Outlook Web Access (OWA) Usage Guide

About

Updated 07/17/25.

Outlook Web App (OWA), also known as OWA or Outlook on the web, is a full-featured, web-based email client with the look and feel of the Outlook desktop client.

To check your email using Outlook Web Access, open a web browser and go to **https://outlook.office.com** and login with your Single Sign-On (SSO) Credentials.

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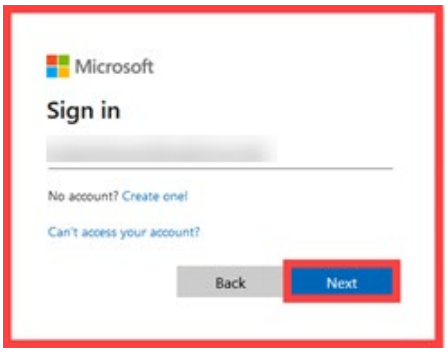
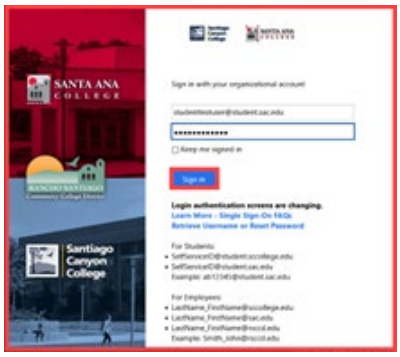
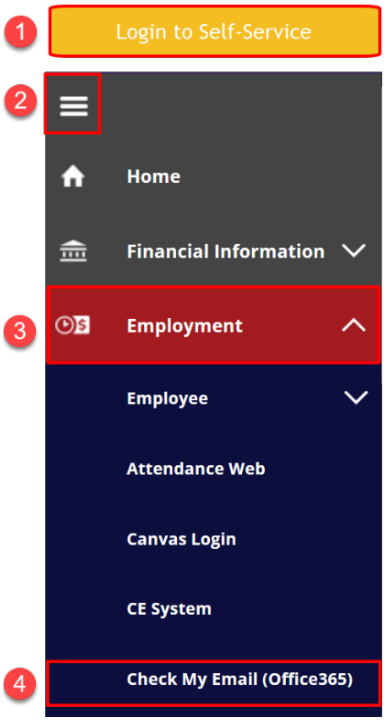
Login to OWA

To access Outlook Web Access (OWA), open a web browser and go to **https://outlook.office.com** and login with your Single Sign-On Credentials.





You can also login to **Self-Service**, select the Navigation Menu, select Employment, and select the link to ***Check My Email (Office365)***, which will take you to the same website.



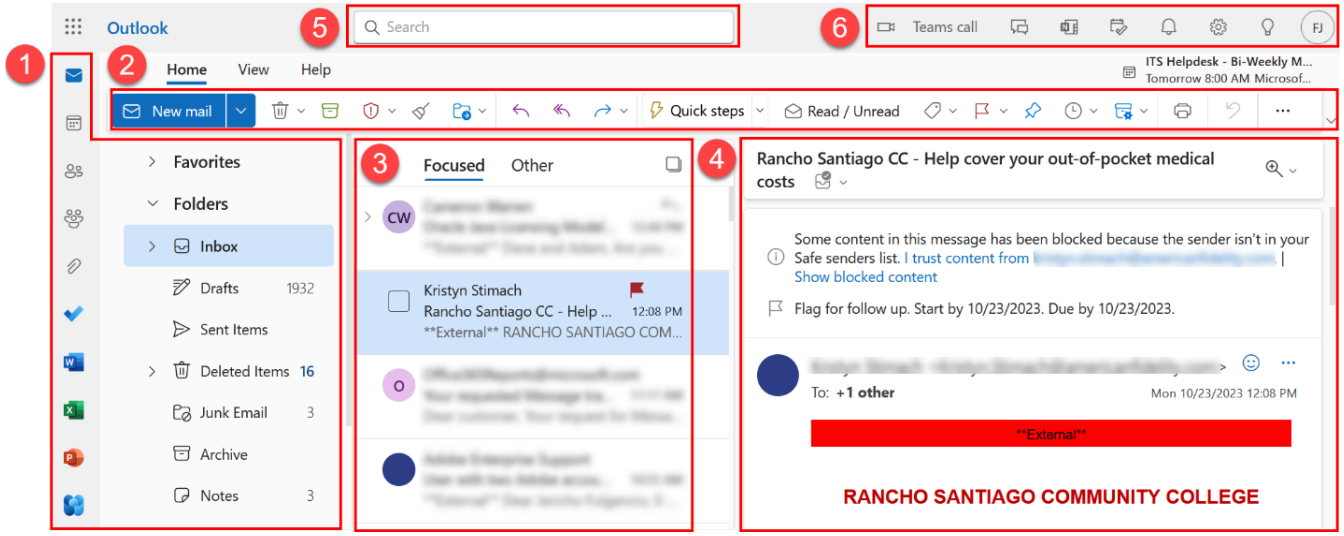
Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) Required for Offsite Access

Note that Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) is a requirement if you are accessing Outlook Web Access while outside of the campus network. If you need help with multi-factor authentication, see our **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) FAQs**.

OWA Interface

Below is a quick overview of the OWA interface.

1. Navigation Pane
2. Ribbon Toolbar
3. Inbox (Focused Mode / Other)
4. Reading Pane
5. Search bar
6. Other Options



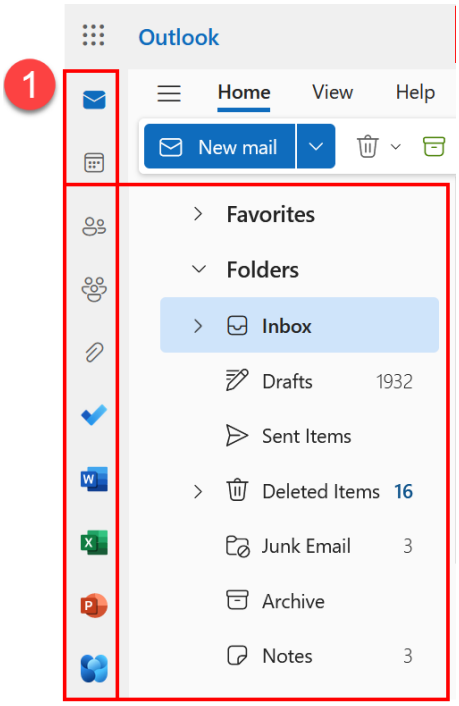
1. Navigation Pane

The Navigation Pane contains links to your **Folders**.

The default folders include the **Inbox, Drafts, Sent Items, Deleted Items, Junk Email, Archive**, as well as other custom folders you've created.

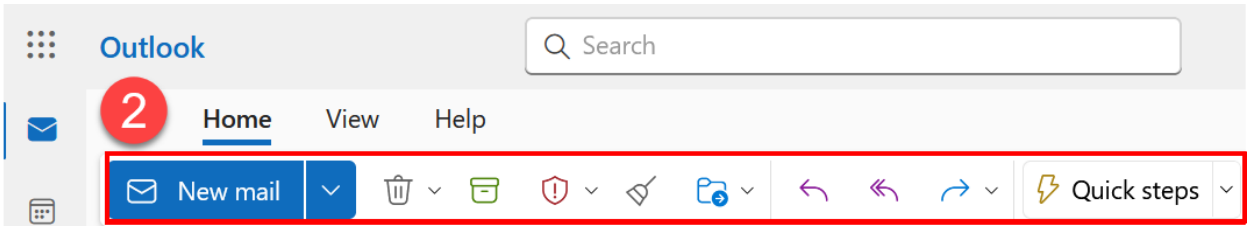
There are also icons for your **Calendar**, **People** **(Contacts), and Task lists.**

See Microsoft's guidance on **What is the Navigation Pane?** and **Working with message folders in Outlook on the web.**



