

The Email Primer - from @ to Zip

Illustrated Version

By

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Welcome to the Email Primer - From @ to Zip! Illustrated Version!

Hi, there!

This is the illustrated PDF version of my eBook, Email Primer - From @ to Zip! There are several changes in the way the information is presented here. There are more actual visual demonstrations of the techniques described, as inferred from the title. It is also a more universal edition as any computer with the Adobe Acrobat Reader should be able to read it.

There are several topics covered in this book. Some are techniques to manage your email and some are topics on writing effective emails. I'll cover email etiquette as well as adding a little fun to your mailings. Most of the examples will be from Outlook Express. I used OE for several years before switching email clients (software). But there will be something here that everyone can use! Enjoy!!

Just some of the topics I will cover are:

- How to save your email to a floppy disk...and be able to read them!
- How to use "Groups" or distribution lists.
- Sending Plain Text versus Rich text or HTML mail.
- What do CC and BCC mean?
- Virus hoaxes and chain letters...how to spot them.
- Adding special words to your spell checker quickly!

I know you'll enjoy this book! I had whole lot of fun writing it...and I hope you'll get as much fun and benefit out of reading it!

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How to Use This Book

This eBook was created to *help you learn* some of the tips and tricks of using email and email software, especially Outlook Express. There is a **table of contents** with a list of articles. The subjects listed are active links. Clicking them will take you to that page.

Links to our website will open your browser, depending on your internet connection software and configurations.

This book can be printed out so that you have a hard copy for your files

This version is illustrated with screen shots of Outlook Express. This should help explain some of the instructions given.

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What is Email?

Email is the electronic equivalent of the old postal letter. But there is quite a bit of difference, as you well know! Email is faster, easier, and in some ways more efficient than a "snail mail" letter. Email can be used for a variety of purposes, both personal and business. An email message may be as simple as a short fill-in form, or as complex as a business or personal letter with attachments and rich text or HTML formatting. Originally started as a way for computer programmers to communicate on a project, email has become one of the fastest growing online activities in all of computing!



Email Formats

There are two basic formats that most email is sent in, **plain text** and **Rich Text (RTF)**, also called **HTML** (hypertext markup language). The latter is very similar to the format used to create web pages. When deciding on which format to use, you should take several things into consideration.

1. Can my recipient's email client (software) handle a Rich Text Format letter? Not all email programs can.
2. How will RTF help me convey my points, emotions, etc., and can I accomplish this by using plain text? Many newsletters are now going to HTML formatting because they wish to make them more interesting by using pictures.
3. Is this a business or personal correspondence? Most businesses prefer to receive plain text formatted messages.
4. Is my recipient using a dial-up account (modem) or a broadband account (cable or DSL)? Large HTML format messages can take awhile to download, so be careful here.

While my software does have the capability to send and receive RTF or HTML messages, I prefer to use plain text. There are ways around its limitations, and as a security measure, it cannot send a virus in the body or the message, nor run tracking programs.

Parts of an Email Message

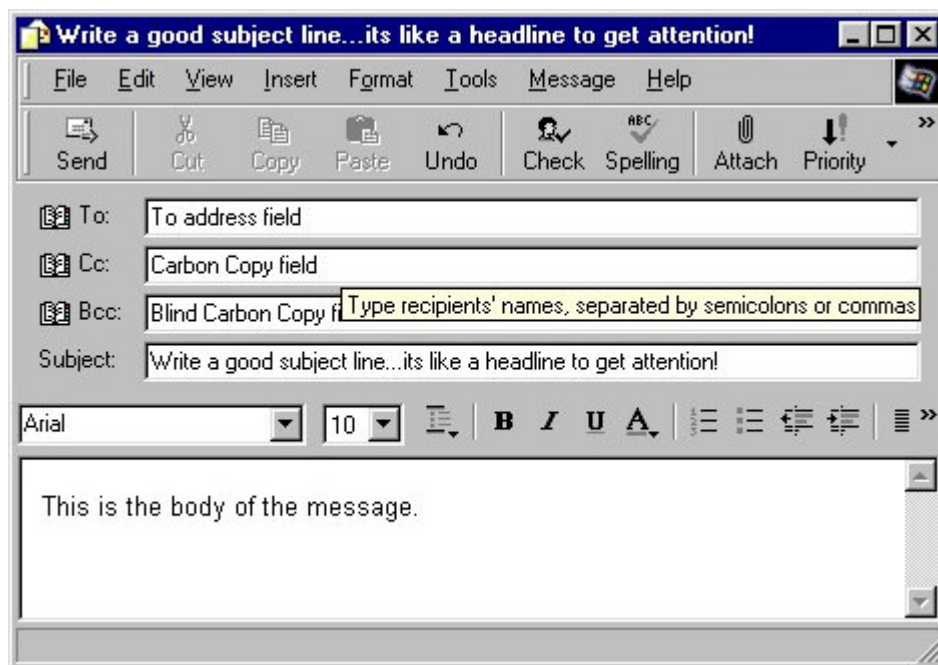
There are several physical sections to an email message. Let's talk about the address fields first, then the subject line, and finally the body of the message.

Address fields.

The address field (sometimes called the header) may have several fields, such as the "To:" field, the "CC:" field, and the "BCC:" field. Each one serves a different purpose. The "To:" field is where you will normally place the email address of the main recipient of your message. The "CC:" field is where you would place any secondary recipients. For example, I might send a response to a question from my dad and place his address in the "To:" field, since I am addressing his question, and put my brother's address in the "CC:" field so he would get a copy.

Subject line.

The subject line has a great deal of importance. It is sometimes a determining factor in whether your message gets read or trashed. Try to keep the subject line short and to the point. It should be related to the content of your message. Many power email users often sort their mail automatically by filtering words in the subject line. Your subject line should give good



indication of what is to follow. "Hi, there!" is not a good subject line if you are trying to ask an important question or relay some very important information. "A question concerning your software" would be much better if you are trying to get some support answers. While, "Here is the information you requested" may be a better subject than none, "How to repair your broken widget" is better, since the reader may have several requests sent to different folks and it gives a better indication about the actual content of the message.

Message Body

The message body is where you will place your information or request. Personal messages may differ slightly than business communications. If at all possible, keep to one subject or topic per message for most business messages, especially if you expect a reply back. Unrelated topics may have to be handled by different business departments and thus have to be forwarded to the appropriate person.

If you must have several related topics, keep all the information related to each topic together. This will aid in the reply since a reply to each topic can be placed adjacent to the topic. For example:

<How much do your widgets cost?>

They are \$4.00 per hundred.

<Is there a limit per order?>

We ship no more than 200 per order.

Placing a space between paragraphs or topics will also make inserting reply comments much easier. More will be covered on replying and forwarding in another lesson, but for now, try to keep your messages organized and to the point. Of course, personal messages like a family newsletter will often cover many topics and may have several unrelated topics. A family newsletter or update is quite different than a business use email.

Email Etiquette

Because email is *so* easy to use, and so *fast*, it's common for folks to forget their *manners* when using email. And there are also some rules of thumb to follow when using email in special situations. I'll outline some of these rules of etiquette here.

ALL CAPS

Using all capital letters in your messages is the email equivalent of **shouting!** While it may seem silly to you at first, when you realize that the only way that *emotion, importance or emphasis* can be conveyed in a letter is through formatting, you can see how all capitals can be seen as shouting. (However, if you are a Net veteran, please be patient with the new person. **Gently** guide him or her in proper email use!)

Subject Line

Do include a *good, short but descriptive* subject line in all your messages. I know many veteran e-mailers who just delete messages without subject lines! If you want your message read, include a subject line. Another thing that subject lines are used for is sorting messages, either automatically or manually. (*See more about this in the article about Folders and Filters*). If you help your recipient manage his or her mail by using good subject lines, you'll be greatly appreciated. Don't just say "Hi!" or some other non-descriptive line. Give a brief **headline** about the message content. And it helps to keep...

One Subject per Message

This may not be very important when sending personal mail, but can be very helpful sometimes if you're expecting a reply to questions or comments. If you do need to include several different topics, try to make sure they are related. It will help keep your recipient's responses manageable! (You can see where a good subject line can be important here!) And if research needs to be done before a reply can be sent, single subject messages can be answered more easily than a potpourri of pondering. And while you're at it...

Keep Business Messages Professional

Personal message can be fun, with lots of "smileys" {>?, sometimes called emoticons, and acronyms, like LOL (laughing out loud). But if you are sending a business correspondence, keep those things to a bare minimum, or don't use them at all. It's really hard to take a business request seriously if those items are used. That's not to say that you can't use a little humor, just keep it under control. That brings me to another important subject...

Sending Mail to Your Friends at Work

This can be a **very** touchy subject. Mailing personal messages to friends at work *could get them in trouble*. Many companies have strict policies concerning using company mail systems for personal use. That joke, or cartoon may be hilarious, that photo may be cute or crazy, but if it's against company policy to get such mails, no one will be laughing when the hammer drops! Many companies monitor employees emails through their IS department, so don't think you can

slip one by! Personal emails are best sent to your friend's personal computers. This goes for virus "alerts" and chain letters, too. While we're on the subject...

So-called "Virus Alerts" and "Email Tracking" messages

I've covered this more thoroughly in another article, so I'll be brief. **Don't!** (*How's that for brief!*) Actually, most of the "virus alerts" you'll get are *bogus*. If it didn't come from your virus software vendor (you **do have** virus software, don't you), you can pretty much ignore it. Don't pass it, trash it. Most of them will say something like this, "*Just announced yesterday...send to everyone in your address book!*" Sound familiar? I thought so. There are a few exceptions, very few, so do a little research before you forward one of these messages. Which brings me to...

RESEARCH Before You Click Send

Email is a **powerful** tool. Used correctly it can do amazing, beneficial things. Used incorrectly, it can be deadly. Think about geometric progression for a moment. If you get a message and send it to the, say, **50** folks in your address book, and they each send it to **50** more in their address books, that's **2500** messages in the first generation of mailing. If those **2500** send out **50** messages each, the potential coverage would be **125,000** people. And if they each sent out **50** messages - **6,250,000** messages in just **4** generations. Of course, there would be some duplication...but many folks will send the *same message* time and again without thinking! Sadly, folks seem to remember bad news easier than good news. People have been hurt terribly by misinformation being passed along this way! Do your research, think before you click "forward"!

One Final Recommendation

Before I close this article, I would like to make one more suggestion, a very important one. Understand that *you can't take an email message back*. If for some reason you get upset at someone and feel you must email them your vengeance, go ahead, *write* the message. But **don't** click the "**send**" button! Save the letter for later. After you've had a chance to cool off, go back and read the letter. **Honestly** read it. Do you really need to send it? If so, can you say what you mean in a little less combative tone? Is it really that important that you vent your anger on this person? You may be surprised to find that the letter is really not necessary, or that you can get your point across in a milder tone.

