Microsoft Outlook Express User's Guide and Outlook Express Quick Guide

Using Microsoft Outlook Express

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1 Outlook Express Overview

Microsoft Outlook Express ("OE"), installed on your laptop, allows you to send, receive, forward, and reply to e-mail messages.

Using OE on the laptops provided by NAEP may be different than what you are used to if you use a web-based e-mail account (such as yahoomail or googlemail).

You can create messages or replies at any time, but these will not be sent until you click on *Send/Receive*. This is because messages you have composed and saved on your laptop are automatically sent and messages waiting for you at Westat are automatically copied onto your laptop when you click on *Send/Receive* and connect to Westat.

BASIC STEPS

1. Open OE
2. Create (compose) new messages and/or create responses to messages you have received
3. Click on *Send/Receive* (this will connect you to the Westat e-mail server, send messages in your Outbox, receive messages waiting for you on Westat's e-mail server and then disconnect you from Westat)
4. Read new messages
5. Repeat steps 2 and 3 if you wish to create replies to messages received or if done, close OE.

This guide will describe the basic features of OE that you will be using. Also included at the end are a few advanced topics for those interested.

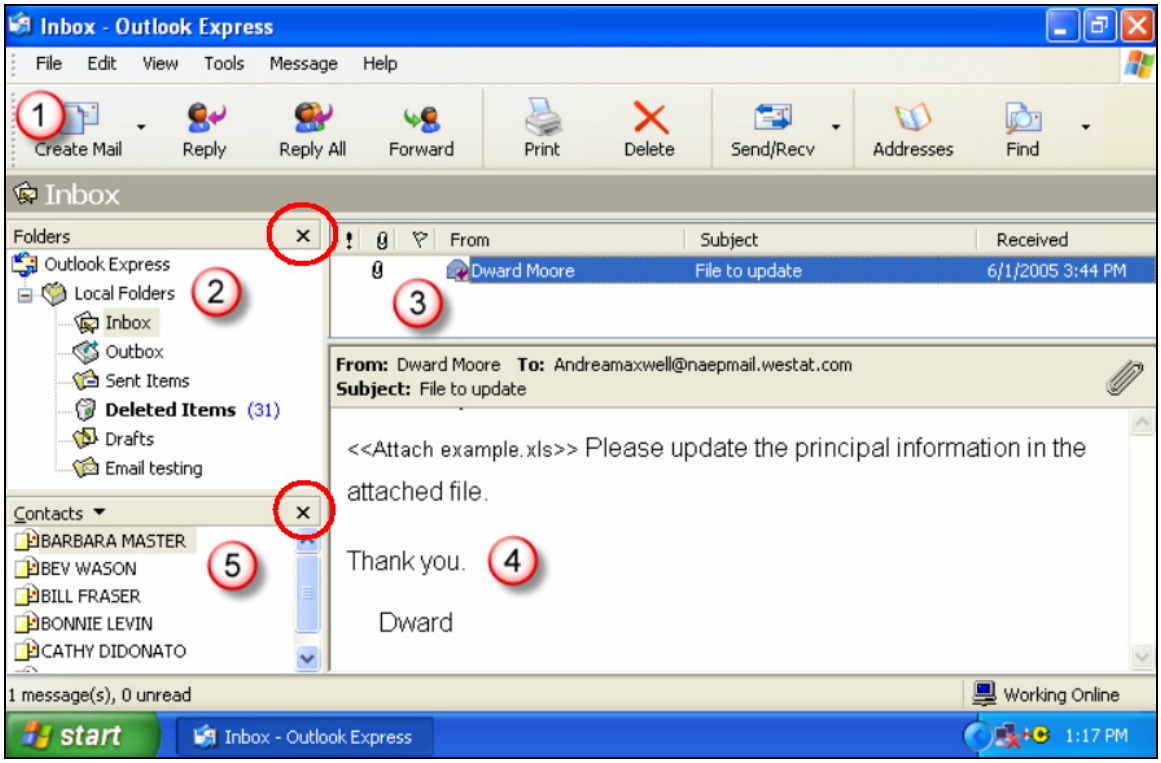
1.1 Opening Outlook Express

To open OE, double-click on the Outlook Express icon on the desktop.

