

# Repair Outlook Data Files (.pst and .ost)

If you cannot open your Outlook Data File (.pst)<sup>1</sup>, or you suspect that the data file is damaged, you can use the Inbox Repair tool (scanpst.exe) to diagnose and repair errors in the file. The Inbox Repair tool scans only Outlook Data Files (.pst or .ost) on your computer and analyses the file structure integrity.

If you are using a Microsoft Exchange account and your offline Outlook Data File (.ost)<sup>2</sup> is missing items or is not synchronized with the Exchange mailbox, you can re-create the file.

## Inbox Repair tool (scanpst.exe)

Scanpst.exe is installed on your computer when you install Microsoft Outlook 2010. The Inbox Repair tool tries to correct any problems by resetting the data file structure and rebuilding the headers for Outlook items. If you are using an Exchange account, the tool does not connect to or analyse the data saved on the Exchange server.

**Important** You must exit Outlook before using the Inbox Repair tool. It is not accessible within Outlook.

1. Open Windows Explorer and select the C:\Program Files (x86)\Microsoft Office\OFFICE14 folder.
2. Double-click **Scanpst.exe**.
3. In the **Enter the name of the file you want to scan** box, enter the name of the .pst or .ost file that you want to check, or click **Browse** to select the file.
4. To specify the scan log options, click **Options**, and then click the option that you want.
5. Click **Start**.
6. If errors are found, you are prompted to start the repair process to fix the errors.

A backup file is created during the repair process. To change the default name or location of this backup file, in the **Enter name of backup file** box, enter a new name, or click **Browse** to select the file that you want to use.

7. Click **Repair**.
8. Start Outlook with the profile that contains the .pst file that you tried to repair.
9. In the Navigation Pane<sup>3</sup>, click **Folder List**.

**Keyboard shortcut** To open switch to the Folder List, press CTRL+6.

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<sup>1</sup> Outlook Data File (.pst and .ost) - Data file on your computer that contains Outlook messages and other items.

<sup>2</sup> Offline Outlook Data File - The file on your hard disk that contains a copy of mail messages and Outlook items. The file is synchronized with the information saved on a mail or Exchange server. The offline Outlook Data File has an .ost extension.

<sup>3</sup> Navigation Pane - The column on the left side of the Outlook window that includes buttons for the Mail, Calendar, and Tasks views and the folders within each view. Click a folder to show the items in the folder.

In the **Folder List**, you might see a folder named **Recovered Personal Folders** that contains your default Outlook folders or a **Lost and Found** folder. The recovered folders are usually empty, because this is a rebuilt .pst file. The **Lost and Found** folder contains the folders and items recovered by the Inbox Repair tool.

You can create an Outlook Data File (.pst), and drag the items in the **Lost and Found** folder into the new data file. When you have finished moving all the items, you can remove the **Recovered Personal Folders** (.pst) file, including the **Lost and Found** folder, from your profile.

## Notes

- If you are able to open the original Outlook Data File (.pst), you may be able to recover additional items from your damaged .pst file. By default, the Inbox Repair tool creates a file with the same name, but with the file extension of .bak. The .bak file is located in the same folder as your original .pst file. You may be able to recover items from the .bak file that the Inbox Repair tool could not recover. Make a copy of the .bak file, and give the file a new name with a .pst extension, such as bak.pst. Import the bak.pst file, and then move any additional recovered items to the new .pst file that you created.
- A copy of the log file is saved to the same folder as the .pst file.

## Re-create an offline Outlook Data File (.ost)

Offline Outlook Data Files (.ost) are copies of your Exchange information. It is not necessary to back up this file. You can create a new copy at any time.

1. Exit Outlook.
2. In Control Panel, click or double-click **Mail**.

*Where is **Mail** in Control Panel?*

***Mail** appears in different Control Panel locations depending upon the version of the Microsoft Windows operating system, Control Panel view selected, and whether a 32- or 64-bit operating system or version of Outlook 2010 is installed.*

*The easiest way to locate **Mail** is to open Control Panel in Windows, and then in the **Search** box at the top of window, type **Mail**. In Control Panel for Windows XP, type **Mail** in the **Address** box.*

**Note** *The **Mail** icon appears after Outlook starts for the first time.*

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The title bar of the **Mail Setup** dialog box contains the name of the current profile. To select a different existing profile, click **Show Profiles**, select the profile name, and then click **Properties**.

3. On the **E-mail** tab, select the Exchange account, and then click **Change**.
4. Clear the **Use Cached Exchange Mode** check box.
5. Click **More Settings**.
6. On the **Advanced** tab, click **Offline Folder File Settings**.
7. Click **Disable Offline Use**, and then in the dialog box that appears, click **Yes**.

**Note** If you cannot click **Disable Offline Use**, this indicates the **Use Cached Exchange Mode** check box was not cleared in step 4. This check box must be cleared.

8. Again, click **Offline Folder File Settings**.
9. Click **OK**.
10. In the dialog box that appears, click **Yes**.
11. Under **Cached Exchange Mode Settings**, select the **Use Cached Exchange Mode** check box.
12. Click **OK**, click **Next**, and then click **Finish**.
13. In the **Account Settings** and **Mail Setup** dialog boxes, click **Close**.

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<sup>i</sup> Source: Office.com