Like I said, you can't take an email back once it's been sent. Think carefully about it before you do or say something that can't be undone!

PS. And don't forget to use your spel chekre! (;>o

Copy and Paste - a must have skill!

Copy and pasting is a very important skill to learn, especially for email use. You can copy a part of one message and paste it into another message. This technique is often used in replying or forwarding messages. You can reply to or forward only the most important or relevant parts of a message that way.

To copy a part of a message, place your cursor at the start of the text you want to copy, hold down the left mouse button and then move to the end of the selection. This will highlight that entire part of the text. Then copy the selection by:

1. Either going to the Menu and select "**Edit**", then scroll down to "**Copy**", or
2. Use the key combination "CTRL + C", or
3. Keeping the cursor in the highlighted text, right click the mouse and choose "copy" from the context menu.

The selected text will be copied into the clipboard. You can then open a new message and paste the selected text into it. To paste it, place your cursor in the body of the message and use the following:

1. Right click your mouse and select "paste", or
2. Use the key combination "CTRL + V", or
3. Go to the menu bar, select "Edit" then scroll down to paste.

Copy and paste is a preferred method of forwarding a message contents for several reasons. They are:

- You don't get those annoying ">" marks, which can get out of hand if the message is forwarded multiple times.
- Your recipient won't have to open multiple attachments, especially annoying if the mail has been forwarded a lot. I often just delete messages that have multiple forward attachments. I really don't have the time to open all of them and then close them all!
- Most importantly, you won't be forwarding the email addresses of the original sender, or others who may have forwarded it! This can become a security and privacy issue.

Copied messages in an email can also be pasted into other documents, for instance, your favorite word processing program or text editor, and saved as a compilation. You might want to keep everything your grandma wrote in one Word document, for example. Copy and paste is a very versatile tool!

How to Reply and Forward Properly

Replying to or forwarding messages is very easy, but some care should be taken as to how you do it. The techniques in the copy and paste article will help, especially when forwarding. I won't go into detail about copy and paste here, check out that article for more information.

Replying to a message

When you are replying to a message there are two basic ways of doing it. One is to click on the reply button. This is the most common method since it puts the original senders address in the "To:" field automatically. It will also put "Re:" in front of their original subject line, which will give them an idea of what you are replying to...if they used a good subject line!

If your email software is configured to reply with the original message, it will be added to the reply message with some sort of indication, such as:

"-----Original message-----"

and have some sort of format mark to identify the message. Replying can then be done in several ways. You can place your reply at the beginning or end of the original message. What I like to do if there are several issues to answer is place my individual replies in the body of the original message and format my replies differently, such as using bold or italic formatting, and place a space between the lines of the original message and my reply:

-----Original message-----
<I would like to inquire about getting a copy of your email primer book
You can download a copy at my website, <<http://www.steve.maurer.net>>
<Are you planning any other projects?
Yes, I have some other eBooks in the planning stages. Thanks for your interest!

If I just need to quote part of the original message I'll use brackets "[...]" to show there is part of the message not quoted:

-----Original message-----
<I am very interested in your book, Email Primer - from @ to Zip. [...] How do I get hold of a copy

You can download a copy at my website, <http://www.steve.maurer.net>

Forwarding a message

I will be brief here. You *CAN* just hit the forward icon from your menu, *BUT* I wouldn't recommend it. That is so easy that it has been abused. When you forward this way the formatting marks are placed in the original message...**each time** that it is forwarded! Your message could end up looking like this:

Adding Contacts Manually to Addressbook

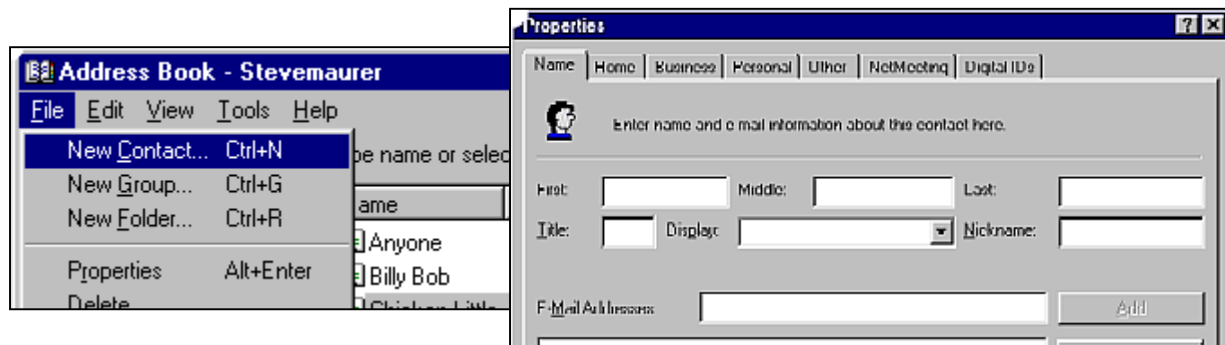
The address book in Outlook Express is a very *sophisticated* tool. There are many tasks that you will want to learn and take advantage of, such as adding names to the address book, adding contact information, and sorting, just to name a few. This article will cover entering contact information **manually**.

Getting Started

Usually you access your address book from within Outlook Express, but this is not necessary. Since you can add information other than email addresses (like phone numbers, mailing addresses, personal information such as birthdays) it may be helpful to add a **shortcut to your address book** on your computer desktop. If you don't know how to do this, check out the topic "Adding Shortcuts" in this book.

Manually Adding Contact Information

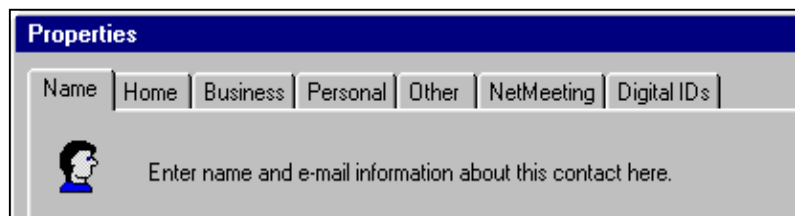
Open your address book (either from Outlook Express or alone). Click on "**File**", then scroll down to "**New contact...**" and the Properties dialog box will pop up for the new contact. Fill out the appropriate information for your contact. After you have typed in the email address, you will need to click the "**Add**" button. This will set the email address. You can add *multiple* email addresses for your contact. The first one will be the default. If you have several addresses for the



contact and want to change the default address, just highlight the address you want as default and click the button marked "**Set as Default**". You might notice the check box at the bottom left corner labeled "**Send email using plain text only**". If the contact is using a text only email client, you might want to check this box. You will then be warned if you try to send an HTML or Rich Text Format letter to them.

Other tabs on the properties box

You will notice some other **tabs** on the properties box. These are for adding other types of contact information. For an example, click on the business tab. Here is where I fill out information for my business contacts. Note



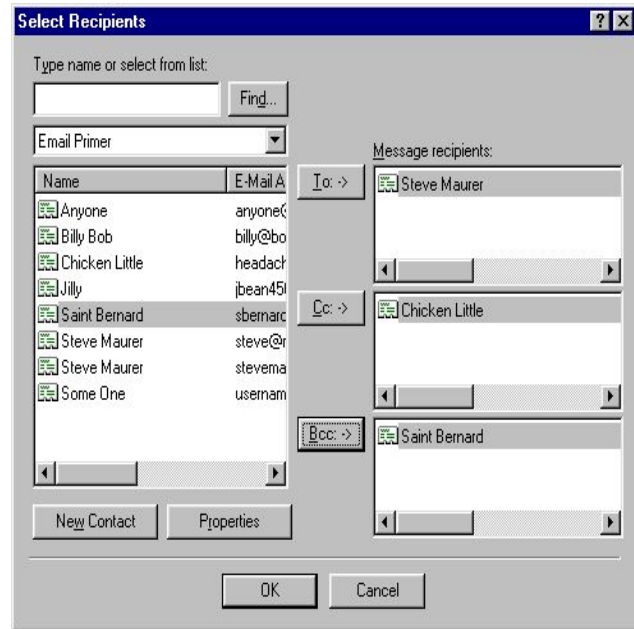
especially the **web site address** field. If you fill this in with the contacts web address, you can open your address book, click on the "go" button beside this address, and you will be connected to that site. Pretty handy feature, eh? *Note: if you add a phone number, be sure to include the area code. Why...?*

The Summary Tab

Check out the other tabs and see what kinds of information can be stored there. After you have entered all the information about the contact you need, click on the **summary** tab. There you will see a summary of *all the information* you have added for this contact. A very handy feature if you need a quick reference!

After You Are Done

When you are done working with the contact, just click "OK" to close the dialog box. Your contact is now added to your address book. Notice how a *balloon* comes up with the contact information when you place your cursor over the contact name. If you **double click** on the contact, the dialog box will pop-up and you can edit the information.

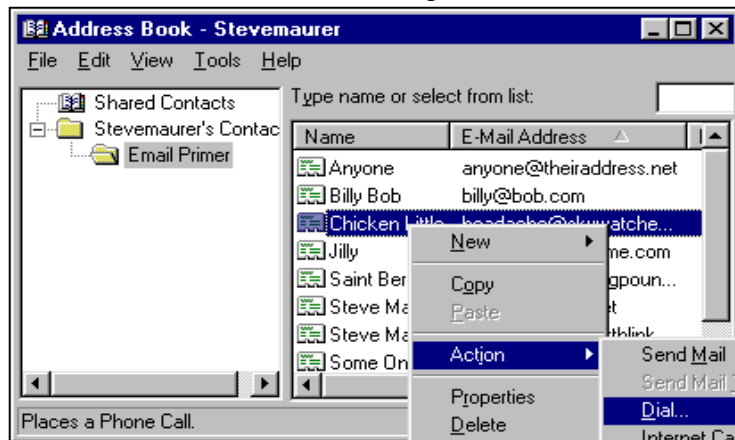


Using Your Address Book

You can use your address book to add recipients to your email messages. Just click on the button at the address field you want to use and your address book will activate. Click on the name you want to add and then click the **button** pointing to the **address field** you want them in. The name will be added to the list of recipients! If you double click the name, the contact will be added to the **original** address field you started with. More on that in the address options article.

One More Tip

Did you know that you can use your address book to make *phone calls*, too? Yep, it is a versatile tool. If you have "Phone Dialer" installed, and most Windows installations do, when you right click on the contact you will get a drop down menu. One choice will be "Action" and if you scroll over the arrow you will get some choices. One of them is "Dial".

