

Microsoft steals access data: Beware of the new Outlook

| 09.11.2023 16:18 Dirk Knop, Ronald Eikenberg, Stefan Wischner

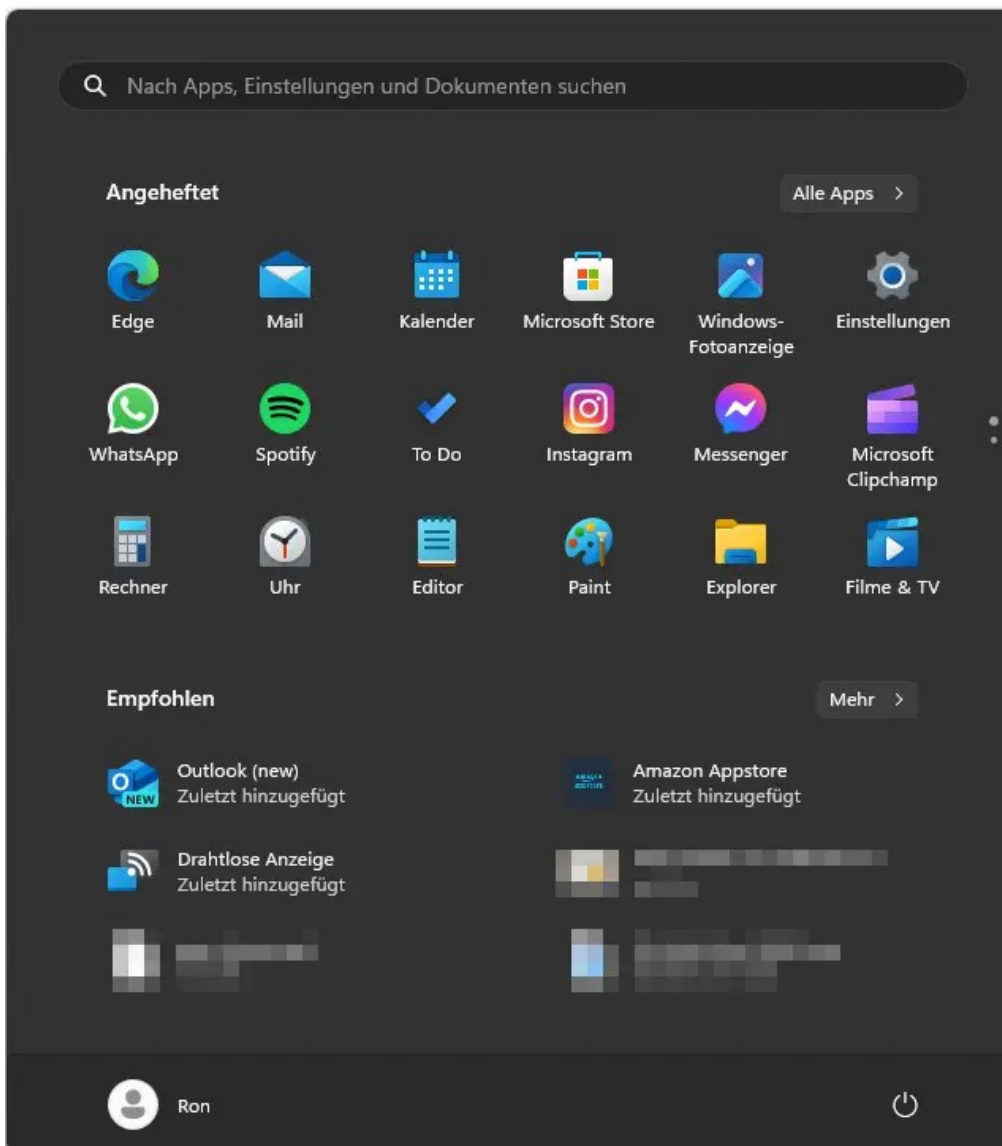


The new free Outlook replaces Mail in Windows, and later also the classic Outlook. It sends secret access data to Microsoft.

The new Outlook is not what it seems at first glance: a replacement for Microsoft Office Outlook - at least not yet. But what it is in any case: decidedly too curious.

