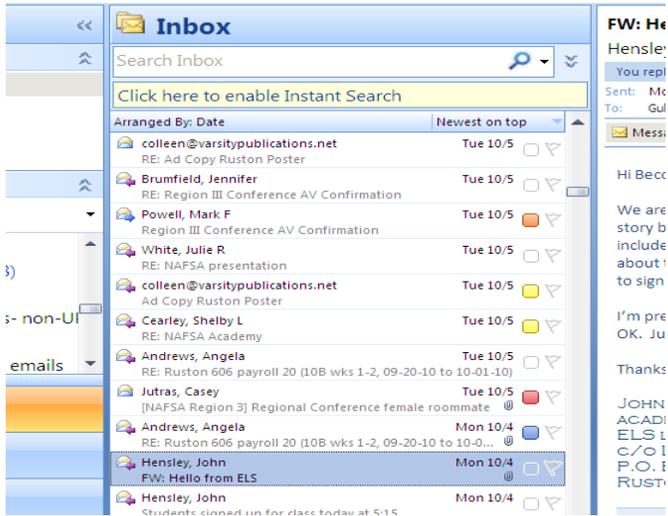


Handy features in MS Outlook

Color-coding emails

You can assign a meaning to colors and use your system to prioritize emails. Simply right-click over the round space beside the flag and choose a color. Here's what my inbox looks like:



My personal system works like this:

Red- urgent, do ASAP

Orange- important, get to as soon as reds are all done

Yellow- do eventually when you have time, or a red or orange that you have responded to but need to follow up on later

Purple- forward email to students

Blue- will need to reference later (sevis or policy matter, etc.), file

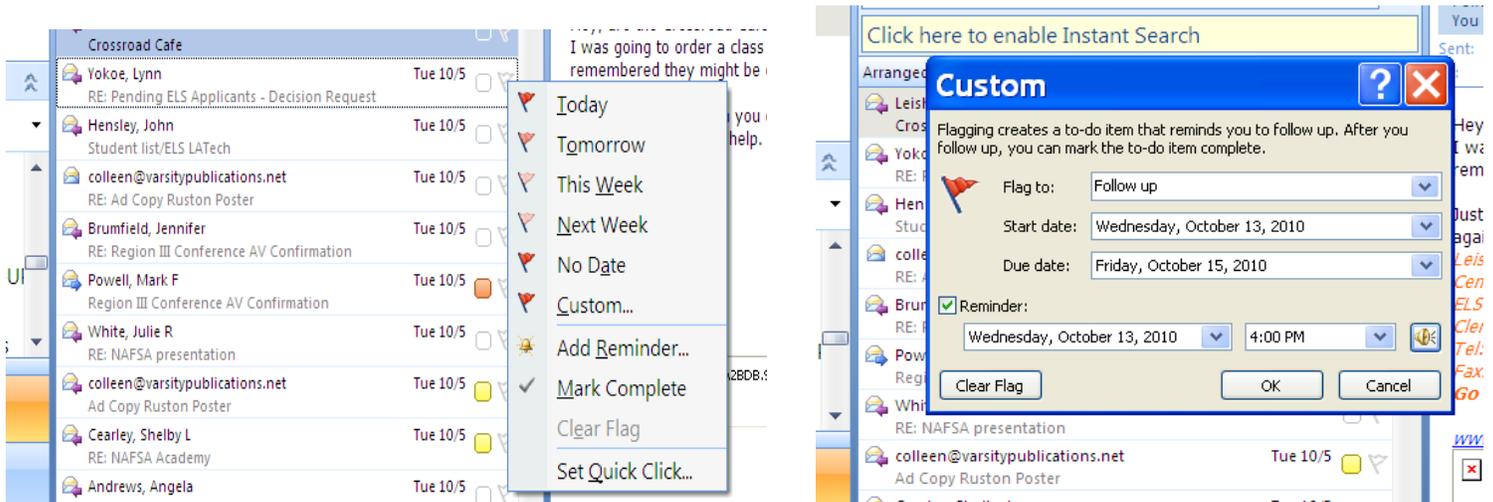
You may want to assign meaning to colors based on subject matter rather than priority, whatever works best for you.