1.2 Main View

The main screen of OE is divided into a menu/icon bar and four panels:

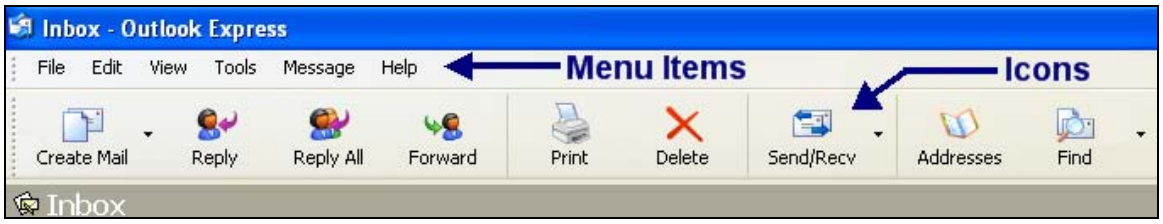
1. Menu/Icon Bar (section 1.2.1)
2. Folders (section 1.2.2)
3. Messages (section 1.2.3)
4. Preview Pane (section 1.2.4)
5. Contacts (section 1.2.5)



NOTE You can accidentally close the 'Folders' and 'Contacts' panes by clicking on the '**X**'s that are circled. If this happens see section 3.8.1.1 on how to bring that pane back.

1.2.1 Menu/Icon Bar

The menu items and icons are located at the top of the screen.



When you click on a menu item, a drop down list of options is presented. Most of the options that you will use from these menu items also are available as icons.

The icons change when performing different functions, such as creating a new message. The icons shown above are the standard email functions you will need:

- **Create Mail** : Click on this to begin creating new message;
- **Reply/Reply All** : Reply to the author(s) of a message;
- **Forward** : Share a message you received with someone else;
- **Print** : If you have a printer connected to your computer;
- **Delete** : Send a message to the Deleted Items folder;
- **Send/Recv** : Connect to Westat and send and receive messages;
- **Addresses** : Takes you to your address book; and
- **Find** : Allows you to search for text within messages.

1.2.2 Folders

All electronic email messages are stored in folders. On your laptop, these are referred to as “local” folders since these folders (and all stored messages) are located on your laptop’s hard disk. Folders include:

- **Inbox (default)**
  When you receive new messages, they go to your Inbox where they will stay unless you move them to another folder;
- **Outbox**
  Messages you create are stored here until you connect to Westat and send and receive messages;
- **Sent Items**
  Copies of each message you create and send are stored here for future reference;
- **Deleted Items**
  If you delete a message, it is sent to this folder;
- **Drafts**
  Messages that you have started, but have not completed are saved here; and

- **User Created Folders**
  Folders that the user creates will be listed in this section as well.

The number shown in parentheses next to a folder name indicates the number of ***unread*** messages in that folder. In this example there are 31 deleted ***unread*** messages but there could be many more messages that were read and then deleted. This is NOT the total number of messages in the folder.

1.2.3 Messages

The 'Messages' pane shows you all of the messages in your current folder (the Inbox or whichever folder you have selected). Unread messages will be bolded, messages you have read will be in regular font.

If you click once on a message the message will appear in the preview pane. If you double-click on a message that message will open in a new window.

The 'Message' pane also provides information on the message and allows you to sort by these features:

If someone sends a message to you and thinks it is very important you may see a red exclaimation mark next to the message in this column.

If the message sender has attached a file or files you will see a paperclip image in this column.

This is the 'Flag' field. This field is unused in 99.9%+ of all messages, though very advanced users may use this feature.

The name of the sender is listed in this field.

The title of the e-mail is listed in this field.

The date the e-mail was received is listed in this field.

NOTE You can sort by these fields as well. Clicking once on the icons or text you see above will all the messages in that folder, in decscending order (Z-A, new-old), by that field. If you click on that field again you will sort the messages in that folder in ascending order (A-Z, old-new).

1.2.4 Preview Pane

When you select a message in the 'Message' pane (by clicking on it once) the body of the message is displayed in the preview pane.

This is an alternative to double clicking on a message, which opens the message in a brand new window.

1.2.5 Contacts

The 'Contacts' pane allows you to quickly select someone from your address book to send a message to and allows you to quickly add a new person to your address book.

Quick Compose

Quick Create

To quickly compose a new message to a person already in your contact list simply double click on the person's name. So in the example above, if you double click on Barbara Master's name a new message window will open with Barbara Master in the 'TO:' field.

