



Guide 3

Cleaning your emails

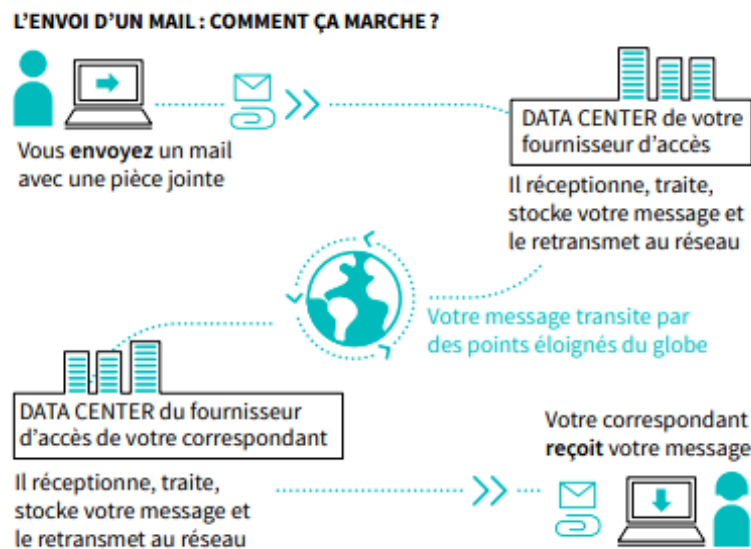
Understanding	2
The impact of emails	2
Did you know ?	2
Three key elements in the impact of sending an email	3
Measure your impact	3
In Outlook	3
On Gmail	5
Taking action	6
Cleaning your mailbox: step by step	6
#1 Sorting your emails	6
#2 Delete the filtered emails and clean up the conversations	8
#3 Empty the recycling bin	9
#4 Limit the amount of unwanted emails you receive	10
#5 Adopt good practices	11
Checklist	12
Go even further	12
Sources	13
Thanks to the contributors	13
Licence to use this guide	13



1. Understanding

The impact of emails

Did you know ?



[Source](#)

According to you, what is the percentage of emails never opened?

60% ! [Source](#)

- **319,6 billion of emails were sent every day**, in 2021. [Source](#)
- An e-mail consisting of text **only weighs a few tens of kilobytes**, i.e. just under 0.1 MB. The **addition of attachments** increases the weight of e-mails considerably.
- **1MB of email storage in the cloud** (just like any other file) **emits on average 0.2 g CO2eq per year** ([source](#)).
- According to ADEME (France), **the carbon footprint of an e-mail** over its entire life cycle (from writing to storage, including sending and reading) is as follows ([source](#)):
 - 1 e-mail with large attachments: 35g CO2eq /unit
 - 1 e-mail without attachment: 4g CO2eq / unit
 For an e-mail with a large attachment, this is the same carbon footprint as 7 sheets of A4 paper ([source](#))

In your opinion, what is the share of SPAM in the volume of all emails sent?

Between 85% et 95%! [Source](#)





- Only **18%** of newsletters are opened. [Source](#)
- A **spam email received**, will have the same impact as a regular email, even if you don't open it! Around 62 **trillions** spam messages are sent each year, which represents a carbon footprint equivalent to the annual emission of 300 000 cars.. [Source](#)

Three key elements in the impact of sending an email

The impact of the email sent depends on :

- the **weight of the content and attachments**
- the **distance travelled between your supplier and the recipient**
- the **number of recipients**

Measure your impact

To find out the current size of your inbox, refer to the information available in your Settings, via your computer. **Make a note of it so that you can measure the impact of your cleanup and share your effort later.**

The path differs depending on the mailbox you use, but you can usually find this information in your settings. Whether you use Gmail, Outlook, Yahoo!Mail, Lilo, Orange, Free or Thunderbird, it is possible to find this information in a few clicks.

Some examples on the following pages.

