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Exporting from Outlook, Simplified

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Do you consider the term *online help* to be an oxymoron? Many do, depending on the product manufacturer and the time that was put into the documentation. But what's worse than bad online help is minimal or no help.

When we decided to evacuate from New Orleans as Hurricane Katrina approached, I bought a new laptop, knowing that I would have to leave my desktop computer behind. Before fleeing, I tried to save all my e-mail addresses and mail folders from Microsoft Outlook to my nifty Swiss Army Knife flash drive, but to no avail. I'd even spoken with a couple of computer science employees and some friends, and they all confirmed that it can be done, but none of them remembered how—or even how to find out.

Online help was online no-help, and the options provided in the import/export functions in Outlook File in the toolbar simply offered too many options, and I didn't understand them. It wasn't until a couple of months after returning to a soggy Crescent City that I learned how to move Outlook files and folders between computers. And I figured that if I had so much trouble doing this, others have too, which prompted me to write this article. You can also export your profiles so that you don't have to recreate these as well—which is a big benefit if you have more than one e-mail address with your ISP. In a nutshell, if you need to copy all your archived folders, individual e-mail addresses, and address books from one computer to another, follow these simple steps.

To export Outlook elements

1. In the Outlook toolbar, choose **File**. If all options don't appear, click the expansion arrow at the bottom of the menu.
2. Click **Import and Export**.
3. In the Import and Export Wizard, select **Export to a file**, and then click **Next**.
4. In the Export to a File window, select **Comma Separated Values (Windows)**—that is, if you are using Microsoft Windows; otherwise, you might have to experiment to determine the correct format.
5. Click **Next**.
6. Select an item that you want to export, such as **Contacts**, **Calendar**, **Inbox**, or **Drafts**. Note, however, that if you are attempting to export from Outlook to a less robust program, some functionality might not be exportable/importable. For example, if you export to Outlook Express, the Calendar is not exportable.
7. Click **Next**.
8. In the **Save exported file as** field, click **Browse** to locate the directory in which you want to place the file.
9. In the **File name** text box, specify a name for the file, and then click **Finish**.
10. Repeat the procedure for each item that you want to export.

To import Outlook elements

1. In the Outlook toolbar, choose **File**.
2. Click **Import and Export**.
3. In the Import and Export Wizard, select the appropriate option for the type of information that you are importing, and then click **Next**.
4. Follow the instructions to indicate the file that you want to import and its location.

5. Repeat for each type of file that you want to import.

While you shouldn't have to perform this procedure often, keep this article handy for when you do. It will save much time and prevent frustration.

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