Hired Digital Literacy Series:

Introduction to Outlook

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Table of Contents:

Introduction.....3

Getting Started.....3

Sending an Email.....5

Signatures.....7

Attaching Files.....8

Replying and Forwarding.....9

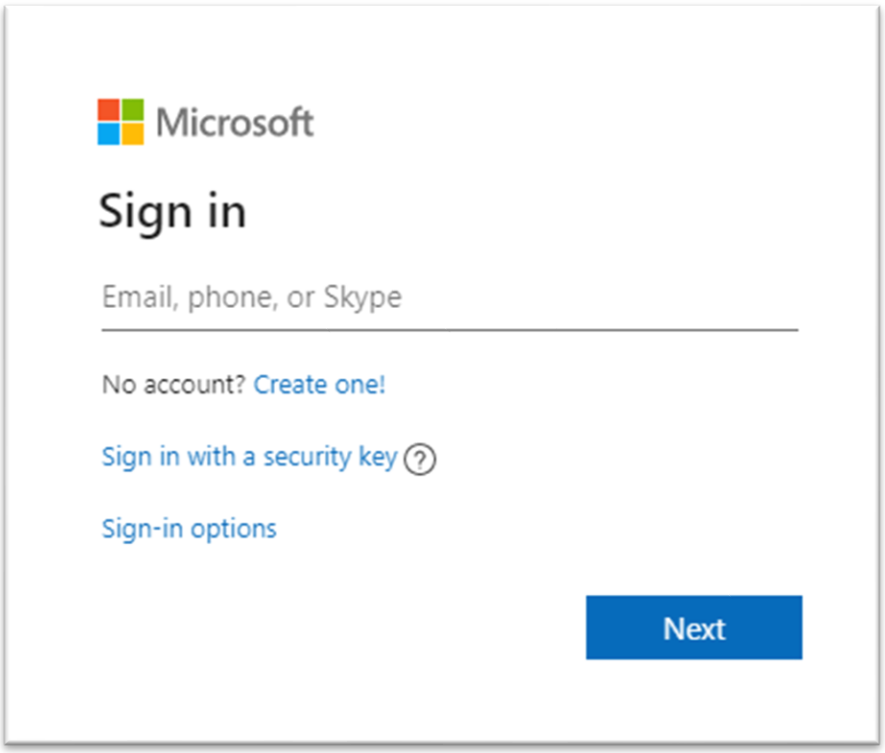
Introduction

Microsoft Outlook is the email application in the Microsoft Office suite. It also has an integrated calendar function. This guide will focus on the email functions of Outlook. As with other applications in Microsoft Office, there is an internal help tool, and you can find tutorials online if you want to learn about more advanced functions.