In Outlook

Online :

- Click on the wheel at the top right, then on "Show all Outlook settings", located at the bottom right
- In Settings, click on "General" > "Storage"



Settings

Search settings

- General
- Email
- Calendar
- People
- View quick settings

Language and time

Appearance

Notifications

Categories

Accessibility

Mobile devices

Distribution groups

Storage

Privacy and data

Search

Storage

Your Outlook mailbox has 49.50 GB of storage. After your mailbox reaches its full capacity, you won't be able to send or receive messages.

0.61 GB used of 49.50 GB (1.2%)

Deleted Items Sent Items templates prez isit - leads Other

Folders

Emptying contents from a folder will help free up space. Items will be permanently deleted.

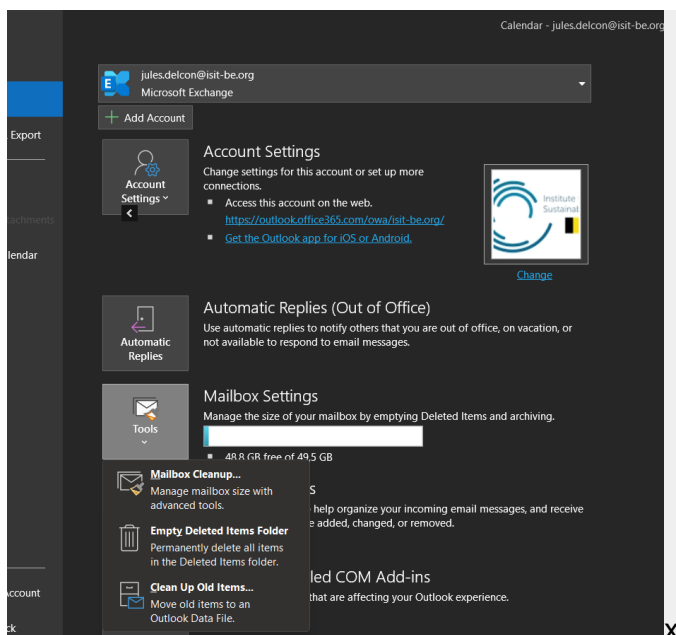
Deleted Items	211.57 MB used 1,000 Posts	Empty
Sent Items	182.55 MB used 776 Posts	Empty
templates prez isit - leads	39.98 MB used 22 Posts	Empty
Elements deleted	27.60 MB used 221 Posts	Empty
Done		Empty





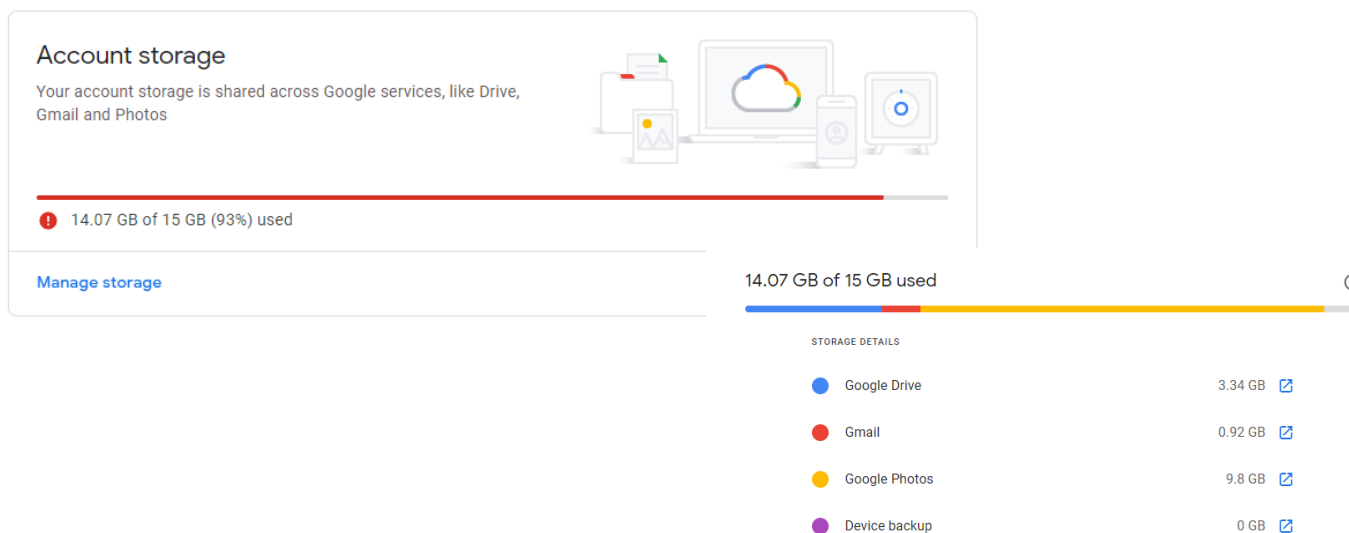
On your computer :