It's possible to assign multiple colors- when you right click, choose "all categories" and then choose which colors you want by checking them off.

To change or remove a color- just right-click like you did before, click the same color you had selected OR click on "remove categories" and the round spot will be empty once more, then choose another color if you needed to change it.

Using flags on e-mails and scheduling reminders

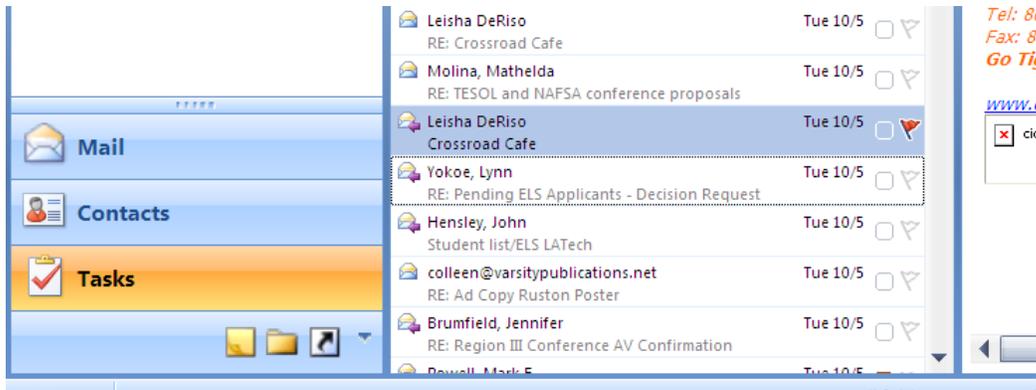
Although I don't often use this feature personally, a lot of people like it. You can right-click over the flag on the right side of an email, and choose a flag.



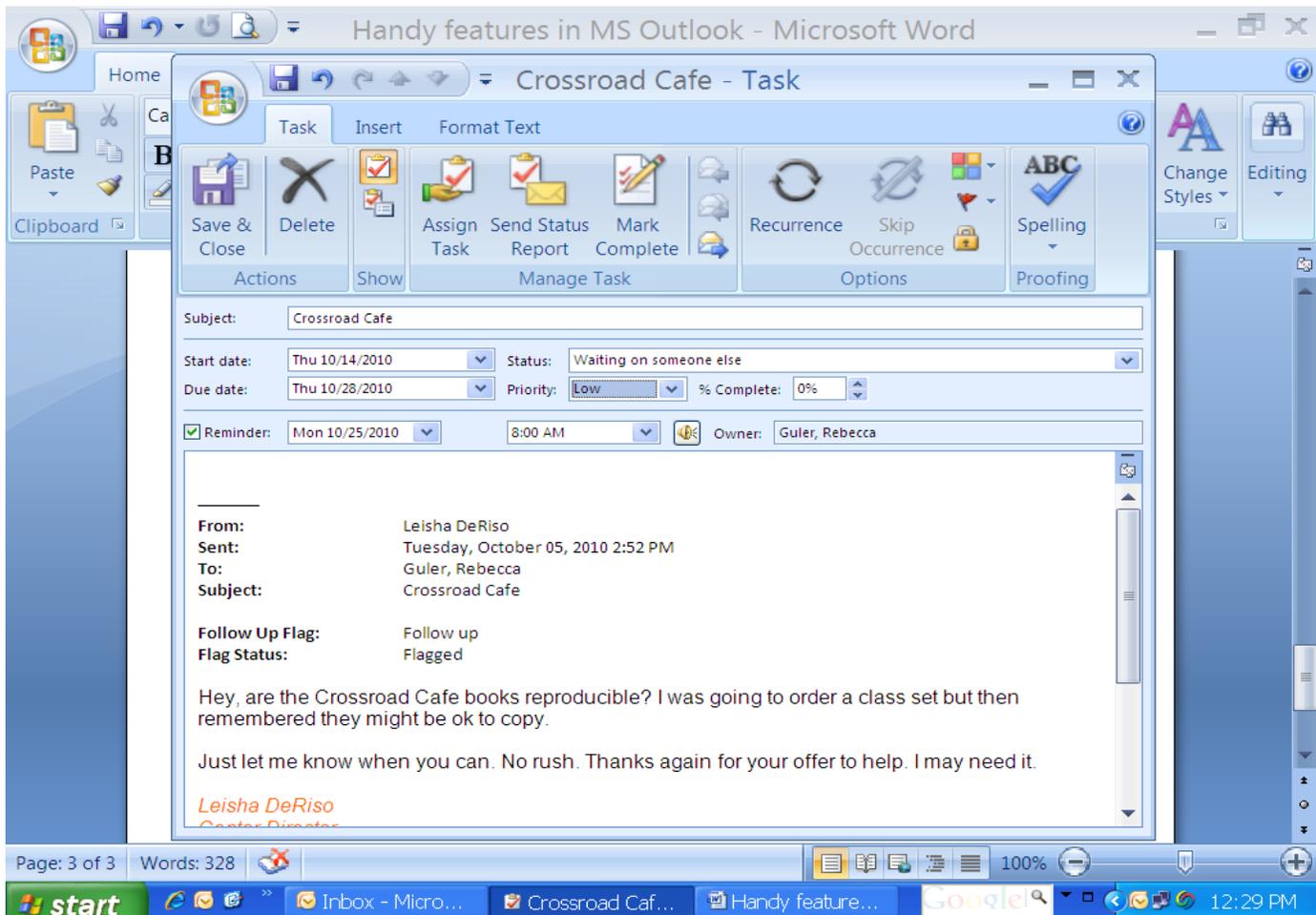
You can choose a day or week from the list, or if you choose “custom”, you can choose a specific start date and due date for the task, and can also schedule a reminder and even choose if you want an alarm sound to go with the reminder.

