

The Lovely Devil - Email - Part 1

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Hope you all agree that **most of us hate the number of Emails we receive every day**. We also do agree, most of us start our day by looking at our Emails. If we don't receive any emails for some hours continuously, we even suspect the email system has some issues. We habituated to live with this Devil, even after we hate it. That is why I am calling the Email Lovely Devil 🙈

Microsoft Teams reduced email loads mostly as people now prefer to chat instead of email, but still, whether we like it or not, **Email is the life of any company, irrespective of the size of the company**, or the size of the team in your projects. I used to get an average of 400-500 emails per day for many years. Assume 50% of the emails are expecting my replies, and even 2 minutes per email, I have to spend 500 minutes per day, which is more than 8 hours. Naturally, we can not spend full time on emails, so we cannot even read 50% of emails, to which we need to respond. That is why the unread mail count is increasing to thousands for most of us.

I do know **many of my colleagues, keep 10-20 emails open same time, not answering even one at the end of the day**. Because of this pending work, most of us get stressed and carry work back home, which affects the work-life balance.

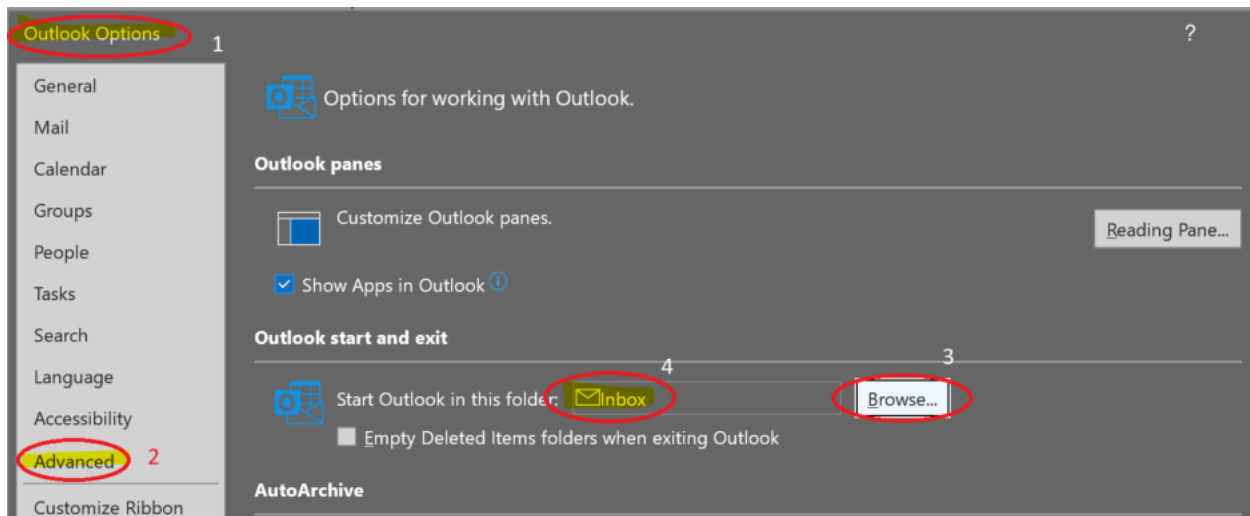
Most of you might watch me doing it differently. Despite the heavy email load, **I was able to manage my stress effectively** with a few simple techniques, by **using Microsoft Outlook differently**. Let me explain how.

There are many productive tips I can share. But I don't want to combine them in one long blog. So, I will cover them in series (parts).

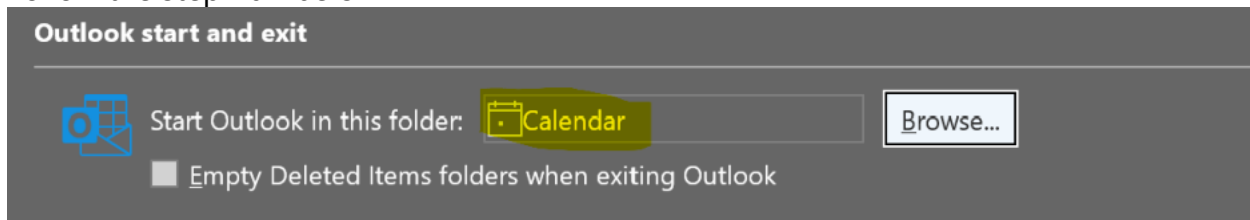
Part-1: We need to change Microsoft Outlook default configurations in this session.