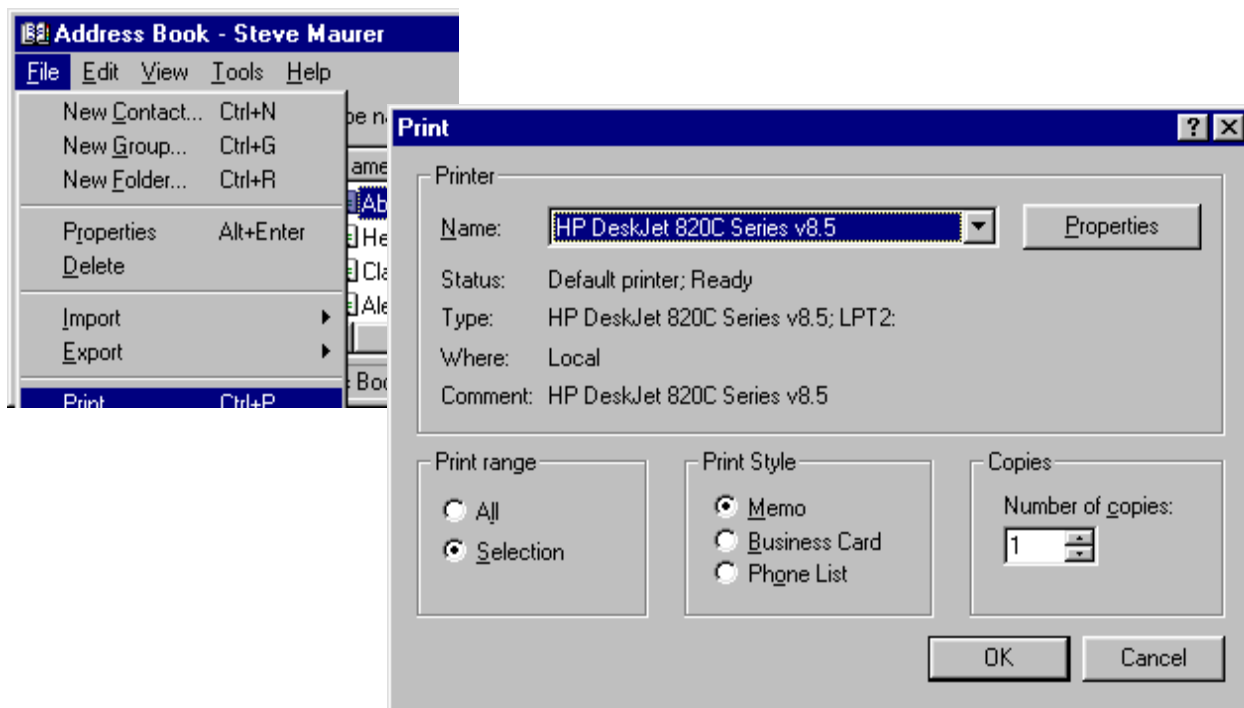


Printing From Your Addressbook

Did you know that you can print out your addressbook in several formats? You can print it out with all the information you included for each contact, or you can print it out in a business card type format, with just the information that would be included on a business card. And you can also print it out as a phone number list. If you included the phone numbers of your contacts you can just about throw out that old paper addressbook

Here is how to print out your addressbook:

Open your Outlook Express addressbook and go to the menu bar in the addressbook. Click on "File", then scroll down to "print". Your printer dialog box will pop up and you will see several selections. Take a look at the pictures below.



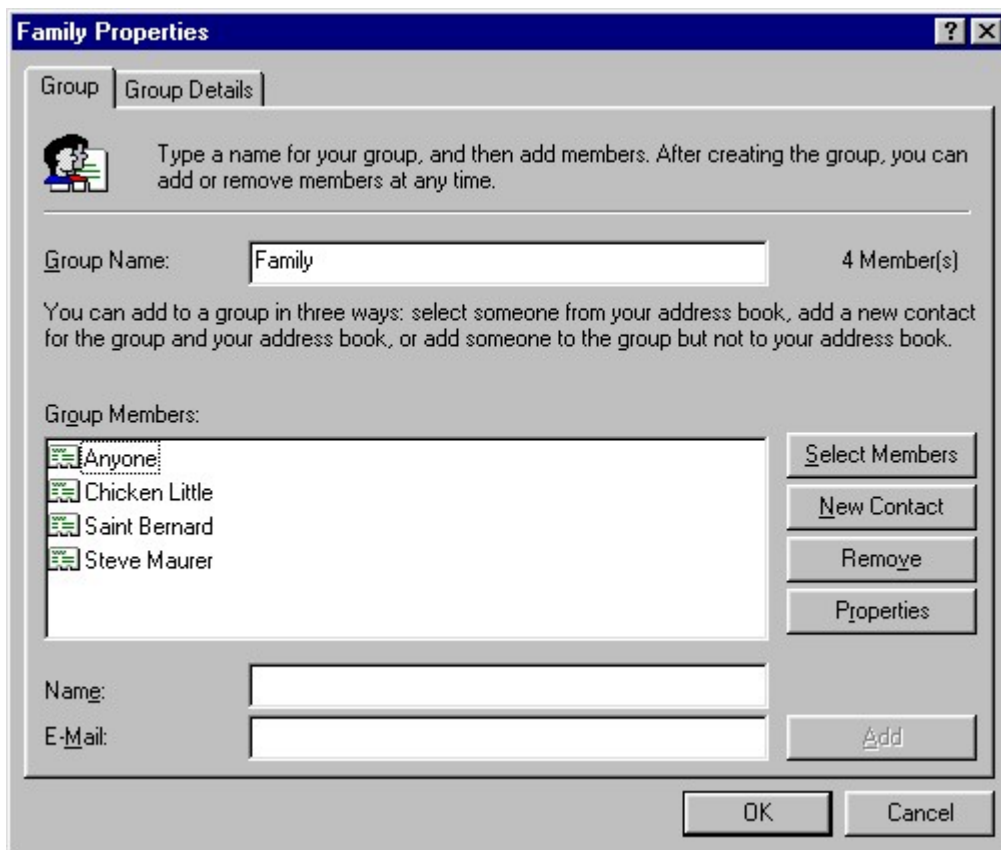
Notice the three options listed at the bottom middle. That is where you can set up to print all the information (remember the different tabs in the contact information dialog box?), some of the information (business card) or just a phone list. (Remember that you can dial from this Outlook Express addressbook. Try that with your old bound paper one!).

Look at the "Print Range". When you highlight just the contacts that you need a hard copy for you can select the "Selection" radio button and just the information for those contacts will be printed out. Selecting "All" will print out the information for your entire addressbook.

I'd recommend keeping a fairly current printed copy of your addressbook around in case you have some major computer problems, or have to move temporarily to a different computer. You can fill in the addresses in your emails manually and won't have to place them on the temporary computer's hard drive.

Create a Mailing Group

1. Open Outlook Express and go to your address book.
2. From the menu bar, select "**File**" then "**New group**".
3. A **dialog box** will pop up. In the text box, type the name you wish to call the group (*For example, My Family*).
4. After you have typed in a name, click on the "**Select members**" button. Your address book will open for you to select **members** for the group.
5. To add members, highlight the name(s) of the people you want to add and click the "**Select**" button in middle bar.
6. To select several at a time, hold down the **CTRL** key on your keyboard and click on the individual names. This will allow you to highlight several names, even if they are not adjacent.
7. After you have selected all the names you want to add, click on the "**OK**" button at the bottom. This will close the select screen and return you to the group information screen.
8. If you wish to **add** some **information** about the group, click on the **group details** tab. If not, click on the "OK" button and your group will be added.



To Mail to the Group

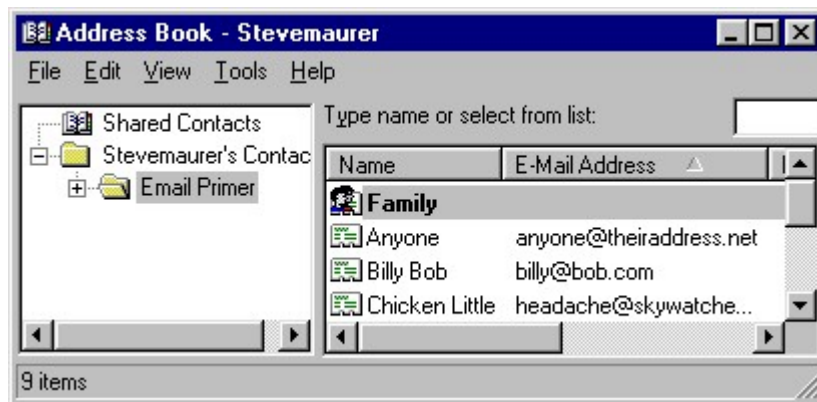
1. Start a new message.
2. Click on one of the **address fields icons (to: cc: bcc:)**.

3. Your address book will open and you can select the group name (*in our example, My Family*). When you add the group name, **all the members** of the group will get a copy of the email message. If you clicked the **TO:** icon, they will be in the **TO:** field, click **CC:** they will be in the CarbonCopy field, and if you clicked the **BCC** icon they will be in the BlindCarbonCopy field. (Note: *I use a group distribution list for sending out my tips newsletter. I always place the distribution list in the BCC field so that the various subscribers addresses do no show up. This is to protect the privacy of my subscribers. **WHAT...** you aren't subscribed to the Maurer Publications Tips Newsletter!?! Well, hop right on over to <http://www.steve.maurer.net> and sign up today!*)

New members can be added, or members can be deleted, by going to your address book and **double clicking** on the group name. It will open the **group dialog box** and you can edit the information for the group.

Here is a special hint!

You can make a group that is , now get this, a **group of groups!** For an example, I have a group that is my **immediate family**. I also have a group that is **my wife's side** of the family, and another that is for our **cousins**. I made a group named **ALL FAMILY**, and the members are **all the other individual groups**. Now I can just use the individual group names for the members of the master group. That way I can mail to individual groups, or to all the groups by selecting the **ALL FAMILY** group. *Pretty slick, eh?*



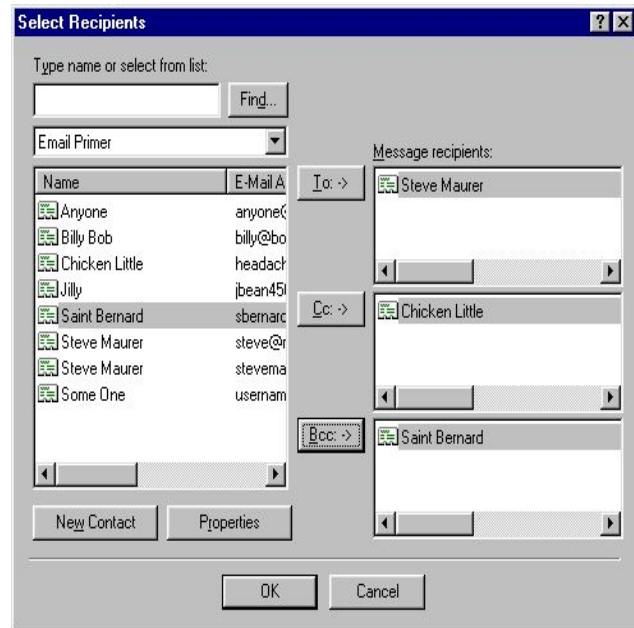
Address Fields Options

There are several address fields in the address field header. Let's take a closer look!