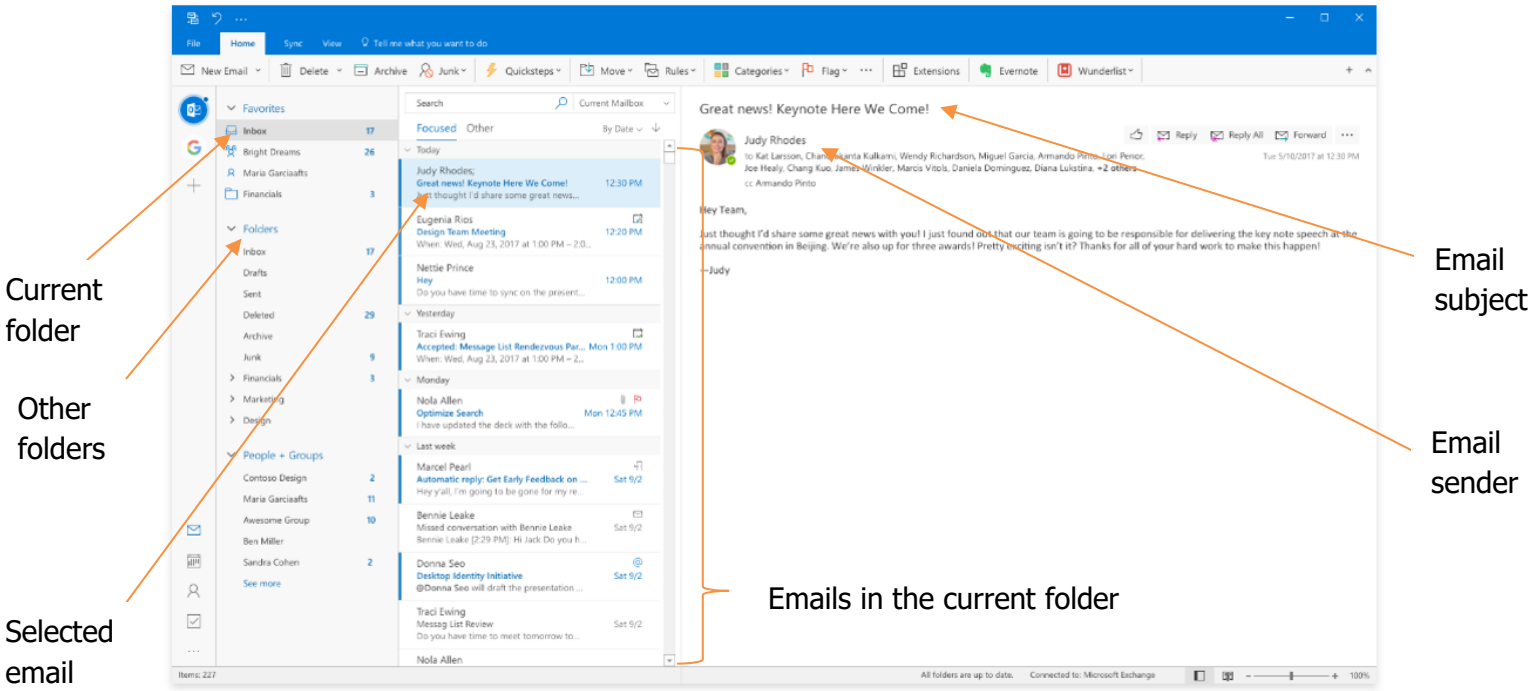
Getting Started

Your first step is to sign in to either the desktop app or the online portal at www.outlook.office.com/mail. We'll assume you've been given an email address from a school or employer. Make sure you've chosen a strong password that has a combination of upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, and special symbols, and make sure you can remember it.

1. The desktop app will have a sign-in window that will look like the screen below. Enter your email address on the line and click **Next.**



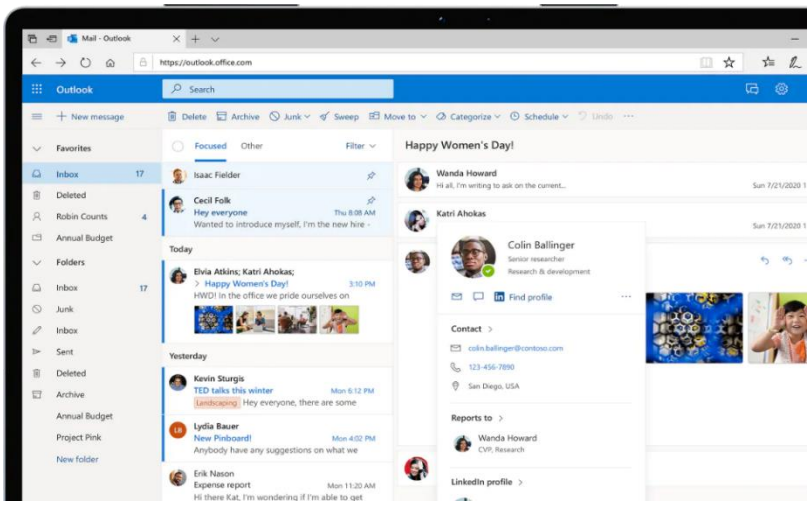
2. You will be prompted to enter your password and then you'll see your inbox, like the image below.