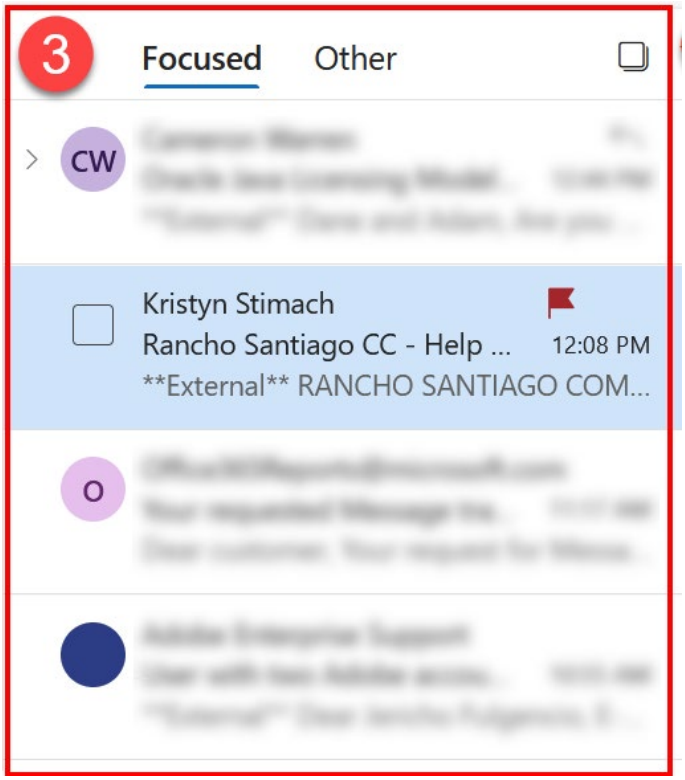
2. Ribbon Toolbar

The Ribbon Toolbar contains quick options to create a **New Mail, Reply or Forward Email**, and other actions.



3. Inbox (Focused Mode / Other)

The Inbox lists all your emails. By default, the Inbox is categorized between **"Focused" and "Other".**



The "Focused" inbox attempts to sort the most important emails for you, and places everything else into the "Other" tab.

To turn off "Focused" mode, see **How do I turn off Focus Mode in Outlook?**

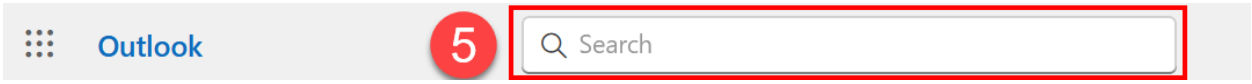
4. Reading Pane

The reading pane displays the contents of a message you've selected. You can also double-click a message to open it in a separate window.

5. Search bar

The Search bar allows you to do a search of the mailbox.

For detailed guidance on how to use the Search bar, see Microsoft's article on **Search Mail and People in Outlook on the web.**



6. Other Options

On the top right of OWA, you can find other options such as the menus for **Settings** and **Account Manager** (where you can sign out or sign into a different Microsoft account).

See Microsoft's guidance for **Mail settings** and **Easy Account Switching With Account Manager**.

Mail Basics

Create a new email

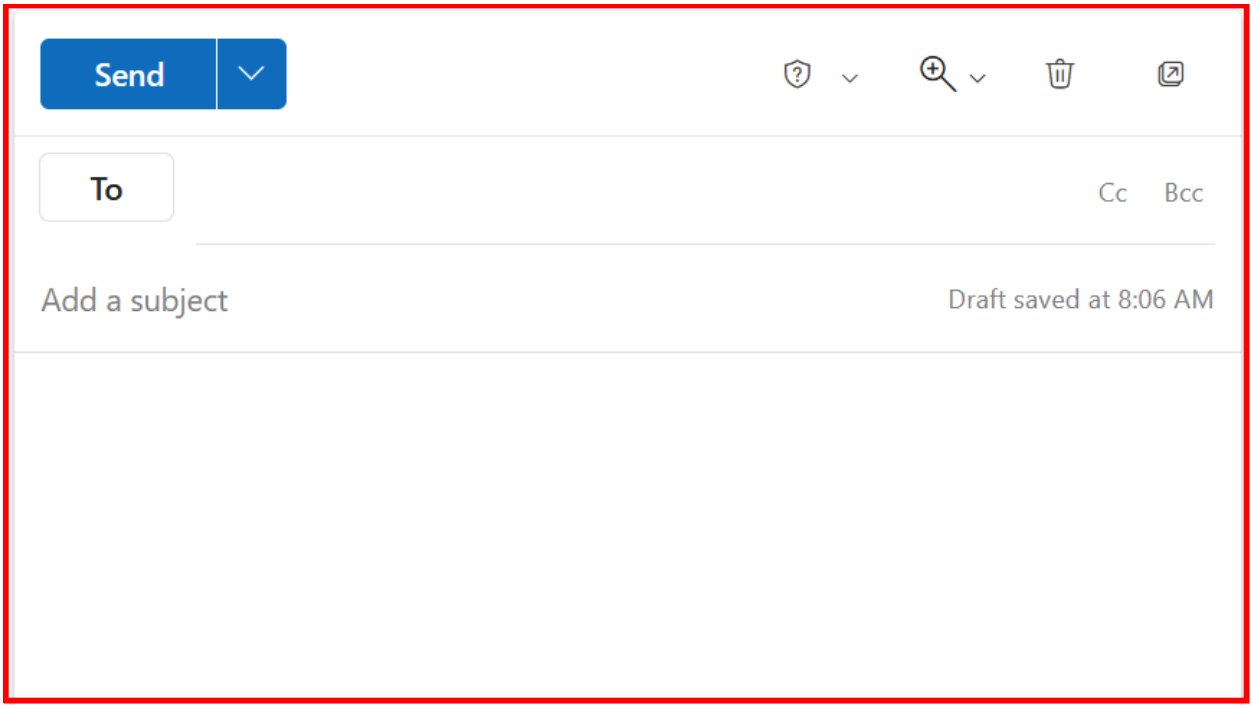
To create a new email:

1. Select **New Mail.**

This will open a blank new email in the Reading Pane.

Add a recipient's email address to the **To** field and use the **Add a Subject** and **Body** fields to type an email.

When you are ready to send the email, select **Send.**



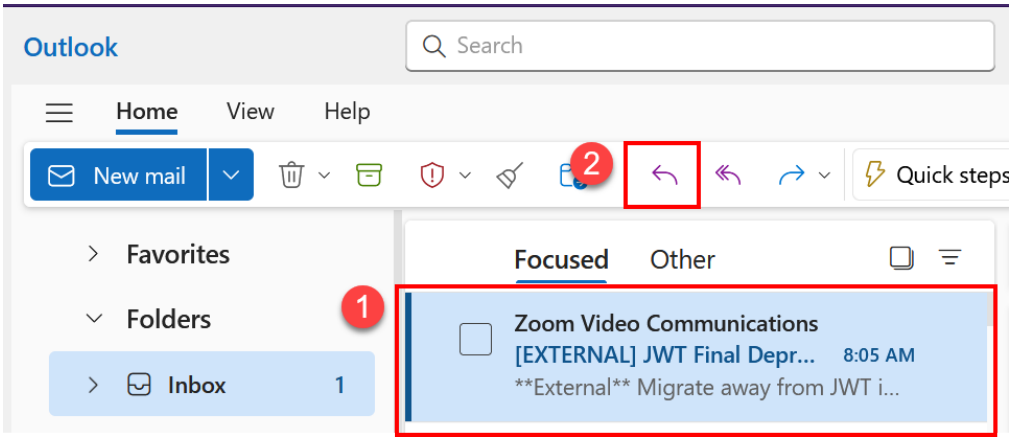
Reply to an email

To reply to an email:

1. Select the message from the **Inbox.**
2. Select the **Reply** button.

This will open a new blank email in the Reading Pane in reply to the original email.

This will also append a **Re:** to the subject line of the email.