The TO: Field

There is the (TO:) field which is, of course, the one in which the main recipient of your email is placed. There can be more than one recipient in this field. The recipient addresses (or names if you are using *nicknames*) are usually separated by a semi-colon or a comma. This is also the case with the other fields. Some email programs require just a space between the names or addresses, so check out which requirement your software uses.

As I said, the to: address field *usually* contains the main recipient of your email. There are some exceptions, however. Sometimes you will want to send the mail to yourself to make sure it got sent correctly, and have the other recipients in one of the other fields. (More on that in a minute.) If you are adding names from the address book, you can **highlight** the names you want in this field (or the CC and BCC fields) and click the **button** pointing towards that field. To highlight adjacent names, hold down the "Shift" key, click on the first name, scroll down to the last name, click on it and release the "Shift" key. All adjoining names will be highlighted. Clicking on the "To:" button will add all those names to the "To:" field.



To select names that *are not* next to each other, hold down on the "CTRL" key and click on each individual name. When finished click on the "To:" button and all those names will be added as recipients. Of course, the CC and BCC fields work the same way.

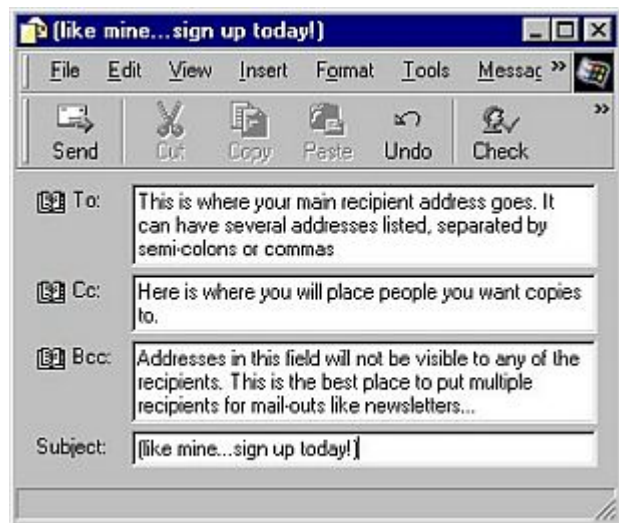
(If you find yourself sending to the same set of folks regularly, check out the article on creating *address groups*, also called *distribution lists*.)

The CC: Field

The CC stands for *carbon copy*. This is a way to send the message to people who are not the main recipients so that they can see the message, too. An example of this would be if I sent some instructions to my Dad and wanted to send a **carbon copy** to my brother. My brother knows that I just want him to check my instructions, and he will only reply if he sees something that needs to be added or changed.

The BCC: Field

One of the most important fields you can use for **security** purposes is the "BCC" field. Let me give you an example. I have a newsletter that I mail out. Now, to protect my **subscribers' privacy** I don't want each recipient to see the names and addresses of my other subscribers. So I use the **BCC** field. BCC stands for **Blind Carbon Copy**, and here is how it works. (*By the way, this is where having your name in the To: field really works well.*)

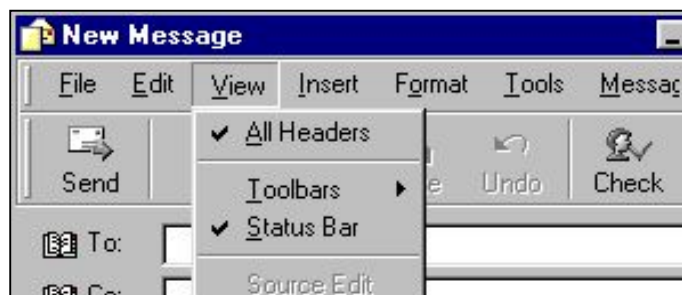


When you add addresses to the **BCC** field, they are **hidden** from the recipients of that message. *Me@mymail.com* can't see *You@yourmail.net*, and vice versa. But **everyone** can see the name in the To: field. This helps protect each individual's **privacy** (*and keeps my subscribers happy, at least on that point!*). If you do this with a newsletter, and I highly recommend you do, be sure to include a good **subject** line!

The From: Field

Let's briefly look at the "**From:**" field. This field contains your *return address* that your recipients will see. It is also the one that any *replies* will be sent to. It is usually already set, using the **reply to address information** that you entered when you set up your account. If you have *multiple* accounts, you may see a drop down arrow beside this address field, showing that you can specify a *different* address than that of your *default* account. (You may also be able to set a different value permanently in your account options. While my ISP account is *stevemaurer@earthlink.net* and thus my default, I have most of my accounts set to steve@maurer.net, my business account.)

PS. If you don't see all the address fields mentioned above, start a new message and click on "View" on the menu bar. Select "All Headers" and the other fields should be available. This will then be the default for all new messages until you change it. sdm



Importing / Exporting Addressbooks in Outlook Express

If you'd like to export an addressbook from Outlook Express so that it can be saved in another email client or used in a different type of program, like a spreadsheet or database program, here is a tip on how to save it as a text file or CSV. You can also use this technique to make your addressbook easy to distribute, such as to your hobby groups and clubs!

Exporting in Text or Comma Separated Value Formats

1. Open Outlook Express email client. Choose "**file**" from the menu, then scroll down to "**export...**". Choose "**addressbook**" from the side pop out menu.
2. You will then be given some choices, at least two. They will be choices for the export format. One is Microsoft Exchange addressbook and the other is "**text file (comma separated values)**". Choose text file (**csv**) and click "**Export**".
3. You will then get the export wizard. You will need to select a place to store the file. Use the "browse" button to locate a place to store the file, I would suggest "desktop" to make it easy to find. Make a name for the file, like "**myaddresses**" and choose a format, either txt or csv. Click "**save**" and you will be taken back to the wizard.
4. At the wizard box, click "**Next**" and you will get a new dialog box where you can choose which fields will be exported. For instance, if you have Names, email addresses, and phone numbers checked, but don't wish to include the phone numbers, just un-check that box. When you have selected the fields you want, click "**finish**" and the program will create the file.

(I would suggest that you create the file both as txt and csv. Comma Separated values are great for importing into databases and spreadsheets.)

Importing in Text or Comma Separated Value Formats

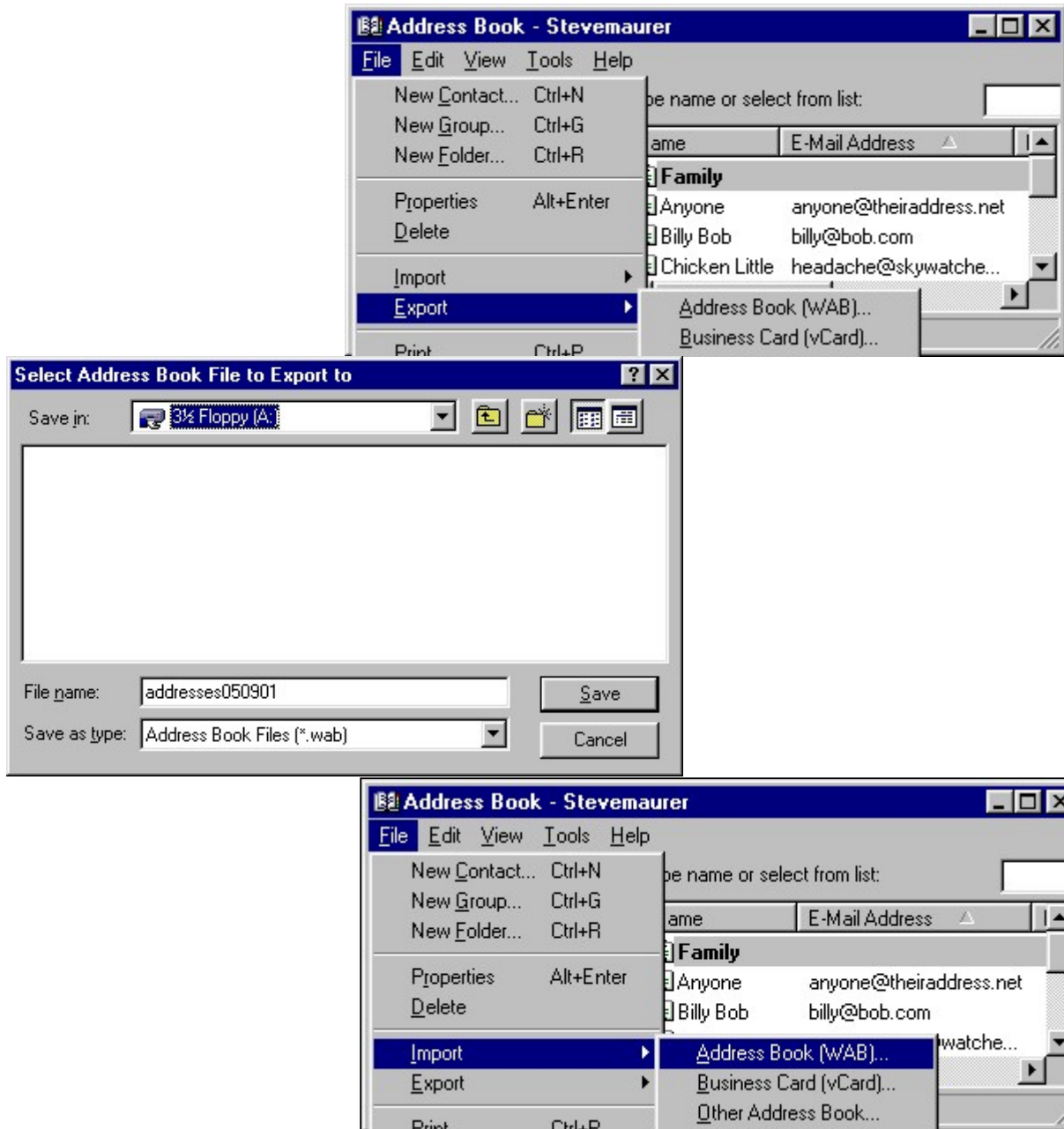
To import the addressbook into an addressbook in Outlook Express, choose "**file**" then "**import...**" "**other addressbook**". You will get a dialog box asking for the type of file. Choose "text file (comma separated value)". Just follow the directions and the new addresses will be exported. Note that if during the importing process OE finds matching addresses, it will ask if you want to overwrite the current one.

To distribute the addressbook you have several options. You can save the file to a disk, attach to an email message, or post it to an Internet location.