To quickly create a new contact, click on the down arrow next to contacts and then click on 'New Contact…' This will open a 'Add New Contact' window which is described in detail in section 3.4.

2 Creating, Replying to, Sending, and Receiving Mail

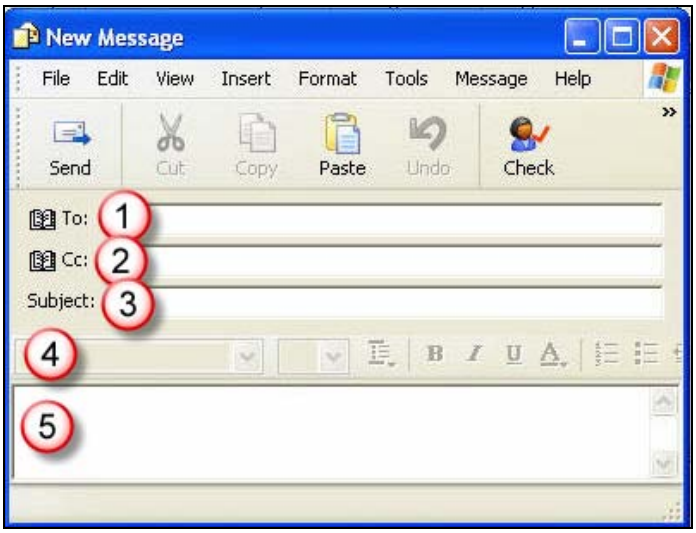
2.1 Creating Messages

The **Create Mail** icon is used to create a new message. When you are ready to compose your message, click once on **Create Mail** and a **New Message** window will appear.

When you are creating a message (including when you reply to a message), icons are available as a shortcut to several common e-mail functions.

- **Send**
  Send message to Outbox (message is not actually sent until you connect to Westat);
- **Cut, Copy, Paste**
  Used to cut, copy, or paste highlighted text (these don't activate until after you type text into the message and highlight it);
- **Undo**
  Use this to "undo" (get back) the previous text deletion;
- **Check**
  Use this to verify the correct spelling of mail addresses (in "To:" or "Cc:") against your address book (Contacts);
- **Spelling**
  Check the message for misspellings; and
- **Attach**
  Used to attach files (Word or Excel files) to the e-mail. More detailed information is found in section 3.3 - Attachments.
- **Priority**
  Alerts the recipient that the message is more urgent than a 'normal' message. However marking a message as 'high' priority will not cause the message to be delivered more quickly, it simply alerts the recipient to the fact that the message is higher priority than a 'normal' message.

2.1.1 The Parts of a Message



(1) **The 'TO:' field:** The 'TO:' field should contain the main targets of the e-mail. For example if you were sending a message to a school about a important visit then the school coordinator's e-mail address would go in the 'TO:' field. There are two parts to the 'TO:' field. The button you can click (To:) to select the names of people you already have contact information for or your can type the complete e-mail address in the space to the right (an example is *john.doe@school.edu*).

(2) **The 'CC:' field:** The 'CC:' (also called the carbon-copy) field should contain those people who are not the intended targets but should be kept informed. For example if you were sending a message to a school about a important visit then your supervisor's e-mail address would go in the 'CC:' field. There are two parts to the 'CC:' field. There is the button you can click (Cc:) to select the names of people you already have contact information for or your can type the complete e-mail address in the space to the right.

(3) **Subject Field:** The subject field should contain a brief description of the message, such as 'A question regarding John Doe High School's enrollment'. In order to help you keep track of your contact with others (especially with schools) it is a good idea to include the School ID in parenthesis at the end of each message.

(4) **Format Bar:** This bar is used to apply formatting (such as changing font size or adding color to text) to the message. More information is found in section 2.1.3 'Adding Formatting to a Message'. It is important to note that not all recipients can receive formatting and adding formatting can distort the message you are sending. It is usually best to keep the use of formatting in an e-mail message to a minimum.

(5) **E-Mail Body:** This is where you enter your message or the response to a message.

You can either click in a field or use the **TAB** key to advance from one field to another.

2.1.2 'BCC:' Recipients

As mentioned above, proper e-mail etiquette is to enter anyone directly responsible for the information in the e-mail or replying to the information in the e-mail as the 'TO:' recipients. Anyone who you included as an FYI should be added as a 'CC:' recipient.

