

Configure Thunderbird for use with MIT Microsoft 365 Mailboxes

Configure Thunderbird for use with MIT Microsoft 365 Mailboxes

On this page:

- [Office365 Setup Procedure](#)
- [Recommended Post Setup Tasks](#)
 - [Sent Folders](#)
 - [Set Mail Sync to "Online Only" Mode](#)
 - [Signing Email with Personal SSL Certificates](#)
- [Additional Notes](#)
 - [Folder Subscriptions](#)

Office365 Setup Procedure

Office365, and other modern mail providers such as Gmail, are moving towards using authentication methods that support two-factor authentication. Often this means using [OAUTH2](#).

MIT's Office365 environment supports OAUTH2 authentication for IMAP, but we do *not* support this for SMTP. All SMTP is handled via `outgoing.mit.edu` as normal.

Thankfully Thunderbird added support for OAUTH2 in v. 77 (or v. 78 ESR).

1. If this is the first time you are running Thunderbird, you will be greeted by the add account prompt.

Otherwise, go to **Edit > Account Settings** (or hamburger menu > Account Settings), then click **Account Actions** then **Add Mail Account**.

2. Enter in your email address and password.

Click on **Configure Manually**, and enter in the following server data.

Setting	Value
Incoming server	outlook.office365.com
Port	993
Connection type	SSL/TLS
Authentication	OAuth2
Username	Full MIT email

Setting	Value
Outgoing server	outgoing.mit.edu
Port	465 or 587
Connection type	SSL/TLS
Authentication	Normal password
Username	MIT/kerb username

Your full name

Mr Halp



Email address

mrhalp@mit.edu



Password



☒ Remember password

Manual configuration

INCOMING SERVER

Protocol:

IMAP



Hostname:

outlook.office365.com

Port:

993



Connection security:

SSL/TLS



Authentication method:

OAuth2



Username:

mrhalp@mit.edu

OUTGOING SERVER

Hostname:

outgoing.mit.edu

Port:

465



Connection security:

SSL/TLS



Authentication method:

Normal password



Username:

mrhalp

[Advanced config](#)

Re-test

Cancel

Done

Thunderbird will attempt to auto-detect fields that are left blank.

Your credentials will only be stored locally on your computer.

3. Hit Done.

4. A Touchstone authentication window will open.

Log in as normal.

Enter credentials for mshalp@mit.edu on outlook.office365.com

https://idp.mit.edu/idp/Authn/MIT?conversation=e1s1

Touchstone@MIT [test settings](#) [help](#)

Welcome, please identify yourself to access MIT services.

Have an MIT certificate?

[Use Certificate - Go](#)

☐ Always login with this

Certificates are your key to secure web services at MIT, (such as Benefits, Request Tracker, SAPweb, and WebSIS) and the preferred way to access MIT servers.

No certificate? Use Kerberos username

Username: @mit.edu

Password: [Login](#)

If you don't have a certificate installed on this machine, you may login using your MIT username (the 8 characters before your @mit.edu email address) and your [Kerberos password](#).

Have Kerberos tickets?