- Click on "File", then "Tools", the storage space used is shown :



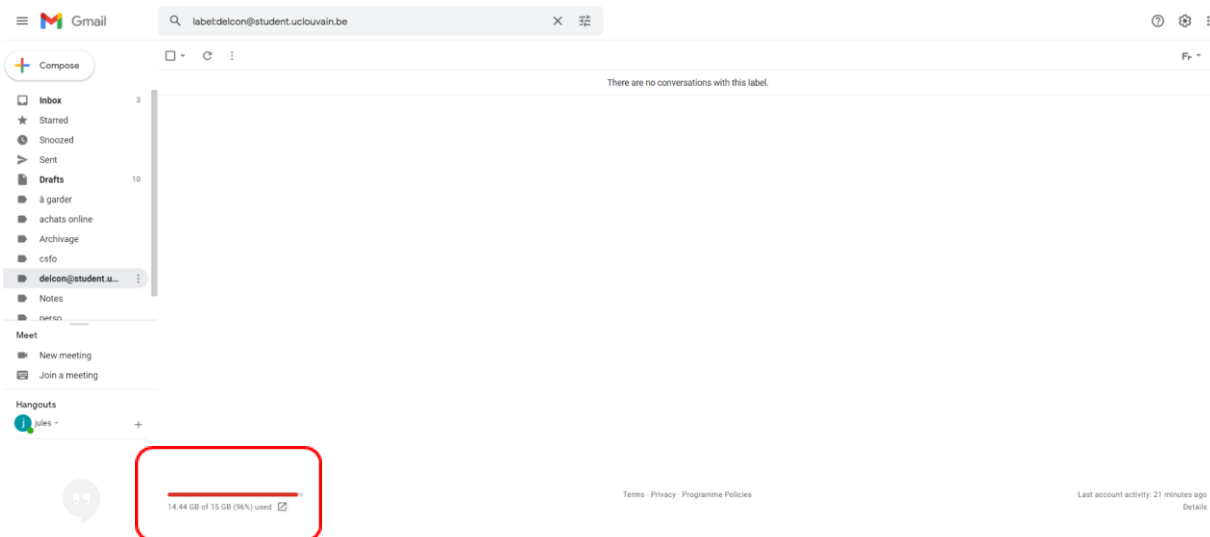
On Gmail

- Click on your profile picture, on the top right, then on "Manage your Google Account". Go to "Payments and subscriptions", then click on the "Manage storage" link. A graph will appear showing your "total storage". Below the graph, click on the "View details" link.





- Note : Storage usage is also displayed at the bottom of your Gmail mailbox screen :



Now that you know and have noted the weight of your mailbox, you are ready to take action!

2. Taking action

Cleaning your mailbox: step by step

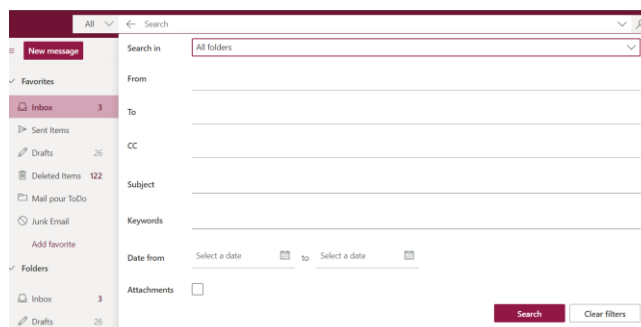
#1 Sorting your emails

Use **filters** available by clicking on the down arrow to the right of your search bar at the top of your mailbox. You can sort them by :