There is a third type of recipient. These are 'BCC:' recipient, or *Blind Carbon Copy*. Anyone added as a BCC recipient will not be visible to anyone else. So if you add Jane in the 'TO:' field, John in the 'CC:' field and Martha in the 'BCC:' field, only Jane and John's names will show up, even to Martha.

'BCC:' is a useful tool for cases when you are sending a message to a very large number of people and you don't want the top of your message to be cluttered with a dozen or more e-mail addresses. This is why you may sometimes receive an e-mail message even though you do not see your e-mail address. You were likely added as a 'BCC:' recipient.

NOTE 'BCC:' recipients will not be included in any reply, even if 'Reply to All' is selected.

To add someone as a 'BCC:' recipient you need to click on the 'TO:' or 'CC:' buttons then:

1. Select the person(s) name you wish to include in the BCC list by clicking once on the name(s); then
2. Click on the 'BCC: ->' button
3. Click on OK

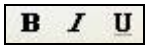
That person will now receive a *blind carbon copy* of the e-mail.

2.1.3 Adding Formatting to a Message

Using the formatting bar you can change the appearance of the text in your message. You can change font size or type, justify the text or even change the color of the text.

A brief listing of the most common formatting options are:

-

Font Type and Font Size – You can change the style of the font or its size with these options;
- 
You can **bold**, *italicize*, or <u>underline</u> your text with these options;
-
Font Color – This button (just to the right of the underline button) allows you to change the color of your text;
-
Justification – These buttons allow you have your text line on the left side of the screen, centered in the middle of the screen, or lined up on the right side of the screen.

2.2 Replying to Messages

There are several ways to reply to a message:

-

To reply to only the original click on the 'Reply' icon.
-

To reply to all the original recipients click on the 'Reply All' icon.
-

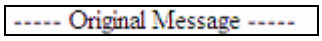
To send the message to someone who wasn't originally on the list, 'Forward' the message by clicking on the 'Forward' icon.

You can also print

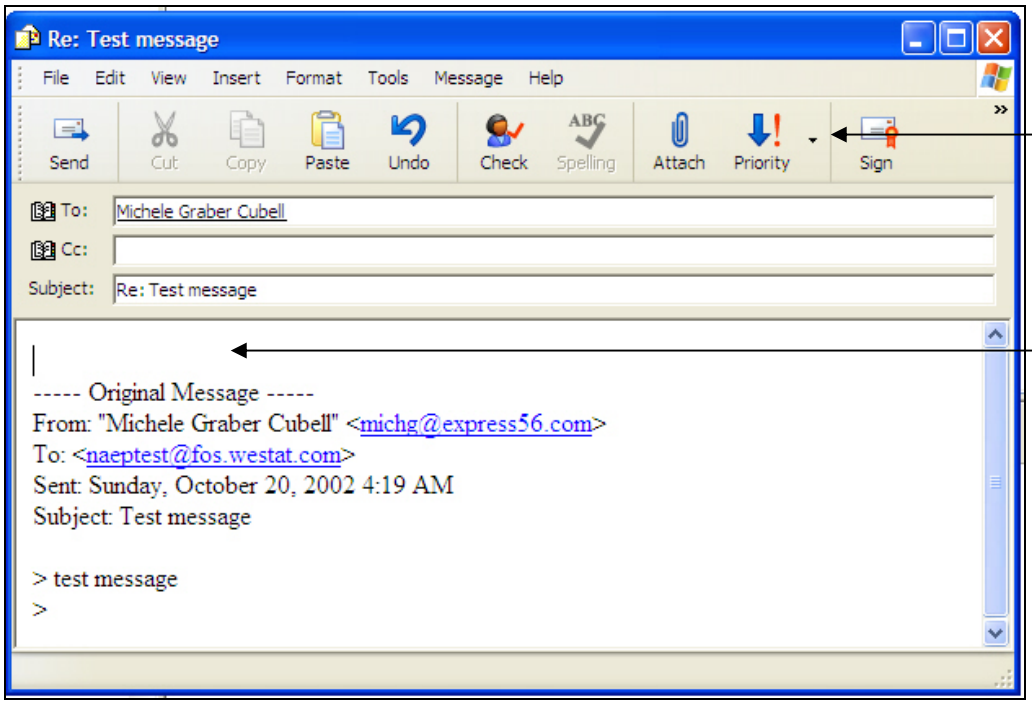
or delete

the message from within the message window.