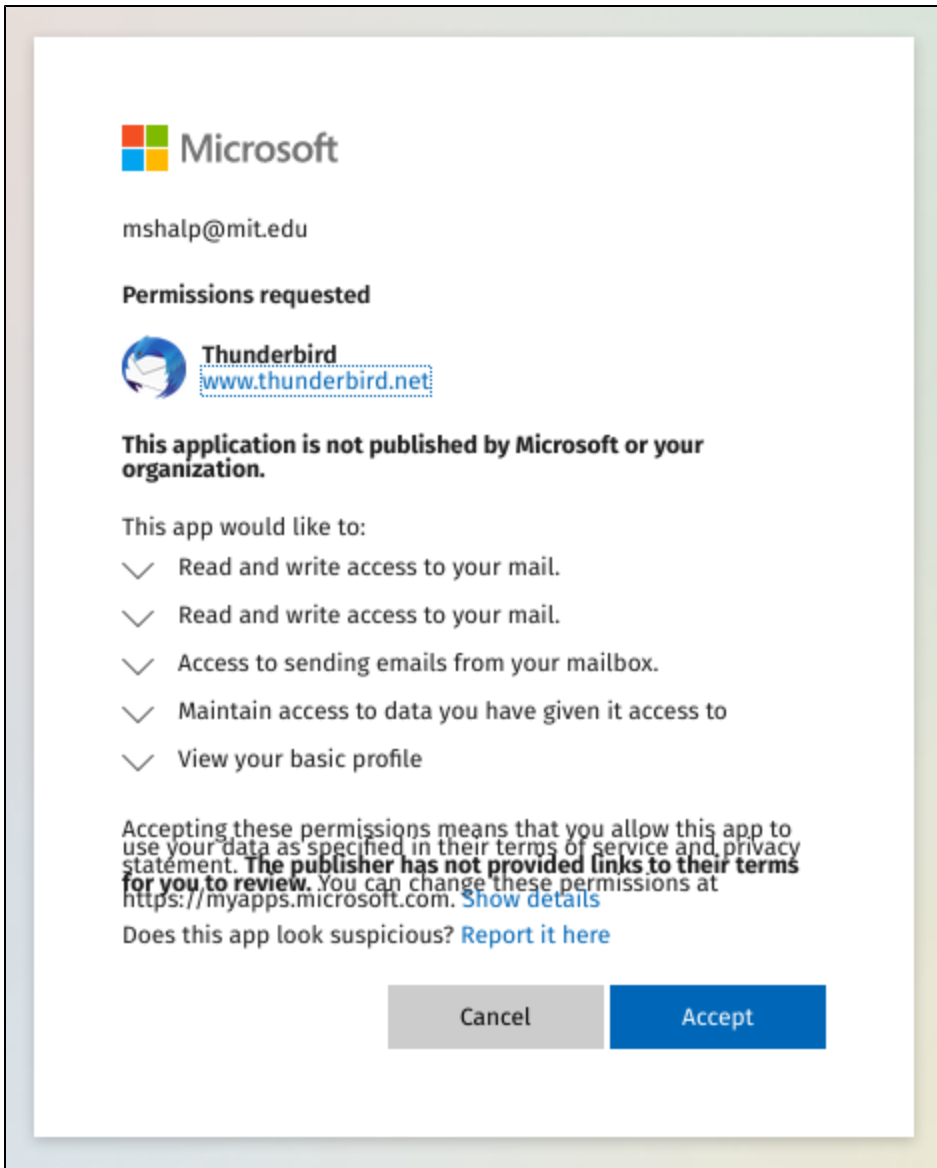
[Use existing tickets - Go](#)

☐ Always login with this

Using your Kerberos tickets to authenticate to MIT Touchstone requires correct [browser configuration](#). This option is useful for Athena and WIN.MIT.EDU users.

MIT massachusetts institute of technology

5. Then grant Thunderbird full permissions to your email.



You are all set!



Make sure to change to Sent folder to Sent Items, and set up calendar and contact syncing! See relevant sections [below](#).

Recommended Post Setup Tasks

Sent Folders

By default most IMAP clients will use the "Sent" folder to save sent email. Microsoft however uses the convention "Sent Items". To save yourself some confusion and heartache later, you should set Thunderbird to respect this convention.

1. Go to **Edit > Account Settings**, then go to **Copies & Folders** under your MIT email account.
2. Under **When sending messages, automatically:** select the **Other** radio button, then in the drop down navigate to the **Sent Items** folder for your MIT email (note: not a local folder.)

