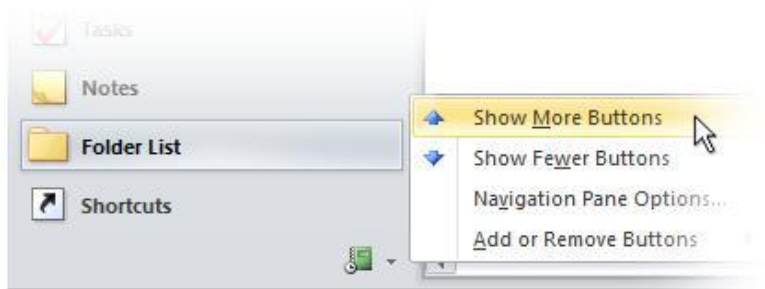


Manage your mail and more with conditional formatting

Quick Reference Card

A note about views and conditional formatting

The steps below apply to most of what you do in Outlook--email, calendars, tasks, and so on. Some views, such as Folder view, don't provide the **Conditional Formatting** command. To see the views that Outlook provides, click the down arrow in the lower-right corner of the Navigation Pane, and then click **Show More Buttons**.



To know if a given view supports conditional formatting, click the **View** tab, and then click **View Settings**. If the **Conditional Formatting** button is available, feel free to use it.

Create a conditional formatting rule

When you create a conditional formatting rule, you can break the process into two parts: setting fonts and colors, and then setting conditions.

Note Because the most common type of rule searches for email messages that contain one or more key words or text strings, these steps show you how to create that type of rule.

Set fonts and colors for a rule

1. Go to the ribbon and click the **View** tab, then click **View Settings**.
That starts the **Advanced View Settings** dialog box.
2. Click **Conditional Formatting**.
That starts the **Conditional Formatting** dialog box.
3. Click **Add**, and in the **Name** box, enter a name for the new rule.
4. Click **Font**.
That starts the **Font** dialog box.
5. Use the commands in the dialog box to select a new font, an effect such as strikethrough or underline, a font color, a style such as bold, and a font size. The exact combinations of fonts, styles, and so on are up to you.
6. Click **OK** when you're done.

Set the conditions for a rule

1. In the **Conditional Formatting** dialog box, click **Condition**. That starts the **Filter** dialog box.
2. On the **Messages** tab, in the **Search for the word(s)** box, enter the text you want the rule to find. For example, **sales, quarterly, southwest**. Make sure you enter terms that exist in your mail messages, calendar, or other items.

Note In this example, the terms are separated by commas. The commas apply a type of search logic called OR logic, which means the rule will act on items that contain any OR all of the terms you specify. For more information about using commas, see the next section.

3. From the **In** list, select **Subject field and message body**. That way, the rule searches the entire messages for the terms you enter.
4. In the **From** field, enter the name or names of the people who send the messages you want to track. Again, enter names that actually exist in your mailbox, calendar, or tasks. You can use first names if you wish, but you must separate them with commas. For example, if you enter **Gwyneth, Bruce (separated by a comma)**, the rule acts on messages sent by Gwyneth or Bruce. But if you enter **Gwyneth Bruce**, the rule assumes that's the sender's name, and you'll probably get no results.
5. Optionally, enter one or more names in the **Sent To** box.
6. Optionally, select the **Where I am** check box and select an item from the list.
7. Optionally, select an item from the **Time** lists, and then click **OK** to close all open dialog boxes.

Your rule takes effect after you close the dialog boxes. If you don't see any results, make sure your terms are spelled correctly, and you're searching for terms that exist in your inbox, calendar or other locations in Outlook.

Using commas (AND and OR) logic in rules

When you follow the steps in the previous section to start the **Filter** dialog box and use the **Search for the word(s)** field, you can take advantage of AND and OR search logic. You can also search using partial words. Remember these rules:

- Commas apply OR logic. For example, a rule that searches for **carbon, fiber, frames, tubing** (all separated by commas) will act on messages that contain any or all of those words.
- Lack of commas (no delimiter between words) provides AND logic. To continue the previous example, if you use **carbon fiber frames tubing**, your rule will only act on messages that have all of those terms.
- A rule will find partial words. In other words, if you search on **tube**, a rule will also act on items that contain the word **tubes**. If you search on **tub**, the rule will act on **tube** and **tubes**.

Change a rule

This example changes a rule so that messages change color after you read them.

1. On the **View** tab, click **View Settings**.
2. Click **Conditional Formatting**, and then click **Condition**.
That starts the **Filter** dialog box.
3. Click the **More Choices** tab.
4. **Select the Only items with checkbox, and make sure unread appears in the list next to the checkbox.**
5. **Optionally, other checkboxes on the More Choices tab and explore the items in lists for each checkbox.**
6. **Click OK to close all open dialog boxes.**

Now, any formatting changes caused by the rule are undone when you read a message.

Stop a rule

Stopping a rule isn't the same as deleting a rule.

1. On the **View** tab, click **View Settings, and then click Conditional Formatting**,
2. Clear the checkbox next to the rule you want to stop, then click **OK** to close all open dialog boxes.

Delete a rule

Once you delete a rule, you can't undo that change. If you want the rule back, you have to recreate it.

1. On the **View** tab, click **View Settings, and then click Conditional Formatting**,
2. If you created the rule, select the rule and click **Delete**.
3. Click **OK** to close all open dialog boxes.