

MANAGING SPAM

Most people get at least a little spam -- unsolicited email -- in their email box. The effects of spam on its recipients can range from mere annoyance to great concern, depending on the source, the content and/or volume of the spam. Regulating spam can be as difficult as fighting computer viruses. Spammers tend to use hacked, phony or hidden accounts to hide their identity and to prevent network administrators from blocking their efforts to reach your email box. So what can you do to avoid (or at least reduce) the amount of spam you receive?

1. **Select an email service provider that offers spam filtering -- and if it has these features, USE them.** Read the directions and go through the steps necessary to activate the filters.
2. **Avoid responding to spam**, especially if it is to ask to be removed from the sender's mailing list. This mostly serves to let them know that they have a "live one." (Spammers use all sorts of methods to compile email addresses from the Internet, even guessing on corporate mailing lists.)
3. **Never buy anything advertised via spam** (it only encourages them).
4. **Be stingy in giving out your private email address.** Keeping your work email address from being listed on web sites, discussion boards, etc. may be difficult, but be cautious with your private email.

Consider using a separate, "disposable" email account (e.g. Hotmail, Yahoo! Mail, etc.) for product and software inquiries and registrations. Look for "opt out" features on registration and order forms. Read privacy policies to know how companies will use your information.

5. **Make use of consumer protection laws.** Check with your state's Attorney General's Office or consumer protection agency. California is one of a few states that allow spammers to be sued for damages in small claims court.

The Direct Marketing Association (DMA) also offers a free service, similar to its program for telephone and postal mailing solicitations, enabling consumers to opt out of UCE. DMA members are required to purge from their mailing lists all e-mail addresses of consumers who have requested to be removed. More information is available from the DMA at <http://www.the-dma.org>.

6. **Consider using an anti-spam program.** A client-based spam blocking utility that the District has been testing is SpamNet <<http://www.spamnet.com>>, which is a plugin for Microsoft Outlook (Windows only, at this time). It examines incoming mail and compares it with a database of known spam. When a user identifies new spam, it sends a notice to the SpamNet list so that same email message can be blocked by other Spamnetters too.

NOTE: Anti-spamming is not an exact science. Commercial anti-spam products frequently err on the side of reducing your incoming mail at the expense of legitimate emails from groups, mailing lists or listservs. So, if you are on any official mailing lists, you may want to think twice about turning on the junk mail filter. Some legitimate emails are classified as "junk mail."

Additional suggestions and directions for managing spam are on this Microsoft web page: <http://office.microsoft.com/assistance/2002/articles/OIManageJunkAndAdultMail.aspx> The directions for turning on the Junk Email and Adult Content Filters in Microsoft Outlook are excerpted below. These features work as described for both Outlook 2000 and Outlook 2002. If you don't know which version of Outlook you have, click on the Help menu and then click on About Microsoft Outlook.

Use Outlook to Manage Junk and Adult Content E-mail

Outlook can search for commonly used phrases in e-mail messages and automatically move messages containing these phrases from your **Inbox** to either a junk e-mail folder created by Outlook, to your **Deleted Items** folder, or to any other folder you specify. You can find the list of terms that Outlook uses to filter suspected junk e-mail messages in a file called Filters.txt, located in the C:\Program Files\Microsoft Office\Office10\1033 folder.

You can also filter messages with a list of senders of junk and adult content e-mail. As you receive unwanted e-mail messages, you can create a list of the e-mail addresses of these senders. When you first begin using these features or when you make modifications to them, you should review messages that are automatically removed from the **Inbox** to make sure that any wanted messages are not accidentally removed.

To automatically move junk mail from your Inbox

1. On the standard toolbar, click the **Organize icon**.
2. Click **Junk E-Mail**.
3. In the bulleted items for **Junk** and for **Adult Content** messages, in each of the first lists, click **move**. When you click **move**, the second list on each line will change from a list of colors to a list of folder destinations.
4. You can leave the default destination (**Junk E-Mail**), click **Deleted Items**, or click **Other folder** and choose or create one.
5. Click **Turn On** to enable the feature.
6. Repeat steps 3 through 5 for both the Junk and Adult Content lines.

In addition to using the built-in Outlook filters, you can create custom rules to filter out specific types of unwanted messages. Custom rules include additional words or phrases that are not included in the Filters.txt file. Just as with the built-in feature, you can specify that the rules you create move messages from your **Inbox** to the junk e-mail folder, to your **Deleted Items** folder, or to any other folder you specify.

To create custom rules:

On the **Tools** menu, click **Rules Wizard**, and then follow the instructions on your screen.

To add e-mail senders to the junk e-mail list

1. Click **Inbox**.
2. Select a message, and then right-click it.
3. Point to **Junk E-Mail**, and then click **Add to Junk Senders list** or **Add to Adult Content Senders list**.

To review or delete e-mail senders on your junk e-mail list

1. On the standard toolbar, click **Organize**.
2. Click **Junk E-Mail**.
3. Click the underlined phrase **click here**.
4. In the second bulleted item, click **Edit Junk Senders** or **Edit Adult Content Senders**.

You can review, add, edit, or delete entries from the list.