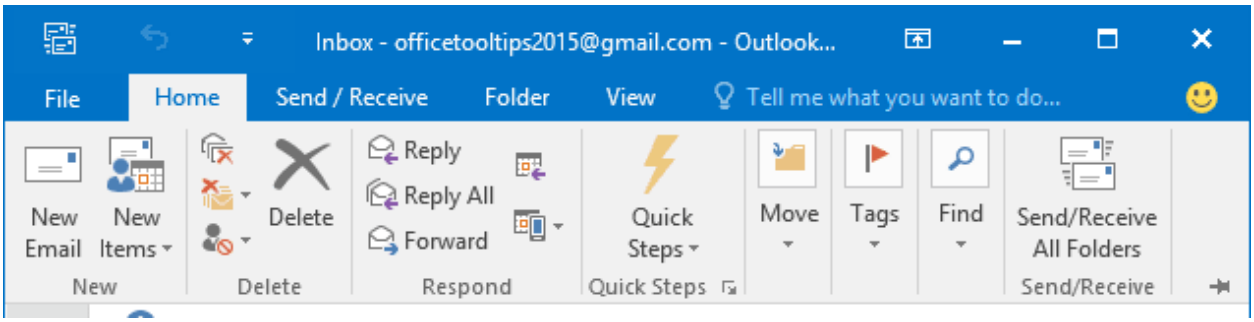
- This is the home screen for your Outlook email. To the left, you can see different folders that you can use to organize your emails.
- The left-hand pane shows how you organize your folders to sort your emails.
- The center pane shows all the emails in whichever folder you've clicked in the left-hand pane.
- The large pane on the right shows the entirety of the email you have selected in the middle pane. Here you can see the sender, other recipients, the subject line, and the whole body of the email.

To sign into Outlook with an internet browser, open your preferred browser and go to www.outlook.office.com/mail. The sign-in screen and procedure are nearly identical in the browser-based Outlook app, but the inbox looks a little different:

Note that both apps have the same three columns, but slightly different appearances. All functions are the same across the two platforms.



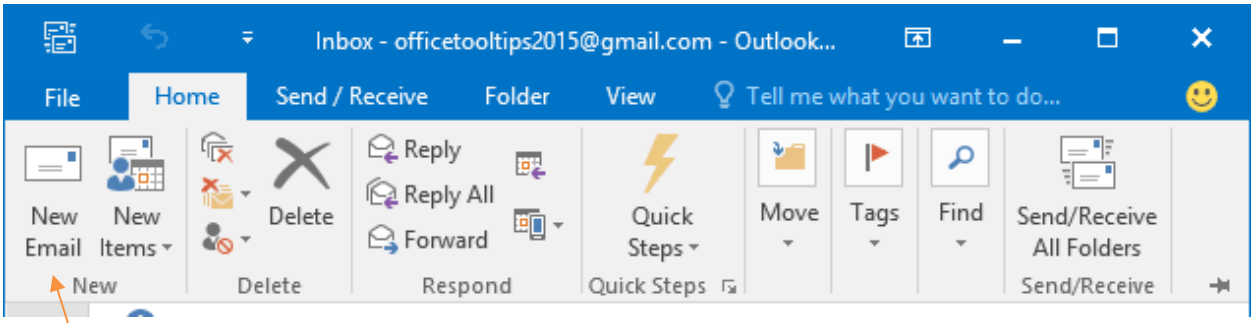
In the desktop app, the ribbon is where you find many controls. Below is the **Home** ribbon:



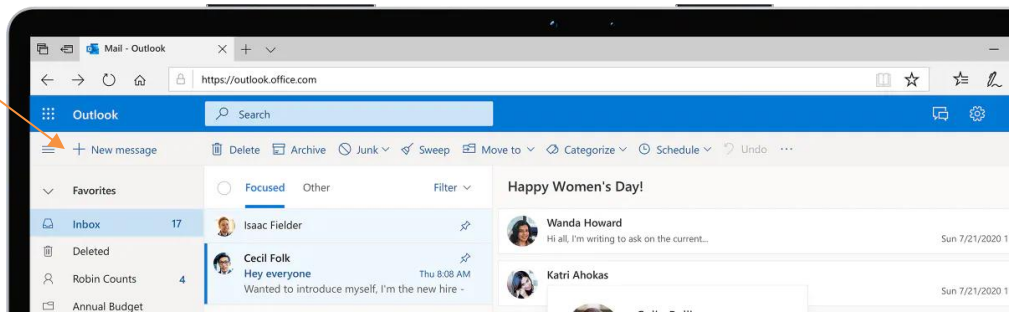
The buttons in this ribbon help you start new emails or calendar items, delete old emails, reply to emails in your inbox, and organize your emails.

