

## Blocked attachments in Outlook

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To help protect your computer, Microsoft Office Outlook does not allow you to receive files of certain types (such as .exe files) as attachments, because of their potential for introducing a virus into your computer. Outlook blocks these files by default. If your organization uses Microsoft Exchange, only the e-mail server administrator can unblock these file types. End users of Outlook cannot unblock these file types.

### In this article

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[↓ Background - The Internet is a dangerous neighborhood](#)

[↓ How to share your files safely](#)

[↓ Attachment file types blocked by Outlook](#)

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## Background - The Internet is a dangerous neighborhood

When Microsoft Outlook 97 first arrived on the market, the Internet still seemed like a relatively safe place, and sending attachments in e-mail seemed like a great idea. But then — beginning in March of 1999 when the Melissa virus struck, only to be followed by the ILOVEYOU virus — reality hit hard. These were the fastest-spreading viruses ever seen up to that time, and they forced a number of companies to shut down their e-mail systems, at significant cost. In order to spread, these attacks relied heavily on fooling people into believing that infected e-mail messages were coming from someone familiar, and even many computer experts fell victim to them and became infected. It is no secret that hackers like to attack the largest available target — and today, that is Microsoft Office Outlook. World wide, more than 300 million people use Outlook. Therefore, the industry and Microsoft customers look to Microsoft to provide protection against security threats.

Most people agree that the Internet is a wonderful tool, but it is important to remember that it is also a dangerous neighborhood. Even people who "know what they are doing" are vulnerable. And hackers are getting more sophisticated. Microsoft does not want Outlook to be a medium by which dangerous files can be spread around the Internet. Outlook, therefore, blocks potentially dangerous attachments and prevents unauthorized programs from accessing your address book. Outlook is designed for safety first, so that everyone can keep sending and receiving e-mail.

[↑ Top of Page](#)

## How to share your files safely

The vast majority of people never intend to circulate potentially dangerous files — and the people who do intend to, use other methods. Here are a few safe ways to share files:

- Outlook does not block documents that have the following file name extensions: .xls, .doc, .ppt, and .txt. These file types are the ones that most people use in their work. However, it is important to keep in mind that such files can contain macros that have the potential to spread viruses. So whenever such files arrive in your **Inbox**, use a [third-](#)

[party antivirus program](#) to scan them before you open them. Also, follow the recommended directions to [protect your PC](#).

- To send a file of a blocked type, you can change the file name extension so that it does not match any of the blocked ones. For example, you can rename program.exe as program.exe\_ok, and then attach the file to your e-mail message. Include instructions in the message about how the recipient can rename the file by using the original extension (in this case, as program.exe). The key point to remember here is that you should only open files that you *expect* from someone.
- Use a zip program to package files before you attach them to your e-mail message. In the message, you can include instructions that explain how to extract the files from the zipped package.
- Post the files to a secure network share. Most Internet service providers (ISPs) offer paying subscribers a space where they can post files. One method is to [save files on MSN](#) and give your recipients access to them. In your message to the recipients, you can include a link to the share.

[Top of Page](#)

## Attachment file types blocked by Outlook

The following table identifies the file types that Outlook blocks by default.

File name extension	File type
.ade	Access Project Extension (Microsoft)
.adp	Access Project (Microsoft)
.app	Executable Application
.asp	Active Server Page
.bas	BASIC Source Code
.bat	Batch Processing
.cer	Internet Security Certificate File
.chm	Compiled HTML Help
.cmd	DOS CP/M Command File, Command File for Windows NT
.com	Command
.cpl	Windows Control Panel Extension (Microsoft)
.crt	Certificate File
.csh	csh Script
.der	DER Encoded X509 Certificate File
.exe	Executable File
.fxp	FoxPro Compiled Source (Microsoft)
.gadget	Windows Vista gadget
.hlp	Windows Help File
.hta	Hypertext Application

.inf	Information or Setup File
.ins	IIS Internet Communications Settings (Microsoft)
.isp	IIS Internet Service Provider Settings (Microsoft)
.its	Internet Document Set, Internet Translation
.js	JavaScript Source Code
.jse	JScript Encoded Script File
.ksh	UNIX Shell Script
.lnk	Windows Shortcut File
.mad	Access Module Shortcut (Microsoft)
.maf	Access (Microsoft)
.mag	Access Diagram Shortcut (Microsoft)
.mam	Access Macro Shortcut (Microsoft)
.maq	Access Query Shortcut (Microsoft)
.mar	Access Report Shortcut (Microsoft)
.mas	Access Stored Procedures (Microsoft)
.mat	Access Table Shortcut (Microsoft)
.mau	Media Attachment Unit
.mav	Access View Shortcut (Microsoft)
.maw	Access Data Access Page (Microsoft)
.mda	Access Add-in (Microsoft), MDA Access 2 Workgroup (Microsoft)
.mdb	Access Application (Microsoft), MDB Access Database (Microsoft)
.mde	Access MDE Database File (Microsoft)
.mdt	Access Add-in Data (Microsoft)
.mdw	Access Workgroup Information (Microsoft)
.mdz	Access Wizard Template (Microsoft)
.msc	Microsoft Management Console Snap-in Control File (Microsoft)
.msh	Microsoft Shell
.msh1	Microsoft Shell
.msh2	Microsoft Shell
.mshxml	Microsoft Shell
.msh1xml	Microsoft Shell
.msh2xml	Microsoft Shell
.msi	Windows Installer File (Microsoft)
.msp	Windows Installer Update
.mst	Windows SDK Setup Transform Script
.one	

	Office Profile Settings File
.pcd	Visual Test (Microsoft)
.pif	Windows Program Information File (Microsoft)
.plg	Developer Studio Build Log
.prf	Windows System File
.prg	Program File
.pst	MS Exchange Address Book File, Outlook Personal Folder File (Microsoft)
.reg	Registration Information/Key for W95/98, Registry Data File
.scf	Windows Explorer Command
.scr	Windows Screen Saver
.sct	Windows Script Component, Foxpro Screen (Microsoft)
.shb	Windows Shortcut into a Document
.shs	Shell Scrap Object File
.ps1	Windows PowerShell
.ps1xml	Windows PowerShell
.ps2	Windows PowerShell
.ps2xml	Windows PowerShell
.psc1	Windows PowerShell
.psc2	Windows PowerShell
.tmp	Temporary File/Folder
.url	Internet Location
.vb	VBScript File or Any VisualBasic Source
.vbe	VBScript Encoded Script File
.vbs	VBScript Script File, Visual Basic for Applications Script
.vsmacros	Visual Studio .NET Binary-based Macro Project (Microsoft)
.vsw	Visio Workspace File (Microsoft)
.ws	Windows Script File
.wsc	Windows Script Component
.wsf	Windows Script File
.wsh	Windows Script Host Settings File
.xnk	Exchange Public Folder Shortcut

[↑ Top of Page](#)

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