MIGRATION PLAYBOOK · EMAIL AND DOMAINS

How to migrate from Zoho Mail to Google Workspace

Google's data import in the Admin console copies Zoho Mail over IMAP, up to 100 users per import. Contacts and calendars travel separately as files. Copy email in advance, switch MX records, then run a delta import to catch the last messages.

Updated 4 Nov 2026 4 phases 8 detailed steps 7 official sources

START HERE

How do you migrate from Zoho Mail to Google Workspace?

SHORT ANSWER

This moves company email from Zoho Mail to Gmail in Google Workspace. Google's own import tool signs in to each Zoho mailbox over IMAP and copies the email across while people keep working. Then you point your domain's mail to Google, and run a final top-up copy.

- **Recommended route:** Google Admin console data import (IMAP), then contacts and calendars by file
- **Order:** Set up Google Workspace and verify the domain first, copy email while Zoho still receives it, change MX, then top up.
- **4 phases:** Prepare Google Workspace, Pilot and copy email, Switch mail flow and Contacts, calendars and close Zoho.
- **You're done when:** Every mailbox is in Gmail and the import reports show no unexplained failures.

Contacts and calendars are exported from Zoho as files and imported into Google.

RECOMMENDED ROUTE

Google Admin console data import (IMAP), then contacts and calendars by file

It is Google's own tool, it runs from the Admin console, and a delta import picks up mail that arrives during the switch.

▼ **Other options and when to use them**

- **Third-party migration tool**
  : You want contacts and calendars moved for users, or more than a few hundred mailboxes scheduled together.
- **Users forward or export their own mail**
  : One or two mailboxes with little history.

TOOLS FOR THIS PLAN

Not sure which route?
Answer 6 quick questions

Are you ready?
22-question readiness check

Plan your dates
Dated countdown you can add to your calendar

Compare options
Compare Microsoft 365 migration tools

Check your DNS
MX, SPF, DKIM and DMARC lookup

New to the jargon?
Plain-English migration glossary

ORDER TO MIGRATE IN, AND WHY

Set up Google Workspace and verify the domain first, copy email while Zoho still receives it, change MX, then top up.

1. **Google Workspace users created and domain verified**
   The import needs a target account for every Zoho mailbox.
2. **IMAP turned on in Zoho and passwords ready**
   The import signs in to each mailbox over IMAP; accounts with two-factor need an app-specific password.
3. **Pilot import of two or three mailboxes**
   Shows folder mapping and speed before the full run.
4. **Full email import in batches of up to 100**
   Copies history while Zoho still receives new mail.
5. **MX change, then delta import**
   Catches mail that arrived in Zoho during the switch.
6. **Contacts and calendars by file**
   IMAP import moves email only.

SETTINGS CHECKLIST: DECIDE THESE BEFORE YOU COPY

Built-in and third-party tools treat these differently. Tick each one off once you have decided.

Download this checklist (Excel)

- [ ] **What moves with the IMAP import**

  How contacts and calendars will move.

  ▼ How each tool handles it

Built-in method	Google data import, IMAP source: email only. Zoho is listed among supported IMAP webmail providers.

  Tip: Plan contacts and calendars as a separate step with a short user guide.

  Google Workspace Admin Help: Import data with the data import tool

- [ ] **Batch size**

  How many imports to run.

  ▼ How each tool handles it

Built-in method	Google data import, IMAP source: up to 100 IMAP users per import; for more than 20 users upload a CSV under 128 MB with SourceImapUser, SourceImapPassword and TargetGUser columns.

  Tip: Split by department and keep each batch's CSV for the delta import.

  Google Workspace Admin Help: Import email from an IMAP account

- [ ] **Zoho IMAP settings**

  Which server name and passwords to use.

  ▼ How each tool handles it

Built-in method	Zoho Mail: imappro.zoho.com on port 993 with SSL for paid organisation accounts (imap.zoho.com for personal and free organisation users). IMAP Access must be turned on, and accounts with two-factor authentication need an application-specific password.

  Tip: Check Server Configuration Details in Zoho settings: the server name depends on your data centre.

  Zoho Mail Help: Access via IMAP

- [ ] **Reports**

Where to keep the import record.

▼ **How each tool handles it**

Built-in method	Google data import: once you exit a completed import, its configuration and reports are no longer available.

Tip: Export reports before exiting; you need them to show every mailbox moved.

Google Workspace Admin Help: Import email from an IMAP account

THE PLAN, PHASE BY PHASE

1 Prepare Google Workspace Week 1

Verify the domain and create users with the same addresses.

Turn on IMAP access in Zoho for every mailbox.

Collect passwords or app-specific passwords into the import CSV.

Watch out: Collecting user passwords is a security risk.

WAYS AROUND IT

- Ask users to set temporary passwords, store the CSV securely and delete it after the project.

Show the detailed steps (2) →

2 Pilot and copy email

Week 1 to 2

Import two or three pilot mailboxes and check folders.