Sending an Email

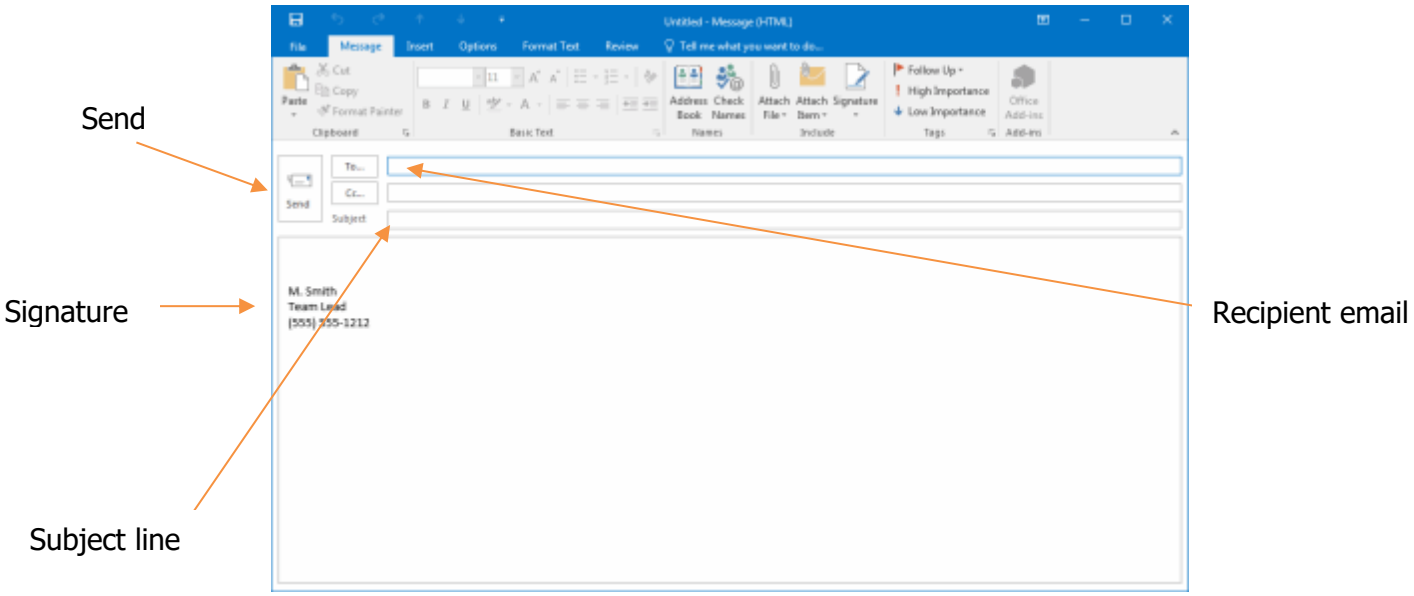
While different email systems have slightly different procedures, the basic steps for sending an email are the same. First, find the button that says **New Email.** In the desktop app, it's the first option in the **Home** menu on the ribbon. In the web portal, look for **+ New Message** in the upper left.



Here are the two buttons for a new email in the desktop app (top) or web portal (bottom)



Here's a new email message:



- First, click in the long box to the right of **To** and type in your recipient's email address. If you wish to send to more than one recipient, type a semicolon (;) and **Space**, then the next email address.

- If you do not expect a direct response from someone, but still think they should know what's in the email, put their address in the **Cc** field. If you click the **Cc** button, you can also add email addresses to the **Bcc** field. Only you, the sender, know who is on the **Bcc** list.

- Add a subject line so your recipient knows what the email is about. Keep your subject lines short and to the point.