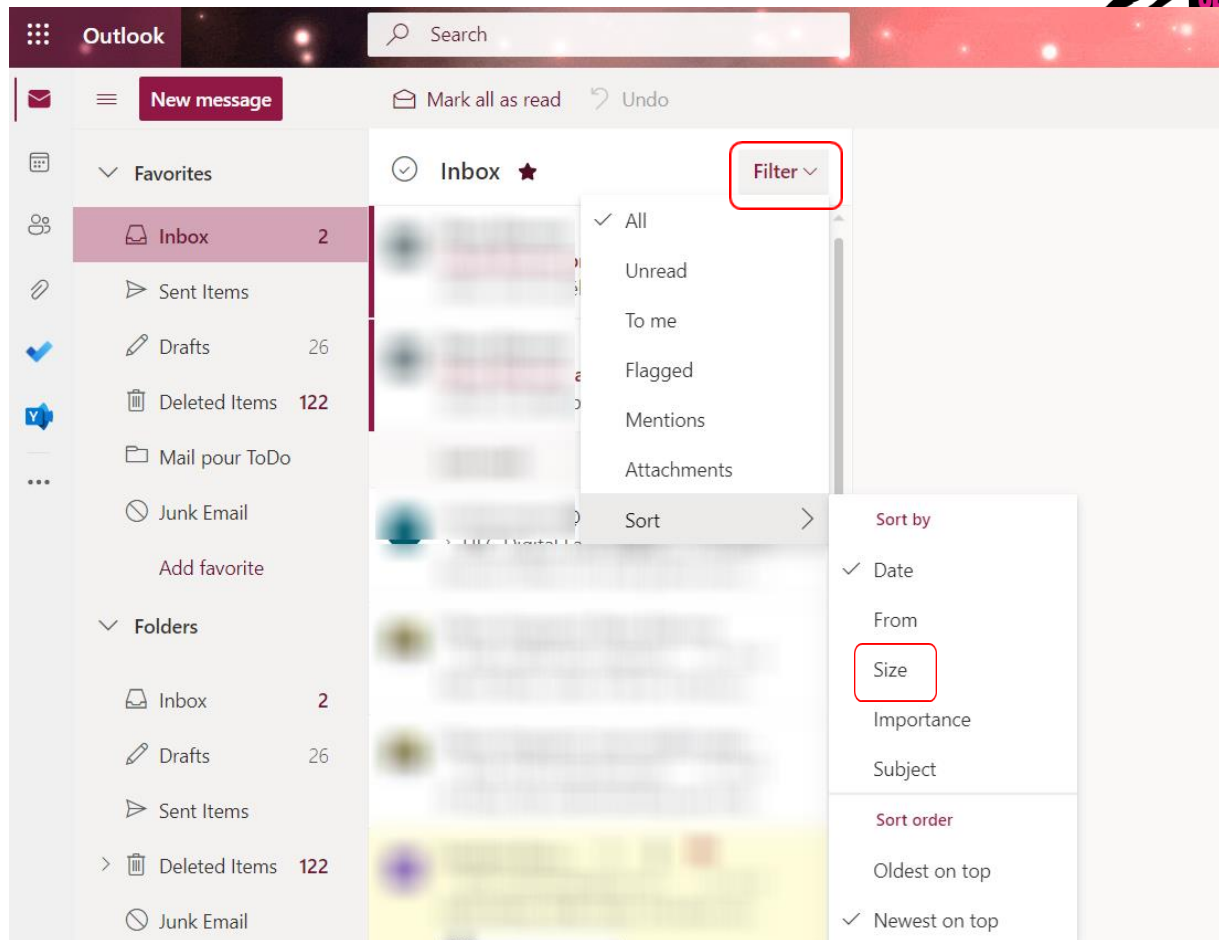
- **Size**: to identify the emails that take up the most space in your box
- **Date**: to delete the oldest emails
- **Sender name** or **Subject**: to identify similar emails, "FYI", "noreply", "newsletter" or those containing only "OK" or "Thank you"

