

How do I e-mail a large file?

FAQ:

Email - How do I email a really large file?

Answer:

Sending and receiving attachments is one of the less pleasurable aspects of dealing with email, due to the amount of time uploads and downloads can take. The size limitations many servers impose on attachments are the main cause of upload woes. If you exceed the permitted size, the email will be sent from your client address, but the email returns later, its journey incomplete, and your email client will download it back to you.

The best way of dealing with large files/attachments is to use a compression program to create an archive of reduced size for your attachments. (File compression is the process of condensing data so it consumes less space.)

Typically, archives can shave anywhere from 10% to 80% off the size of a file, depending upon file type. Graphical files, particularly bit maps, shrink the most. A compressed file takes less time to send and download, so we recommend its use even when your attachments are well within server size limits.

File compression utilities have been around for years and continue to add new features and enhancements to their capabilities. Utilities such as StuffIt Deluxe from Aladdin Systems, WinRAR from RARLAB, WinZip from WinZip Computing, and ZipMagic from Aladdin Systems let you create, add to, and email archives quickly and easily. Some even let you drag and drop files onto an archive icon to add them to an existing archive; others let you create schedules to compress and archive groups of files. Regardless of which file compression utility you decide to use, one is often necessary to keep bloated files and shrinking storage space under control.

In some cases, compression software solves the problem. However, files can only be compressed so much, and many video files are already stored in what amounts to a compressed format. A more realistic alternative might be to split the file into more manageable fragments. Your compression program might have an option to split files into multiple fragments. If not, you can download freeware designed for the job such as MaxSplitter, which is available at www.acc.umu.se/~max/index.html.

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