

1. When reviewing new messages, take action on those items that need immediate attention and/or will only take a few minutes to complete first.
2. Delete messages that you don't need right away.
3. Set aside blocks of time every day to review, reply and compose messages (30 - 60 minutes for each block of time is ideal).
4. Sort and move the rest of your messages to “action” and “non-action” folders (see items 5 & 6 for common “action” & “non-action” categories).
5. Typical “action” folders may include: “urgent/not urgent tasks”, “follow-up”, “upcoming events”, “read” and “reply”. Make sure to delete tasks after completing them, or file them in a “non-action” folder.
6. “Non-action” folders are used to file information that you want to use for future reference. Typical “non-action” folders could include folders for specific “clients”, “organizations” and “projects”. Also, a folder called “reference” is good for filing general information you want to keep.
7. Put your action folders at the top of your folder list so you’ll see them every time you check your messages.
8. To avoid having too much information in one particular folder, sub-categories can be used. For example, a main folder called “projects” can have subfolders for each project.
9. Use different email accounts to keep your business and personal mail separate. If you want to control the volume of email you receive to your business account, use a separate account for things that tend to be informational, such as message group updates or newsletters. This allows you to view them at your leisure and helps keep you focused during your work day.

The 30/30 Time Management System™

Day 19 – Step 3: Systematize (Program Review)

Tips for Controlling Email

- 10.If you have a software program to manage your email, such as Outlook, use the feature that will automatically send emails with a specific subject line directly to that folder, instead of to your in-box.
- 11.If you have a large amount of old messages in your in-box, take the approach of cleaning them up a little at a time by blocking out specific times on your calendar to sort and process them.
- 12.If you tend to receive a heavy volume of mail that requires you to take action, you may want to move your tasks to a task list, giving them a due date. This will help to ensure that tasks are completed in a timely manner and will also keep your action folders from growing too large and difficult to manage.