Exporting in Outlook Express Format

If you open the **addressbook** and choose "**File**" "**Export...**" "**addressbook**", you will only be able to export in the **WAB** format, which is proprietary to Outlook Express. Importing is the same, but just the **WAB** format is available. However, there's a good use for this if you are using OE. It's an excellent way of **backing up** your addressbook! Save the file using the date for the name, for example 050901.WAB, and save it to a folder, or even better, to a removable disk that can be stored in a safe place. If your addressbook becomes corrupted, deleted or otherwise comes up missing, you can restore it by importing the dated WAB file.

To import it, choose "File", "Import" "addressbook" (not "other addressbook"), from either the main OE or the addressbook menus. Navigate to the file and import it. I usually back up my own addressbook at least every month, sometimes more often. It really comes in handy if you have to format your drive or move to another computer.



Using Folders and Filters

You can use folders and filters to help manage your email messages. First, let's take a look at folders.

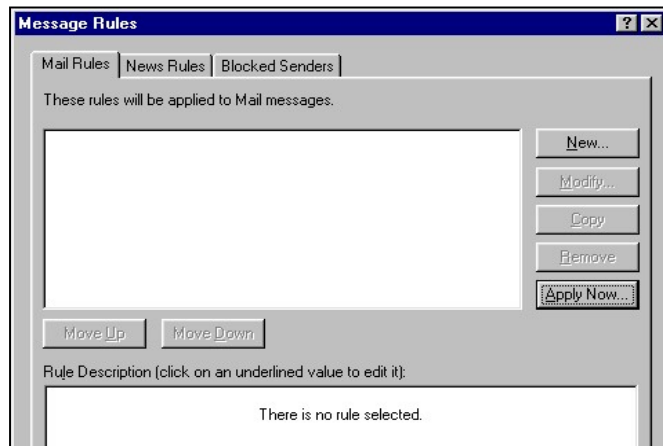
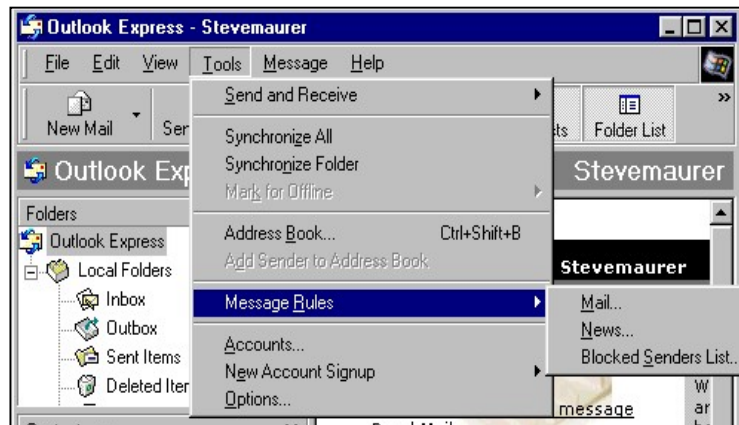
Folders for Filing

You can create folders in Outlook Express quite easily. With OE open, make sure you have the folders view at the left of your screen. Right-click on "Local Folders" and select new folder. You will then get a dialog box to help you create a new folder. Make sure "Local Folder" is still highlighted. Type in a name for the new folder you want to create, then click "OK". This will create a new folder under the "Local Folder" category. You can also create a new folder under any of the folders already there. Just highlight the folder you want to create a subfolder for and go through the same procedure. You might, for example, want to create a main folder called "Family" and subfolders under it named "Parents", "Siblings", "Cousins", "Aunts and Uncles". You can then sort your mail to these folders.

Folders can also be sorted "on the fly" as you read your mail. Right-click on a message in the upper pane, where the name, subject and other items are, and select "Move to folder". You can move the message to an existing folder, as well as create a new folder for it. To move it to an existing folder, highlight the folder you want and click "OK". (If the folders aren't showing, click on the + sign beside "Local Folders" and they will appear). Click on "New Folder" to create a new folder for it to be moved into.

Filters for Sorting

Filters can be used to automatically move incoming mail into predetermined folders. This can be very helpful if you get a lot of mail and need to read certain ones first. To create a filter, click on "Tools" in the menu, scroll down to "message rules..." then over to "mail". This will open a dialog box where you see your

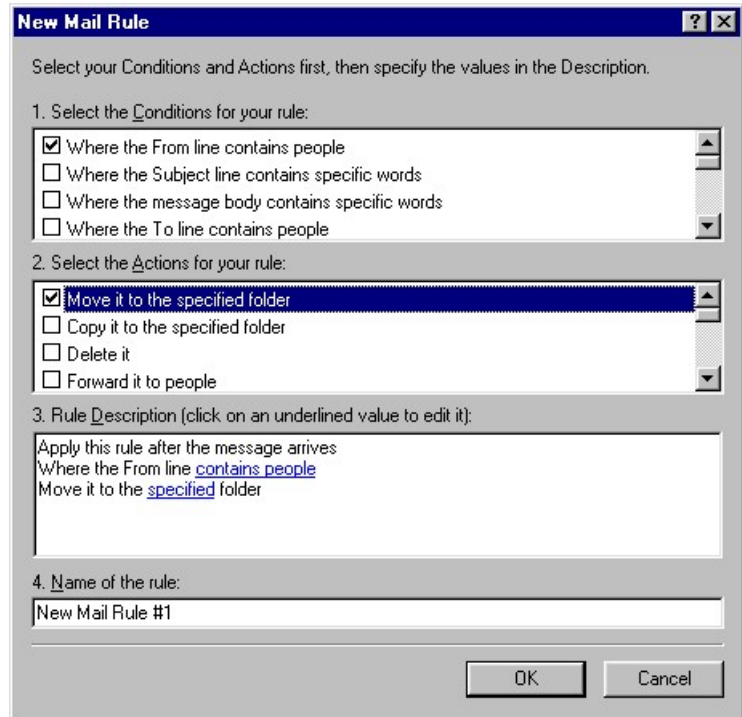


rules. Click on "New" to get a new dialog box to create or modify a rule. The top two text boxes contain check boxes with the various rules available. When you check one of the boxes the rule begins to form in the third box. The first text box is the criteria box where you set which messages are filtered. The second text box tells what to do with the message. The third text box will contain some blue underlined words. Click on them and they will add the specifics. For instance, if you checked the

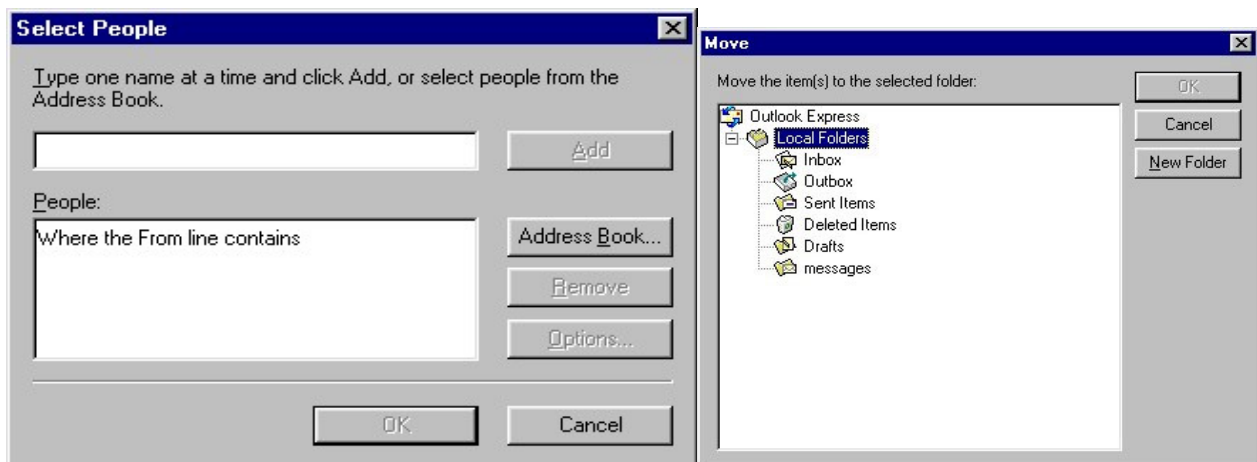
box "Where the from line contains people", when you click on the blue "contains people" in the third box, you will get a dialog box where you can add the people you want to filter. You can enter one at a time in the text box, or click on the "addressbook" button and select several at a time. You can get fancy and click several options in each box. (For example, you can select messages from Mom that contain "Vacation Plans" in the subject, Move to Family folder and flag it).

The next blue words will be the action. If you chose "Move it to folder", then "specified" will be blue. Click on specified and you will get a dialog box where you can choose a folder. Choose one and then click "OK". Your rule is now made and you can see the filter in the third box. The very bottom box contains the rule or filter name, usually a number. You can rename it to say for instance, Family Rule. This will make it easier to find if you need to change or delete the rule.

The next time you download your mail, the rules (filters) will be applied and your mail sorted for you! Pretty cool, huh!! If you have messages received before you created your filters, open the message rules dialog box and click the "Apply Now" button. This should sort the existing message by the rules.