Copies & Folders

When sending messages, automatically:

☒ Place a copy in:

☐ "Sent" Folder on: [redacted]@mit.edu ▼

☒ Other: [Sent Items on [redacted]@mit.edu ▼

☐ Place replies in the folder of the message being replied to

☐ Cc these email addresses: [Separate addresses with commas]

☐ Bcc these email addresses: [Separate addresses with commas]

Set Mail Sync to "Online Only" Mode

The default behavior in Thunderbird is to download a local copy of all email. If you do not want this to happen, you can achieve this like so:

1. Go to **Edit > Account Settings**, then go to the **Synchronization & Storage** section under your MIT email account.
2. Untick the option **Keep messages in all folders for this account on this computer**

Synchronization & Storage

Message Synchronizing

☐ Keep messages in all folders for this account on this computer

Note: Changing this affects all folders in this account. To set individual folders, use the Advanced... button.

Advanced...

Signing Email with Personal SSL Certificates

It is possible to use your personal MIT certificates to digitally sign your emails. This is generally only useful if others have the [MIT CA certificate](#) installed on their systems to validate your signature, and if your recipients are expecting messages from you to be signed.

1. First you need to download a copy of your personal SSL certificate: either use Firefox to access <https://ca.mit.edu/ca/>, or use any browser with <https://certassist.mit.edu/>.

Download a copy of your cert and remember the download password you set.

2. Import this certificate into Thunderbird. Go to **Edit > Preferences** (or hamburger menu > Preferences), then to **Privacy & Security**, and scroll down to **Certificates** and click on **Manage Certificates**

Certificates

When a server requests my personal certificate:

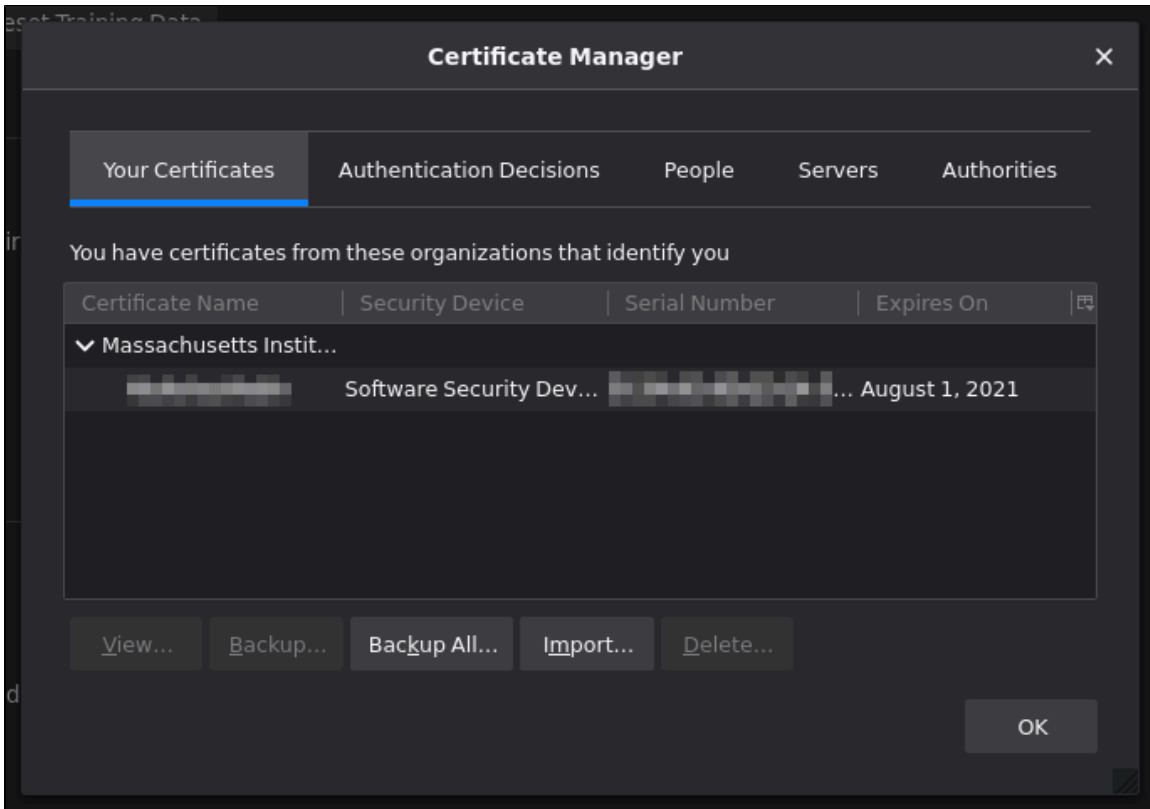
☐ Select one automatically ☒ Ask me every time

