Guide 5
Cleaning your emails

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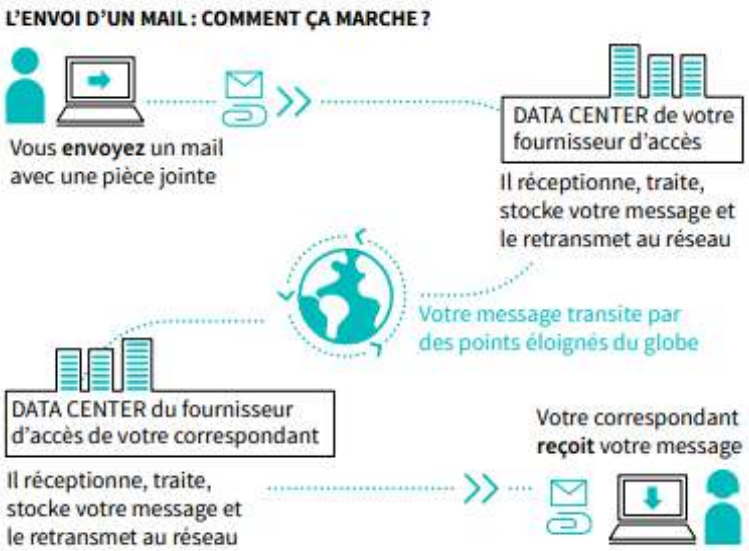
1. Understanding

The impact of emails

Did you know ?



Source

According to you, what is the percentage of emails never opened?

60% ! Source

- **319,6 billion of emails were sent every day**, in 2021. Source
- **1 email emits on average 4 g of CO_2**, this equals the carbon footprint of a low-energy light bulb turned on for 6 minutes. An email with a large attachment can release up to **35g of CO_2** Source

In your opinion, what is the share of SPAM in the volume of all emails sent?

Between 85% et 95% ! Source

- Only **18%** of newsletters are opened . Source
- A **spam email received,** will have the same impact as a regular email, even if you don't open it! Around 62 **trillions** spam messages are sent each year, which represents a carbon footprint equivalent to the annual emission of 300 000 cars.. Source

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Three key elements in the impact of sending an email

The impact of the email sent depends on :

- ➔ the **weight of the content and attachments**
- ➔ the **distance travelled between your supplier and the recipient**
- ➔ the **number of recipients**

Measure your impact

To find out the current size of your inbox, refer to the information available in your Settings, via your computer. **Make a note of it so that you can measure the impact of your cleanup and share your effort later.**

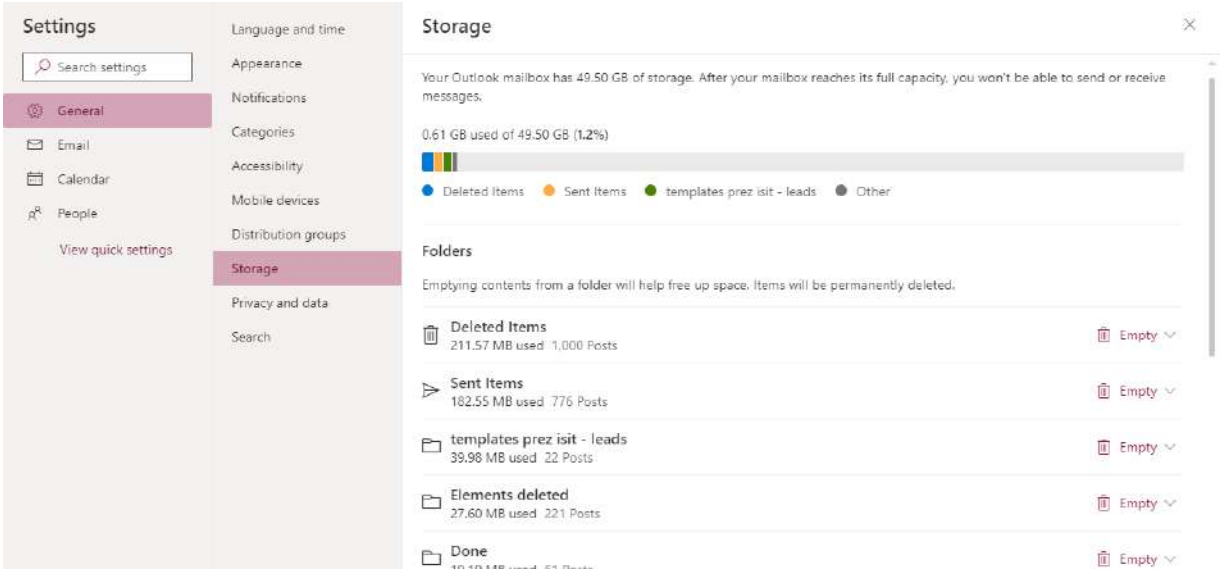
The path differs depending on the mailbox you use, but you can usually find this information in your settings. Whether you use Gmail, Outlook, Yahoo!Mail, Lilo, Orange, Free or Thunderbird, it is possible to find this information in a few clicks.