Example:

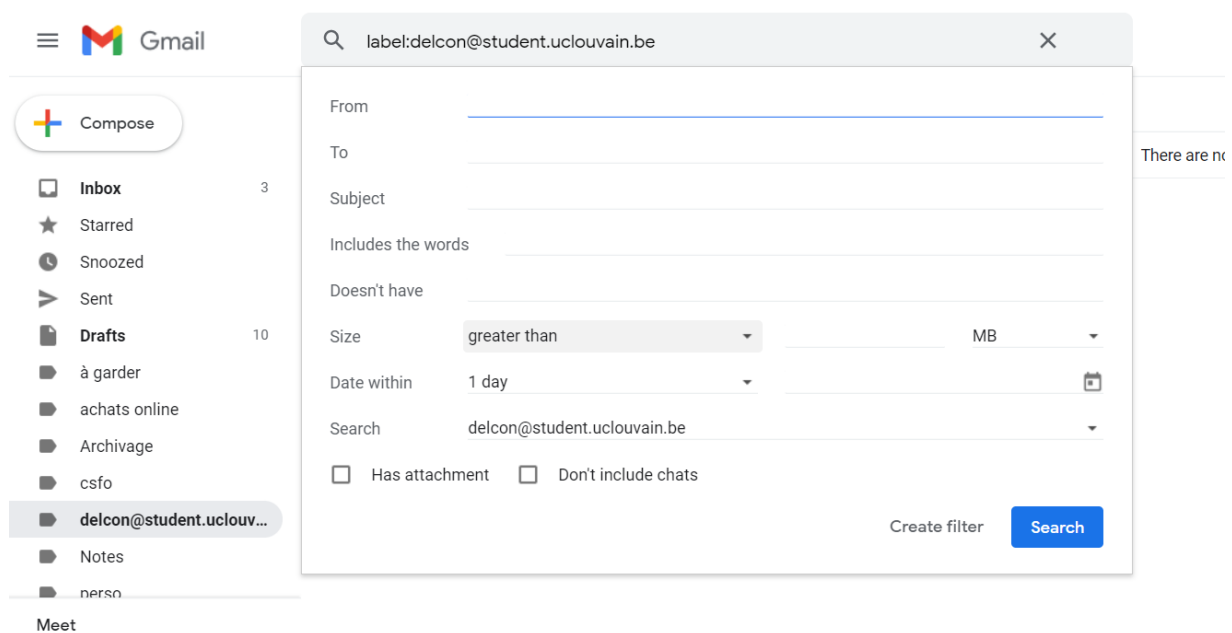
On **Outlook**



OR by clicking on "Filter" then "Sort" then on the criteria of your choice



On Gmail



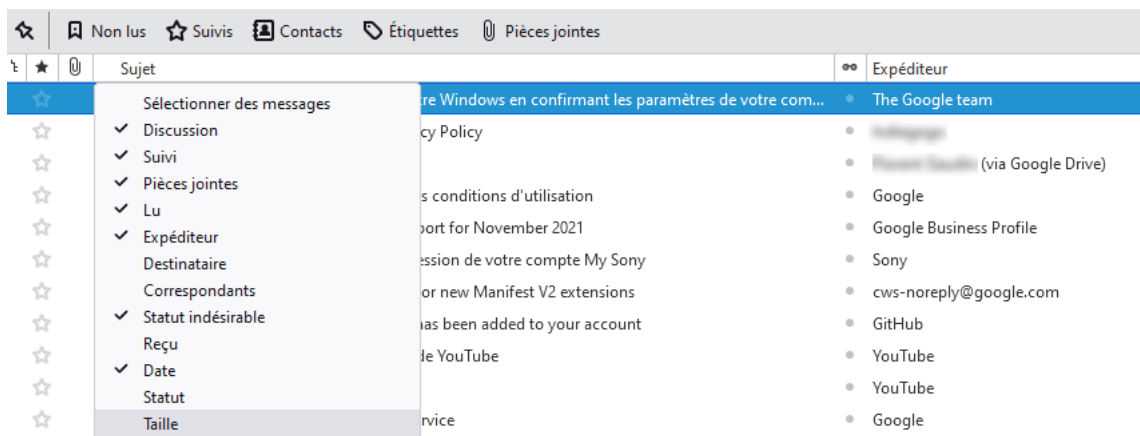
On

Thunderbird





You can display the size of the messages by right-clicking on the column bar, then selecting "Size".