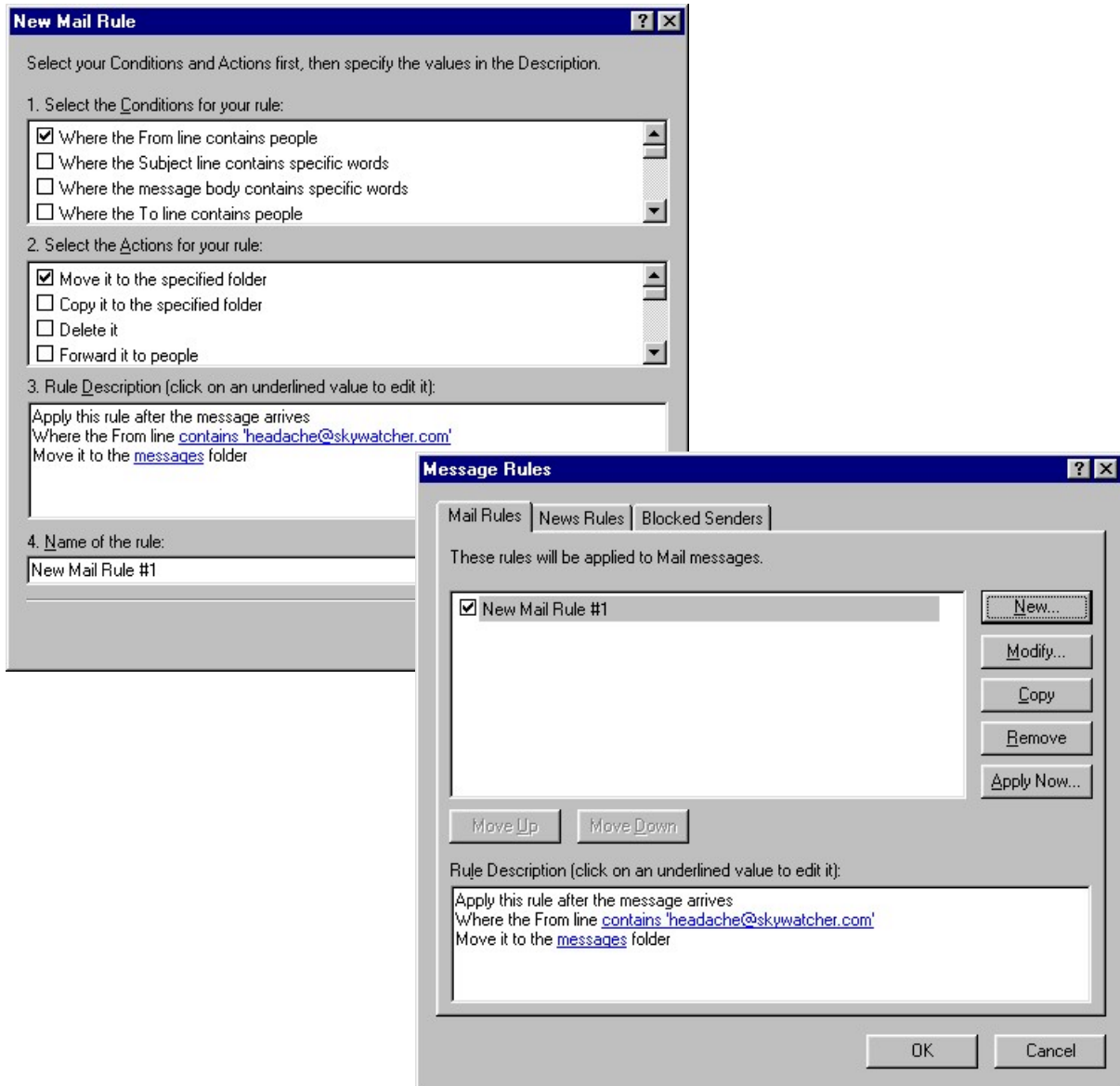


Note: If you are getting spam from somebody, or don't want to receive someone's mail anymore, check the "Delete from server" option. The mail will be deleted before it downloads to your



computer. This is a better option than unsubscribing from known spammers. Rules can also be

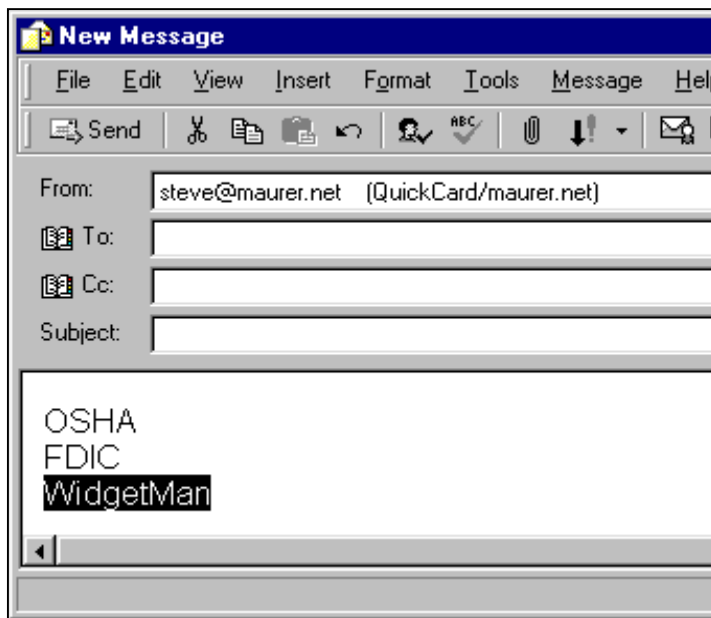
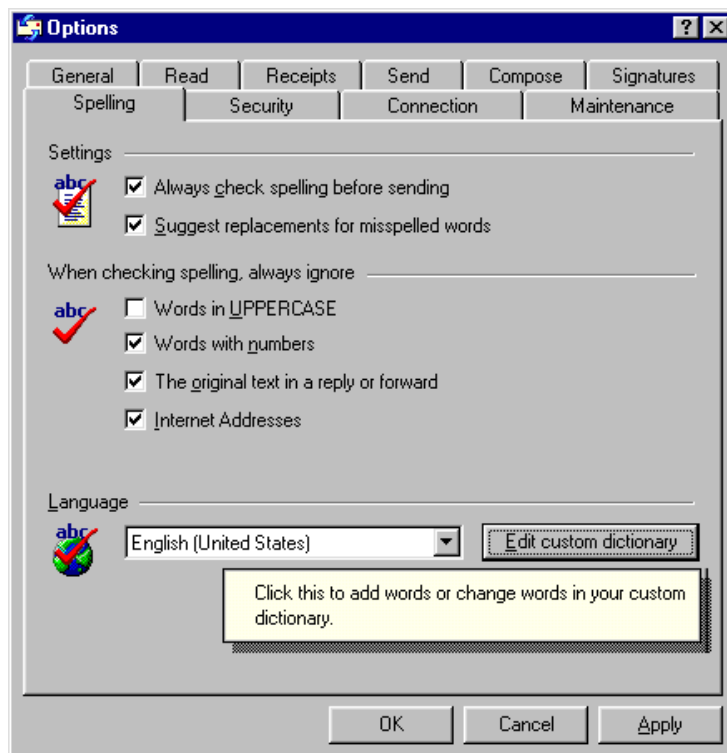
used to filter out real virus alerts that come with a specific subject line or address. You can delete them from the server before they are downloaded to your computer. Be advised, however, that ANY mail with that subject line will be deleted, even harmless ones. The pictures below show the completed message rules.



Adding Unique Words to Spell Checker

You can "**program**" Outlook Express to accept specific "unknown" or unique words. Here is the easiest way to do it.

1. With Outlook Express open, go to the menu bar and click on "**Tools**". (This is in OE 5, but other versions are similar).
2. Scroll down to "**Options**". You will get a *pop up dialog box*.
3. Click on the "**Spelling**" Tab. You will see your spell check options.
4. Make sure the "**suggest spelling**" box is checked. Click "**Apply**" button at the bottom and close the box. (Note: you might also want to check the box "*Check spelling before sending*" to automatically run the spell checker when you click "**Send**". Not necessary, but if you don't you will have to click the spell checker manually before sending it). New words can be added using the "Edit custom dictionary" button, or follow the next steps.
5. If you already know many of the words you want approved follow this step. Start a new message and type the words you want to approve (your name, acronyms, etc.) Then click on the spell checker button. It looks like a check mark with **ABC** above it. This will start your spell checker.
6. When spell checker comes to the first word it doesn't know, a dialog box will come up with a list of suggestions for the word and several option buttons, (*ignore, ignore all, replace, etc.*) Click on the button that says "**Add**". This will add the word to the spell check dictionary.



7. The box will close, go to the next "*misspelled*" word (did I spell that right?!) and the box will open again. Go through the same procedure.
8. When you are done, close the message without sending it or send it to yourself to see how it works.



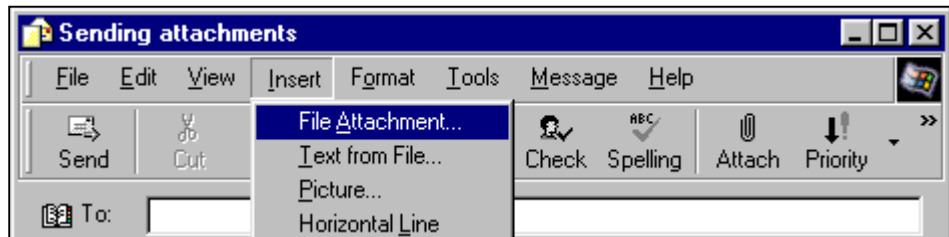
If you want to add words "**on the fly**", you can do the same thing while composing an actual message. Run spell check before you send and use the dialog box to "**Add**" words to the revised list.

Sending Attachments

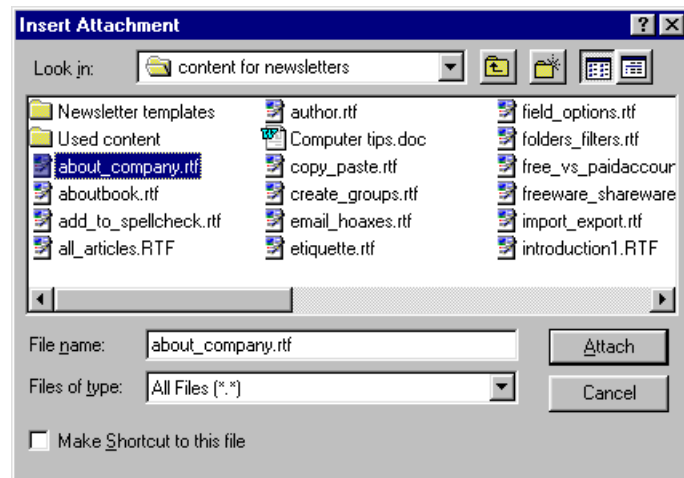
One thing that everybody wants to do is send attachments with their email! Whether it be pictures of the kids, documents, or sound files, this is a good skill to learn.

Getting Started

First, open up a new message. You can fill in the addresses, subject line, and message body if you want, but don't forget to attach your file before you click "send"! When you are ready to attach your file, either



click "Insert" then "File Attachment" from the *menu bar*, or click on the **paper clip icon** on the *tool bar*. A browse box will open so you can locate the file. When you find the file attachment, highlight it and click on the "Attach" button. NOTE: Be sure that the "make shortcut" check box in the lower left corner is **NOT** checked. This is a common mistake. If this is checked, the recipient will not get your attachment, but they will get a *shortcut* to your file on your computer



(usually has a *.lnk* extension, for link). If they click on it, nothing will happen! The file won't open since they have no connection to your computer. (They might get access to your computer and the file if your computers are connected on a network. *I am not sure about cable and DSL connections, but since they are always on, you need to take special precautions there*). When you click "Send", your message and attachment should be on their way! By the way, you can send more than one attachment with a message.

Some Precautions and Recommendations

Be extremely careful when using attachments. Some files can contain viruses and these are usually spread through attachments, especially executable files (files with *.exe*, *.dll*, and *.vbs* extensions to name a few). Make sure your attachments are clean before you send them. It's not fun to have someone fire back a heated message about a virus they caught from your mail!