Some examples on the following pages.

In Outlook

Online :

- Click on the wheel at the top right, then on "Show all Outlook settings", located at the bottom right
- In Settings, click on "General" > "Storage"



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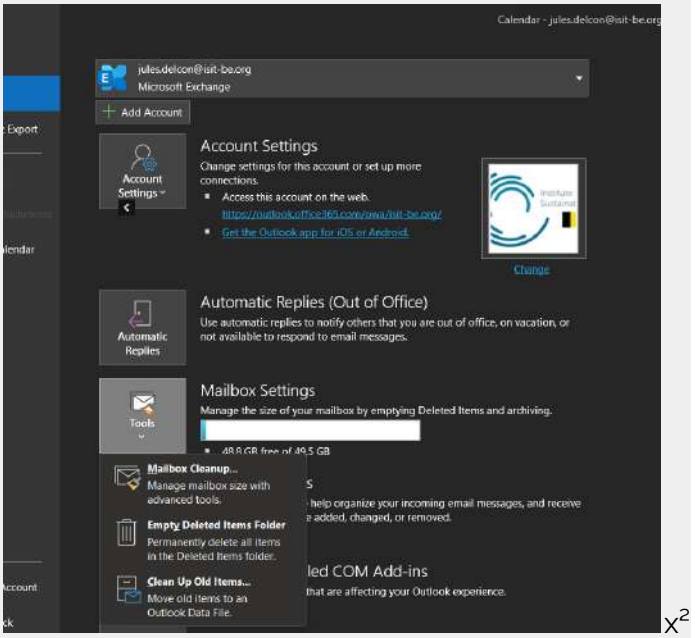
On your computer :

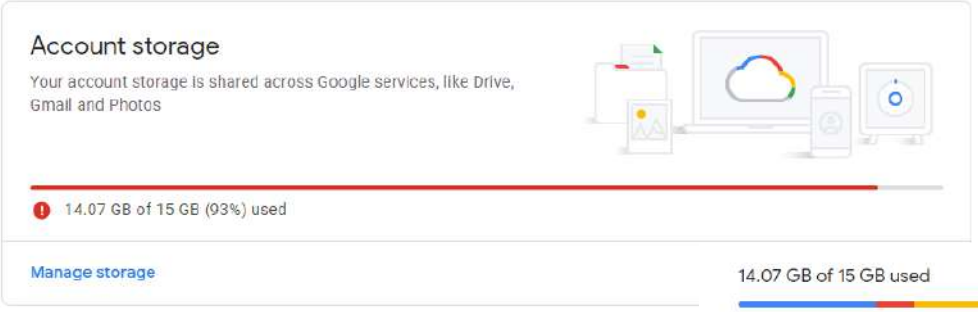
- Click on "File", then "Tools", the storage space used is shown :



x2

On Gmail

- Click on your profile picture, on the top right, then on "Manage your Google Account". Go to "Payments and subscriptions", then click on the "Manage storage" link. A graph will appear showing your "total storage". Below the graph, click on the "View details" link.