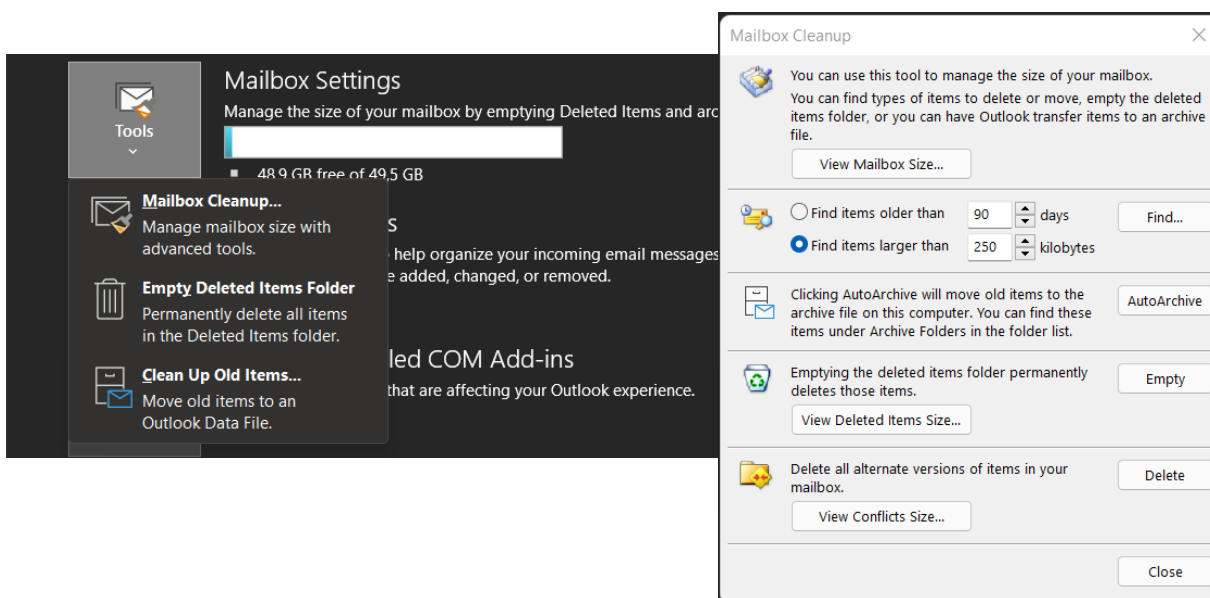


#2 Delete the filtered emails and clean up the conversations

Once filtered, select the emails you wish to delete and simply click "Delete".

In the case of long conversations, to limit the storage of redundant messages, consider selecting the most recent message and deleting the old ones.

If you use your email locally, clean up the duplicates linked to synchronisation. For **local Outlook**, go to "File" > "Tools" > "Clean Mailbox" > "Delete" under "Delete all other versions of items in your mailbox".