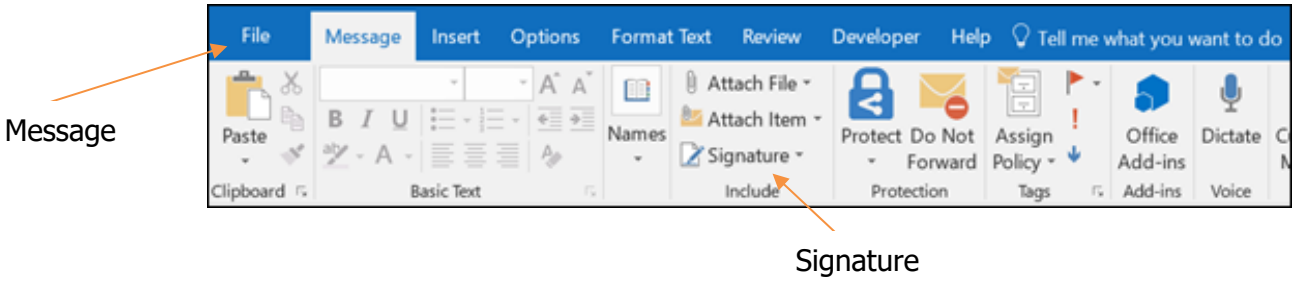
- Now click in the main body and type your email. In the image above, the sender has set up a **Signature**. We'll cover setting up a signature next.

- When you are comfortable with your email and you have proofread it to catch any spelling or grammar issues, click **Send**.

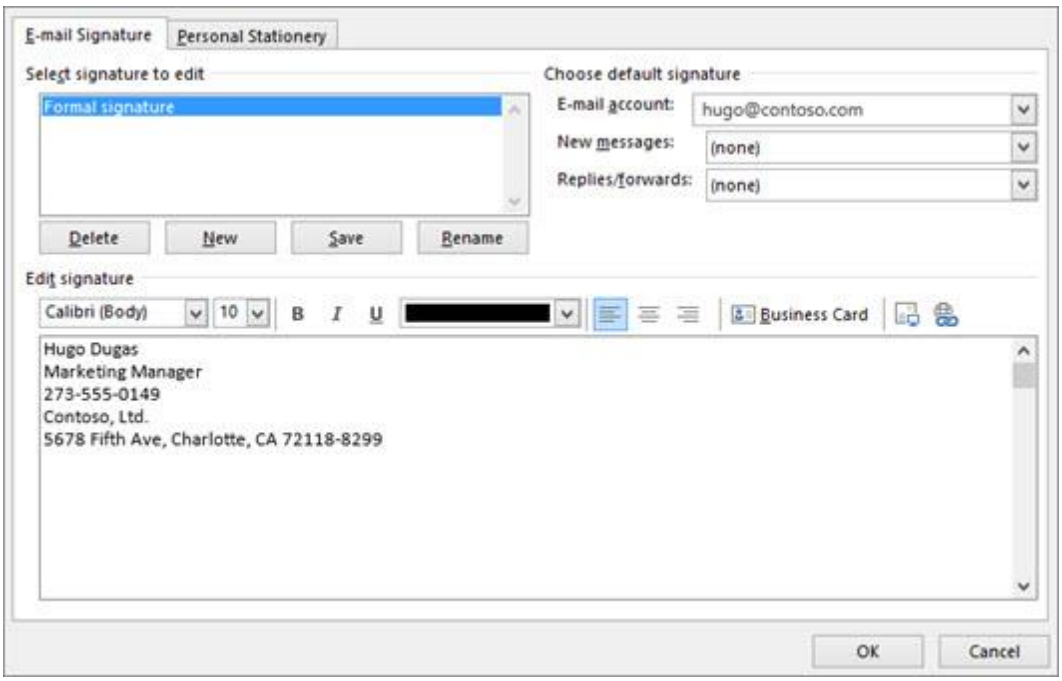
Signatures

Adding a signature to the bottom of your emails is a way to remind people of your name, title, and contact information. Your signature should have your name, organization, title, phone number, and sometimes your mailing address.

- First, open a new email message, then click **Message** in the ribbon.
- From the **Message** menu, click **Signature.**



- From there, the signature window will pop up. Type your email in the large box. The formatting tools should be familiar from Word.