Once you select "reply" or "forward," Outlook Express will open a new message window. In the new message window the text from the message you are responding to will be placed at the bottom of the message box. Enter your message above this text:



This screenshot shows an example of what the screen looks like when you select "Reply."



New icons. Grayed out icons can only be used after you've typed text.

This is where you will enter your reply or other text. Please note, the "Original Message" is the one sent to you.

When you have completed your reply or forward message click on 'Send' to send the message to the Outbox. The message will automatically be sent to Westat's server the next time you click on the Send/Receive icon and successfully connect. The original message you replied to will remain in your Inbox and a copy of the message you sent will be saved in the 'Sent Items' folder.

2.3 Sending Messages

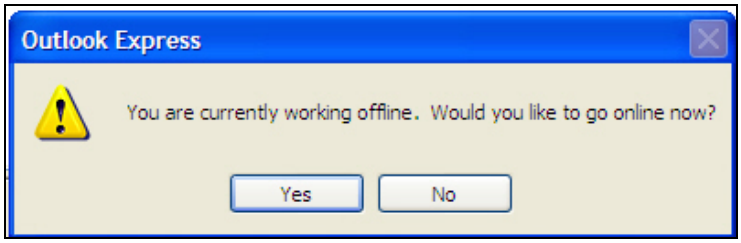
When the message is complete, click on the **Send** icon which will put it in the queue of messages to be sent the next time you click on 'Send/Recv' (these messages are saved in the Outbox until then).

When you connect using the 'Send/Recv' button in OE you are connected to Westat's e-mail server. All of the messages waiting to be sent in your Outbox will be uploaded and all your messages waiting on Westat's e-mail server will be downloaded.

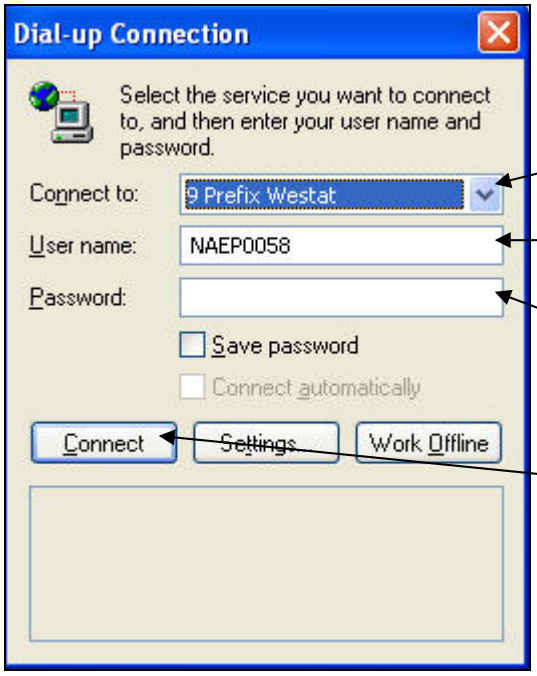
Copies of all messages you send are kept in the "Sent Items" folder.

2.4 Connecting (usually by clicking on 'Send/Recv')

When it's time to send and receive messages, attach the phone cable to the modem, then to the wall jack. Click on the **Send/Recv** icon to initiate the dial-up connection. The following screen appears:



Choose **Yes** and the following screen appears.



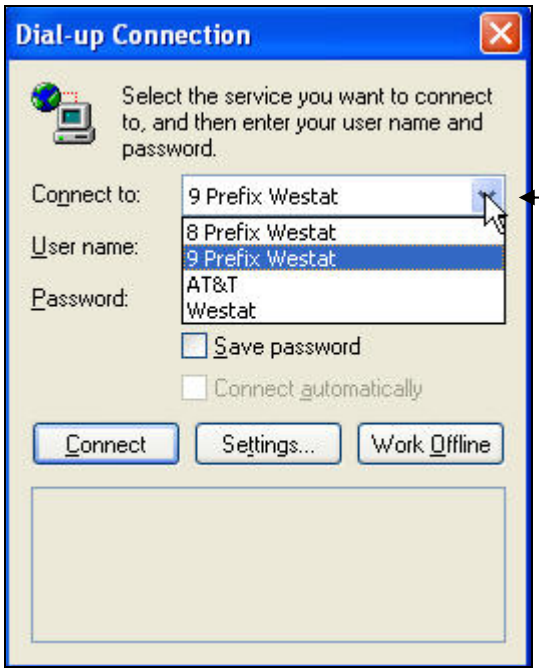
Make sure you have the right connection (Westat, 9/8 Prefix Westat) selected

Your NAEP ID should already appear in the fields (if not, type it in manually).

