

Best Practices for Importing Contacts

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This article applies to:

[Max Classic](#)

[Click here](#) if you are looking for step-by-step instructions for importing records into Max Classic

When bringing in contacts from another system or source, it's essential to focus on **quality over quantity**. On average, about **25% of a contact list becomes outdated each year**, and in some industries the turnover is even higher. Importing poor-quality or unverified contacts can quickly damage your sender reputation, hurt deliverability, and lead to spam complaints.

Important: You cannot import purchased, rented, or shared lists. Only contacts who gave you explicit permission should be added.

Step 1: Exclude Unusable Contacts

Before importing, remove any contacts who have previously:

- **Opted Out** – unsubscribed from your communications
- **Hard Bounced** – email addresses permanently undeliverable
- **Marked as Spam** – reported your emails as spam
- **Non-Marketable Status** – flagged as non-marketable in your previous system

These contacts should never be re-added to your marketing list.

Step 2: Assess Contact Engagement

Once unusable contacts are removed, evaluate the engagement of the remaining list. Engagement includes:

- Opening emails
- Clicking links in emails

Engaged Contacts (within the last 30 days)

- **Action:** Import these contacts and begin emailing them right away.
- **Recommendation:** Send them through a **double opt-in / confirmation sequence** to verify their interest and strengthen list quality.

Unengaged Contacts (31–90 days)

- **Action:**

1. Run this list through a **list cleaning tool** (e.g. [SpamClean](#), [Klean13](#)).
2. Import only those flagged as valid/good.
3. Send a [double opt-in confirmation sequence](#).
 1. Suppress or remove anyone who does not confirm within 14 days.

Stale Contacts (91+ days of no engagement)

- **Action:** Do **not** import these contacts into your CRM/ESP.
 - **Alternative:** Retarget them on other platforms (e.g. Facebook, Google, social media). Drive them to a **fresh opt-in page** to regain [Explicit permission](#) before re-adding them to your email list.
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Why This Matters

By importing only active, permission-based contacts, you:

- Improve inbox placement and deliverability
- Reduce spam complaints and bounce rates
- Protect your sender reputation
- Maximize engagement and marketing ROI

A clean, engaged list is the foundation of successful email marketing.