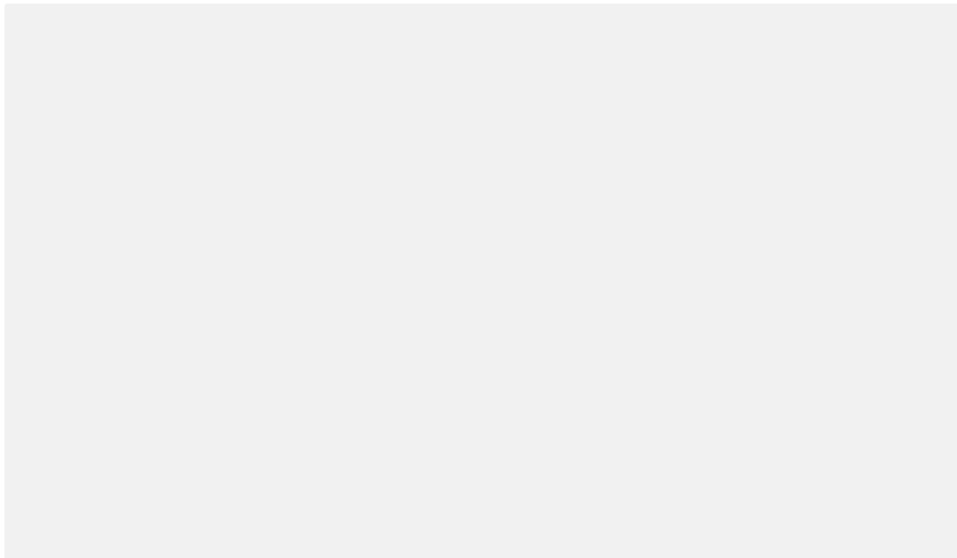
Microsoft is singing the praises of the new Outlook and wants to encourage users to switch. But beware: if you try out the new Outlook, you risk losing your IMAP and SMTP data.

Access data for email accounts and all emails to Microsoft servers. Although Microsoft explains that it is possible to switch back to the previous apps at any time, the data will already be stored by the company. Microsoft can then read the emails.



After the 2023 update of Windows 11, the new Outlook is the recommended app in the Start menu. (Image: Screenshot / rei)

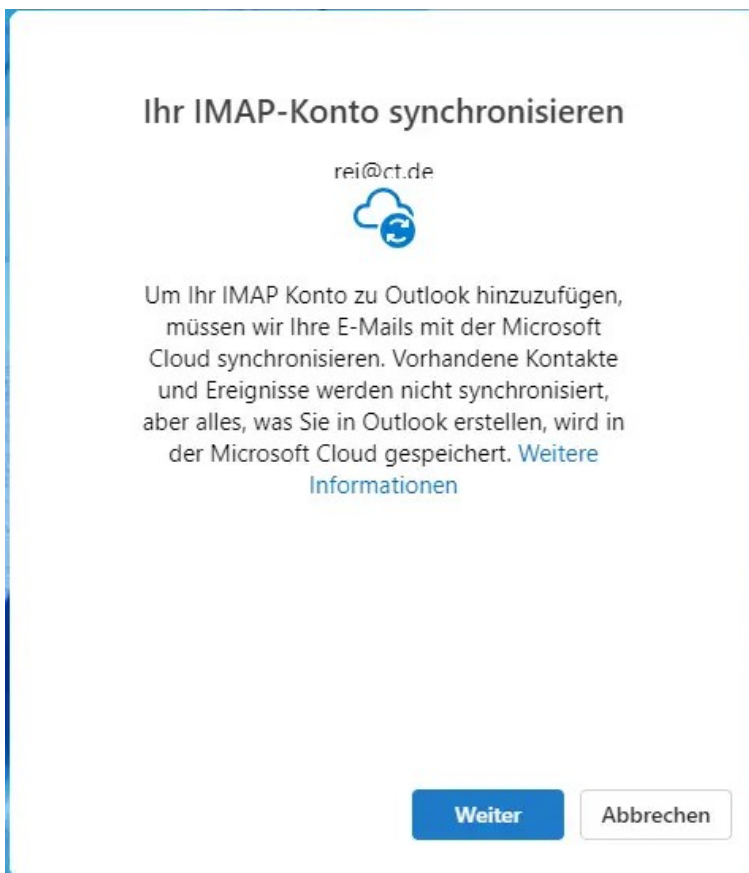
The new Outlook now appears as a recommended app in the Windows Start menu of **Windows 11 devices with the 2023 update [1]**. The Outlook client itself also offers to test the new Outlook version with a "The new Outlook" button. This is still under development, but is set to replace the mail program and the calendar included in Windows in 2024. In a **recent Techcommunity article, Microsoft [2]** employee Caitlin Hart also **explains** that it will also replace the classic Outlook. However, unlike the Windows Mail and Calendar apps, the timetable for this has not yet been set.