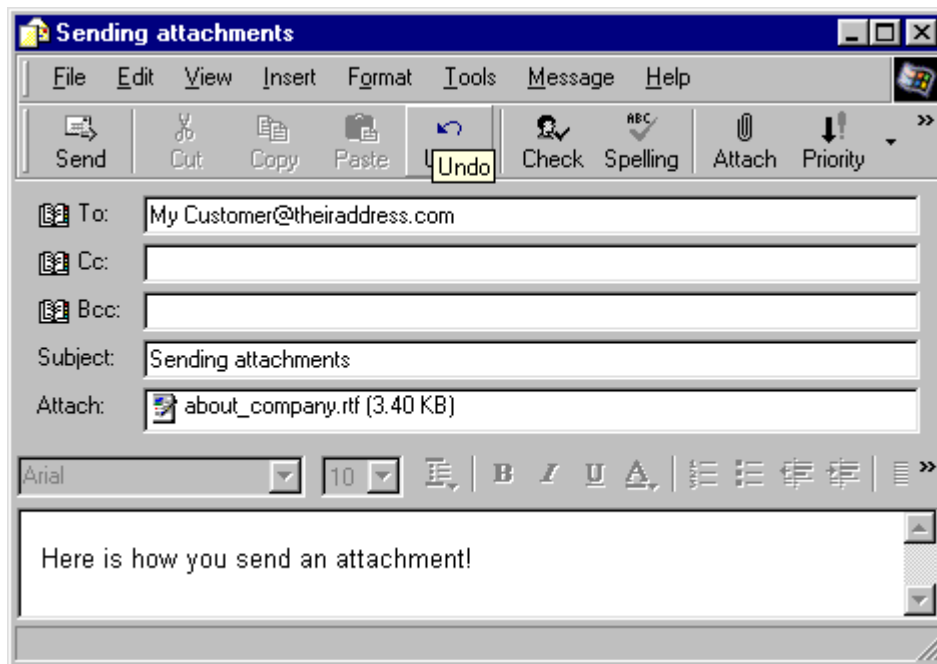
Keep your attachments as small as possible. This is especially important to remember if you are sending graphic files, like pictures of the kids, which can be extremely large if not scanned

properly. Please limit your total attachments to not more than 1 Megabyte, smaller if at all possible. For folks still using a dial-up connection (and that is about 90% of us), large attachments take a **LOOOOOONNNNNGGGG** time to download! (I once had to wait for 5 minutes while one person's attachment downloaded. Not once, but twice! They are now on my "blocked senders" list and their messages get deleted off the mail server as soon as they come in! Sound harsh, I know, but I get very busy and have a limited time to check my mail.) If you must send a large attachment, please send a message several days in advance so your recipient can be ready for it.

Also, check with your ISP. Many have a limit on how big attachments can be, and also on the amount of mail stored on the mail server (Most mailboxes have a 5 or 10 megabyte storage limit). If you send a large attachment, you may bump off some of your recipient's important messages that they haven't seen yet. Again, warn them ahead of time so they have time to clean out their mailbox.

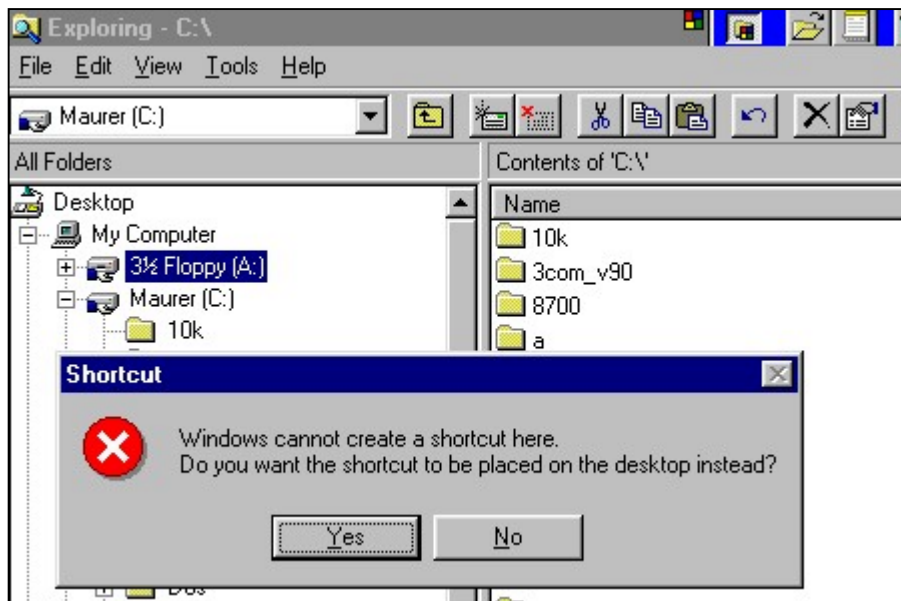
Have fun with attachments!

PS. I was just reminded of something while I was proofreading this article. Unless you are away from your usual computer, be sure that your messages are downloaded to your computer and not left on the mail server. My Earthlink server, for instance, will only keep 10 Mb of messages. If the limit is exceeded, older messages are deleted to make room for the new. Ask your ISP how to make sure this is done properly. Sdm



Saving Email to a Disk

Place a shortcut on your desktop for the drive or folder you want to store your email in. To place a shortcut to your **A-drive** (*floppy drive*) go into Windows Explorer, right click on the A-drive (don't have a disk in the drive at this time) and select "**create shortcut**". You will get a warning message that Windows cannot place a shortcut there. It will ask you if you want to place the shortcut on the desktop instead. Click "**Yes**" and it will place a shortcut on your desktop. Position the shortcut close to one side of your desktop. The shortcut will be named "**shortcut to a-drive**". If you rename it to "**A-drive shortcut**" and arrange your desktop by name or use auto-arrange, this will help. You'll see why in a minute.



place the shortcut on the desktop instead. Click "**Yes**" and it will place a shortcut on your desktop. Position the shortcut close to one side of your desktop. The shortcut will be named "**shortcut to a-drive**". If you rename it to "**A-drive shortcut**" and arrange your desktop by name or use auto-arrange, this will help. You'll see why in a minute.

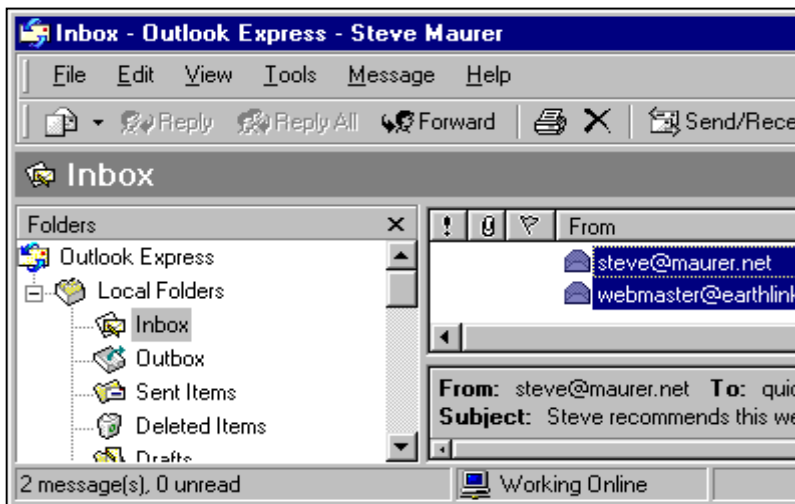
Open Your Email Client

Next, open up your email client, Outlook Express. If it is maximized on your screen, make it smaller by clicking the box next to the X in the top right hand corner. This will minimize the window so you can see the desktop. Or you can resize the window by clicking and dragging the lower right hand corner. Move the window so you can see the a-drive shortcut.

In the pane that lists your emails (*address, subject, date received*) highlight all the messages you want to copy to disk. **Ctrl +A** will select them all, or hold down the **Ctrl** key and click on just the ones you want to save.

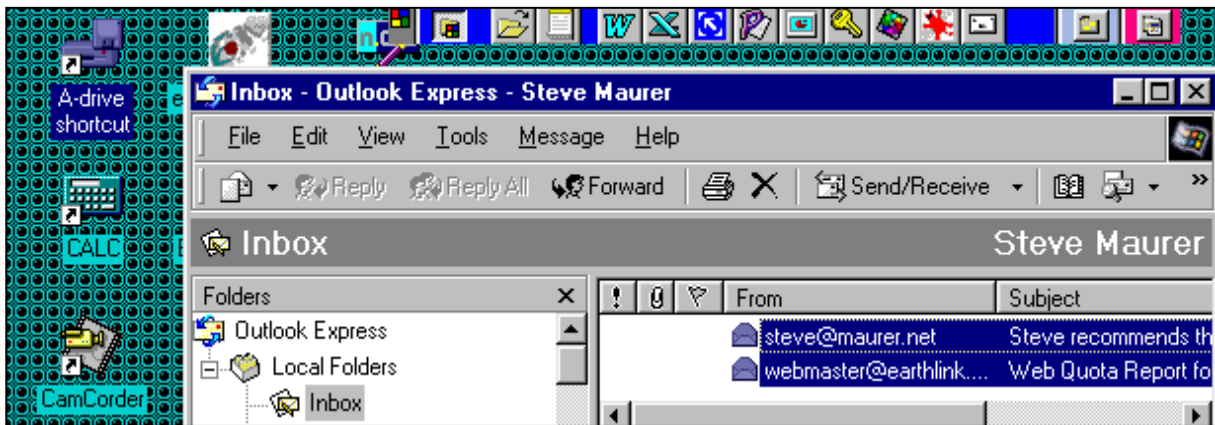
Drag to the Shortcut

Now, right click on any of the highlighted messages and drag to the *shortcut* to your A-drive. When you release the button you will be asked whether you want to *copy* or *move* the selected files. Select one of the options and you're done. The emails will be copied or moved to your a-drive! (*I suggest copy over move just to make sure they all got*



copied, then delete them from Outlook Express.) The emails are copied to the floppy in **eml** format, so clicking on one of the stored emails will open Outlook Express so you can read it. You might want to save messages in groups on different floppies or locations. For instance, keep all of your messages from your brother on one floppy, use another floppy to keep messages from your best friend, and another to keep business related messages.

