

Moving email from Google Workspace to Microsoft 365.

Here is the honest starting point: **Microsoft's own guide tells a very small business not to run its migration tools alone, and to get help.** The mail will move. Calendar and contacts are the part that bites, because even Microsoft's fuller tool leaves out shared calendars, meeting-room bookings and full contact records. This is the order to do it in, and where to stop.

ESSENTIAL

Skip it and mail bounces or is lost

GET HELP

Advanced or has no undo, stop if unsure

The label on the right is when, or how long.

Before you start: admin screens, menu names and limits change often on both sides. Use this guide for the order of events and the traps to avoid; check the current screen in each admin console as you go.

01 Before you touch anything

- ☐ **ESSENTIAL** **Set up Microsoft 365, verify your domain, and create every user with a licence.** The mailbox has to exist on the Microsoft side before anything can be copied into it. This is a hard order, not a preference. **DO FIRST**
- ☐ **Inventory the Google side, and expect it to be manual.** List users, groups, aliases, delegated mailboxes, shared and resource calendars, and contacts. Google has no one-click "export every group with its members", so groups come out one at a time. Budget time for it. **DO FIRST**
- ☐ **GET HELP** **Choose your path before anything else: mail only, or mail plus calendar and contacts.** The mail-only path is simpler. The fuller path brings calendar and contacts but needs advanced Google Cloud setup. This one choice changes every step that follows. **DECIDE FIRST**
- ☐ **GET HELP** **Turn on the access the tools need on the Google side.** Google no longer allows plain password sign-in for mail tools, so you set up 2-step verification and app passwords, or the service account for the fuller path. If sign-in is locked to security keys, app passwords may not be available, a real dead end to catch now. **SET UP**
- ☐ **Lower your MX record's TTL a day or two before.** The TTL is how long the internet caches your mail settings. Lowering it in advance means the later switch takes effect in minutes, not a day. Put it back afterwards. **A DAY OR TWO AHEAD**

02 Copy the mail across

Google stays live and receiving the whole time. Which path you chose in step 01 decides what actually moves.

- ☐

ESSENTIAL

The mail-only path copies email, and only email. No calendar, no contacts, no tasks. It is simple and reliable for mail, but it means a separate calendar-and-contacts step later (section 04). It copies; it never changes the Google side.

RUNS FOR DAYS

- ☐

GET HELP

The fuller path adds calendar and contacts, at a price. It brings more across but needs the advanced Google Cloud setup from step 01, and it still leaves gaps (section 04). Worth a hand if you have not done it before.

ADVANCED

- ☐

Expect a big mailbox to take days. Google limits how much can be pulled per day, and reaching that limit pauses the mailbox for a while. A large mailbox shows up as time, not as an error.

PATIENCE

The trap that doubles your mailbox. Gmail shows the same message under every label it carries, so to a copy tool one email can look like three, plus another copy in "All Mail". Left alone, this can double or triple the size of the new mailbox and stall the whole move. The fix is to exclude Gmail's "All Mail" folder when you set the copy up, before you run the full batch.

03 Switch it over

Set authentication up ahead, then change the DNS records together at cutover, and mind the wait before you delete anything.

- ☐

ESSENTIAL

Get authentication ready, and start DKIM early. SPF, DKIM and DMARC do not carry over from Google, and without them your outgoing mail can land in spam. Set up DKIM a day or two before switch day, because it can take up to two days to begin working. Replace the single SPF record as you switch, then add DMARC once SPF and DKIM are live. Our separate one-page guide gives the order.

BEFORE SWITCH

- ☐

ESSENTIAL

Change the MX record to Microsoft, and add the Autodiscover record. The MX record sends new mail to Microsoft; the Autodiscover record lets each person's Outlook set itself up without fiddly server details.

SWITCH DAY

- ☐

ESSENTIAL

Do not delete the migration batch yet. Microsoft's own advice is to leave it running for at least three days after the switch, so late-arriving mail still syncs across. Deleting it is the real point of no return.

WAIT 72H

- ☐

Import or check calendar and contacts. If you took the mail-only path, this is where people bring their calendar and contacts into Outlook by hand. If you took the fuller path, check them against the gaps in section 04.

AFTER SWITCH

04 What does not come across cleanly

Calendar and contacts are the real work in this direction. Plan a manual step for them whichever path you choose.

- ☐ **Plain mail migration carries no calendar and no contacts.** The mail-only path is email and nothing else. People export their own calendar and contacts from Google and import them into Outlook.
- ☐ **Even the fuller path drops the shared parts.** Shared team calendars, meeting-room bookings, contacts with more than a few addresses, and custom tags do not come across. Budget to rebuild these by hand.
- ☐ **GET HELP The fuller path's setup is genuinely advanced.** A Google Cloud project, a service account, and API permissions. This is not a between-meetings job. If you have not set up a Google Cloud service account before, this is the step to get help with.
- ☐ **Google Groups have no native path to Microsoft.** Neither Microsoft nor Google documents a first-party converter. Rebuild each list in Microsoft from the membership you exported in step 01.
- ☐ **GET HELP Very large mailboxes need a specialist tool.** Above a certain size the ordinary migration will not handle a mailbox, and the alternative is a command-line-only tool.
- ☐ **A locked-down Google account can block the tools.** If sign-in is limited to security keys, the app passwords the mail-only path relies on may be unavailable. Sort this out before switch day, not during.

05 Test it before you trust it

Do these the same day you switch, not a week later.

Send and receive both ways	From outside into each new inbox, and out from each one to an external address.
Outlook sets itself up	A fresh Outlook profile should configure from the Autodiscover record without manual server details.
Set each person's time zone	Microsoft's own step. Skip it and calendars and times look wrong for that user.
Calendar and contacts, against the gap list	Check specifically for shared calendars, room bookings, and fuller contact records.
Groups and aliases	Rebuilt lists route correctly, and every alias delivers.
Mailbox sizes look sane, not doubled	If a mailbox ballooned, the "All Mail" trap was not excluded. Fix and re-run.
Authentication passes	SPF, DKIM and DMARC pass on a received message. You cannot test DKIM by emailing yourself.

06 What you can undo, and what you cannot

Almost every step is reversible. The one that is not comes later than the MX switch: it is deleting the migration batch.

The copy, and testing in Microsoft

Reversible. Google is only read from, never changed.

The MX change

Reversible. You can point it back while Google is still live.

Deleting the migration batch

The real point of no return: after it, new Gmail mail stops copying across and users cannot get it.

The point of no return is deleting the batch, not the switch. Microsoft's own guidance is to leave the batch running at least three days after cutover, and to keep Google Workspace live and paid until everything checks out. Tearing either one down early is how mail goes missing.

Rather hand this over? We move small-business email between Google Workspace and Microsoft 365, both directions, as a paid service: the copy, the label trap, the calendar-and-contacts step neither tool fully does for you, and the authentication afterwards. The guide is free either way, and we will tell you honestly if you are better off staying put. info@xsquare.com.sg · xsquare.com.sg/contact