[3]

New Outlook: Warning about data transfers

When adding a mail account in the new Outlook that is not hosted by Microsoft but is located on company mail servers, for example, the program displays a message. It **links to a support article [4]**, which only formulated that non-Microsoft accounts are synchronized with the Microsoft cloud, whereby Gmail, Yahoo, iCloud and IMAP accounts are supported. The new Outlook also does this in the versions for Android, iOS and Mac. This means that copies of "emails, calendars and contacts are synchronized between your email provider and Microsoft data centers". This means that the company has full access to all emails and can read and analyze them. Microsoft wants to provide functions that Gmail and IMAP do not offer.



The new Outlook provides a warning that it is transferring data to Microsoft's cloud server. (Image: Screenshot / rei)

The note makes you wonder: What does Microsoft transfer where? When creating an IMAP account c't records that the target server, log-in name and password are transmitted to Microsoft's server. Although

TLS-protected, but the data in the tunnel is sent to Microsoft in plain text. Without informing or Microsoft grants itself full access to the IMAP and SMTP access data of users of the new Outlook.

```
https://outlook.office.com/ows/beta/ShadowService/getShadowToken?n=0&cv=...B1.0

{
  "emailAddress": "...@heise.de",
  "providerType": "GenericImap",
  "remoteImapServer": {
    "hostname": "heise.de",
    "port": 457,
    "secure_connection_type": "ssl"
  },
  "remoteSmtpServer": {
    "hostname": "heise.de",
    "port": 457,
    "secure_connection_type": "ssl"
  },
  "remoteImapCredentials": {
    "UserId": "...@heise.de",
    "Secret": "Strolchi!0815"
  },
  "remoteSmtpCredentials": {
    "UserId": "Nutzername",
    "Secret": "Strolchi!0815"
  }
}
```

When setting up IMAP accounts, the new Outlook sends the access data and server information to Microsoft. (Image: Screenshot)

Other accesses

When switching from the old Outlook to the new one, it is installed in parallel. Previously set up IMAP accounts are not transferred, but the account stored in Windows is. When checking with Google accounts, authentication with OAuth2 was used. In the process, users receive a Authentication query and at least no specific access data ends up at Microsoft, but an access token that users can withdraw again.

The answer to our request for a statement from Microsoft is still pending. At the present time However, we must warn you not to try out the new Outlook without thinking. In addition to all the emails, some access data may even end up with Microsoft.

Microsoft already attracted **attention with such brazen data redirections at the beginning of the year. [5]** After Office updates on Mac computers, Outlook redirected the data there to Microsoft's cloud server without any queries. At that time, the remedy was to delete IMAP accounts and set them up again. However, this is obviously no longer helpful with the new Outlook.

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to the anonymous mailbox [6]

(dmk [7])

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[2] <https://techcommunity.microsoft.com/t5/outlook-blog/things-to-look-forward-to-in-the-new-outlook-for-windows/ba-p/3975602>

[3] <https://www.heise.de/ct/>

[4] <https://support.microsoft.com/de-de/office/synchronisieren-ihres-kontos-in-outlook-mit-der-microsoft-cloud-985f9e19-d308-4e85-9d1d-0c6f32f8e981?ui=en-en&rs=en-en&ad=en>

[5] <https://www.heise.de/news/Microsoft-IMAP-Umleitung-in-Outlook-nach-Office-Update-jetzt-auch-auf-Macs-7477743.html>

[6] <https://heise.de/investigativ>

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