Tab to the next field and enter your password.

Click on Connect to dial out.

Hotels almost always require you to use dial either an 8 or a 9 to make a long distance call from the hotel. Check the information on your telephone or ask at the desk what the prefix needs to be. Use either the '8 Prefix Westat' or '9 Prefix Westat' (depending on what the hotel requires) to check your e-mail from a hotel.



To add the proper prefix, change the "Connect to:" option by clicking on the down arrow button.

Click on the down arrow and move the pointer down the list until the prefix needed is highlighted. Click on the prefix or press the Enter key. If your user name and password do not appear, type them in. Then, click on the Connect button.

Once you are connected, OE will automatically send all mail waiting to be sent and receive all mail waiting to be delivered. A status bar indicates the progress of the transmission. Once all messages are sent and received, you will be notified how many new messages were downloaded to your laptop and you will be disconnected. There may be a delay in closing the dialog box when you are disconnecting from Outlook Express. New messages will appear bolded in your Inbox.

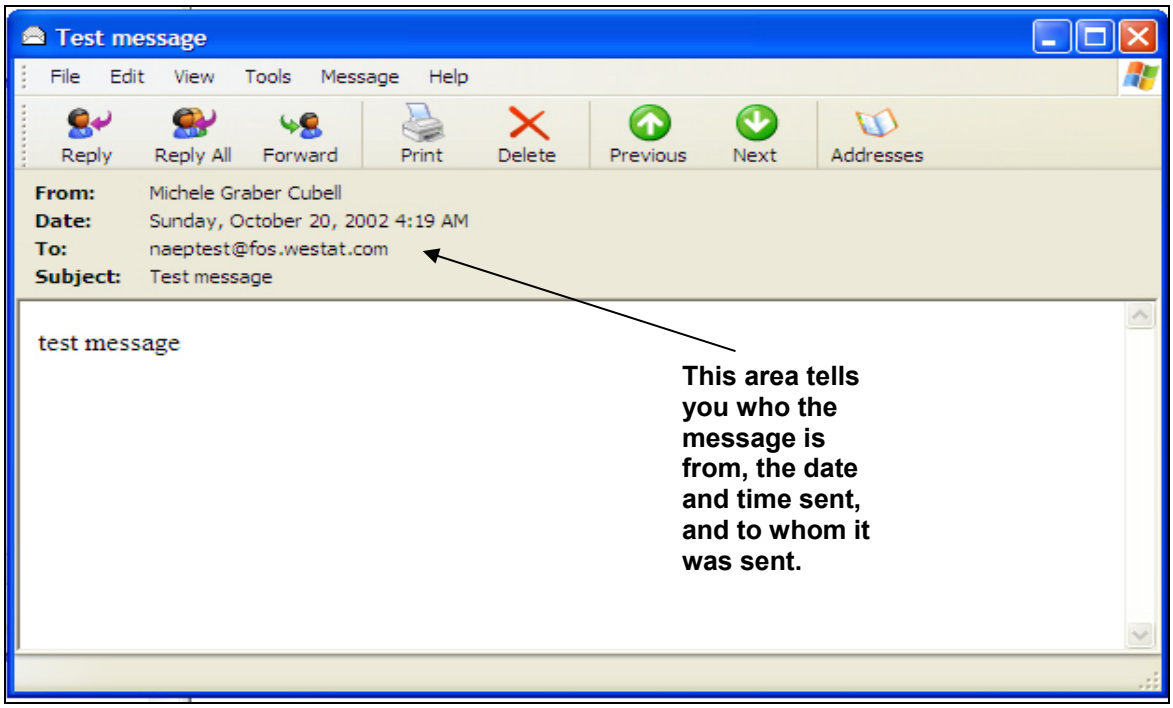
2.5 Receiving Messages

Once you have connected to Westat through Outlook Express (using the Send/Recv button) your laptop will download all messages that are waiting to be delivered to you onto your laptop. This way you can access them from your laptop even when you are off line.