Dragging emails to the “tasks” function to make a to-do list

This is what I prefer to do instead of flags. If you click on an email and drag it to the “tasks” bar on the left-hand side



then release, a nice window pops up converting the email into a task for you.



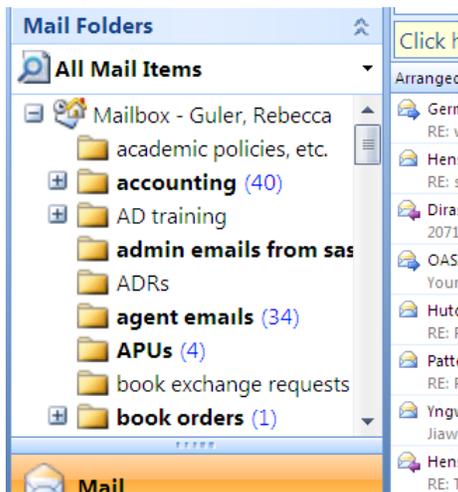
You can schedule start dates and due dates, a reminder and alarm, choose a status to show priority, makes notes about the progress like “not started”, “in progress”, “deferred”, etc.

Click “save and “close in the top left-hand corner. Now if you click the “tasks” bar, you’ll get a list of tasks, showing when they’re due and if you open them, the full email will be in there.

When you complete a task, simply right-click on the flag and choose “mark as complete” and it will disappear from the list.

