Windows 11 Search indexing extremely slow

Repeated Event ID 10024 – Outlook search returns no results – Rebuilding does not resolve the problem

Technical report for Microsoft Support | 27 November 2026

1. Problem description

I have been experiencing persistent problems with Windows Search and Microsoft Outlook indexing for several months.

The main symptoms are:

- Windows indexing initially progresses rapidly but subsequently slows down dramatically or appears to stall.
- Outlook indexing does not complete or takes an extremely long time.
- Outlook search returns no results, even when searching for emails visibly present in the Inbox.
- Restarting the Windows Search service occasionally restores normal indexing temporarily.
- Rebuilding the entire search index does not resolve the underlying problem.
- Event Viewer records numerous Event ID 10024 warnings relating to unresponsive filter host processes.

I have spent considerable time troubleshooting this problem and would appreciate technical assistance in identifying and resolving the underlying cause.

2. System configuration

- Windows 11, 64-bit; Windows build: 10.0.26200.9974.
- Microsoft 365, classic Outlook.
- Multiple POP and IMAP email accounts (also an organisational account).
- Seven OST files, representing approximately 14 GB of data.
- Six PST files, including several large historical email archives.
- Four archive PST files represent approximately 17 GB of data.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader 2026.003.22110 (64-bit); PDFsam and PDF Annotator also installed.
- Approximately 50 GB of free disk space on C:.
- Dropbox and OneDrive installed.

The Windows search index includes:

- Drive W: (mainly Dropbox documents).
- Drive X: (documents and multimedia files).
- Selected Windows user profile folders.
- Microsoft Outlook and Start Menu.

AppData and various application cache folders are excluded from normal filesystem indexing.

3. Chronology of the problem

25 November 2026 – Temporary successful recovery

At the beginning of the troubleshooting session, Windows reported 973,074 indexed items and Outlook reported 79,318 items remaining to be indexed. Outlook indexing was progressing extremely slowly.

We examined the indexing configuration, excluded several unnecessary application folders and Windows user profiles, verified Windows system file integrity and restarted the Windows Search service.

Following the restart, Outlook indexing progressed significantly:

Stage	Outlook items remaining
Initial status	79,318
Before restarting Windows Search	77,865
After restarting	56,201
Subsequent measurement	47,058
Subsequent measurement	24,003
Subsequent measurement	5,117
End of day	0

Outlook confirmed that indexing had finished. I tested Outlook search and it was working correctly again.

26 November 2026 – Problem returned

The following morning, Windows reported 1,001,790 indexed items and Outlook reported 117 items remaining. The Windows indexing counter subsequently remained unchanged for several hours, while the number of pending Outlook items gradually increased. Event ID 10024 warnings reappeared.

Restarting Windows Search resulted in some limited progress, but did not permanently resolve the issue.

We reduced the indexing scope, including excluding a large OneDrive picture folder containing approximately 40,814 indexed entries. A direct query of the Windows Search index showed that these entries were still present several hours after the exclusion, even though the exclusion rule was correctly registered in the registry.

We therefore initiated a full index rebuild using the standard Windows procedure:

Indexing Options → Advanced → Index Settings → Rebuild

26–27 November 2026 – Index rebuild stalled or slowed dramatically

The rebuild initially progressed very rapidly, reaching approximately 394,000 indexed items within 54 minutes. It subsequently slowed dramatically.

Date and time	Windows indexed items	Outlook items remaining
26 Nov, 16:35	226	—
26 Nov, 17:29	394,404	510,320
26 Nov, 17:49	394,404	510,323
26 Nov, 19:49	395,218	510,334
27 Nov, 07:08	403,138	505,667
27 Nov, 08:32	407,428	—
27 Nov, 09:42	407,703	505,690

The laptop was left running overnight, connected to its power supply, with Outlook open. Outlook search currently returns no results. Restarting both Windows Search and Outlook on 27 November has not produced the improvement observed on 25 November.

4. Event Viewer findings

The Application log was filtered using the following event sources: Search, Search-Core, Search-ProfileNotify and Search-ProtocolHandlers.

Event ID 10024 – Gatherer

Numerous warnings contain the following message:

> The filter host process [process ID] did not respond and is being forcibly terminated.

These warnings have occurred repeatedly over several days and involve different process IDs. They also occurred throughout the night while the index was being rebuilt and the laptop was not actively being used.

Event ID 1015 – Search service

Windows reports that repeated occurrences of Event ID 10024 have been suppressed. One such event reported 14 suppressed occurrences. The actual number of filter host timeouts is therefore greater than the number of individual warnings displayed in Event Viewer.

Event ID 1008 – Search service

This event appeared when the index rebuild was initiated and indicated that Windows Search was attempting to remove the old search index. It appears to be associated with the rebuild itself.

Events 1003 and 1013

Search service informational events were also recorded, including service startup events.

