

OUTLOOK.COM - WHAT IS IT

Outlook.com replaces Hotmail as the free Windows mail service.
Is it the same as Hotmail? No. Does it replace Outlook? No.
Well, where does it fit and what does it do?

Declaration of Bias:

I don't like Outlook.Com. (So what, I don't like broccoli either.) But Outlook.com is supposed to represent Microsoft's vision of the future of computing - the new wave of user design. We've spent the last 30 years studying user interface design and learning what users understand best and can use most effectively, and the MS team has thrown large portions of that out in the name of 'Modernity'. Well, it's pretty enough, but it just doesn't work. It's heavy on style and light on usability, and not worth using unless you have to.

Dan Covill

What is Outlook.com?

Microsoft's latest free e-mail _service_.
It runs in your browser. Mail is kept on the server/in the cloud/somewhere.

What Outlook.com is NOT

1. Outlook - A mail/calendar application in MS Office Pro.
2. Outlook Express - free mail program, came with Windows XP.

EMAIL and Microsoft - A Checkered Past

Win Version	Mail Program	Mail Service
Win 95	Outlook Express	Hotmail
Win 98-XP	"	MSN Hotmail
Win Vista	Windows Mail	Windows Live Hotmail
Win 7	Windows Live Mail	"
Win 8	Mail	Outlook.com

Note: Win 8 Mail cannot access POP accounts - IMAP only.
This is to allow syncing between devices.

How do you sign up?

Go to outlook.com and register or log in.

(All hotmail accounts have already been merged.)

Accounts and Aliases

You have to sign in with your "Microsoft Account"

MS Accounts use your email as an ID. Mine used RoadRunner.

This means email you send from Outlook looks like it came from RR.

They have 'Aliases'. You can choose which alias your mail comes from(!)

I opened an Outlook acct a year ago - dcovill@outlook.com

I sent a test mail to that address - went ok, no bounce.

I went into Outlook.com, with my MS Acct.

- a. No mail for me.
- b. OK, that's because I logged in as dcovill@san.rr.com
- c. I need to add an alias for my Outlook acct.
- d. "Add existing acct as alias" rejected - "Account already in use"!

Solution:

1. On 8/21 MS eliminated 'renaming' and changed to aliases.
2. Went to Account Aliases page (using MS Account)
 - a. "Open a new account as alias": "dan.covill@outlook.com"
 - b. Accepted. (did NOT ask for a password!)
 - c. I can designate either 'alias' as the main ID.
3. Can send messages to Dan.Covill and get them at Outlook.com.
4. The test msg I sent to dcovill@outlook.com never appeared!

Side Effects:

If you use a Gmail acct as the Outlook 'alias':

- a. All mail you send from Outlook will appear to come from Gmail.
- b. If recipient replies the reply will go to Gmail.
- c. If you reply to mail sent to Outlook.com, the reply will appear to come from Gmail.

Conclusion:

1. Make sure your primary 'alias' is the Outlook.com alias.
2. Don't use Outlook.com unless you have to.

How to sync?

1. You must have a Microsoft Account (was Windows Live ID)
2. Your MS Account must be the primary alias.

Demo.

Browser - Outlook.com - sign in w/MS Acct.

Usability Issues:

New message:

1. Click plus-sign named 'New'. New message page appears.
2. The To: panel is at far left, but focus still on right pane.
 - You have to click inside the To: box BEFORE typing.
 - + Your alias is shown, and you can select another if you wish.
 - + Can add cc and bcc as desired, with assistance.
3. The 'Add a Subject' box is at the way top, and it's not a box.
 - You have to specifically GO THERE, it's not automatic.
 - Once you've added it, it doesn't say 'Subject' any more
4. After entering the subject, you have to manually go to the text.
 - Hitting 'Enter' at end of subject does NOT move you down.
5. Clearly marked 'Send' button + other options.
6. You can 'Save Draft', but then you can't get out!
 - 'Cancel' will restore main page, but not your inbox!
 - 'Drafts' menu choice recovers drafts nicely, however.
7. While drafting a new message, you can't look at your inbox!

In general, layout is confusing and NOT user-friendly.
Use Gmail or Yahoo instead.

References:

<<http://winsupersite.com/windows-8/hands-windows-81-mail>>
<<https://windowssecrets.com/best-practices/feature-showdown-gmail-vs-outlook-com/>>
(Comparison between Outlook.com and Gmail