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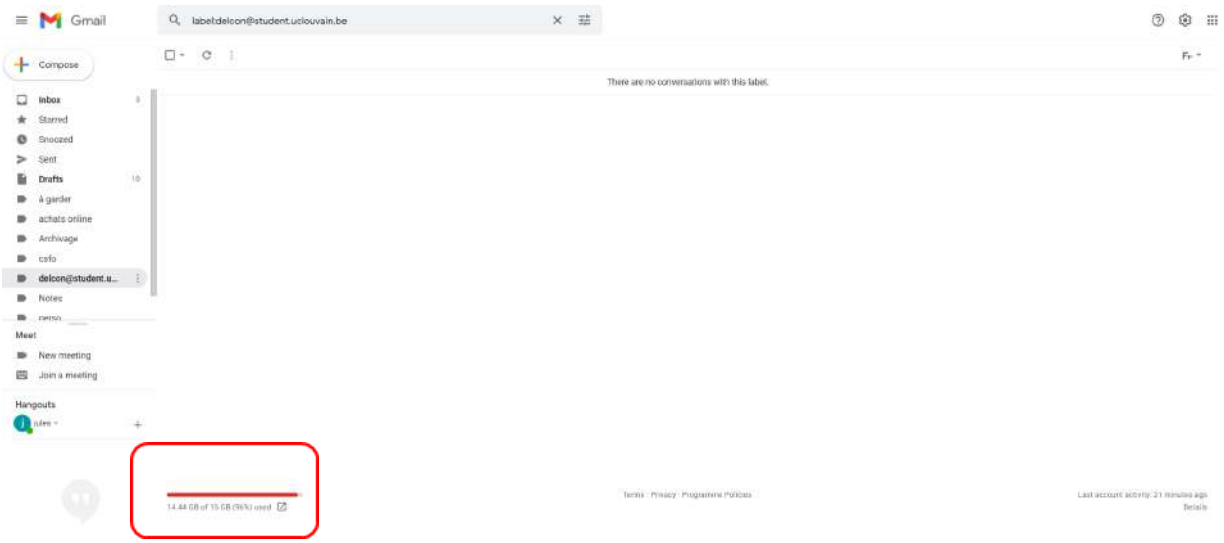
- Note : Storage usage is also displayed at the bottom of your Gmail mailbox screen :



Now that you know and have noted the weight of your mailbox, you are ready to take action!

2. Taking action

Cleaning your mailbox: step by step

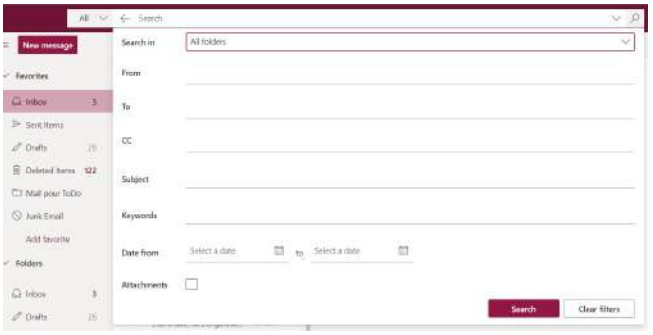
#1 Sorting your emails

Use filters available by clicking on the down arrow to the right of your search bar at the top of your mailbox. You can sort them by :

- *Size*: to identify the emails that take up the most space in your box
- *Date*: to delete the oldest emails
- *Sender name* or *Subject*: to identify similar emails, "FYI", "noreply", "newsletter" or those containing only "OK" or "Thank you

Example:

On **Outlook**



OR by clicking on "Filter" then "Sort" then on the criteria of your choice

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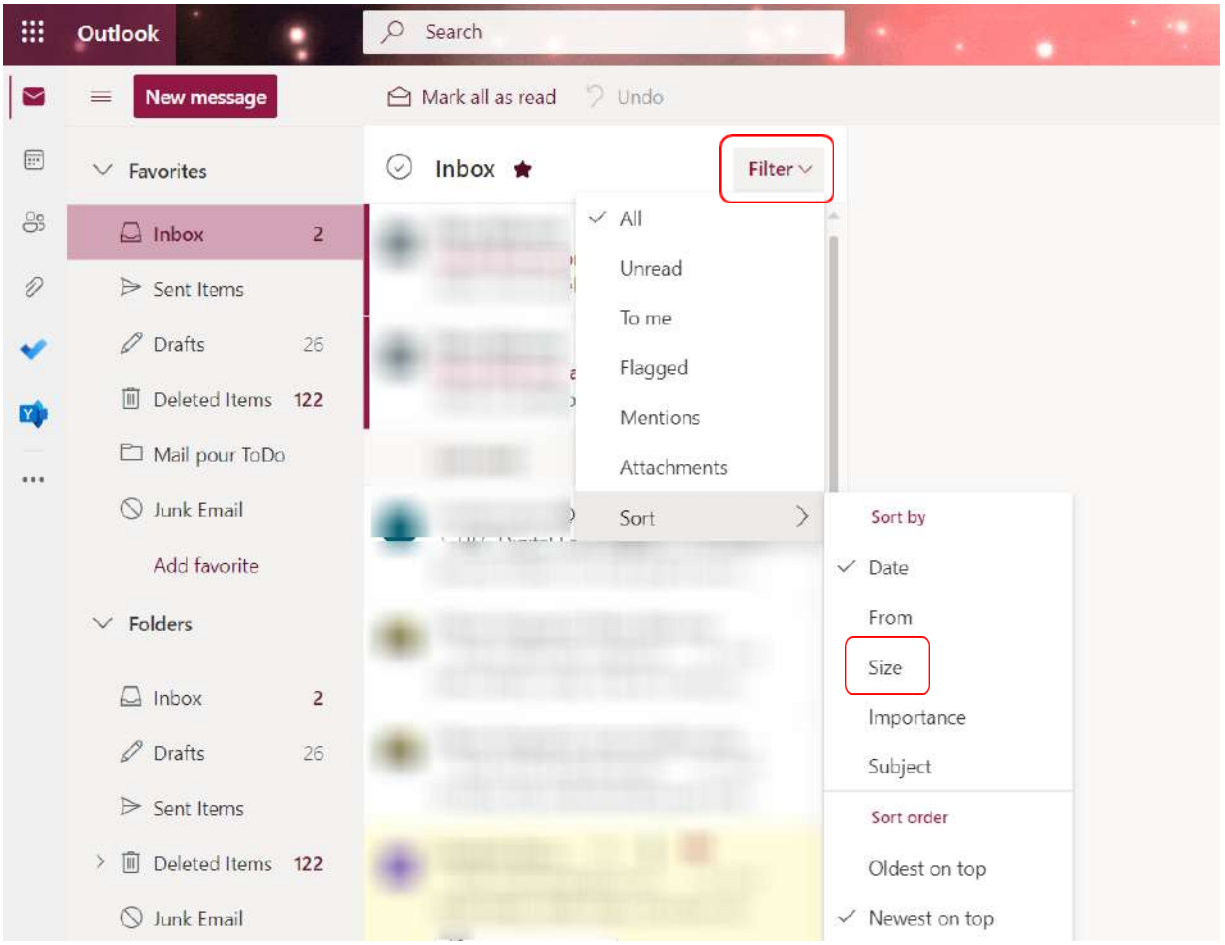
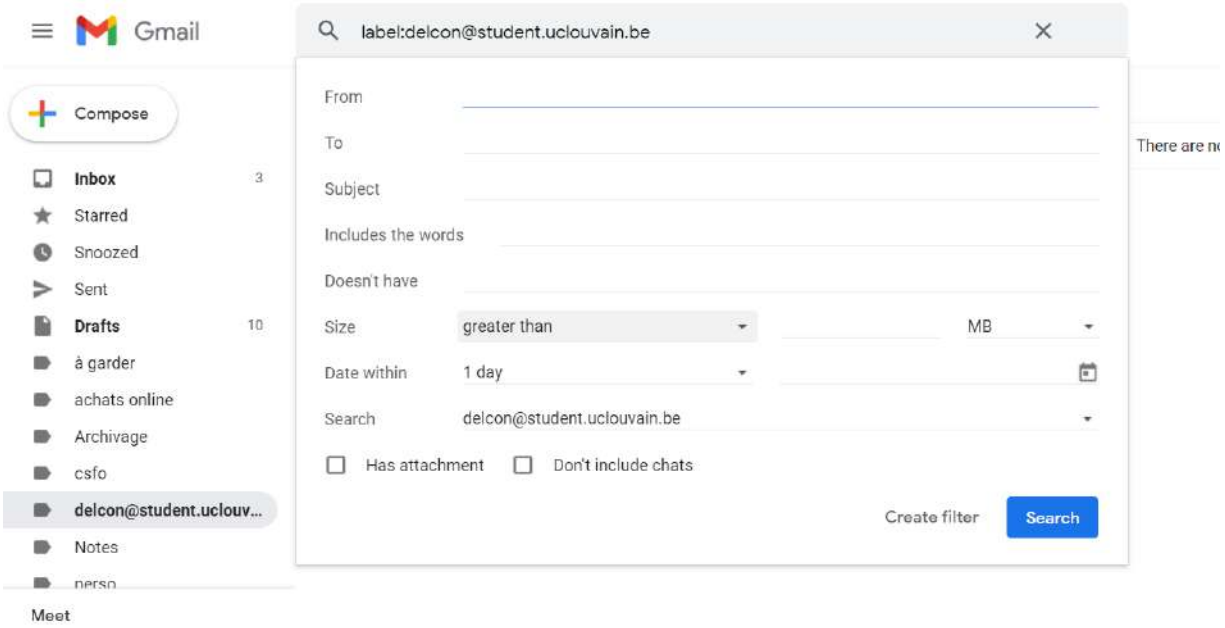