Run the full import in batches of up to 100.

Export each batch's report.

Watch out: Up to 100 IMAP users per import.

WAYS AROUND IT

- Run several imports in turn.

Show the detailed steps (2) →

3 Switch mail flow

Cutover day

Lower DNS TTL a day before.

Change MX records to Google.

Run a delta import after mail arrives at Google.

> **Watch out:** Mail can arrive in Zoho for a while after the MX change.
>
> **WAYS AROUND IT**
>
> - Run the delta import after DNS has settled.

Turn this phase into dated tasks with the cutover planner

Check your DNS records before and after the change

Show the detailed steps (2) →

4 Contacts, calendars and close Zoho

Week after cutover

Export contacts and calendars from Zoho, and import

into Google.

Check nothing new lands in Zoho.

Cancel Zoho Mail after sign-off.

> **Watch out:** Organisation policy may hide Zoho's Export option.
>
> **WAYS AROUND IT**
>
> - Have the Zoho admin allow export for the migration period.

Show the detailed steps (2) →

You are finished when

- Every mailbox is in Gmail and the import reports show no unexplained failures.
- MX records point to Google and new mail arrives there.
- Contacts and calendars are in Google for every user who needs them.
- Zoho is cancelled after sign-off.

CLICK BY CLICK

What does each step involve?

Open a part when you reach it in the plan. Each step says where to go, what to do and what you should see.

About this migration — What it covers, limits at a glance —

Zoho Mail supports IMAP, so Google's data import tool can copy each mailbox straight into Gmail. Google lists Zoho among the IMAP webmail sources the tool supports, and IMAP sources move email only. Contacts and calendars are exported from Zoho to files and imported by each user, or by an admin on their behalf.

Need the general IMAP version of this? See IMAP email to Google Workspace. Moving to Microsoft 365 instead? See Zoho Mail to Microsoft 365.

EMAIL TOOL	PER IMPORT	ZOHO SERVER
Google Admin console data import, IMAP source	**Up to 100 IMAP users**	**imappro.zoho.com for paid organisation accounts**

CONTACTS	CALENDARS	TOP-UP
Export from Zoho Contacts, import to Google Contacts	**Export ICS from Zoho Calendar, import to Google Calendar**	**Delta import after the MX change**

1 What do you need before you migrate from Zoho Mail to Google Workspace?

Need	Details	Where to get it
Google Workspace super administrator	Required to run the data import.	Google Admin console
Verified domain and users	One Google account per Zoho mailbox.	Add a domain, bulk-create users
Zoho IMAP server name	Usually imappro.zoho.com for paid organisation accounts.	Zoho Mail > Settings > Mail Accounts
Mailbox passwords	Or app-specific passwords where two-factor is on.	Each user, or Zoho admin
DNS access	To change MX records.	Your DNS host

2 Turn on IMAP in Zoho and build the CSV

2 steps

1

Turn on IMAP access

Where: Zoho Mail > Settings > Mail Accounts > your address > IMAP

Tick **IMAP Access** and save, for each mailbox. Note the incoming server shown under Server Configuration Details.

✓ **You should see:** IMAP Access is ticked.

2

Build the import CSV

Where: A spreadsheet saved as CSV

Add three columns: SourceImapUser, SourceImapPassword and TargetGUser. Keep it under 128 MB and up to 100 users per file.

✓ **You should see:** One CSV per batch.

3 Run the email import

2 steps −

1

Connect to Zoho over IMAP

Where: Google Admin console > Menu > Data > Data import & export > Data import

Choose IMAP, enter the Zoho server name, and click **Test connection**. Upload the CSV.

✓ **You should see:** The connection test passes and users are listed.

2

Set options and start

Where: Data import > import settings

Set a start date and folders to exclude if needed, then click **Start import**. Export the report when it finishes.

✓ **You should see:** Folders appear as labels in Gmail and an email report arrives.

4 Change MX and run a delta import

2 steps

1

Change MX records

Where: Your DNS host

Replace Zoho MX records with Google's. See change MX records and lower DNS TTL first. Update SPF to include Google.

✓ **You should see:** New mail arrives in Gmail.

2

Run a delta import

Where: Data import > your import > Delta import

Once DNS has settled, run a delta import to copy mail that reached Zoho after the first import.

✓ **You should see:** The latest Zoho messages appear in Gmail.

5 Move contacts and calendars

2 steps

1

Export from Zoho

Where: contacts.zoho.com > Export; Zoho Calendar > Settings > Import/Export > Export

Export contacts as VCF or CSV. Export each calendar as ICS. Exports stay in Calendar's export history for 30 days.

✓ **You should see:** A contacts file and an ICS file per calendar.

2

Import into Google

Where: Google Contacts > Import; Google Calendar > Settings > Import & export

Import the contacts file, then import each ICS into the right calendar.