1. Start your day by looking at your Calendar ... not email.

How to do: Outlook can be configured easily with this change. Look at the images attached.



Follow the step numbers



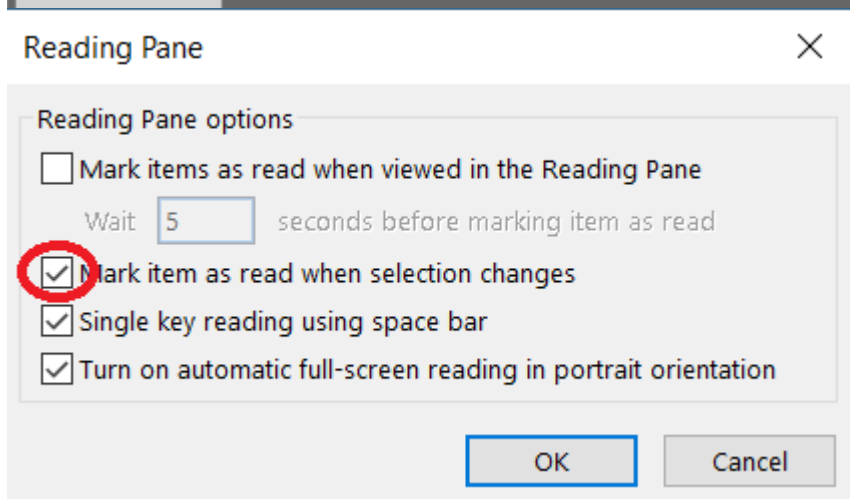
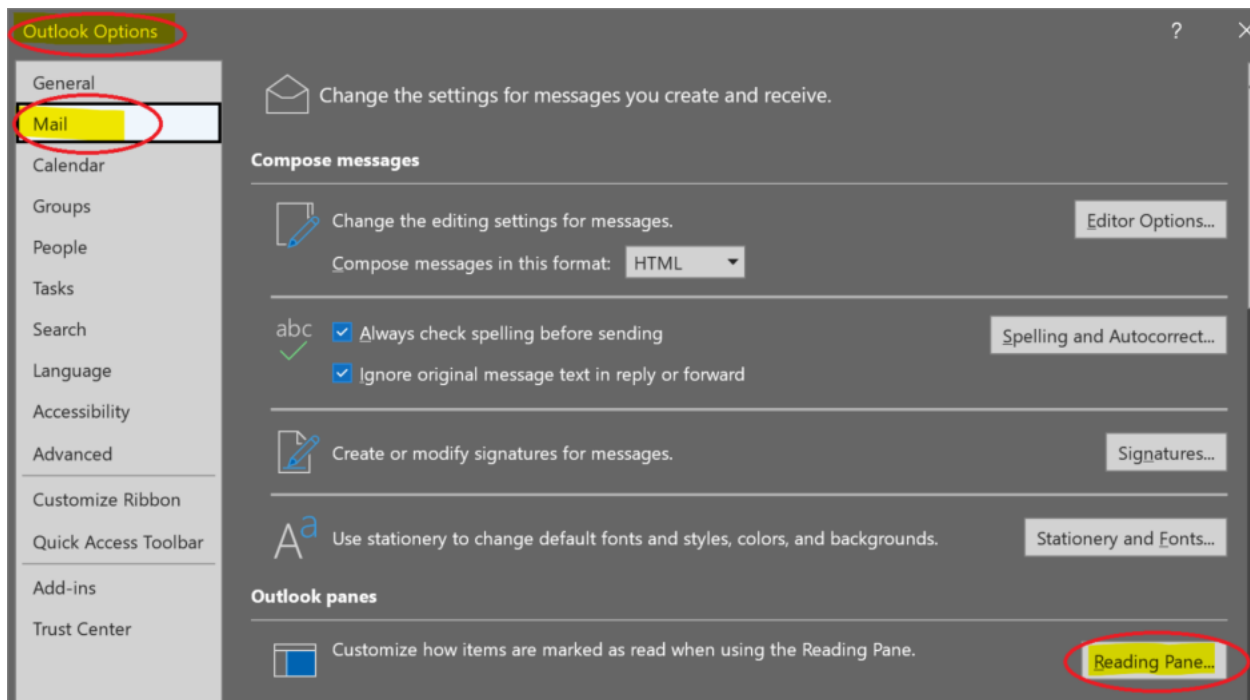
Select Calendar from Browse