☒ Query OCSP responder servers to confirm the current validity of certificates

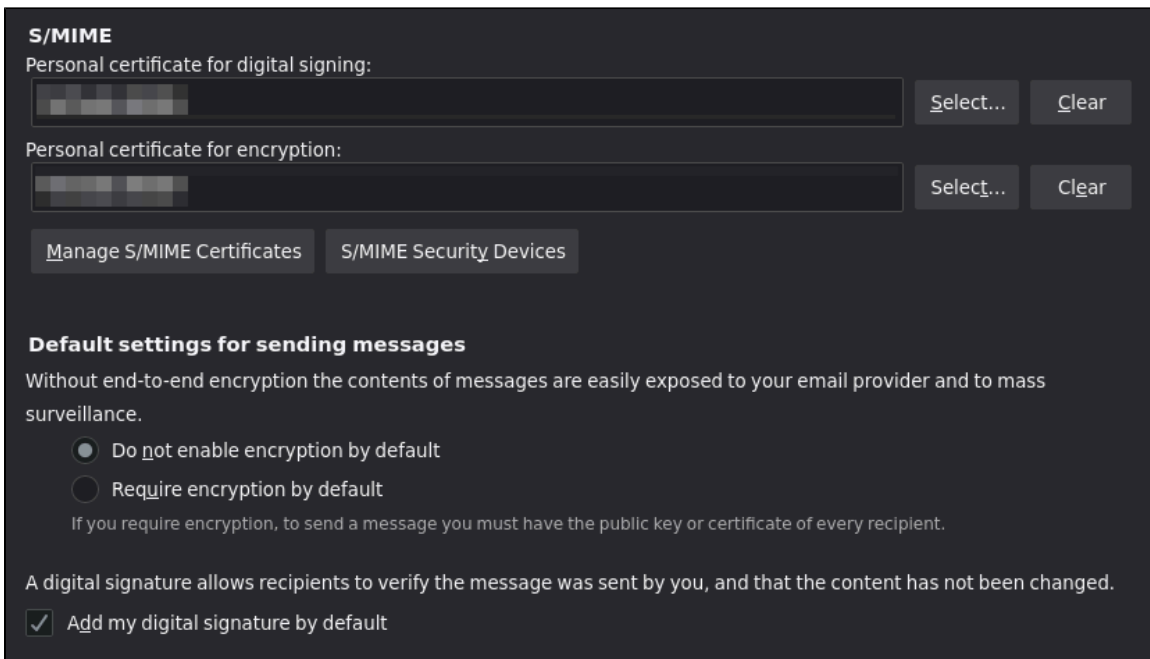
Manage Certificates...

Security Devices...

3. On the **Your Certificates** tab click on **Import...**, and select the certificate file you downloaded. At this stage you will need to enter in the download password you set before.



4. Now you can pick this certificate to be used for signing or encryption. Go to **Edit > Account Settings**, then to **End-To-End Encryption** under your MIT email account.
5. In the **S/MIME** section select your personal certificate.



6. If you want you can also set signing email to be the default behavior. Otherwise you can do this per-message under the **Options** menu.

Additional Notes

Folder Subscriptions

If you do not see all the mail folders that you expect to see or if it looks like folders are missing, check to see that all of your folders are marked as "subscribed".

1. Right-click your Inbox folder and choose **Subscribe...** from the menu.
2. In the *Subscribe* window, put a checkmark on every folder that you want to appear in your folder list.
Folders without checkmarks will be hidden and will not appear.