5. Diagnostic tests and interventions already performed

A. Windows Search service

Verified the Windows Search service configuration:

- Service name: WSearch
- Startup type: Automatic (Delayed Start)
- Service status: Running

- Executable: SearchIndexer.exe

The service has been restarted several times. Restarting it temporarily restored normal Outlook indexing on 25 November, but subsequent restarts have not consistently resolved the problem.

B. Windows system file integrity

Executed:

```
SFC /verifyonly
```

Result:

> Windows Resource Protection did not find any integrity violations.

No protected Windows system file corruption was detected by this test.

C. Search database size and available disk space

The search database was located at:

```
C:\ProgramData\Microsoft\Search\Data\Applications\Windows
```

Before rebuilding:

- Windows.db: approximately 14.17 GB (decimal).
- Total database-related files: approximately 14.41 GB (decimal).
- Available disk space: approximately 50 GB.

There was no obvious shortage of available disk space.

D. Excessive index size

The previous index contained more than one million items. Microsoft documents potential performance problems associated with very large search indexes.

However, the same filter host timeouts and indexing slowdown reappeared during the rebuild when the new index contained fewer than 400,000 items. Consequently, excessive index size does not appear to be the sole explanation.

E. Reduction of indexing scope

Several unnecessary application folders and Windows user profiles were excluded. Internet Explorer History and Microsoft OneNote were also removed from the indexing scope. A large OneDrive picture folder was excluded.

Before rebuilding, a direct Windows Search query returned 40,814 indexed items for this folder. The corresponding registry rule was verified under:

```
HKLM\SOFTWARE\Microsoft\Windows Search\CrawlScopeManager\Windows\SystemIndex\WorkingSetRules
```

The rule referred to the correct folder and had the following value:

```
Include = 0
```

Despite this, the 40,814 items remained in the search index several hours after the exclusion and a service restart. This was one of the reasons for initiating the rebuild.

F. PDF indexing filter

The PDF indexing configuration was examined because malfunctioning PDF filters can cause Windows Search filter host timeouts.

The original configuration was:

- Extension: PDF
- Filter Description: Reader Search Handler
- Index Properties and File Contents: Enabled

The registry was queried to identify the actual registered filter.

PDF Persistent Handler:

```
{1AA9BF05-9A97-48c1-BA28-D9DCE795E93C}
```

Registered IFilter:

```
{6C337B26-3E38-4F98-813B-FBA18BAB64F5}
```

Registered DLL:

```
%systemroot%\system32\Windows.Data.Pdf.dll
```

This confirms that Windows is using its native Microsoft PDF filter rather than an Adobe PDF IFilter. Adobe Acrobat Reader was also checked for updates. No updates were available.

PDF indexing was temporarily changed to **Index Properties Only**. No observable improvement occurred during the approximately 30-minute observation period. The Windows indexing counter remained unchanged, and Outlook's pending item count increased slightly. The original PDF content indexing configuration was subsequently restored.

This test was inconclusive because indexing was already stalled when the setting was changed.

G. Outlook MSG indexing filter

Verified under **Indexing Options → Advanced → File Types**:

- Extension: MSG
- Filter Description: Office Outlook MSG IFilter
- Index Properties and File Contents: Enabled
- File type selected for indexing

The configuration appears correct.

H. Outlook search locations

Verified under **Outlook → Search Tools → Locations to Search**. All 13 visible Outlook accounts, calendars and archive data stores were selected. Microsoft Outlook is also included in Windows Indexing Options. No configuration problem was identified.

I. Resource Monitor – Live indexing activity

Resource Monitor was used to examine SearchIndexer.exe, SearchFilterHost.exe and SearchProtocolHost.exe.

The following observations were made while the indexing counter appeared stalled:

SearchProtocolHost.exe

Actively reading multiple files, including PDF documents, Word documents, Excel spreadsheets and JPEG images.

SearchFilterHost.exe

Accessing Microsoft Office and Windows components, including:

- DocumentFormat.OpenXml.dll
- mosfie.dll

- msxml3.dll
- System.Xml.ni.dll

Different SearchFilterHost process IDs were observed over time. These observations do not identify which particular filter is malfunctioning.

SearchIndexer.exe

Actively writing to the indexing database:

File	Observed write activity
Windows.db	602,580 bytes/sec
Windows.db-wal	685,458 bytes/sec
Windows-gather.db	2,710 bytes/sec
Windows-gather.db-wal	60,451 bytes/sec

Overall disk utilisation was relatively low, approximately 3–6% during the observations. The indexing service was therefore not completely frozen, despite the extremely slow increase in indexed items. Database write activity alone does not establish that new items are being successfully indexed.

J. Direct queries of the Windows Search index

Windows PowerShell was used to query the search catalogue directly through the following OLE DB provider:

```
Provider=Search.CollatorDSO;Extended Properties='Application=Windows';
```

The purpose was to determine whether the indexing status counters reflected the actual searchable contents of the index.