- When you're satisfied with your signature, make sure that your email is selected in the **E-Mail account** drop down. To add this signature to all new outgoing messages (recommended), click the **New messages** drop down and select your signature. To add your signature to replies or forwards

(not recommended), click the **Replies/forwards** button and select your signature.

- Click **OK** to save your changes. Your signature *will not* appear on the first email after you make these changes. You can add it manually by clicking the **Signature** button and selecting your signature.

- *Note:* Keep your signature visually simple as a favor to your recipients. You may encounter email signatures with lots of color, graphics, or even animations. These additions can make it harder to load your emails on slow internet connections.

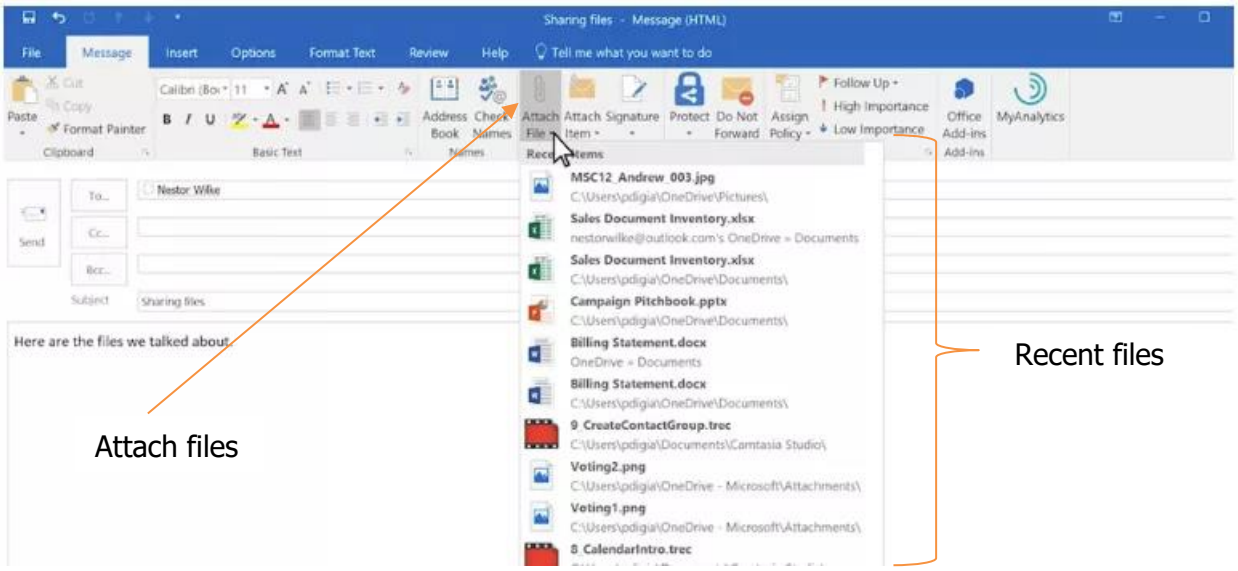
Attaching Files

Email can be a convenient way to share files with other people. Whether it's a PowerPoint presentation, an Excel spreadsheet, a Word document, or a picture, any file sent via email is called an attachment. There are a few different ways to attach files to an email.

- First, open a new email message and type in the address, subject, and body of the message.

- The easiest way to attach a file is to simply click and drag the file from your computer into the message body.

- Another way to attach a file is to click the paperclip icon that says **Attach File**. Documents you have worked on recently are automatically suggested, or you can browse your computer to find the correct the file. Here is what that looks like:



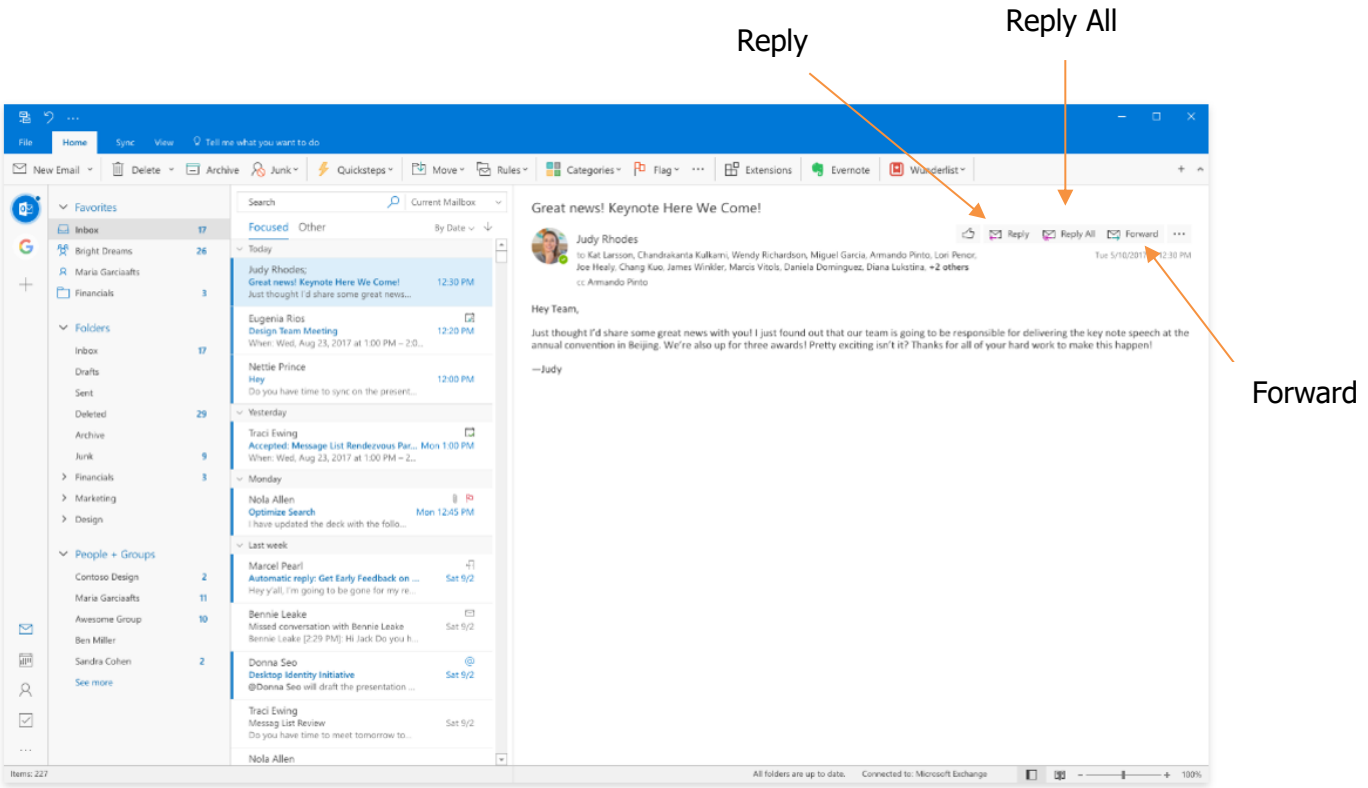
Replying and Forwarding

Sending, replying, and forwarding are the three basic email actions. We've covered sending, now let's talk about replying and forwarding. **Reply** refers to sending an email back to a sender in response to their message to you. If you are one of many recipients of an email, you can choose to reply only to the sender or **Reply All** to everyone else who got the email. If you **Forward** an email, you are simply taking an email that someone sent to you and sending it on to someone else. You can choose to add your own message at the top or simply send it on.

- In the example below, you have received an email from Judy, who appears to be your supervisor or colleague. She has emailed the whole team some good news. To respond to Judy, click **Reply**. A new message window will appear, already addressed to Judy, and you can type your response and click **Send.** In most cases, the message you are replying to will appear below the new message that you type so you can keep a conversation going.

- If you want to reply to your whole team, click **Reply All** to send a message to everyone else who has received the message. Again, a new message window will appear already addressed to the correct recipients. Type your message and click **Send**.

- To send this message on to someone who didn't get it, click **Forward**. Once again, a new message window will appear and you can choose a new recipient, type a message to them, and click **Send**.



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