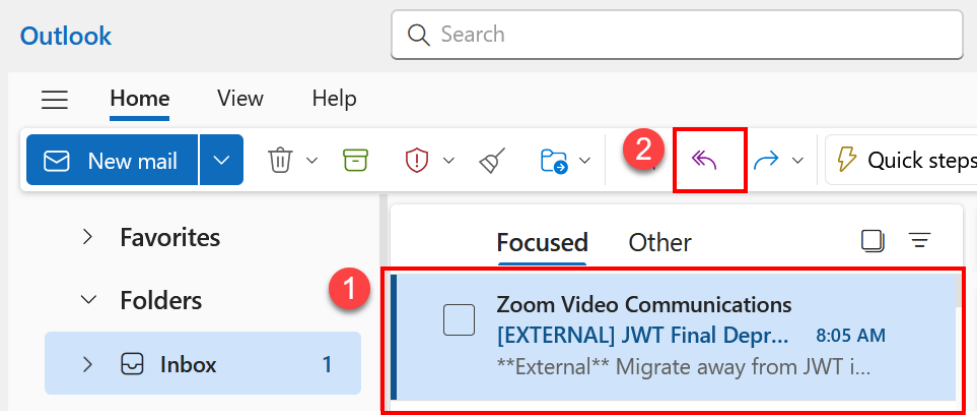
Reply All to an email

To "reply to all" recipients on an email:

1. Select the message from the Inbox.
2. Select the **Reply All** button.

This will open a new blank email in the Reading Pane in reply to the original email, including the original recipient and the others CCed on the email.

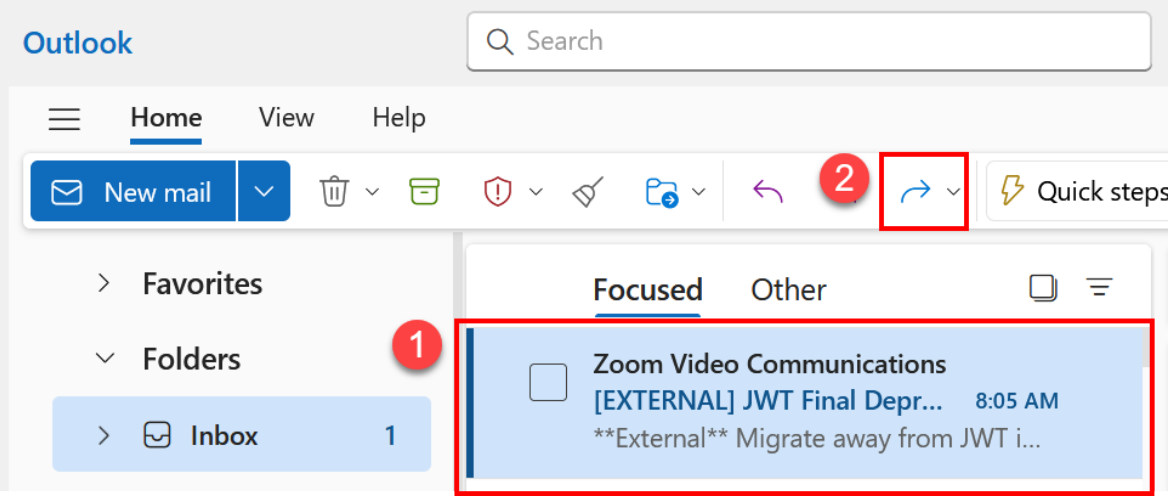
This will also append a **Re:** to the subject line of the email.



Forward an email

To forward an email:

1. Select the message from the **Inbox.**
2. Select the **Forward** button.



This will open a new blank email in the Reading Pane where you can specify new recipients in the To, Cc, and Bcc lines, and which starts a new email conversation outside of the replies to the original message.

This will also append a **Fw:** to the subject line of the email.

Enable From, CC (Carbon Copy), and Show Bcc (Blind carbon copy) fields

By default, OWA shows the **To, Subject, and Body** fields in new emails.

To enable additional fields for From, Bcc, and Cc:

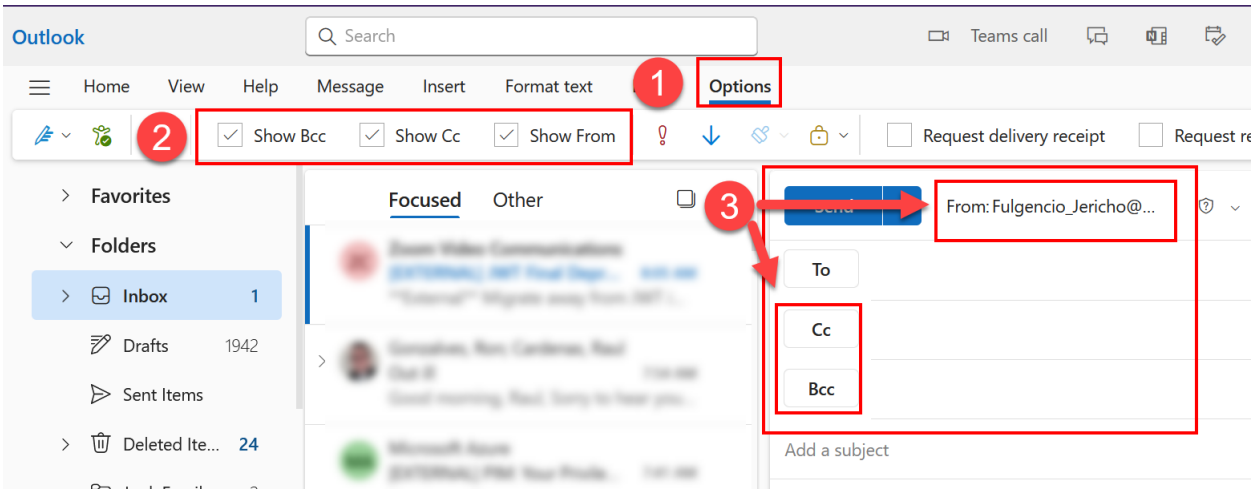
1. Select the **Options** tab.
2. Select the checkboxes for **Show Bcc, Show Cc, and Show From.**
3. These fields will now appear when creating new emails or replying/forwarding email.

NOTE on Cc (Carbon copy) and Bcc (Blind carbon copy):

"Cc" refers to carbon copy, and "Bcc" refers to blind carbon copy.

Cc (carbon copy) allows you to send a copy of an email to someone apart from the recipient in the To field.

Bcc (blind carbon copy) is like Cc, except that the email addresses of the recipients in this field do not appear in the received message header, and the recipients in the To or Cc fields will not know that a copy was sent to these recipients.



For further guidance, see Microsoft's article **Show, hide, and view the Bcc (blind carbon copy) field.**