Test 1 – Retrieve all index entries

Query:

```
SELECT System.ItemUrl FROM SystemIndex
```

The connection was established, but reading the results failed with:

```
IErrorInfo.GetDescription failed with E_FAIL (0x80004005)
```

The exception occurred when calling the Read() method of the OLE DB reader. This error may be associated with the size of the query or a provider problem. It does not necessarily indicate database corruption.

Test 2 – Retrieve a limited number of entries

Query:

```
SELECT TOP 10 System.ItemUrl FROM SystemIndex
```

Result: 10 rows returned successfully.

Test 3 – Retrieve Outlook entries

Query:

```
SELECT TOP 10 System.ItemUrl FROM SystemIndex WHERE SCOPE='mapi16:' OR SCOPE='mapi:'
```

Result: 10 rows returned successfully.

Test 4 – Retrieve Outlook email subjects

Query:

```
SELECT TOP 20 System.Subject FROM SystemIndex WHERE SCOPE='mapi16:' OR SCOPE='mapi:'
```

Result: Blank subject fields.

Test 5 – Identify the type of Outlook entries

Query:

```
SELECT TOP 20 System.ItemType, System.ItemNameDisplay, System.Subject FROM SystemIndex WHERE
SCOPE='mapi16:' OR SCOPE='mapi:'
```

Result: All 20 returned entries were classified as `MAPI/Folder`. These included Inbox, Sent Items, Calendar, Contacts and other Outlook folders.

Test 6 – Exclude Outlook folder entries

Query:

```
SELECT TOP 20 System.ItemType, System.Subject FROM SystemIndex WHERE (SCOPE='mapi16:' OR
SCOPE='mapi:') AND System.ItemType <> 'MAPI/Folder'
```

Result: `Matching items: 0`

Test 7 – Search for a known email subject

A query using CONTAINS(System.Subject, ...) was executed for a distinctive word appearing in the subject of an email visibly present in Outlook.

Query:

```
SELECT TOP 10 System.Subject FROM SystemIndex WHERE (SCOPE='mapi16:' OR SCOPE='mapi:') AND
CONTAINS(System.Subject, 'letzte')
```

Result: Zero matching items.

These tests suggest that the Outlook folder structure is being indexed, but that individual emails may not currently be indexed successfully. However, I recognise that these queries may not capture every Outlook item type or every entry in the catalogue. In particular, results are limited to entries accessible to the querying account, and the inequality condition in Test 6 may omit entries with a missing ItemType.

K. Outlook Advanced Find

Outlook's Advanced Find function was tested using Ctrl + Shift + F. The correct Inbox was explicitly verified. Three searches were performed:

- Searching for a known email subject.
- Searching for a distinctive word appearing in an existing email subject.
- Searching without any search words.

All returned zero results, despite the Inbox visibly containing numerous emails.

L. Restarting Outlook

Outlook was closed and reopened. No observable improvement in the indexing backlog occurred during the subsequent observation period.

6. Current assessment

The following findings appear particularly important:

1. Windows Search initially indexes hundreds of thousands of items very rapidly.
2. Indexing subsequently slows dramatically or appears to stall.
3. Numerous SearchFilterHost timeouts are recorded.
4. The problem occurs even after rebuilding the index and with fewer than 400,000 indexed items.
5. Windows Search continues reading files and writing to its database during periods when the indexing counter remains almost unchanged.
6. Direct queries retrieve Outlook folders but have not successfully retrieved individual email subjects.
7. Outlook search previously worked correctly after restarting Windows Search and completing indexing, but this improvement was temporary.
8. Rebuilding the index has not resolved the underlying problem and has resulted in the temporary loss of previously functioning Outlook search capabilities.

7. Questions for Microsoft Support

I would particularly appreciate assistance with the following questions:

1. How can I identify the specific file, file type, IFilter, DLL or Outlook item responsible for the recurring Event ID 10024 warnings?
2. Are there additional Windows Search diagnostic logs, ETW tracing facilities or Microsoft diagnostic tools that can identify the cause of filter host timeouts?
3. Why does Windows Search continue reading files and writing extensively to its database while the number of indexed items barely increases?
4. Why does the index appear to contain Outlook folder structures but no searchable individual emails in the queries performed?
5. Could a malfunctioning Microsoft Office IFilter, the Outlook MAPI protocol handler, or the native Windows PDF filter explain this behaviour?
6. Is there a known Windows 11 or Microsoft 365 issue associated with this behaviour?
7. Is it possible to prioritise Outlook indexing over filesystem indexing without removing the existing filesystem indexing locations?
8. Is there a way to repair the Outlook indexing component independently of the entire Windows search catalogue?
9. Is there a reliable method of verifying the actual number of indexed Outlook emails independently of the Outlook Indexing Status counter?
10. What further diagnostic or corrective measures would Microsoft recommend, given that rebuilding the index and restarting the Windows Search service have not provided a permanent solution?

My objective is to restore reliable Windows and Outlook search functionality without losing access to my existing email archives, removing my Outlook accounts or unnecessarily restricting document content searches.

I would prefer to identify and resolve the underlying cause rather than repeatedly rebuild the search index.

Thank you for your assistance.