What happens to my email address when I switch

By David Swan on 21 August 2012

I'm switching broadband provider but my current supplier provides my email address - what will I need to

do to switch email addresses? Will I still be able to use the old one?

Keeping emails can be a tricky business.

The general rule is that providers leave email accounts alone when you switch but, better safe than sorry, it's

often worth backing up and moving to your new ISP's service or to free webmail.

Although there's plenty of anecdotal evidence that it can be just fine to use a previous provider's address for

months and years after switching ISPs are under no obligation to keep those accounts open.

Switching emails

Let's look at some specific provider examples, in alphabetical order.

BT: email@btinternet.com

According to the terms and conditions of BT broadband, when you cancel your BT broadband subscription you

will lose access to your BT email account.

On the other hand, speaking from personal experience I know that this doesn't always happen: I'm still using an

old BT Openworld email address years after cancelling my BT broadband and I've heard from many others in the

same situation.

There is a third way: BT's Premium Yahoo! Email service is a paid service which will allow you to access your BT

account, even when signed up to another ISP, without the worry that you might lose access to your account at

any moment.

At the time of writing the service is priced at £1.54 a month and you can sign up seven days after you have left

BT. See <u>BT's page on this</u> for more information.

Orange: mail@yourname.orangehome.co.uk/@fsmail.net

Orange allow former customers to continue to access email through third software like Outlook: Orange even

have a guide on how to do this.

However, those that access email through Orange's webmail account - probably with an fsmail address - will

eventually lose access.

It's worth noting that Orange's terms and conditions specifically note that after termination of your broadband contract they reserve the right to "in particular... delete all the emails in your email account".

Plusnet: email@plus.net

When a Plusnet account is closed access to all account features - including email - should be cut off within a month.

However, you can keep your email by requesting a downgrade to Plusnet's email only package, which is £20 for a year, during the cancellation process.

However, you have to request this option when you cancel: after the accounts gone it's too late.

Sky: email@sky.com

You're in luck! Sky offer what they call 'email for life'.

It's just a webmail service, actually it's operated by Google, but we like that Sky really emphasise that their customers can keep their email addresses even after changing ISP.

TalkTalk: email@talktalk.net

TalkTalk also offer webmail which remains accessible even after customers have moved to another ISP.

Just as when TalkTalk webmail users are with the provider, the account will become inactive if it isn't used for 90 consecutive days.

Inactivity just puts the account 'to sleep', though. It doesn't delete it but the address will stop receiving emails.

So if users log in again after 90 days the account will again become active and start receiving emails again.

Virgin Media: email@virginmedia.com

Virgin Media's policy is just about the exact opposite.

They give former customers three months to change all their account details across the web and then clear out old email addresses, removing personal data and even, potentially, recycling the address (see below).

http://www.choose.net/media/guide/faqs/email-address-switch-broadband.html