

Should You Switch To The NEW Outlook?

If you use Microsoft Outlook as your primary email client, you've undoubtedly noticed a little toggle switch up in the top right corner, asking you to update to the "New" Outlook. You might be curious to what the "New" Outlook is and what it means for you, the user. I hope this article can shed some light into the good and the bad of the new version.

Right away, when you switch to the New Outlook, you'll notice that it looks different. It more closely resembles the Outlook Web Access (OWA) version of Outlook. Reduced menus, cleaner toolbars, less clutter. This should give you a hint that the new version isn't quite as functional as the older Outlook. The main features you'd want as an enduser are there, but many of the more advanced features are now gone.

One of these advanced features is the ability to open email archive files (.PST). Maybe you've been using Outlook for a long time, and you've accumulated several archive or export files. In "classic" Outlook, you could simply point to and open these files, and you could see your historical emails. This is not supported in the "new" Outlook...at least not yet.

If you're using Outlook to sync your Gmail, Yahoo (IMAP) email accounts, they will still function, but you may find that your calendar, contacts, tasks and notes will not convert over...only email. You will need to export and migrate to another server. If your service uses MS Exchange, you shouldn't see any issues.

The main problem this poses for IMAP users in Classic Outlook is that they will need to migrate their calendars, contacts, tasks and notes to a fully synchronized platform such as Exchange or Google Workspace.

The New Outlook also has limited support for Public(Shared) Folders and Calendars. The main difference here is the steps used to attached to them.

Some people may use multiple email accounts with their Outlook. Perhaps you have a work email as well as a personal email, all on the same device. This is currently not available on the New Outlook, but is an upcoming feature.

So, the question after all of this is, is the New Outlook right for you? It depends entirely on how much you use the advanced features in Classic Outlook. Do you have multiple accounts setup? Do you have a plethora of archived PST files? Do you use Public/Shared Folders? If you answered Yes to any of those, then it might be in your best interest to stick with Classic Outlook for as long as possible, but start preparing yourself for the inevitable change over to New (Modern) Outlook.

If you use the basic features of Outlook, like simple email, calendar then the new trimmed down interface and boosted responsiveness of the New Outlook could be your new favourite thing.

Luckily, there is still plenty of time to use Classic Outlook until its forced upon you. Predictions are showing 2026 for the full switch over.

For a more in-depth list of functionality differences between the Classic and New Outlook, Microsoft has provided this list. <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/feature-comparison-between-new-outlook-and-classic-outlook-de453583-1e76-48bf-975a-2e9cd2ee16dd>