

Microsoft 365 Exchange Online Distribution Lists

This document builds on the Microsoft 365 Exchange Online Essentials Guide and focuses on Distribution Lists, with emphasis on exporting Dynamic Distribution List (DDL) members using Exchange Online PowerShell.

Distribution Lists allow email to be sent to multiple recipients using a single address. Exchange Online supports two types:

- **Static Distribution Lists:** Members are managed manually and are best for fixed or small groups.
- **Dynamic Distribution Lists:** Members are calculated at send time based on attributes such as department, title, or location, eliminating manual maintenance.

Key insight: Dynamic Distribution Lists do not store fixed members. Membership is evaluated when an email is sent, which reduces administrative effort but limits visibility in the Microsoft 365 admin center.

Export Dynamic Distribution List Members

Dynamic Distribution Lists do not expose member lists in the Microsoft 365 admin portal. PowerShell must be used to preview and export effective membership. Open PowerShell as admin.

1. Install and Connect to Exchange Online

```
Install-Module ExchangeOnlineManagement
Import-Module ExchangeOnlineManagement
Connect-ExchangeOnline -UserPrincipalName admin@yourdomain.com
```

2. Retrieve the Dynamic Distribution List

```
Get-DynamicDistributionGroup "DDL - IT Department"
```

3. Export members of a Distribution Group to CSV

```
Get-DistributionGroupMember -Identity "AllStaff" |
Select FirstName, LastName, DisplayName, PrimarySmtpAddress |
Export-Csv "C:\Reports\AllStaff-Members.csv" -NoTypeInfo
```

Simplified Version

```
Get-DistributionGroupMember -Identity "AllStaff" |
Select DisplayName, PrimarySmtpAddress |
Export-Csv "C:\Reports\AllStaff-Members.csv" -NoTypeInfo
```

Important Considerations

- The export to a CSV file is a point-in-time snapshot
- Membership updates dynamically as user attributes change
- Only mail-enabled recipients are included
- PowerShell is the only supported method for exporting DDL membership

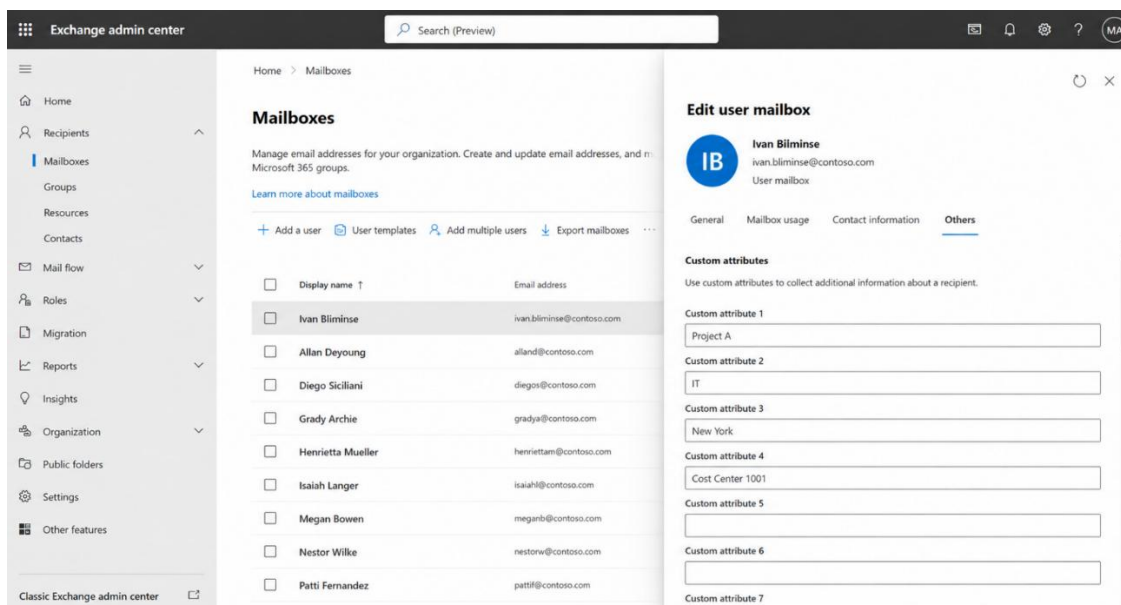
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How to edit a Custom Attribute

Applies to: CustomAttribute1–CustomAttribute15 (used for Dynamic Distribution Lists, reporting, filtering, etc.). These values are immediately usable in **Dynamic Distribution List recipient filters**.

Steps

1. Sign in to the **Exchange admin center** (<https://admin.exchange.microsoft.com>)
2. Go to **Recipients** → **Mailboxes**
3. Select the user mailbox you want to edit
4. Open the **Others** tab
5. Scroll to **Custom attributes**
6. Enter a value in **Custom attribute 1–15**
7. Click **Save**



PowerShell (alternative method)

Add Single User

```
Set-Mailbox user@domain.com -CustomAttribute1 "Project A"
```

One-liner pipeline PowerShell command for one or more identities

```
"user1@domain.com","user2@domain.com" |  
ForEach-Object { Set-Mailbox $_ -CustomAttribute1 "Project A" }
```

Remove (clear) a Custom Attribute

```
Set-Mailbox user@domain.com -CustomAttribute1 $null
```