✓ **You should see:** Contacts and events appear in Google.

WORTH KNOWING

What can go wrong, and how do you avoid it?

The detail behind the plan: options compared, and what experienced engineers check first. Tap any item.

Compare all the ways to do this 2 options −

Google data import (IMAP)

LOW EFFORT

Best for: Most organisations

- + Built into the Admin console
- + Delta import after MX change
- + Email reports
- – Email only
- – Needs each user's password

Read more →

Third-party migration tool

MEDIUM EFFORT

Best for: Moving contacts and calendars for users as well

- + Can include more data types
- – Not a Google tool

OUR ADVICE

Use Google's data import for email and handle contacts and calendars by file. Consider a third-party tool only if moving those for many users by hand would take too long.

IMAP moves email only

USER IMPACT –

Google lists IMAP sources, including Zoho, as email only.

WHAT TO DO

Give users a short guide for contacts and calendars, or do it for them.

Google Workspace Admin Help: Import data with the data import tool

Two-factor accounts need app passwords

SAVES TIME –

Zoho requires an application-specific password for IMAP when two-factor authentication is on.

WHAT TO DO

Ask users to create one for the migration, then revoke it after.

Zoho Mail Help: Access via IMAP

Reports vanish when you exit

COMPLIANCE –

Exiting a completed import removes access to its configuration and reports.

WHAT TO DO

Export reports before exiting.

Google Workspace Admin Help: Import email from an IMAP account

The import CSV holds passwords

COMPLIANCE

For more than 20 users, the import CSV includes each Zoho user's IMAP password in plain text.

WHAT TO DO

Use temporary passwords, keep the file in a restricted location and delete it when the project ends.

Google Workspace Admin Help: Import email from an IMAP account

Large organisations need several imports

SAVES TIME

Each IMAP import takes up to 100 users, and further users need a new import.

WHAT TO DO

Plan batches and start the largest mailboxes first.

Google Workspace Admin Help: Import email from an IMAP account

Recurring events and invitations

USER IMPACT

Importing an ICS copies events into one calendar; it is a copy, not a live meeting series owned in Google.

WHAT TO DO

Recreate important recurring meetings in Google Calendar so invitations work.

Google Calendar Help: Import events to Google Calendar

FINISH SAFELY

How do you check it worked, or roll back?

Full validation checklist

4 checks

Run these before you declare the migration complete. Record the results in the data validation report.

Check	How to check	What good looks like
Every mailbox imported	Compare reports with your mailbox list.	All completed or explained.
Message counts	Compare a few folders in Zoho and Gmail.	Counts match, allowing for exclusions.
Mail flow	Send test mail from outside to several users.	It arrives in Gmail.
Contacts and calendars	Ask pilot users to check.	They see their contacts and events.

Rollback plan

If it goes wrong

ROLL BACK IF

- Mail does not arrive at Google after the MX change
- Large parts of mailboxes are missing

POINT OF NO RETURN

Zoho keeps its copy until you cancel. Until then, rollback is pointing MX back to Zoho.

1

Point MX back to Zoho

Where: Your DNS host

Restore the Zoho MX records.

✓ **You should see:** Mail arrives in Zoho again.

2

Tell users

Where: Email or chat

Ask users to keep using Zoho until the issue is fixed.

✓ **You should see:** Nobody works in two places.

Agree the triggers and who decides before the go / no-go meeting. Use the rollback plan template.

Common problems and fixes

4 errors

`Test connection fails`

Cause: Wrong Zoho server name, or Zoho cannot be reached.

Fix: Use the server in Zoho Server Configuration Details, port 993 with SSL.

`Authentication failed for a user`

Cause: Two-factor is on, or IMAP access is off.

Fix: Turn on IMAP Access and use an app-specific password.

`CSV upload fails`

Cause: File over 128 MB or wrong headers.

Fix: Delete the file, create a new one with the exact headers.

`Export option missing in Zoho Contacts`

Cause: Organisation policy blocks export.

Fix: Ask the Zoho admin to allow export.

Search the full error library →

FAQ

Frequently asked questions

Can Google import Zoho Mail directly?

Yes, over IMAP with the data import tool in the Admin console.

Are contacts and calendars included?

No. IMAP import moves email only; export them from Zoho to files.

How many users per import?

Up to 100 IMAP users. Run more imports for more.

Do Zoho folders become labels?

Yes, Gmail shows imported folders as labels.

SOURCES

Official sources

7 official pages this guide is based on

Vendors change limits and features, so confirm details on the source before you rely on them. Last checked 4 Nov 2026.

- Google Workspace Admin Help: Import email from an IMAP account
- Google Workspace Admin Help: Import data with the data import tool
- Zoho Mail Help: Access via IMAP
- Zoho Calendar Help: Import or export calendars
- Zoho Contacts Help: Import and export contacts
- Google Calendar Help: Import events to Google Calendar

Google Contacts Help: Import contacts