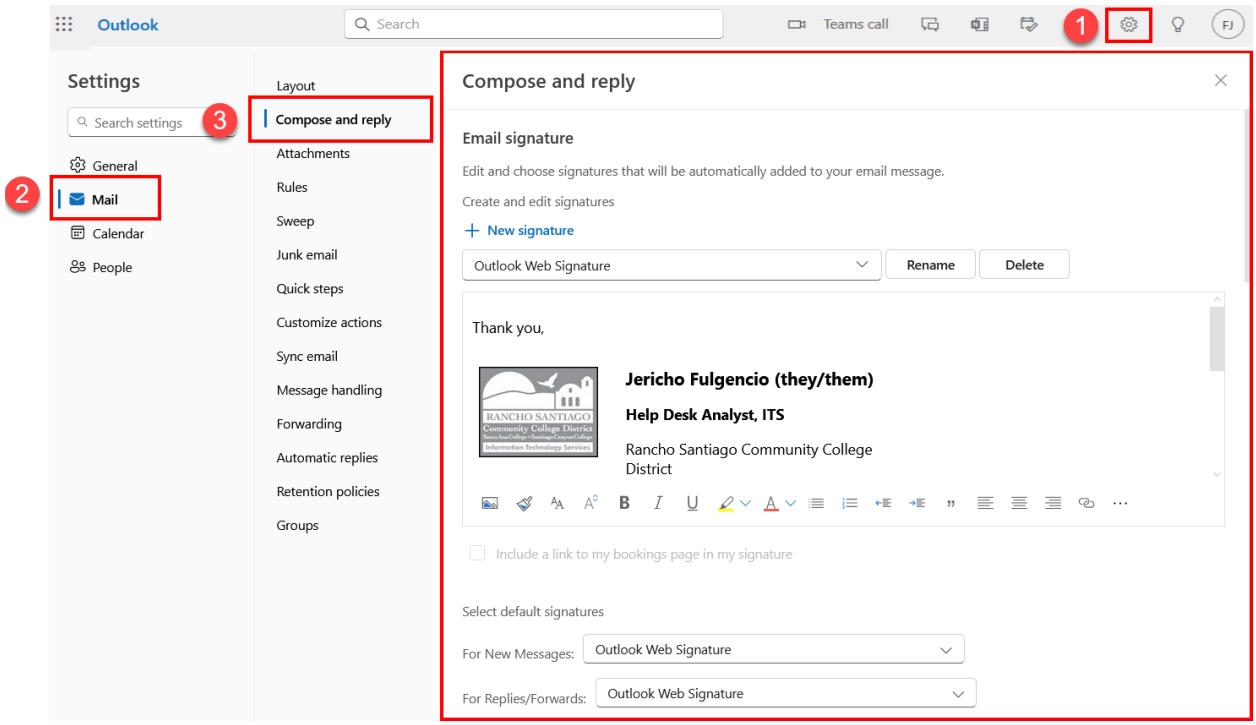
Create an email signature

To manage your email signatures:

1. Select the **Settings icon** (on the top right of OWA).
2. Select **Mail**.
3. Select **Compose and reply.**

From here you can create a **New Signature** or m**anage existing signatures**.

You can also configure **default signatures** for New Messages and for Replies/Forwards.

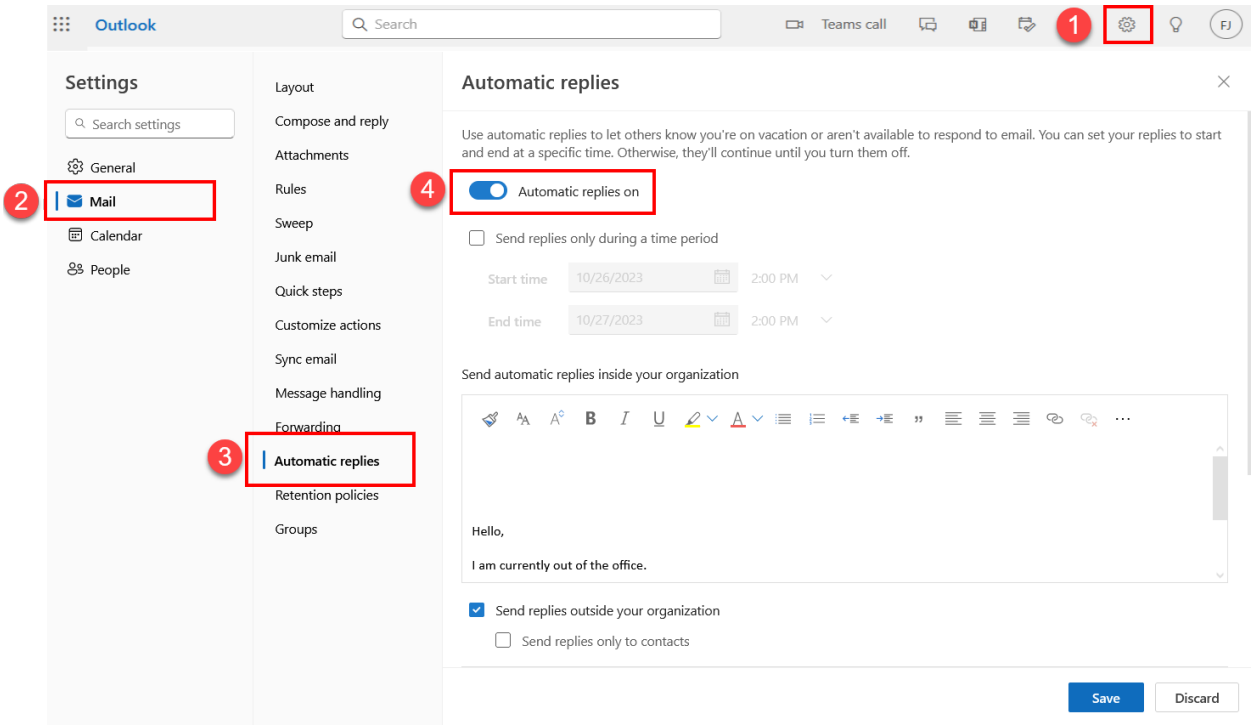


For further guidance, see Microsoft's article [Create and add an email signature in Outlook.com or Outlook on the web]

Set an out of office message (Automatic replies)

To set an out of office message (Automatic Reply):

1. Select the **Settings icon** (on the top right of OWA).
2. Select **Mail.**
3. Select **Automatic replies.**
4. Select **Turn on automatic replies.**



Options for automatic replies include:

1. Sending replies only during a **specific period**, with **start and end time**.
2. Sending a separate reply for **recipients outside of your organization**.
3. The ability to **block your calendar and decline new invitations** that occur during the time set for your out of office reply.

When done, select **Save**.

NOTE: If you did not specify a Start and End Time for your automatic replies, they will stay on indefinitely until you toggle the Automatic replies off.

Inbox Management basics

Focused Inbox and Other

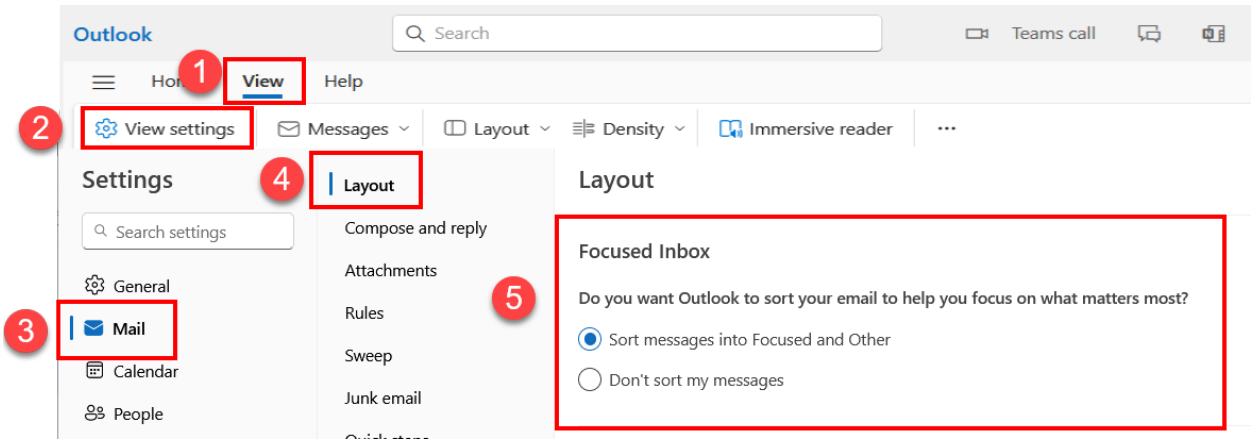
By default, the Inbox is categorized between **"Focused" and "Other".**

The "Focused" inbox attempts to sort the most important emails for you, and places everything else into the **"Other" tab.**

To turn Focus Mode on or off:

1. Select the **View tab**.
2. Select **View settings.**

3. Select **Mail.**
4. Select **Layout.**
5. Under Focused Inbox, select **“Sort messages into Focused and Other” or “Don’t sort my messages.”**

