

# Mailbox Conversion

(WHM >> Home >> Email >> Mailbox Conversion)

- Overview
- Convert mailboxes
  - Conversion directories
- Create disk space
  - The mbox format
  - The maildir format
- Additional documentation

## Overview

This interface allows you to convert the mailbox format for email addresses on a cPanel account.

- The maildir format uses flat files, which cause systems with large mail archives to exhaust their inode resources quickly.
- The mbox format stores multiple messages in a file and uses a simpler indexing scheme. This format requires fewer files, reduces inode usage significantly, and decreases disk space usage.

### Warnings:

- Unlike the maildir format, the mbox format does **not** support symlinks.
  - For example, when a cPanel account owner uses Webmail on an account that uses the maildir format, the system displays every mailbox of the account's email users. However, on a cPanel account that uses the mbox format, the system **only** displays the cPanel account's mailbox. The system does **not** display the mailboxes of the cPanel account's other email users.
  - For more information about symlinks in Dovecot®, read [Dovecot's Symlinks](#) documentation.
- When you convert from one mailbox format to another, the unique identifier (UID) for each email message on the server will change. The system uses UIDs to identify each message that a POP email account receives. Email clients that do not delete mail from the server use these UIDs to determine which messages to download. Due to this change in UIDs, mailbox conversions can cause POP email users to receive previously-downloaded messages as though they were new.
- If you convert your mailboxes to the maildir format, you may notice a discrepancy between reported and actual disk usage for the **default email account**. This occurs because a maildir mailbox adds the total default email account usage to the `INBOX` directory usage of every other email address on the cPanel account. It does not add the subfolders for any other mailbox.

## Convert mailboxes

This interface displays a summary of the accounts that use the mbox and maildir formats. It also lists benefits and limitations for each format.

To convert an account's mailboxes from one format to the other, perform the following steps:

1. Select the desired mailbox format and then click *Next*.
2. Select the checkboxes for each account you wish to convert and then click *Next*.
  - Use the navigation tools at the top of the table to search for and select accounts.
  - To return to the previous step in the procedure, click *Previous*.
3. Click *Convert* to convert the mailboxes for the selected account or accounts.
  - To convert the mailboxes and keep the files for the old format, select *Keep old mailbox files*.
  - To return to the previous step in the procedure, click *Previous*.

After you click *Convert*, the interface displays the status and progress of the conversion of mailboxes, and any warnings.

## Conversion directories

When you convert mailboxes, the system creates the `/storage` directory in the following directories for each email account:

- `/home/user/mail`
- `/home/user/mail/domain/emailaccount`

### Note:

- `user` represents the cPanel account's user.
- `domain` represents the domain.
- `emailaccount` represents the email account.

In these directories, the system stores all of the email addresses that the account received before you converted the mailbox's format.

**Warning:**

Do **not** delete the `/storage` directory. Additionally, if you convert an account's mailboxes from the maildir format to the mbox format, do **not** delete the `/mailboxes` directory. The system **requires** these directories.

## Create disk space

The system does not include the `/storage` directory's contents when it determines a cPanel account's email account usage. However, the system **does** include this directory's contents when it determines a cPanel account's disk space usage.

## The mbox format

To create disk space after you convert your mailboxes to the mbox format, delete the following files:

```
cur
.Drafts
.Junk
new
.Sent
tmp
Trash
```

## The maildir format

To create disk space after you convert your mailboxes to the maildir format, delete the `/mailboxes` directory.

## Additional documentation

[Suggested documentation](#) [For cPanel users](#) [For WHM users](#) [For developers](#)

- [Mailbox Conversion](#)
- [The Mailbox Format Conversion Scripts](#)
- [Mailserver Configuration](#)
- [The install\\_dovecot\\_fts Script](#)
- [Mail FAQ](#)
  
- [Email Routing](#)
- [Mail FAQ](#)
- [Archive](#)
- [Autoresponders](#)
- [Default Address](#)
  
- [Mailbox Conversion](#)
- [The Mailbox Format Conversion Scripts](#)

- [Mailserver Configuration](#)
- [The install\\_dovecot\\_fts Script](#)
- [Mail FAQ](#)
  
- [UAPI Functions - Email::add\\_forwarder](#)
- [cPanel API 2 Functions - Email::addforward](#)
- [UAPI Functions - Email::delete\\_domain\\_forwarder](#)
- [UAPI Functions - Email::account\\_name](#)
- [UAPI Functions - Email::delete\\_pop](#)