How can I back up or archive all my email before my account is deactivated?

Q: How can I back up or archive all my email before my account is deactivated?

Answer

This article is about backing up your email. If you wish to back up or archive the files in your account, see How can I back up or archive all my Athena files before my account is deactivated?

Each January, IS&T deactivates the accounts of users who have graduated or left the Institute in the previous year. Two email warnings are sent prior to deactivation: one in November and one in early January. When you receive the first notice that your account will be deactivated, you should immediately begin the process of archiving your email, if you wish to retain a copy of it. (If you receive a deactivation notice, but believe your account should not be deactivated, reply to the message or contact User Accounts at x3-1325. Do not wait until the last minute.)

The easiest way to back up your email is to use one of our supported email clients on your personal computer and copy all mail from the MIT mail servers to folders stored locally on your computer. For more information and detailed instructions, see this article on backing up your email.

IS&T frequently receives questions about migrating an entire mailbox to Gmail or a similar service. Unfortunately, we cannot provide assistance with that at this time, nor do we recommend it. Gmail and other services often impose limits on upstream IMAP transfers and thus it can take days to transfer four years worth of mail to Gmail. Instead, the best choice is to download your email as described above. At a later date, you may opt to transfer the mail from your personal computer to Gmail, but IS&T does not provide assistance with this.

Email Forwarding for Life (EFL)

Graduates of MIT are eligible for Email Forwarding for Life (aka "Infinite Connection"), which is a service provided by the Alumni/ae Office. This service is **not** the same as your MIT email account. EFL provides you with an email address ending in `@alum.mit.edu` which can only be used for forwarding. No email storage is provided by this service. For more information, including sign-up instructions, visit http://alum.mit.edu.