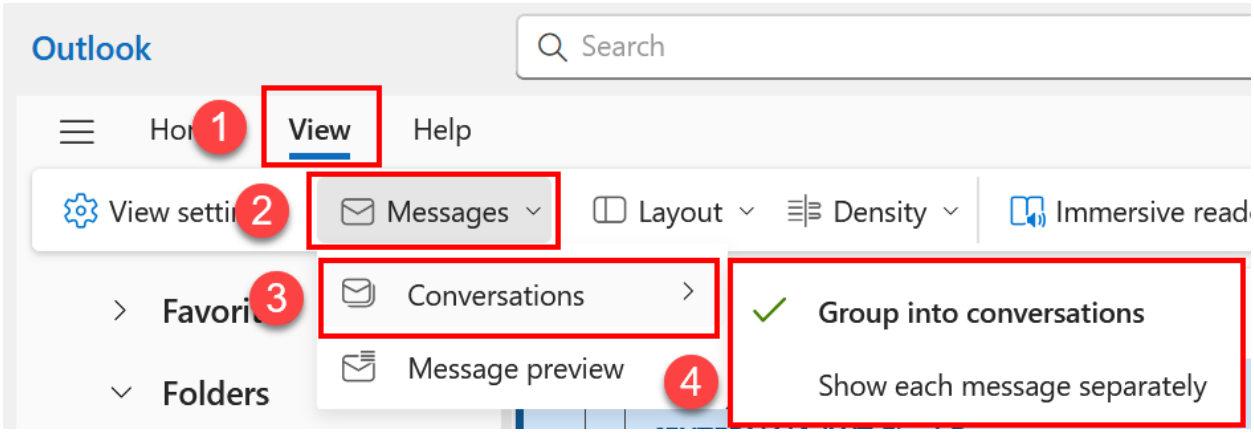


View Emails as Conversations, or Show Each message separately

By default, OWA will organize your Inbox emails as **Conversations.** A conversation includes all messages in the same thread with the same subject line.

<u>To toggle Conversations on or off:</u>

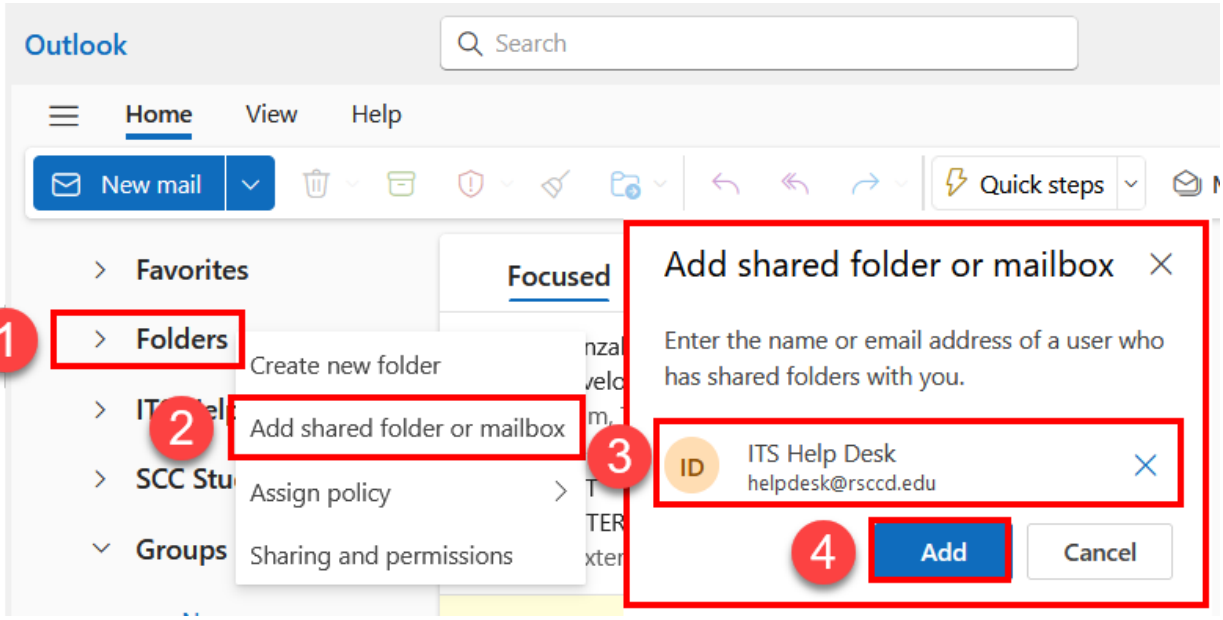
1. Select the View tab
2. Select Messages.
3. Select Conversations
4. Select **“Group into conversations”** or **“Show each message separately”**.



Add a shared mailbox

To add a shared mailbox to OWA:

1. From the Navigation Pane, right click **Folders**.
2. Select **Add shared Folder or mailbox.**
3. **In the search box, enter the email address of the shared mailbox** (e.g., sharedmailbox@sac.edu)
4. Select **Add**.



The shared mailbox will now appear in the Navigation Pane.

Note on Full Access permissions to shared mailboxes:

You will need **Full Access permissions** to the shared mailbox to add it to Outlook.

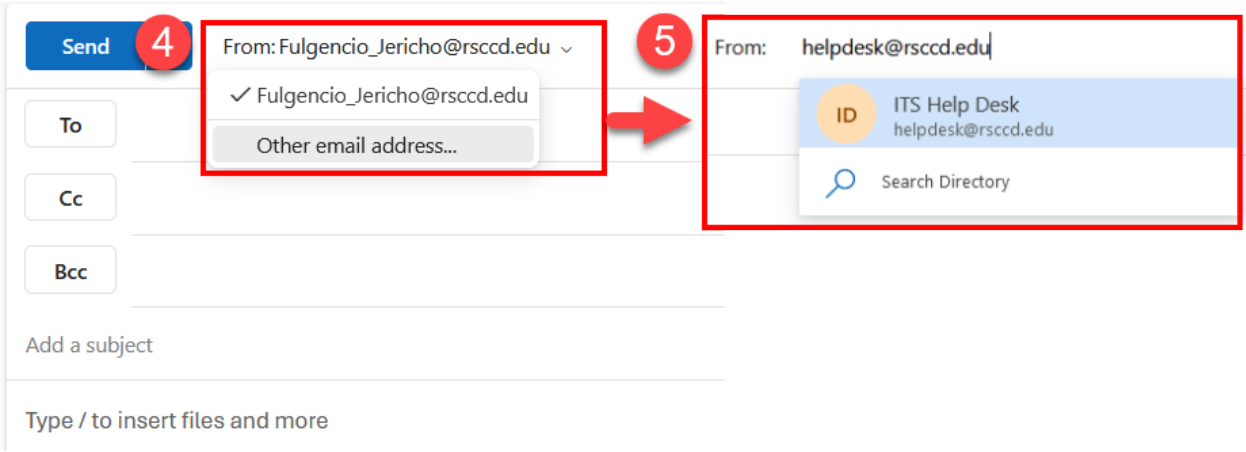
If you need to request access permissions, please create a ticket with the ITS Help Desk so we can help.

Send emails from a shared mailbox

To send emails as a shared mailbox:

1. Follow the steps to **add a shared mailbox to OWA**.
2. **Enable the From field** under View settings.

3. Create a new email.
4. In the new email, select the dropdown menu from the From field, and select Other email address.
5. Manually type in the email address of the shared mailbox or use the Search Directory feature to look up the shared mailbox in the directory.



Note on Send As permissions to shared mailboxes:

You will need **Send As permissions** the shared mailbox to send emails from it.

