

Tips and Guidelines on Outlook Archiving

Microsoft Outlook's archiving function can be an important tool in email management, but it is important to assess whether it is appropriate for your needs and to understand its limitations. The use of Outlook's archive function should be used only under one of two conditions:

1. If you legitimately need to keep certain emails to support your job function and your active account storage space is insufficient for this purpose.

OR

2. If you have inactive email of historical value that should be kept for archival preservation, but that has not yet been sent to the University Archives.

Both of these situations will be rare, and **Outlook's archive function should not be used as a replacement for good email management and proper deletion of temporary communications.**

If you do use the archiving function, please keep in the mind the following information:

1. Large Outlook archives files (.pst) become difficult to search and easily become corrupted. Limit the size of your Outlook files to aid accessibility, and label them by date.
2. Store your .pst files on the network to ensure that they are backed up. Storing files on your local hard drive does not provide protection against accidental deletion or hardware failure.
3. Be careful in using Outlook's auto archive function, which creates large unstable files and can potentially fail to archive some emails.
4. If you are using the archive function for email that is essential to your job function, be sure to take the time to periodically delete the archive files when they are no longer actively used. Taking them out of your active email account does not mean that they no longer need to be managed.
5. Historically-significant e-mail generally sets or interprets policy, formalizes business processes, or documents decision-making. In general, email of historical value will belong to senior administrators, but there are always exceptions. If you have questions about whether your email may have historical value, please consult the University Archives.