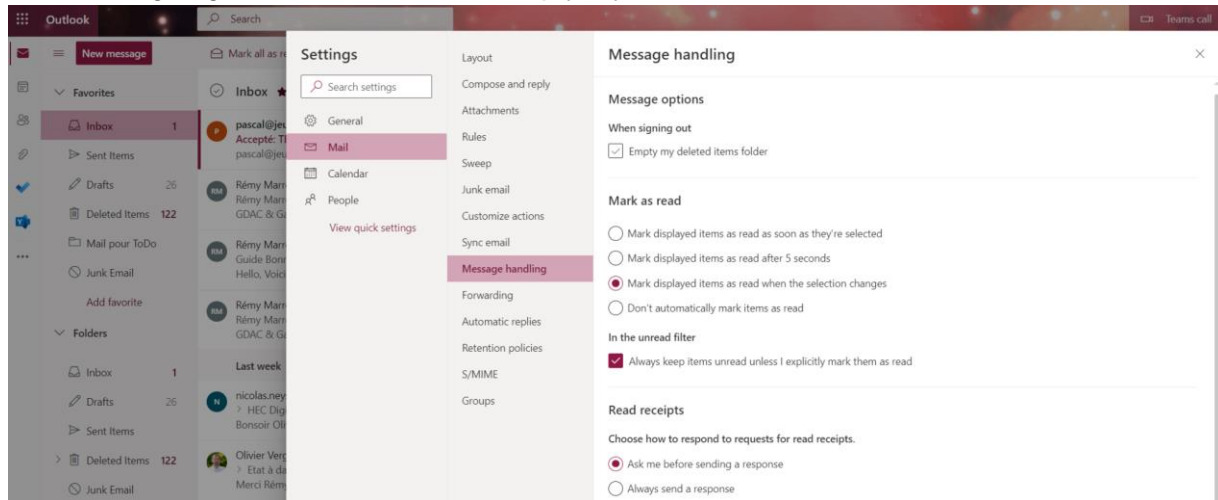


#3 Empty the recycling bin

You just deleted numerous emails ; they are now in your *deleted items*. You can manually delete it by by right-clicking on the "Deleted Items" tab > "Empty folder"

You can also automate this operation with certain providers.

On **Outlook**, go to "Settings" > "Mail" > "Message handling". In the category "Message options" > "When signing out", check the box "Empty my deleted items folder".



On **Gmail et Yahoo!Mail**, the e-mails in the trash folder or the spam folder are automatically deleted after 30 days.

Don' t hesitate to complete your cleaning by going through the official support of your mailbox:

- Microsoft Outlook : [Clean up your inbox](#)
- Gmail : [Delete Gmail messages or restore deleted messages](#)
- Apple iCloud : [Delete emails in Mail on iCloud](#)
- Orange : [Check free space and delete emails](#)



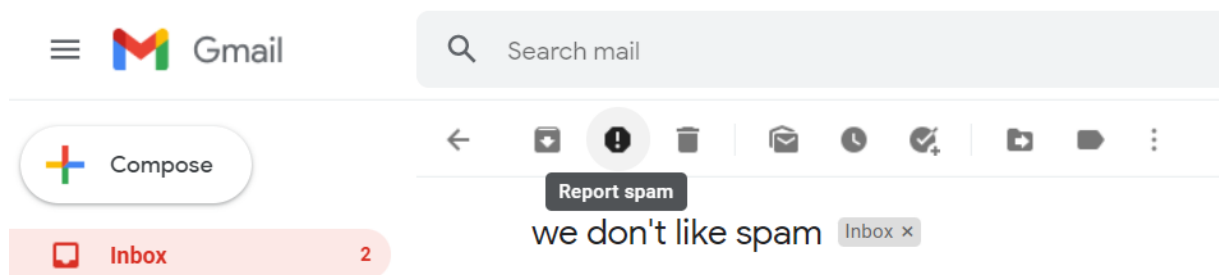
#4 Limit the amount of unwanted emails you receive

You have subscribed to newsletters but you don't read them? **Unsubscribe!**

At the bottom of each newsletter, you will find a link "Unsubscribe", written in lowercase. (*Be careful about the sender and the link you click on*).

Pay attention to the page you are taken to, as it is sometimes necessary to fill in a form to unsubscribe.

If you identify **unknown/unwanted senders**, you can **block them** by clicking on the "Report as SPAM" button.



Similarly, if you have not explicitly consented to receive marketing emails from known recipients, report them as SPAM!



#5 Adopt good practices

Limit the amount of attachments and the weight of these attachments

Attachments are often the heaviest part of an email. Before sending them, ask yourself if it is really necessary..