Advantages:

- o You will know what are your meetings the next day. Maybe a few meetings start much earlier than your day. You also have some time to mentally prepare for those meetings.
- o You will not miss any meetings on that day. You know what are the free slots of the day so that you can plan your work accordingly, even before looking at your emails.

2. Don't mark any email as read, if not answered by you (if your action is required)

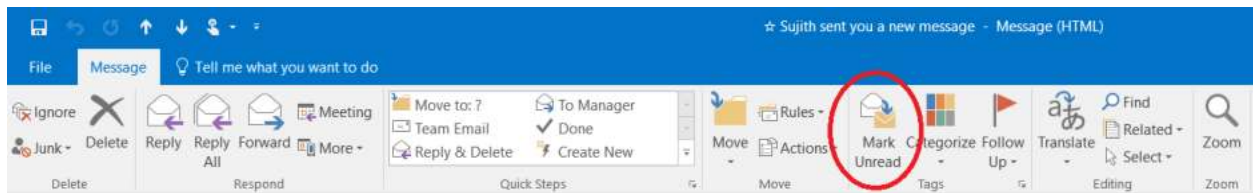
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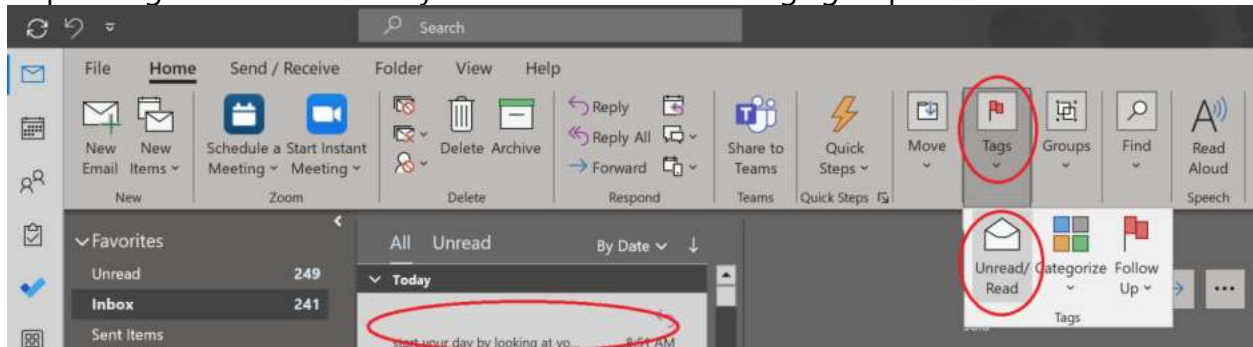
Advantages:

- o You will not miss any email unanswered (unattended to be more precise)
- o You can do a quick review on the preview pan.
- o If you double-click on the email, it opens in a separate window. This automatically marks your mail as read (action taken).
 - You can reply immediately so that the action is completed.
 - Open the email only if you want to complete the reply within 2 minutes.

- Just in case you realize you cannot complete the reply in 2 minutes, make sure you **'Mark' the mail as unread** by clicking on the button in the menu bar.



Depending on the version of your outlook check for Tags group



- This way, you can avoid too many work-in-progress emails. Open the email, only when you want to take an action.

Try these two tips for a few days.

There are many things you can do with Microsoft Outlook.

I will show them how to do it, one after another

Meanwhile, if you have any feedback on this blog please do let me know. You can share your experiences also in these blogs. Do let me know if you want to add anything.

Do also let me know, if you want to know any other specific topics that I need to cover in parallel.

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