Once the download is complete you are free to compose replies, move messages between folders or delete messages.

2.6 Reading Messages

To read a message, double click on it. The message window will come up:

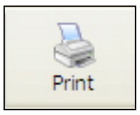


You can use the green 'Previous' and 'Next' buttons to advance to the next message or go to the previous message.

You won't be able to make changes to the message until you click on 'Reply', 'Reply All', or 'Forward'.

3 Managing Outlook Express

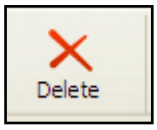
3.1 Printing Messages



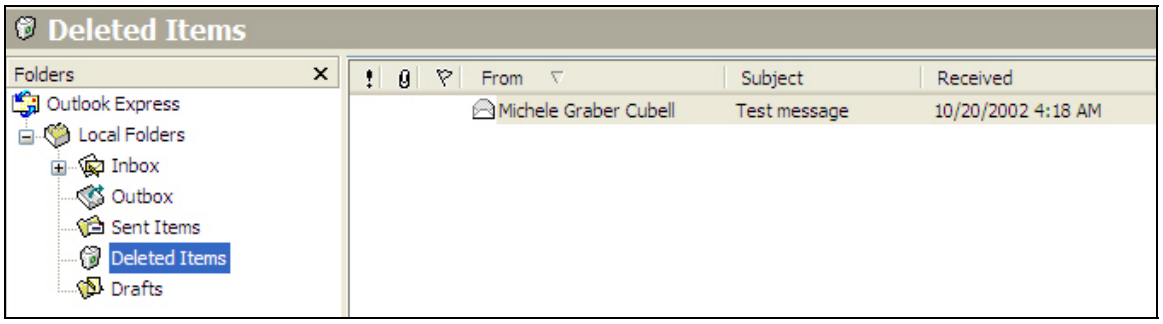
If you have a printer attached to your laptop, you can print any message by clicking on it once in the folder list highlighting the message and then clicking on the 'Print' icon. You can also print by choosing **F**ile **P**rint from the menu.

To print an attachment, double-click on the attachment file name to open it, then print the document from within the appropriate file software application (e.g., Excel or Excel viewer to print an Excel spreadsheet).

3.2 Deleting Messages



You can delete messages from any folder other than the Deleted Items folder by clicking once on the message (highlighting it) and then clicking on the Delete icon. The message will automatically be moved into the Deleted Items folder. You can also drag and drop a message to Deleted Items as you would from any folder to another.



Multiple messages may be deleted at one time by clicking on the first message, then holding down 'Shift' or 'Ctrl' before clicking on another message. 'Shift' allows you to mark a continuous block of messages, and 'Ctrl' allows you to mark one message at a time. Once all messages are highlighted, click on 'Delete' to move them into Deleted Items.

Messages are retained in Deleted Items until you until you choose "*Empty 'Deleted Items' Folder*" from the Edit menu. You can also change a default setting under "Options" on the Tools menu to automatically empty the Deleted Items folder when you exit from OE.

If you move a message into Deleted Items and change your mind, you can drag and drop it back into its original folder. However once you choose "Empty Deleted Items," it is not possible to retrieve a message.

3.3 Attachments

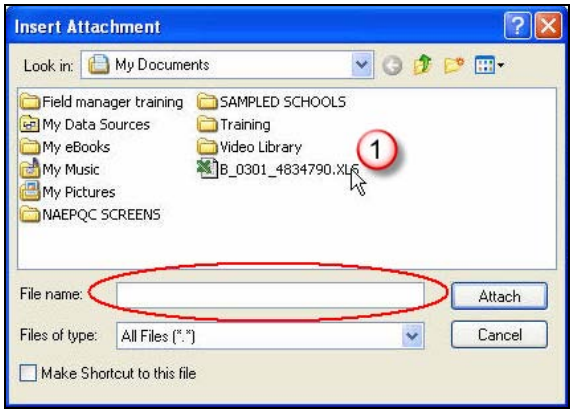
Attachments are files (such as Word documents or Excel spreadsheets) that you literally attach to your e-mail message. Attached files are sent to the recipient with the e-mail message and are available for the recipient to open when they receive the message.