On Gmail



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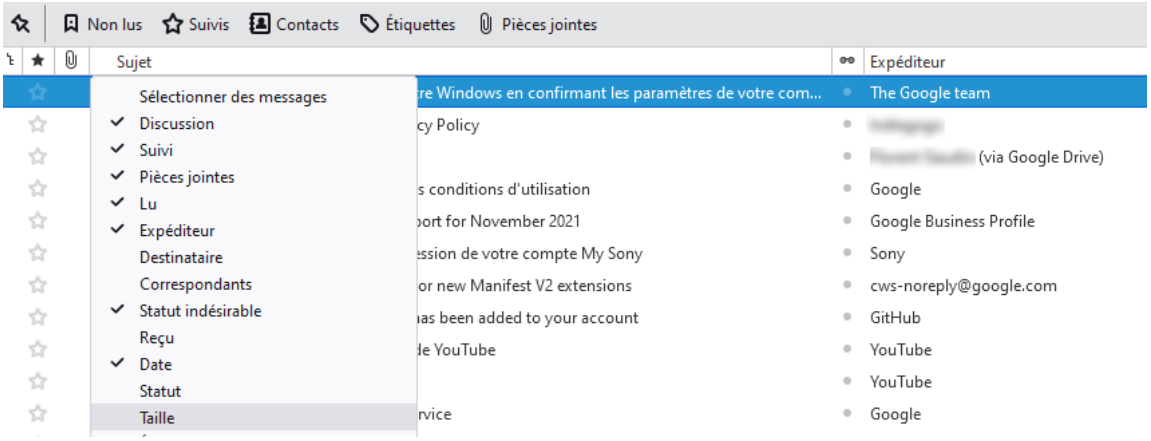
On **Thunderbird**

You can display the size of the messages by right-clicking on the column bar, then selecting "Size".

