)**
3. Click **Next**
4. In the **Export Outlook Data File** window, **select the folder** containing mail to export
5. Tick **include subfolders** if this is required  ☒ Include subfolders
6. Click **Next**
7. Click **Browse...** and navigate to the **C:** drive
8. Click **New Folder** and type the folder name *s99jb9_OutlookExport* (replacing *s99jb9* with your username). Then double-click on this folder to open it.
9. Type a meaningful file name (**.pst**)
e.g. export emails older than 01/01/2025 from *Project A*, into *2011_ProjectA_Export.pst*
10. Name the file
11. Leave the duplicates option as default unless you particularly require another option.
12. Click **Finish**
13. It is *optional* to add a *password*. If you want to do this enter the password twice and click OK, otherwise click **OK**
14. The export will commence and create the **.pst** file in the folder you created.

Step 2 - Backup an exported folder to H:

We don't recommend storing business critical data on the C: drive, where it may be susceptible to hardware failure. Instead, you should back up **.pst** files from **C:** to **H:**

1. Close Outlook and open your **C:** drive folder in Windows File Explorer.
2. Right-click on your **.pst** file.
3. Select **Copy** from the drop-down menu.
4. Navigate to your **H:** drive and click **New Folder**, then name your folder **Outlook Exported Emails**.
5. Double-click on the new folder to open it.
6. Right-click on the white space in the folder, then select **Paste** from the drop-down menu.
7. Delete the original **.pst** file from **C:** if you wish.



Step 3 - View an exported folder

To refer to the contents of an exported folder, open a *temporary* connection to your H: drive from Outlook:

1. Open Outlook and click the **File** tab, then click **Open & Export**.
2. Click **Open Outlook Data File**.
3. Browse to the **.pst** file on **H:**
4. Click **OK**.
5. A **Personal Folders** heading will be added to the folder list (below **Search Folders**). You can expand this to view content that you exported into the **.pst** file that you created.



▶ Personal Folders



Leaving this connection live can risk the **.pst** file becoming corrupted. It is good practice to **open** a **.pst** file, **view** the content you require and then **close** it / **disconnect** from it. Remember you can open it again at any time.

How to close an exported folder from Outlook

There is a known issue with maintaining a *permanent* connection to network drives from Outlook.

In order to avoid the risk of **.pst** file corruption, when you have finished with this folder on your H: drive, **you must remove its connection to Outlook**.

1. Click the **File** tab.
2. From the **Account Settings** option click **Account Settings...**
3. Click **Data Files**.
4. Select the folder.
5. Click **Remove**, then click **Yes** and click **Close**.



How to check the size of an exported folder

1. In Outlook, right-click on **Personal Folders**, then click **Data File Properties...**
2. Click **Folder Size...**
3. Look at **Total size (including subfolders)**.

How to add to an existing exported folder

Before you add to an exported folder, remember to check the **.pst** file is not approaching **2GB**.

1. **Connect** to the .pst file so you can see it under **Personal Folders** (see view an exported folder above)
2. Move or copy any content you want to export from your Mailbox to folders within the Personal Folders of the .pst.
3. **Disconnect** the .pst again (see close an exported folder above).

Further information and help

Contact the IT Service Desk: <https://myit.abdn.ac.uk>