Creating folders to organize emails for later reference

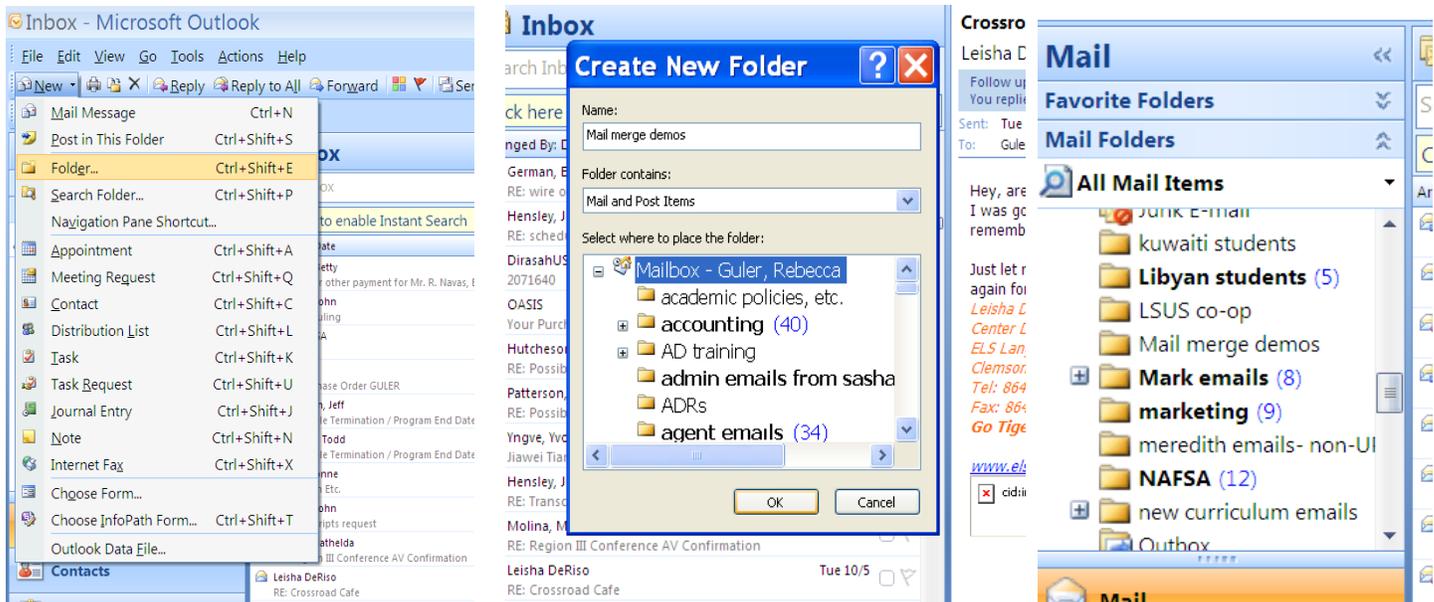
Notice that to the left-hand side is a list of topics like “accounting”, “agent emails”, etc. These are the folders I’ve created to sort my emails into so that if I need to reference them later, they’re in logical categories and easier to find.



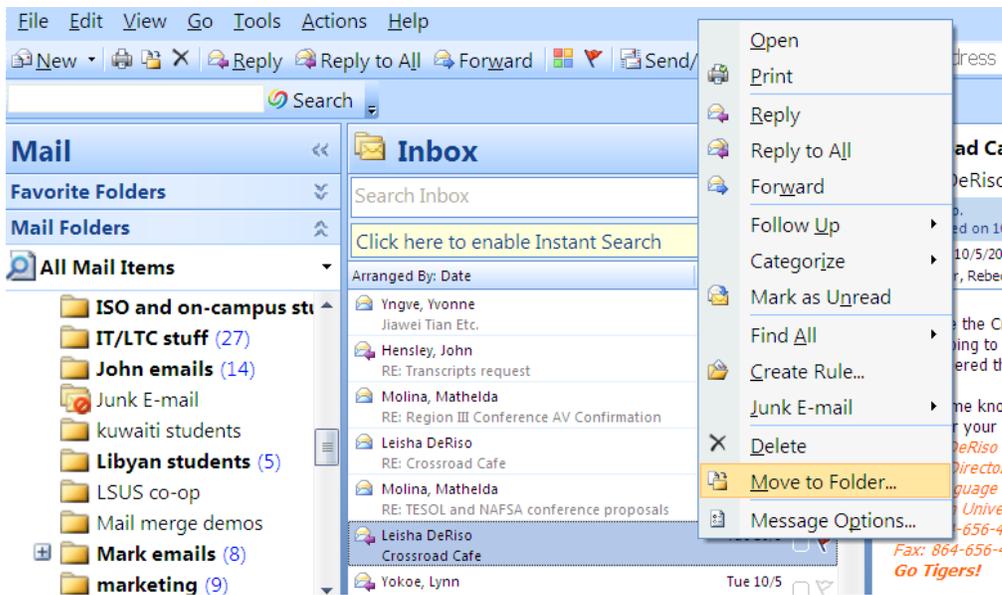
To make folders, go up to the top bar and click on “new” and choose “folder” from the drop-down list.