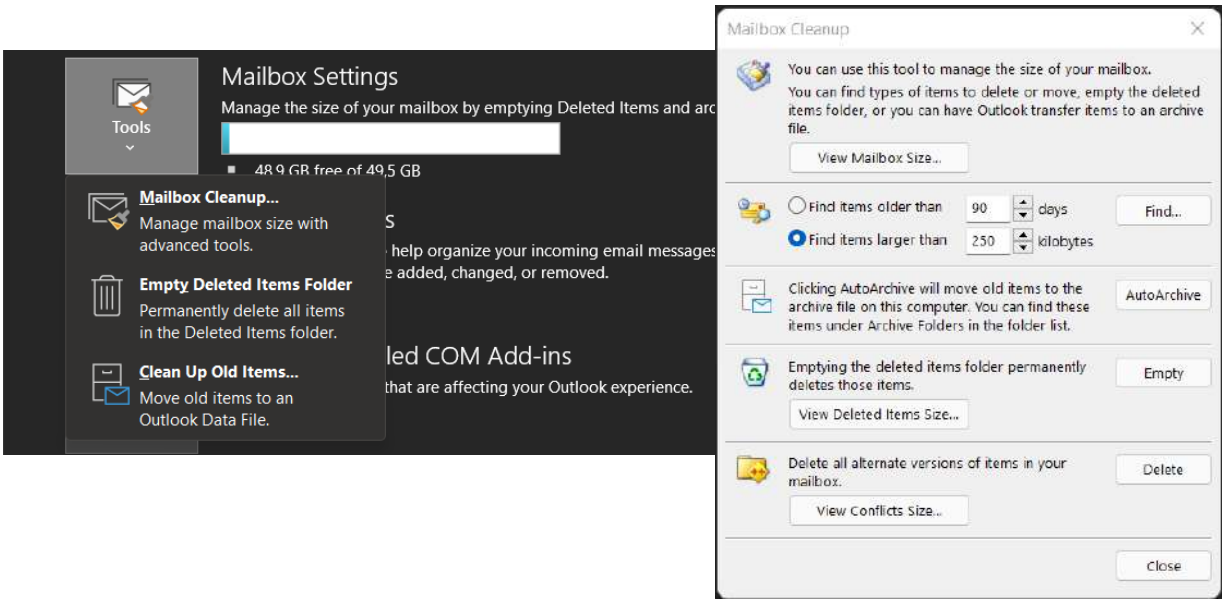


#2 Delete the filtered emails and clean up the conversations

Once filtered, select the emails you wish to delete and simply click "Delete".

In the case of long conversations, to limit the storage of redundant messages, consider selecting the most recent message and deleting the old ones.

If you use your email locally, clean up the duplicates linked to synchronisation. For **local Outlook**, go to "File" > "Tools" > "Clean Mailbox" > "Delete" under "Delete all other versions of items in your mailbox".



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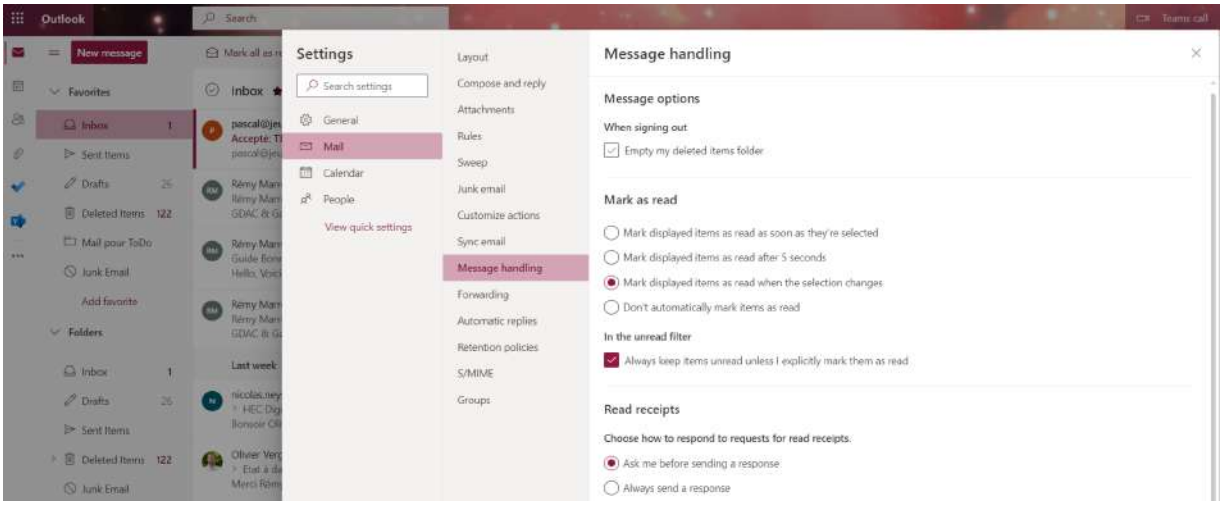
#3 Empty the recyling bin

You just deleted numerous emails ; they are now in your *deleted items*. You can manually delete it by by right-clicking on the "Deleted Items" tab > "Empty folder"

You can also automate this operation with certain providers.

On **Outlook**, go to "Settings" > "Mail" > "Message handling". In the category "Message options" > "When signing out", check the box "Empty my deleted items folder".



On **Gmail et Yahoo!Mail**, the e-mails in the trash folder or the spam folder are automatically deleted after 30 days.

