Automatically move or delete older items with Auto Archive

Your Microsoft Outlook mailbox grows as you create and receive items. To manage the space in your mailbox or on the mail server you are using, you can move old items that are important, but rarely used, to an archive location. This storage process occurs automatically with AutoArchive, but you can customize most of the default settings.

Note: The **Archive** command and AutoArchive feature does not appear for any account in your Outlook profile if you include an Exchange Server account and your organization uses Microsoft Exchange Server Online Archive. Your network administrator can also disable this feature.

Note: Items in your mailbox might be subject to your organization's retention policies or messaging records management. When applied to a Microsoft Exchange account, these policies take precedence over AutoArchive settings. The AutoArchive feature is removed from any Outlook profile that contains a Microsoft Exchange account with retention policies.

Review or change the default AutoArchive settings

AutoArchive moves items from their original location in Outlook to an archive file folder when they expire, that is, when they pass their aging period. You can also set options for items to be deleted when they expire.

Items are stored in their archived locations unless you change one or more AutoArchive settings, or choose to have the items automatically deleted when they expire. If the setting is to Delete expired items, those items are not archived but are deleted permanently. Items can be automatically deleted only before they are moved to their archive location. Items that are already archived can only be deleted manually.

The different kinds of Outlook items, such as messages, appointments, and tasks, have different aging periods. These default-aging periods do not change unless you change the settings for them manually. The default aging periods for Outlook items are as follows:

Folder	Aging period
Inbox and Drafts	6 months
Sent Items and Deleted Items	2 months
Outbox	3 months
Calendar	6 months
Tasks	6 months

Notes	6 months
Journal	6 months
Contacts	Do not expire

Note Folders you create that contain the same type of items as **Inbox**, **Calendar**, **Tasks**, **Notes**, or **Journal** have the same default, six-month aging period.

The point at which an item begins to age is determined by its type:

Item type	When the aging period starts
E-mail message	The received date/time or when you last changed and saved the message, whichever is later.
Meeting, event, or appointment	The date when you last changed and saved the item, whichever is later? Recurring items are not AutoArchived.
Task	The completion date or when you last changed and saved the task. Tasks that are not marked complete are not AutoArchived. Tasks assigned to other people are archived only if marked complete.
Note	When you last changed and saved the note.
Journal entry	The date the Journal entry was created or when you last changed and saved the entry.
Contact	Contacts are not archived by default. However, you can manually archive them.

The first time that you run Outlook, AutoArchive are turned on by default and runs every 14 days. You can change how often AutoArchive runs, specify the Outlook data file (.pst) used to store archived items, and choose when items in your Outlook folders are subject to being archived.

1. Click the **File** tab.
2. Click **Options**.
3. Click **Advanced**.
4. Under **AutoArchive**, click **AutoArchive Settings**.
5. Select the **Run AutoArchive every *n* days** check box, and then specify how often to run AutoArchive.

6. Select any other options that you want. You can choose to have old items deleted automatically at AutoArchive.

Notes

- If you change, the archive file listed under **Move old items to**, this new file will be used each time that AutoArchive runs.
- Set the default folder options first, and then customize individual folder settings. Otherwise, you may unintentionally change the default settings.
- For more information about AutoArchive settings.

Change the AutoArchive settings for an individual folder

1. In the folder list in the Navigation Pane, right-click the folder that you want to change, and then click **Properties** on the shortcut menu.
2. On the **AutoArchive** tab, select the options that you want.