For sending large files or entire folders, it is advised to use a file sending service such as Swiss transfer (www.swisstransfer.com) or Tresorit (send.tresorit.com).

You can then paste the link to your file into your email.

One of the biggest advantages of this solution is that the file is only sent once and you can delete it later once your email has been processed.

Feel free to reduce the size of your documents, images and videos by compressing them using tools. [source](#)

Limit the number of recipients.

Is it necessary to send a message to all your contacts or your professional group? Before sending, make sure you only send your email to people who are relevant and have a high chance of reading and responding to it.

The "reply all" button is therefore not always a good idea.

Did you know?

If you send an email with a **10 MB** attachment to a list of **20** people, it will be duplicated for each recipient, resulting in **200 MB** of cumulative storage for a single email!

So make sure you send your email to as **few people** as possible!

Limit the size of your signature

Have you ever seen people's signatures with images or logos? Be aware that this practice has a significant impact on the weight of an e-mail and the addition of images can increase the weight of an email tenfold, even more so when the conversation is lengthy and the signature is applied several times!

Your signature with your name and the name of your organisation is more than enough.





Checklist

- Sort out your inbox
- Empty the recycling bin and automate its cleaning
- Unsubscribe from unread newsletters
- Report unwanted emails as SPAM
- Adopt good practices for sending emails

Congratulations! You've cleaned up your emails!

Go to your settings to [measure your impact](#).

3. Go even further

Now that your mailbox is cleaned, do you want it to stay clean all year round? Here are some tips to help you better manage your emails on the daily.

- **Favour instantaneous communication:** after 3 exchanges by email or for more complex communications, it is sometimes more efficient to discuss by phone or by instant messaging
- **Use RSS feeds instead of newsletters:** you add a news feed to your mailbox, and consult it only when you have the time and inclination. [source](#)
- **Adopt the Zero Inbox method**
 - Delete messages that don't require any action on your part and are not worth keeping,
 - Forward messages that are not your responsibility to your colleagues or relatives,
 - Respond immediately to messages that require no work on your part and take no more than 2 minutes to respond to,
 - Do what you can handle at the time,
 - Archive or postpone messages that require more time, additional information,...





Sources

- Cover picture : <https://fr.freepik.com>
- <https://www.futura-sciences.com/planete/questions-reponses/eco-consommation-empreinte-carbone-e-mail-10840/>
- <https://fr.statista.com/statistiques/583905/nombre-d-e-mails-par-jour-dans-le-monde--2019/>
- <https://librairie.ademe.fr/cadic/2351/guide-pratique-face-cachee-numerique.pdf>
- <https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/a-growing-digital-waste-cloud>
- <https://kevinguerin.fr/fr/mieux-gerer-vos-e-mails>
- <https://www.orange.be/fr/blog/reduire-empreinte-carbone-mail>

Acknowledgements

Yolaine Floréan - Florent Burcelot - Christelle Buisson - Kevin Guerin
Alexandre Kalatzis - Nathalie Barre - Rémy Marrone



Attribution
Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale
Partage dans les Mêmes Conditions 4.0 International



Licence to use this guide

[CC-by-nc-sa \(Attribution / Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale / Partage dans les mêmes conditions\)](#)



The CC-by-nc-sa 4.0 licence allows any exploitation of the work (sharing, copying, reproducing, distributing, communicating, reusing, adapting) by any means, in any format. All uses of the work or derivative works, except for commercial purposes, are possible.

The obligations related to the license are to :

- to credit the creators of the original works, to indicate the sources and to indicate if modifications have been made to the works (obligation of attribution);
- not to profit (direct gain or commercial gain) from the work or derivative works;
- disseminate the new creations under the same conditions (according to the same licence) as the original work (thus authorising modifications again and prohibiting commercial uses).

This licence therefore prohibits the new derivations of the derivative work from being exploited for commercial purposes.

World CleanUp Day : <https://www.worldcleanupday.org/>

Digital World CleanUp Day (international website): <https://www.digitalcleanupday.org/>

ISIT-BE: Belgium: 7, Joseph Stevens street | 1000 Brussels - <https://isit-be.org/>