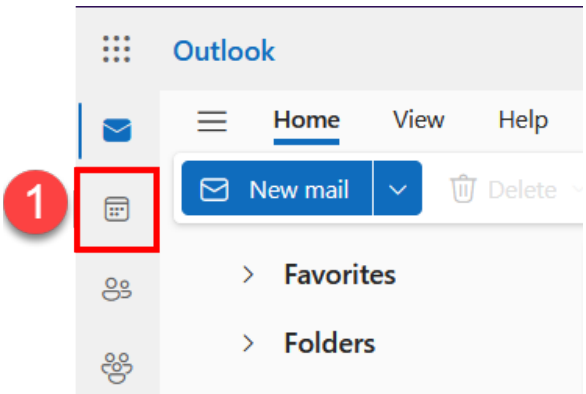
If you need to request access permissions, please create a ticket with the ITS Help Desk so we can help.

Calendar Basics

Accessing the Calendar

To access your Calendars:

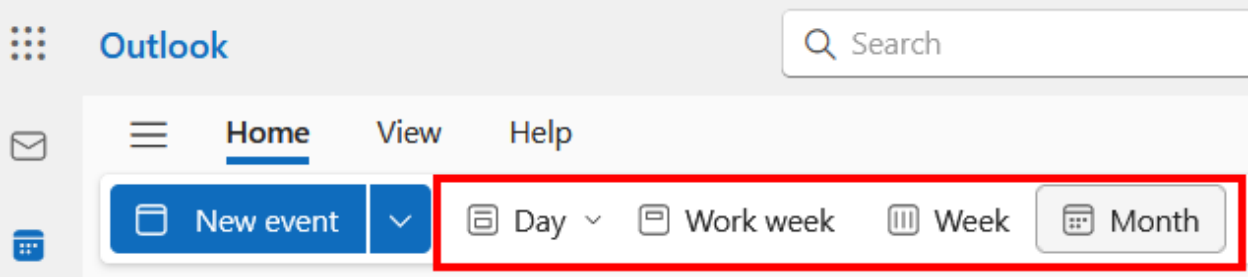
1. Select the **Calendar icon** from the **Navigation Menu.**



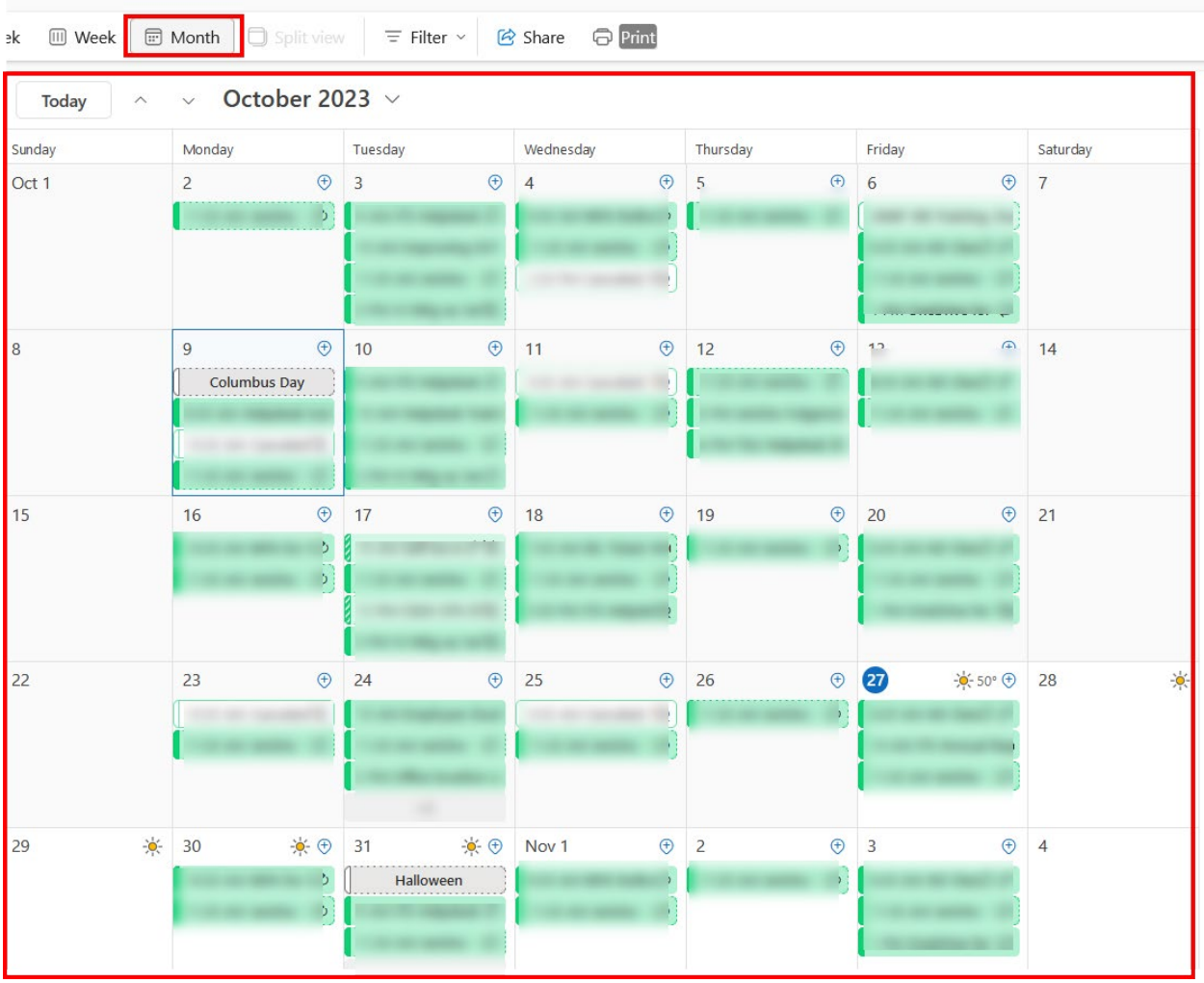
Adjust calendar views (Day, Work Week, Week, Month)

To toggle the calendar views:

1. From the Ribbon Bar, select **Day, Work week, Week, or Month views.**



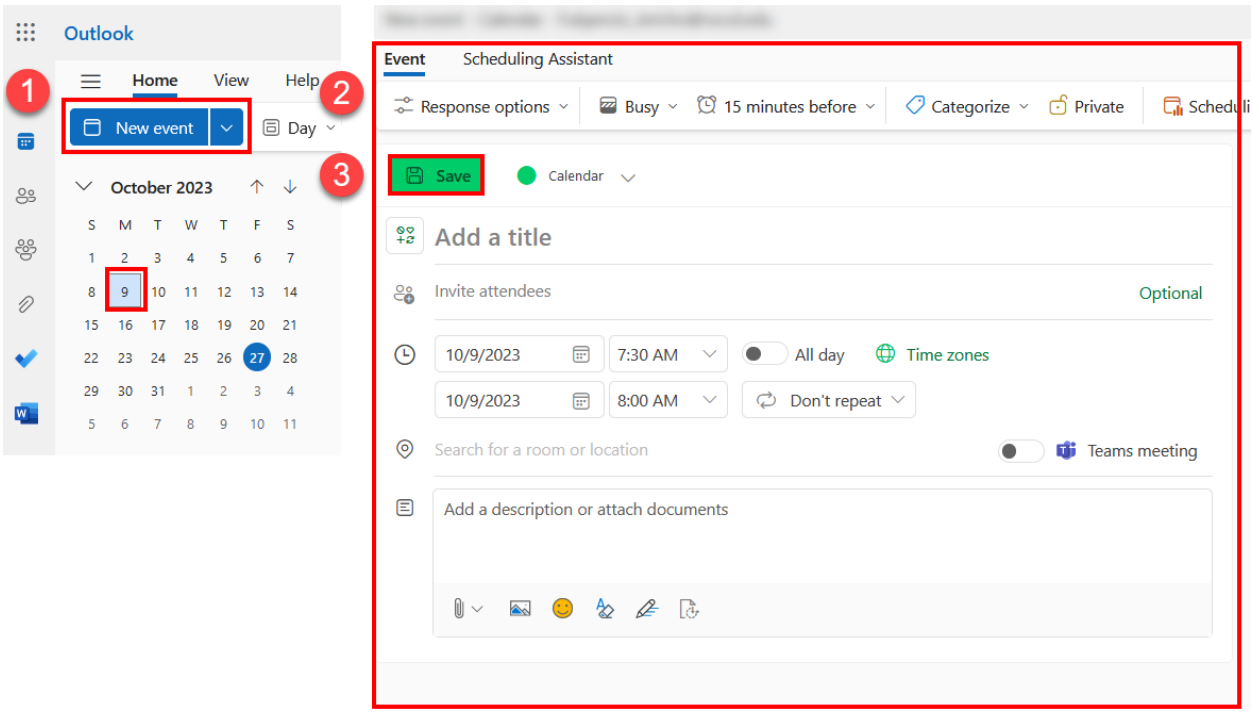
For example, selecting the Month view will display the entire month of events.



