

RECOVERING DELETED ITEMS THROUGH OUTLOOK 2003 IN EXCHANGE 2003

Mark E. Donaldson

Of course you can. Deleted items that are deleted via OWA or the regular Outlook client can be easily recovered, as long as the items that were deleted were not purged from the Exchange store.

Set retention times

First, let's see how long an item is kept in the store after a user deletes it:

1. On your Exchange server open Exchange System Manager (ESM) and navigate to your server object.
2. Right-click the server object and select Properties.
3. In the Limits tab notice the value in the "Keep Deleted Items" box.

In our case it's 7 days. This means that a user has 7 days to recover his or her deleted items. After that - it's restore from media time!

Note that the higher you make this value, the bigger the store gets, as deleted items take a longer time to be purged from the store.

Use Outlook to recover deleted items

The good news is that you can recover deleted items both from the regular Outlook client and from OWA.

In order to recover a deleted item via Outlook we need to first open Outlook (Duh). Then, click on the Deleted Items folder.

Click on Tools, and then the Recover Deleted Items icon (which looks like the recycle bin, lookout not to click on the left icon - that'll empty your deleted items folder).

You'll get a new window, where you'll be able to browse to the item(s) you want to recover, and then press the Recover button.

The recovered items will return to the Deleted Items folder, where you can read, reply or move to their original location.

How do I recover hard-deleted items via Outlook?

Hard-deleted items are items that have been deleted by using SHIFT+DEL, thus the item avoided landing in the Deleted Items folder, and because of that, it cannot be simply recovered.

To show you the trick we will first hard-delete an item from the user's Inbox by clicking on the item and pressing SHIFT+DEL on the keyboard. You will be prompted to accept the action. Do so.

Now, let's see if we can normally recover this item. No, the Recover Deleted Items folder is empty because the item was hard-deleted from the Inbox. To enable hard-deleted items recovery in Outlook follow these steps:

1. Open Registry Editor.
2. In Registry Editor, navigate to the following registry key:
3. Create the following value (DWORD):

RECOVERING DELETED ITEMS THROUGH OUTLOOK 2003 IN EXCHANGE 2003

Mark E. Donaldson

`DumpsterAlwaysOn`

and give it a value of 1.

Note: As always, before making changes to your registry you should always make sure you have a valid backup. In cases where you're supposed to delete or modify keys or values from the registry it is possible to first export that key or value(s) to a .REG file before performing the changes.

4. Close Registry Editor, re-open Outlook for settings to take place.

After you add this value, the Recover Deleted Items option becomes available for the Sent Items folder, the Drafts folder, the Outbox folder, and the Inbox folder. You can recover deleted items from these folders.

As you can clearly see, the Inbox has the Recover Deleted Items option enabled, and so does each and every folder in the user's mailbox.