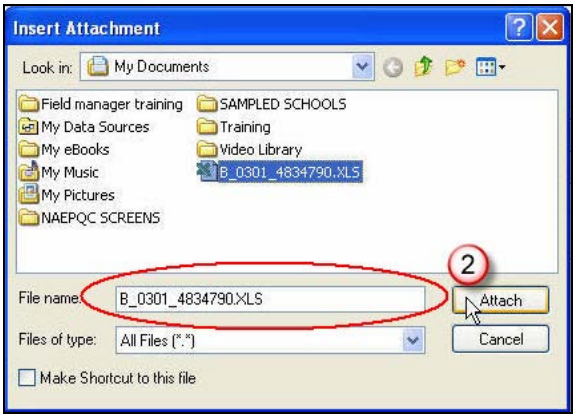
3.3.1 Adding Attachments

To add an attachment you click on the 'Attach' icon (blue paperclip)

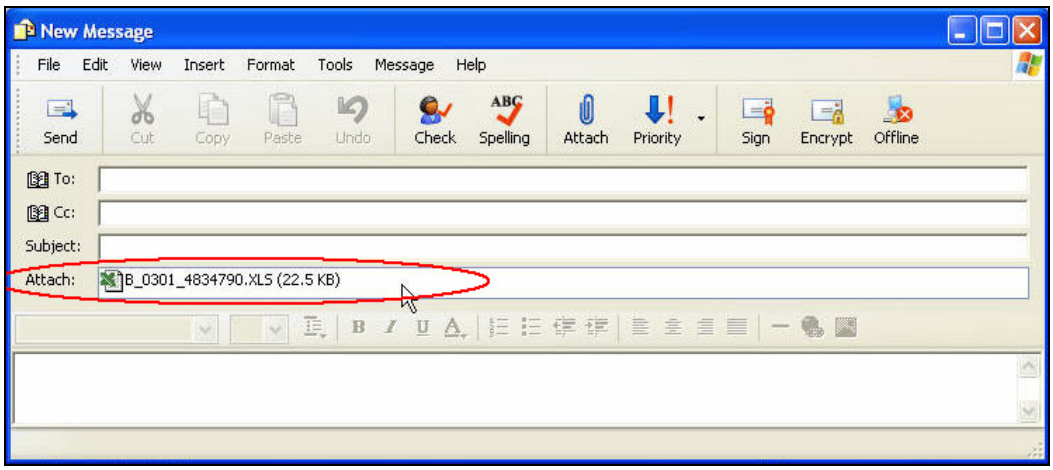
A box will open asking you to locate the file you want. Once you locate the file you want to attach:

1. Click once on the file you want and then click 'attach'. When the file is selected the area behind the file name will turn blue and the name of the file will appear in the 'File name:' field (circled in the pictures).
2. Then click on the 'Attach' button.





After you click on the 'Attach' button you will be returned to the message you are creating/replying to. There will be a new filed called 'Attach:' which will show the file you attached (circled)



If you want to attach more files, click on the attach icon or go to Insert and select 'File Attachment' and then repeat the steps for attaching a file. You can attach as many files as you would like, however if attach too many files or files that are very large it will take a long time to upload those files and you could time out. Additionally some mail servers limit the total size of any e-mail (which includes the size of the attachment(s)) which could cause the e-mail to be returned without being delivered.

Usually (although not always) Microsoft Word and Excel files are small enough that there should be no problems. PDF files (the ones opened in Adobe Acrobat Reader) are usually larger and could create problems if you attach a long PDF file or multiple PDF files.

3.3.2 Saving Attachments

NOTE While you can save any attachment, you cannot open or view the contents of that attachment unless you have the correct software to open or view the attachment.

There are two ways you can look at e-mail messages. You can either:

- Click on the message once to read it in the 'Preview' pane; or
- Double-click the message to open the message in a new window.

Each has a slightly different process for saving attachments to your laptop.

3.3.2.1 Saving Attachments from the 'Preview' Pane

To save attachments from the 'Preview' pane, click on the yellow paper clip once. This will bring up the 'Open Attachment Warning'. Move to section 3.3.2.3 to see how to proceed.

3.3.2.2 Saving Attachments when Messages Opened in a New Window

If you opened the message in a new window you will see a field called 'Attach:' (circled in the screenshot). Double click on the filename in this field and the 'Open Attachment Warning' box will appear. Move to section 3.3.2.3. to see how to proceed.