

Distribution List Size Limits

There is a limit (29 KB) to how large a distribution list stored on the server can be. Distribution lists are saved lists of email addresses for use when sending a message to a number of recipients. Generally, distribution lists will be stored with your Contacts on the Exchange server.

The limit, for distribution lists stored on the server, is based on the size of the individual contacts, not the number of contacts. Each distribution list can not exceed 29KB. This limit applies whether the members of the distribution list are selected from your Contacts folder, entered as full email addresses, or selected directly from the Global Address list (GAL). Any single distribution list cannot exceed 29KB.

If you use very basic information for each contact (for example, only the name and the email address), your distribution list limit may be **125 to 130** contacts. If you have additional information on each contact, your distribution list limit may be significantly lower. For more information about distribution list size limits, see:

<http://support.microsoft.com/default.aspx?scid=kb;en-us;238569&Product=out>

Workaround

Create mailing lists instead of distribution lists

While you may be able to devise complex workarounds for the distribution list size limit, we recommend that any list containing more than about 50 to 100 contacts, be created as a mailing list on the ISU Mail Server:

https://www.extension.iastate.edu/Comp/Training/email/mailing_lists_homepage.html

There are a number of advantages to mailing lists over distribution lists:

- No large lists of names in the To: or Bcc: header (even if you suppress the names so that recipients don't see them, the mail server still sees them in the header and may treat a message with a large number of recipients as spam).
- Mailing list members can subscribe and unsubscribe themselves
- Mailing lists can be used by more than one person, since they're on the mail server (you can also set them up so you're the only person who can send email to the list).

It is also possible to maintain larger distribution lists in your Personal Folders rather than in your Mailbox on the Exchange server. However, you will still have the disadvantages of large distribution lists (tendency for some mail servers to treat as spam) and you will not be able to access these distribution lists when you are on a different computer.

To view the size of your contacts and distribution lists in

Outlook:

1. Select Contacts | View | Arrange by | Current View | Current View | Phone List (or Categories)
2. Right-click on any of the column headers
3. Select Customize Current View
4. Select the Fields button
5. Under “Select available fields from,” select ‘All mail fields’ (Note: make sure you don’t forget the ‘All’).
6. Under “Available fields” select ‘Size’.
7. Click ‘Add’
8. Move Size up the list
9. Click OK twice

Direct Addressing

If you type in the individual email addresses directly or select each email address from Contacts or the Global Address List each time, you will not have a size limit (recommendations to use mailing lists for large groups of recipients will still hold, however).