Create new calendar events

To create a new calendar event:

1. **Select a date on the calendar**, then select **New Event**.
2. Configure the appointment with a title, attendees, start and end time, and a description.
3. When done, select **Save**.

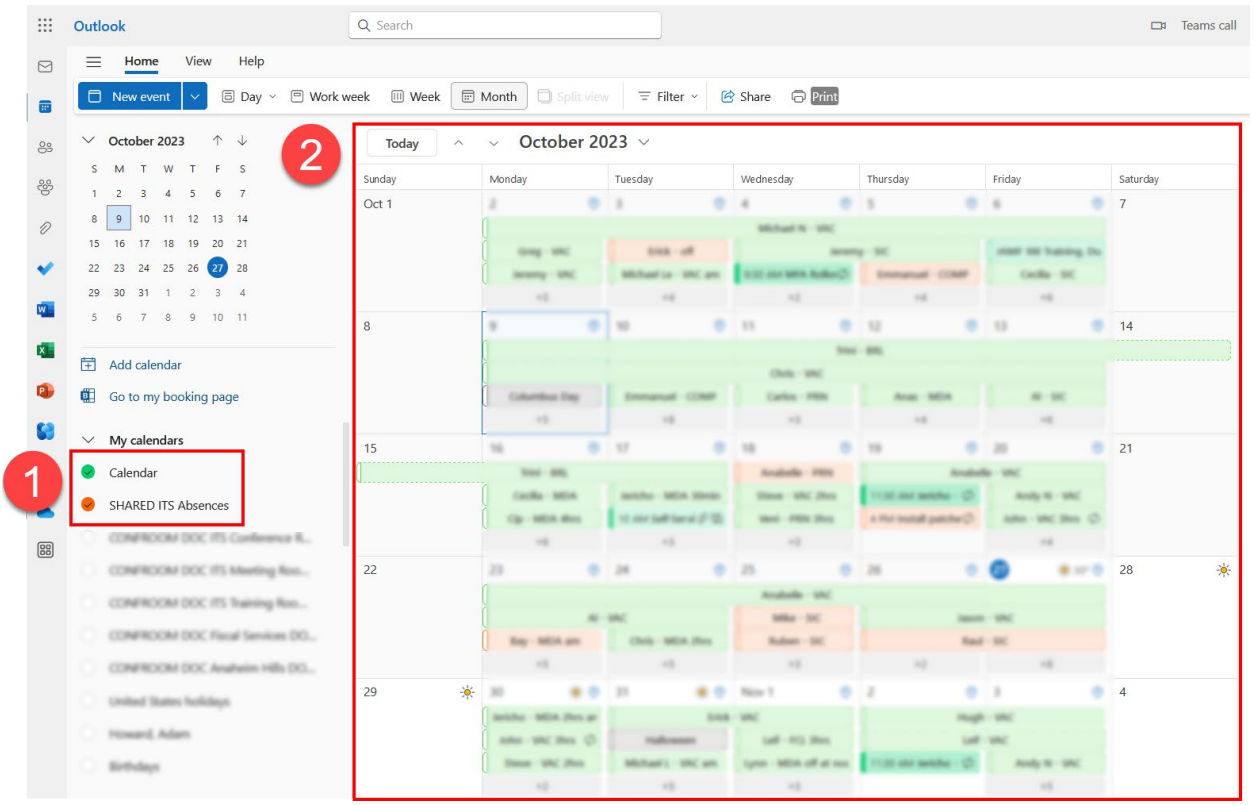


View multiple calendars

To view multiple calendars at once:

1. Use the navigation and select multiple calendars using the button icons.
2. Multiple calendars events will appear in different colors on the display.

For example, selecting your own calendar and a shared calendar will display events for both calendars at the same time in different colors (e.g., green and orange).

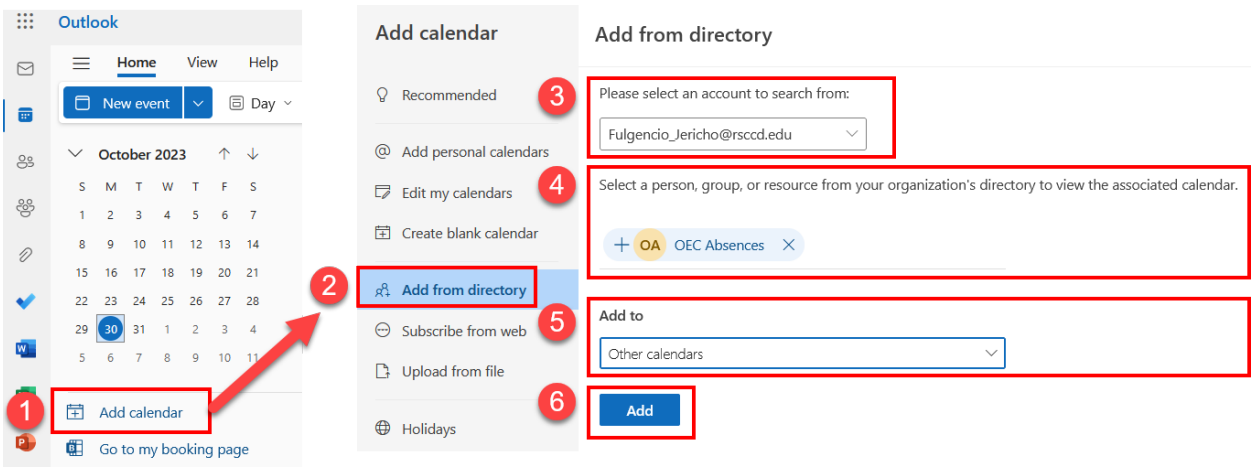


Add calendars from Directory

To add new calendars:

1. On the calendar navigation menu, select **Add Calendar.**
2. Select **Add from Directory**
3. **Select an account** to search from
4. **Enter a name or email address for the associated calendar (**e.g., OEC Absence Calendar)
5. Select where the calendar should **Add to** (e.g., My calendars, Other calendars, People's calendars)
6. Select **Add** when finished.

The calendar you added will then appear as an additional menu item in the calendar navigation menu.



