

example, suppose you have a computer at the office that has all your important work-related software and files on it. You can access that computer from your home computer by establishing a VPN connection to your work network and then using Remote Desktop Connection to connect to your work computer. Presto! You're working from home!

## Using Outlook Web App

Most people who connect to their office networks from home really just need their email. If the only reason for accessing the office network is to get email, try this simple, easy tool: Outlook Web App, also known as OWA. This Microsoft Exchange Server feature can access your company email from any computer that has an Internet connection. The remote computer just needs a web browser and an Internet connection; no VPN or other special configuration is required.

The best part is that you don't have to do anything special to enable OWA; it's enabled by default when you install Microsoft Exchange. Although you can configure plenty of options to improve its use, OWA is functional right out of the box.

To access OWA from any web browser, just browse to the address designated for your organization's OWA. The default address is the DNS name of your mail server, followed by /exchange. For example, for the mail server `smtp.lowewriter.com`, the OWA address is `smtp.lowewriter.com/exchange`.



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The connection must use the secure version of the normal HTTP web protocol. You must type **https://** before the OWA address. The complete address will be something like `https://smtp.lowewriter.com/exchange`.

When you browse to your OWA address, you're prompted to enter a name and password. Use your regular network logon name and password. OWA appears in the browser window, as shown in Figure 24-1.

If you're familiar with Outlook, you'll have no trouble using OWA. Almost all Outlook features are available, including your inbox, calendar, contacts, tasks, reminders, and even public folders. You can even set up an Out of Office reply.

One difference between OWA and Outlook is that there's no menu bar across the top. However, most of the functions that are available from the menu bar are available elsewhere in OWA. If you can't find a feature, look in the Options page, which you can reach by choosing Options ⇨ Show All Options near the top right of the page. Figure 24-2 shows the Options page. From here, you can create an Out of Office reply, set your signature, and change a variety of other options.