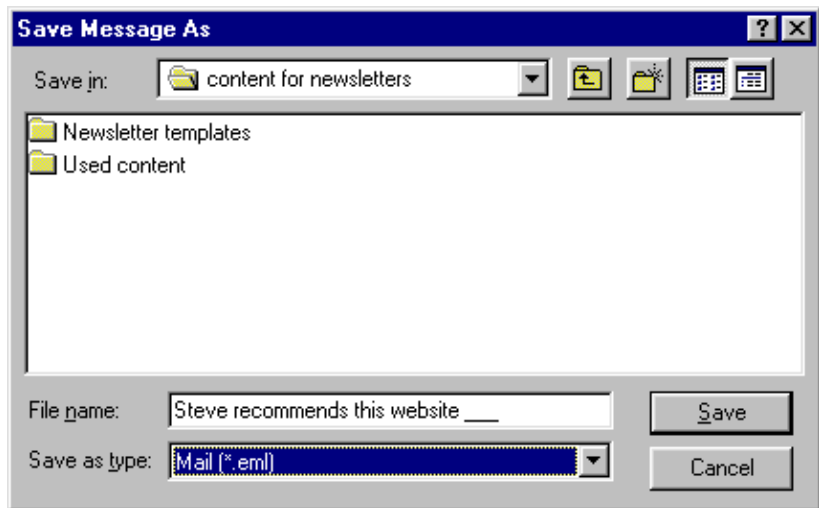
This procedure also works with a zip drive and with **folders** on your computer. Just create a **shortcut to the folder** on your desktop and drag to that it instead. This method is different from archiving your messages in that they are readily accessible and can be read just by opening them. Archiving actually compresses the messages into one file.



Another Way to Save Your Messages

There is also another way to save your email messages to a disk. This can only be used on one message at a time.

Highlight the message you want to save and then click on "File", then scroll down to "Save as..." and you will get a "Save Message As" dialog box. You can browse to the location where you want the message saved. The subject line is the default name for the email file, but you can change it to whatever you like (this is a good thing, especially if your contacts don't write good, short, descriptive subject lines like you always do!).



You can save the message in email format (**.eml**) or in text format (**.txt**) by using the drop down menu in the dialog box. If you save in text format it will take up less disk space, but you won't be able to open it in Outlook Express and any links in the message will not open when clicked on.

The Email Primer - From @ to Zip Illustrated

You won't be able to reply from the message saved in text format. It will open with a text editor like Notepad or Wordpad. These two programs come standard with Windows installations.

Email Hoaxes - Some Tips

If there is one thing I **don't** like about email, it's got to be all the email hoaxes and chain letters floating around. It also seems that much of the mail I get is concerning them. Go figure! Well, most of the time folks are asking me if I think a certain message is a hoax before they send it out and that is a good thing. I will answer them, but I would rather educate them to find out for themselves. Here are some pointers on how to spot a possible hoax:

VIRUS HOAXES

These insidious letters contain "supposed" information on email viruses. Some of the things they have in common are:

1. "This just reported yesterday by (Microsoft, IBM, AOL, other software and internet companies)". As rule of thumb these types of companies just don't send virus alerts out. They leave it up to the virus software people.
2. "Send this to everyone in your addressbook!" This is a dead give-away. **Don't send it to anyone!**
3. "For more information contact (the name of some fictitious person, you can never get hold of them).
4. They make some **unbelievable** claims on the damage that will be done on your computer.
5. Usually they are forwarded, like, about a million times.

Steps you should take include:

1. Check your virus software vendor's site for information (you do have virus software, don't you? You do keep it updated, don't you!)
2. Check out some reputable "Hoax alert" sites. I recommend the Urban Legends site at <http://www.snopes.com> . Also, ZDNet also has some good hoax information.
3. Do some **real research** before you send them out!

But, Steve, you say. What harm can be done by sending out a hoax? Plenty. If you do send it out to "*everyone*" in your book, and they send it out to *everyone* in their book, and they send it out to **everyone** in their book...well, email systems can get clogged, even whole company systems shut down from overload! Check out the figures in the Email Etiquette article.

CHAIN LETTERS

I really don't like chain letters, either. Again, the Snopes.com site is an excellent place to check on these. In a nutshell, no one will get the 3 cents per forwarded email, Bill Gates is not giving away free money, while the Neiman Marcus cookie recipe sounds delicious it did not come from a disgruntled little old lady.

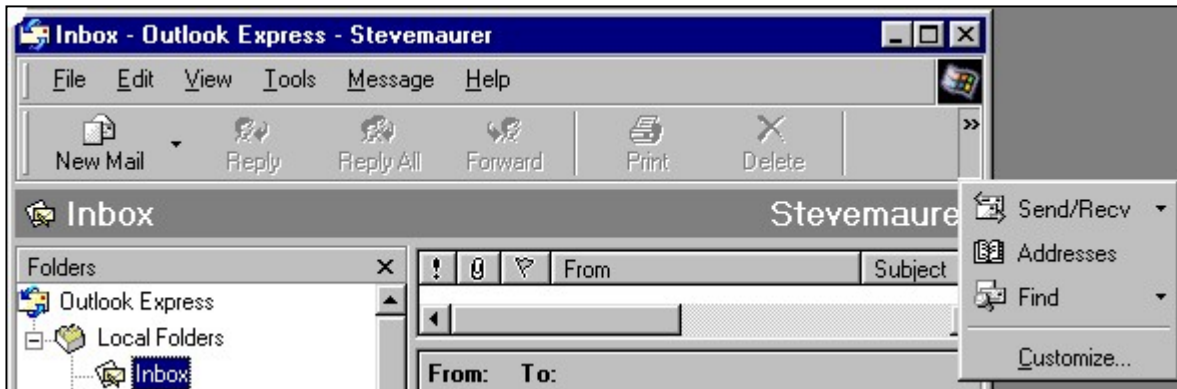
Missing children requests are hard not to pass on. BUT, there is a site where you can check their validity. Go to the missing children site at <http://www.missingkids.org> and you will find good solid information. The urban legends sites will also have some info.

In closing let me give you this little bit of advice from a person who has spent countless hours on the Internet. Check **everything** before you pass it on. Do some solid research! Don't take the easy way out and just click forward.

Working with Toolbars

(In response to a question sent me)

Steve! I've lost my toolbar icons! What do I do!?



Try this:

First, right click on your **text menu bar** (file, edit, view, etc.). Make sure that "**tool bar**" has a check mark beside it in the drop down menu. If it doesn't, click on the words "**tool bar**" and your icons should come back.

If it is checked and you still don't see your icons, here is something else you can try. **It is possible to move the menu and toolbar around.** You mentioned that you don't have "**all**" your buttons. Do you have "**some**" of them. If you do, what has happened is that they just got moved over, probably to the right.

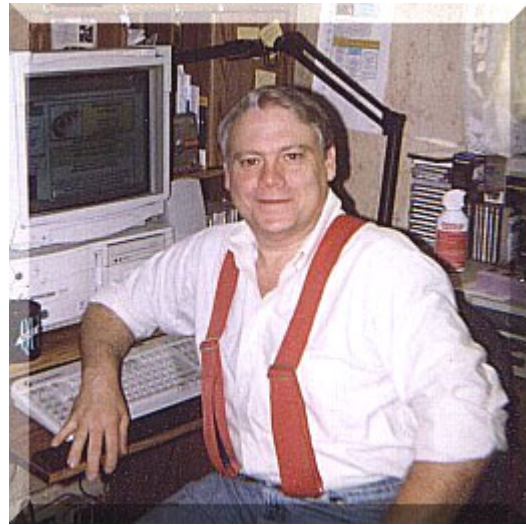
Look at the left most icon that you have. Is there a straight, raised looking line beside it? If there is, that is called a "grab bar" and is used to move the toolbar around. If there are little marks (>>) beside it, that means there are some more selections that are not visible. Click on the marks and you will see them in a drop down list. **Grab** the bar by moving your arrow pointer over it. The arrow should turn into a horizontal line with 2 arrowheads on it. Left click your mouse and hold down the button. Move (drag) the grab bar. The toolbar should move with it. Release the button when you have the menu where you want it. You can place it either right next to the menu bar, or even below it.

About the Author:

Hi there! My name's Steve Maurer and I'm the owner of **Maurer Publications and WebDesign**. I authored this book to help the many friends that I've made on the Internet over my years on the "Net".

Many of them have written to me for help and advice on the subject of email use, and I post frequently on the About.com email & business software forums. Since some of those folks have asked me where they can find more information on email topics, I felt that I could at least give them a book that would help them out.

Having been around computers since the early 70's (*my first computer was a Texas Instruments TI99/4A, basically a keyboard to which you attached a black and white television for a monitor and used a cassette recorder for "memory"*) and a Netizen for 5 years +, I have acquired a bit of experience in things computer and web. From that basic TI to various types of word processors and computers, I've been able to gain experience in writing and computing.



Folks often call on me for help, sometimes from the workplace environment, and many are amazed at what I can make their software do! But *really*, it isn't that I'm some sort of genius or "guru". I've just been fortunate to learn from some of the best...and I want to pass that knowledge on to you.

I would like to thank some of the people that made this book possible, both directly and indirectly. First I'd like to thank **Mary**, my wife, who put up with me working on this book late into the night, and gave me the support and encouragement I needed. She also critiqued it for ease of use and style. *Wow, brains and beauty, am I lucky or what!* You can visit her childcare site at <http://www.mary.maurer.net>

Second, I'd like to thank my brother, Mark. He gave me my first "real" computer that I could call my own (I used others at work, but they take a dim view of using them for personal projects sometimes). Up till then, Mary and I used word processors for most of our business work (and still made some decent money at it). The old **Gateway P5-90** is still hummin', and I've "popped the hood" on her more than once to look around, tweak it a bit, make that baby *purrrrrrr!* In fact, this book was created on that very computer, even though it's getting the gray hairs, just like me! Mark and I have also kicked a few projects back and forth, honing our software skills. I've learned a lot from him. **Thanks, Bro!**

Dad and Mom have also been an inspiration to me. Just getting into this PC thing in the last few years, **Dad** keeps me hopping with some of the questions he emails to me, but he **is** getting to be quite good. He has been in the printing and publication industry and I can rely on him to

check my spelling! And since we live about 700 miles away from each other, it has made me improve my teaching skills, making my instructions simpler and easier to understand. And Mom, well...**Mom** is a lot like Mary. She puts up with us "talkin' computer" ...a bunch, although she **does** make us talk about her grand kids now and then, too. Although she's not very computer literate, I have noticed that most of the family "updates" come from her. I think she dictates them to Dad. ***Thanks for all you've done, folks!***

My kids keep me going, too. My girl, Stephanie, has a very creative side to her and gives me some great ideas on the design and feel of my products. And John, well...my football player does two things. He has very practical, technical side to him and checks out the details of operation and navigation. And...he eats like a horse, so I've got to keep producing just to keep him fed! ;>}-

In closing, I would like to thank YOU. It's because of you and the many friends I've made on the old *WWW* that this book is even in existence. Thanks for being there...and for being a friend!

Steve Maurer
Maurer Publications and WebDesign

PS. My girl just read over this and let me know that I forgot to mention the dog (got to have a dog in Arkansas, it's the law!) Well, let's see, what does Honey the Dog do. I guess, when I'm up working late at night on a project, she keeps my side of the bed warm. Unfortunately, she want to keep it to herself when I do finally get there. I haven't got bit...yet...real bad...too much! From the looks of this picture, I'm not the only one she puts up with! Sdm



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