A “create new folder” window will pop up. Type a name for the folder, and select where to place it- probably your mailbox is the best place, click OK.

Now, you’ll see a new folder to the left with the name you created.

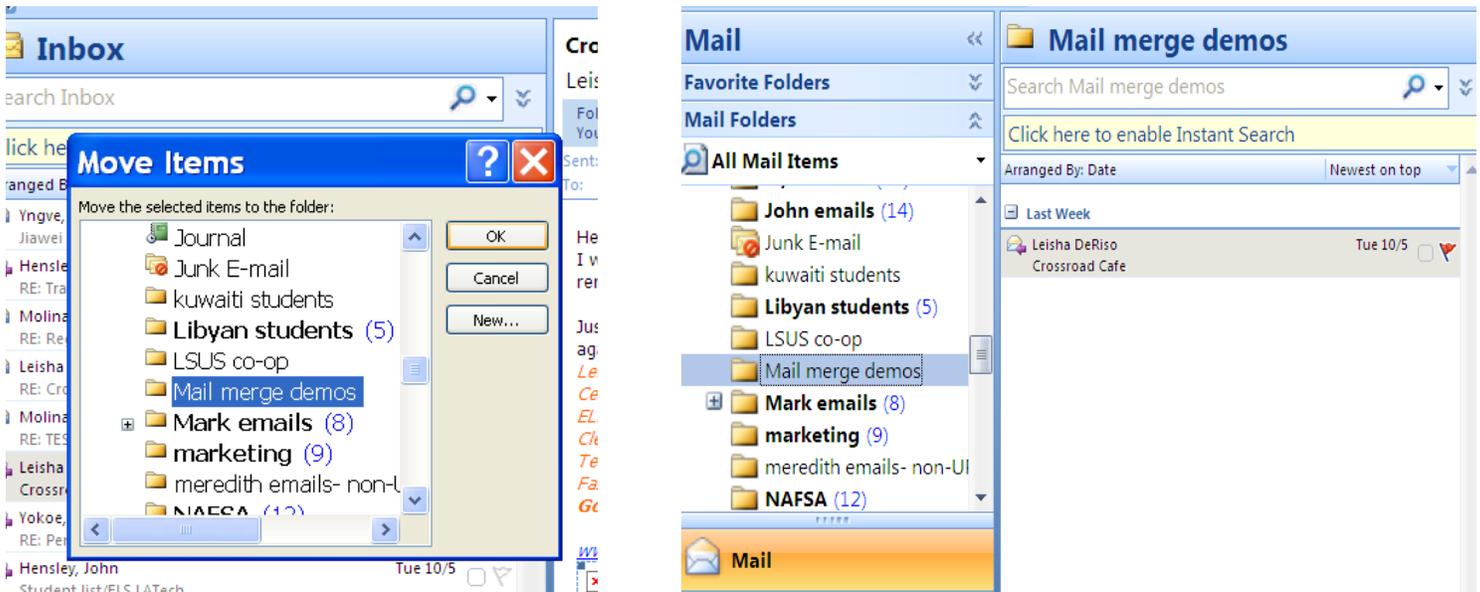


To sort mail into folders- right-click on an email that you want to move, and choose “move to folder”.



A “move items” window will pop up and you can choose the name of the folder from the list and click “ok”.

Now, if you need to later reference the email, you can open the folder you put it in, and it will be, complete with any color-coding or flags that you may have left. I like to leave my blue dot on anything that involves policy or Sevis issues that I know I’ll eventually need to reference. To open a folder, just double-click on it in the list of folders on the left.



I’ve discovered over time that it’s also helpful to file my responses in appropriate folders. When I respond to an agent, I file a copy of my response in “agent emails”. If I turn in a survey or project that the marketing department requested by a deadline, I file my response in the “marketing” folder. It’s handy in case you later need to resend something or forward it to show that yes, you did turn that in by a deadline 😊

To file a sent response, simply go to “sent items”, and as before, you’ll right click on the email, choose “move to folder” and select the appropriate folder.

Have fun organizing in Outlook!