Don' t hesitate to complete your cleaning by going through the official support of your mailbox:

- Microsoft Outlook : Clean up your inbox
- Gmail : Delete Gmail messages or restore deleted messages
- Apple Icloud : Delete emails in Mail on iCloud
- Orange : Check free space and delete emails

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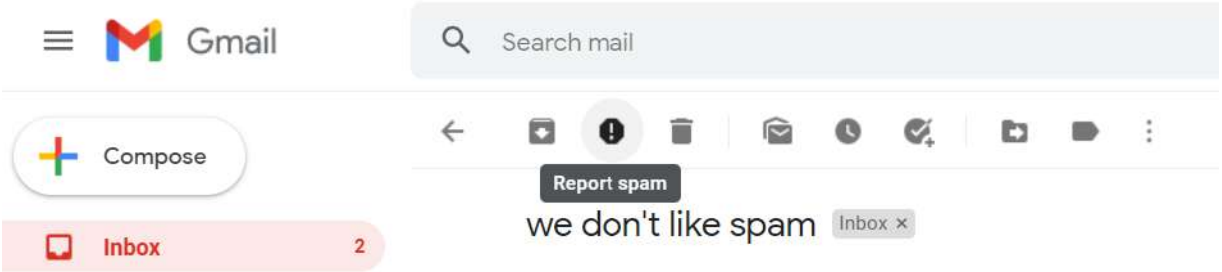
#4 Limit the amount of unwanted emails you receive

You have subscribed to newsletters but you don't read them? **Unsubscribe!**
At the bottom of each newsletter, you will find a link "Unsubscribe", written in lowercase. (*Be careful about the sender and the link you click on*).
Pay attention to the page you are taken to, as it is sometimes necessary to fill in a form to unsubscribe.

If you identify **unknown/unwanted senders, you can block them** by clicking on the "Report as SPAM" button.



Similarly, if you have not explicitly consented to receive marketing emails from known recipients, report them as SPAM!

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#5 Adopt good pratices

Limit the amount of attachments and the weight of these attachments

Attachments are often the heaviest part of an email. Before sending them, ask yourself if it is really necessary..

For sending large files or entire folders, it is advised to use a file sending service such as Swiss transfer (www.swisstransfer.com) or Tresorit (send.tresorit.com).
You can then paste the link to your file into your email.

One of the biggest advantages of this solution is that the file is only sent once and you can delete it later once your email has been processed.

Feel free to reduce the size of your documents, images and videos by compressing them using tools. source

Limit the number of recipients.

Is it necessary to send a message to all your contacts or your professional group? Before sending, make sure you only send your email to people who are relevant and have a high chance of reading and responding to it.
The "reply all" button is therefore not always a good idea.

Did you know?
If you send an email with a **10 MB** attachment to a list of **20** people, it will be duplicated for each recipient, resulting in **200 MB** of cumulative storage for a single email!

So make sure you send your email to as **few people** as possible!

Limit the size of your signature

Have you ever seen people's signatures with images or logos? Be aware that this practice has a significant impact on the weight of an e-mail and the addition of images can increase the weight of an email tenfold, even more so when the conversation is lengthy and the signature is applied several times!

Your signature with your name and the name of your organisation is more than enough.

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Checklist

- ❏ Sort out your inbox
- ❏ Empty the recycling bin and automate its cleaning
- ❏ Unsubscribe from unread newsletters
- ❏ Report unwanted emails as SPAM
- ❏ Adopt good pratices for sending emails

Congratulations! You've cleaned up your emails!

Go to your settings to **measure your impact.**

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3. Go even further

Now that your mailbox is cleaned, do you want it to stay clean all year round? Here are some tips to help you better manage your emails on the daily.

- **Favour instantaneous communication:** after 3 exchanges by email or for more complex communications, it is sometimes more efficient to discuss by phone or by instant messaging
- **Use RSS feeds instead of newsletters:** you add a news feed to your mailbox, and consult it only when you have the time and inclination. source
- **Adopt the Zero Inbox method**
    - Delete messages that don't require any action on your part and are not worth keeping,
    - Forward messages that are not your responsibility to your colleagues or relatives,
    - Respond immediately to messages that require no work on your part and take no more than 2 minutes to respond to,
    - Do what you can handle at the time,
    - Archive or postpone messages that require more time, additional information,...

Sources

- Cover picture : https://fr.freepik.com
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