

# Exporting an Office 365 Mailbox to PST

This guide walks you through the steps for exporting a Microsoft Office 365 mailbox to a PST file. This process is commonly needed for backup, departing staff, legal compliance, or archiving. Microsoft 365 does **not** offer a direct “Export to PST” button. However, you can export mailboxes using the **eDiscovery** tool in the Microsoft Purview (Compliance) portal. For a Microsoft Exchange Server, here are the procedures for [mailbox exports to .pst files in Exchange Server](#)

## Prerequisites

- **Permissions:** A *Global Administrator* must assign you to the **eDiscovery Manager** role group in Microsoft Purview. Once assigned, you can run exports without needing Global Admin rights.
- **Browser Requirement:** Use **Microsoft Edge** to download PST files (other browsers may fail).
- **Tool Access:** Ensure you have access to the **Microsoft Purview Compliance Center**.

## 1. Assign eDiscovery Manager Role

1. Log in to the **Microsoft 365 Admin Center** → <https://admin.microsoft.com>
2. Navigate to **Microsoft Purview** → **Settings** → **Roles & Scopes** → **Role Groups**.
3. Select **eDiscovery Manager**.
4. Add your account under **eDiscovery Administrator**.
5. Confirm that the **Export** role is listed.
6. Save → Log out → Log back in to apply permissions

## 2. Create a Content Search

1. Open **Microsoft Purview Compliance Center**: <https://compliance.microsoft.com>.
2. Go to **Solutions** → **eDiscovery** → **Content Search**.
3. Click **New Search** → name it clearly.
4. Select **Exchange Mailboxes** → choose mailbox(es). Define search conditions (optional).
5. Configure search conditions (optional).
6. Save and run the search.
7. Submit and wait for **Completed** status.

## 3. Export Search Results

1. Select your search → **Actions** → **Export Results**.
2. Choose **One PST file per mailbox**.
3. Start export → wait until **Completed**.

## 4. Download the PST File

1. Go to **Export tab** → select job → **Download Results**.
2. Launch **eDiscovery Export Tool**.
3. Sign in → choose local folder → save PST.

## Alternative Method (User-Level)

If you only need to export your own mailbox:

- Use **Outlook Desktop App** → **File** → **Open & Export** → **Import/Export** → **Export to PST**.
- Select folders → save locally.
- Source: [Export emails, contacts, and calendar items to Outlook using a .pst file](#)

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## Optional: PowerShell Automation (Advanced IT Admins)

Microsoft Purview supports scripted searches using:

```
Connect-IPPSSession  
New-ComplianceSearch  
Start-ComplianceSearch  
New-ComplianceSearchAction -Export
```

## Best Practices

- Use an account with MFA to secure the eDiscovery access
- Always encrypt PST files before storing or sharing
- Keep exports in a secure storage (SharePoint, OneDrive, offline vaults)
- For ex-employees, convert their mailbox to a shared mailbox first
- Document export actions for audit and compliance logs

## Disclaimer:

**Microsoft Exchange Online and Microsoft 365 administrative** processes may change over time due to updates from Microsoft. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this guide, performing administrative tasks incorrectly can lead to issues such as data loss, compliance impacts, or service disruption. If you are unsure about any step or its potential consequences, consult a qualified IT professional before proceeding.