Add calendars outside of Directory

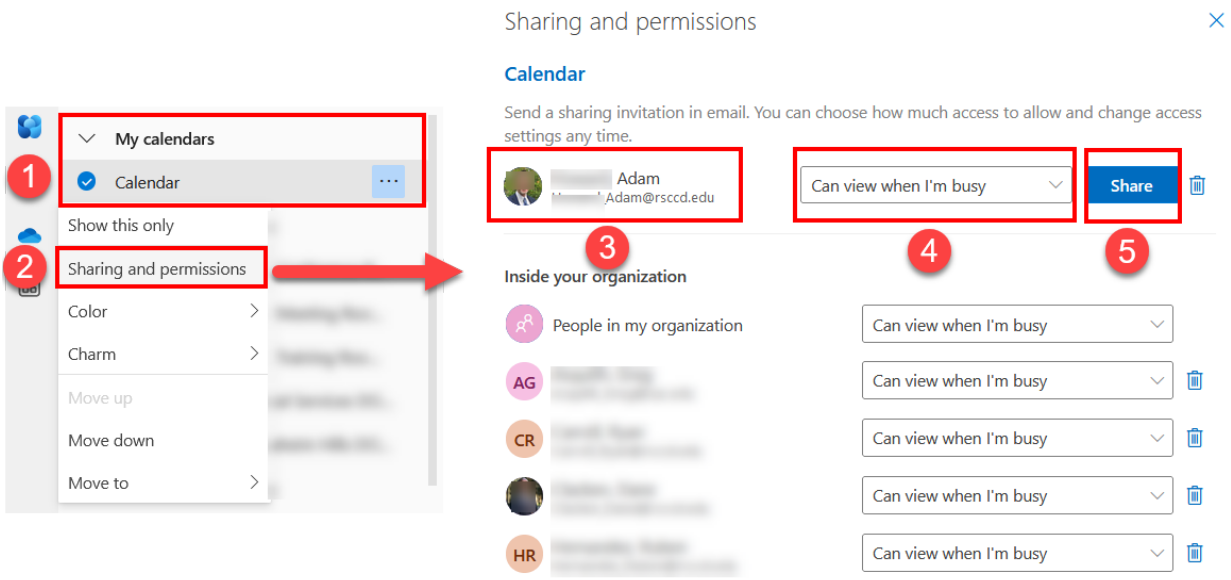
For guidance on how to add additional calendars outside of the directory, such as personal calendars or uploading calendars from a file, see Microsoft's documentation on **Add a calendar in Outlook.com or Outlook on the web**.

Sharing your personal calendar with others

To share your personal calendar with others:

1. **Find your Calendar under My calendars.**
2. **Right click** on the Calendar and select **Sharing and permissions**.
3. **Enter an email address or contact name** for the person you want to share your calendar with.
4. **Select the appropriate permission level for that person.**
    a. List of permissions (from least to most permissive):
        i. Can view when I'm busy
        ii. Can view titles and locations
        iii. Can view all details
        iv. Can edit
        v. Delegate (Full Access)
5. When done, select **Share**.

You can also return to the Sharing and Permissions screen to alter or remove calendar permissions from those you've already shared with.



NOTE: Shared mailbox calendars and public calendars have a different set of permissions that are managed by ITS.

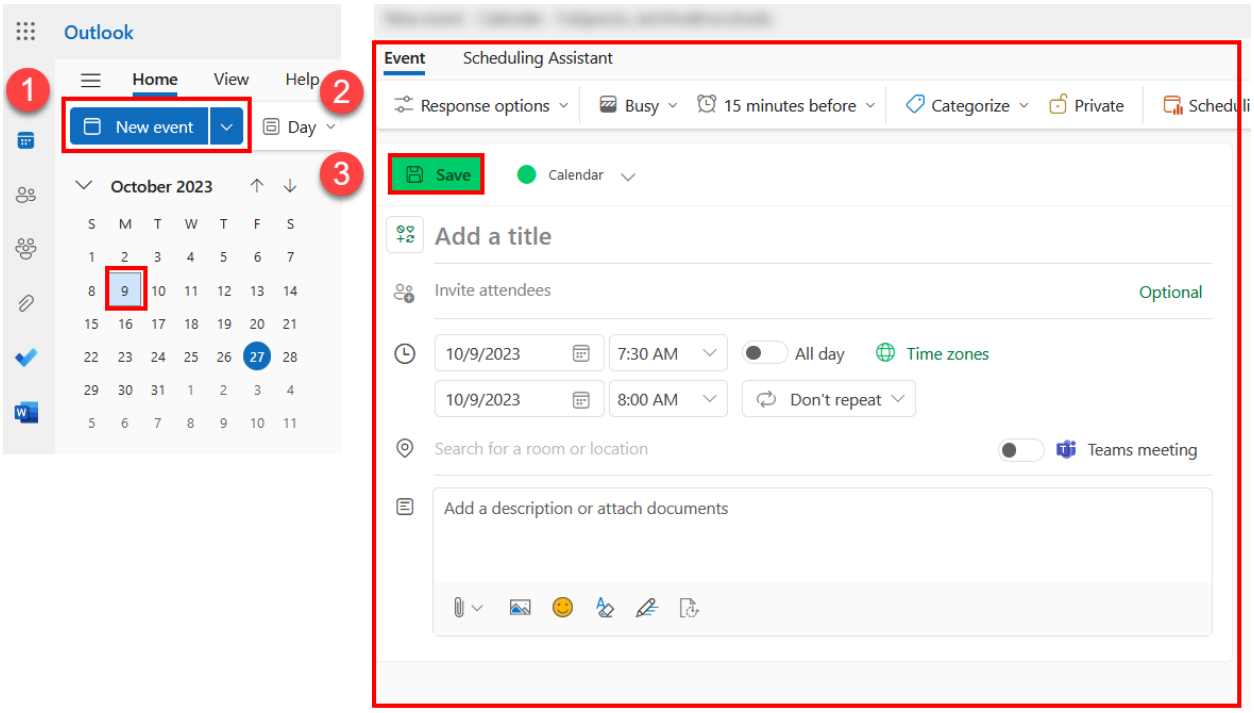
If you need access to a shared calendar or public calendar and aren't able to see it in the Directory, please contact the ITS Help Desk so we can verify if this requires access permissions to be granted by your supervisor or the owner of the mailbox.

NOTE: Other people's personal calendars have their own access permissions. If someone hasn't shared their calendar with you, you may not be able to see any contents. You'll need to ask that person to give you permission to their calendar as described above.

Create new calendar events

To create a new calendar event:

1. **Select a date on the calendar**, then select **New Event**.
2. Configure the appointment with a title, attendees, start and end time, and a description.
3. When done, select **Save**.



Contacts Basics

How to use Contacts

See Microsoft's article on **Using contacts (People) in Outlook on the web**.

Modifying Contacts

See Microsoft's article on how to **Create, view and edit contacts and contact lists in Outlook.**

Other Resources

Microsoft Outlook for iOS and Android (Mobile App)

To access email from a **mobile device**, see our **Microsoft Outlook for iOS and Android Mobile App Guide**.

ProofPoint Spam Quarantine

If you need help with emails being quarantined as spam or junk, see our **ProofPoint Spam Quarantine FAQs**.

Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)

If you need help with multi-factor authentication, see our **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) FAQs.**

Single Sign-on (SSO)

If you need help with Single sign-on, see our **Single Sign-on (SSO) FAQs.**

Password Troubleshooting

If you need help with your password, see our **Password Troubleshooting FAQs.**

OWA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Exchange Online Migration FAQs

See our other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) from the **Exchange Online Migration FAQs.**

- When I go to outlook.office.com, I am already signed in with an existing Microsoft account from another institution / another company.
- I can't access email at mail.rsccd.edu. I get a "something went wrong" message.
- I can't access email from outlook.office.com. I get a "something went wrong" message
- I was advised to use outlook.office.com as a temporary workaround, but need to open a shared mailbox. How do I do this?
- My contacts and address list are not loading in Outlook after the migration. How do I fix this?
- I am receiving an error when trying to send emails from a shared mailbox. The error is "You do not have permission to send the message on behalf of the specified user."
- When sending emails to a specific person, I'm getting an error that says, "Your message couldn't be delivered." How do I fix this?
- How do I turn off Focus Mode in Outlook?
- Copy and Paste no longer works from Outlook Web App. How do I fix this?
- I lost my email signatures. How do I re-create them?

- Why am I getting an error when trying to send emails with .DOCM files attached?

Troubleshooting problems

Troubleshooting sign-in problems

- Use the **Password Reset page** if you've forgotten your password, or need to retrieve your username.
- Use the **Change Password page** to create a new password.
- Read the **Single Sign-On FAQs page** for other sign in issues.

Contact the ITS Help Desk

- Website: **https://rsccd.edu/helpdesk**
- Phone: **714-564-4357 Extension 0**
- Email: **helpdesk@rsccd.edu**

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