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Generated on 15/11/2026 00:18

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Outlook shows Disconnected or Working Offline: how to get it back online

Outlook, Phones & Apps

CODE	VERSION	COUNTRY · LANGUAGE
RLX-AO-KB-2008	v2026.10.16	Angola · English

Interweb Angola
RLX Angola, Lda. · Group RLX Holdings
Tax ID (NIF) 500 260 5724 · Commercial registration no. 26464-25/250724

https://www.meu.interweb.ao/knowledgebase/2008

Outlook shows Disconnected or Working Offline: how to get it back online

Outlook, Phones & Apps Created on **October 16, 2026** 3 min read



The short answer: the bottom bar of Outlook shows “Disconnected”, “Working Offline” or “Trying to connect…”, and mail stops coming in and going out. Often it is just the **Work Offline** button left switched on; otherwise Outlook cannot reach the server (network, password or settings). **First, the webmail test:** open **webmail** with the same account. If everything is right there, the server is fine and the problem is in Outlook or the computer. If webmail fails too, the problem is on the server side and we fix it.

What each message means

Symptom	Most likely cause
“Working Offline”	Outlook itself (or someone) went offline. It is switched off with the **Work Offline** button.
“Disconnected”	Outlook tried and could not connect: no internet, a mistyped server, a port blocked by the network, or a VPN in the way.
“Trying to connect…” that never ends	The connection starts but does not complete: an old saved password, a firewall or antivirus blocking Outlook.
“Password required”	The mailbox password changed and Outlook still has the old one.
Disconnects at the same time, or only on one network	It is the network: office, hotel Wi-Fi or mobile data blocking e-mail ports.

Getting back online

1. **Turn off offline mode: Send/Receive** tab, press **Work Offline** until it is no longer highlighted.

2 **Check the internet:** open any website on the same computer. If the browser cannot open anything either, the problem is the connection.

3 **Switch networks to test:** move from Wi-Fi to your phone's data (or the other way round). If it connects on the other network, the first network blocks e-mail: use port **587 with STARTTLS** for outgoing mail, as in **common Outlook errors**.

4 **Reset the saved password:** in Windows, open **Credential Manager > Windows Credentials**, delete the entries for your e-mail address and reopen Outlook: it asks for the password again.

5 **Check the server settings:** mail.yourdomain, IMAP on port 993 with SSL/TLS, SMTP on 465 with SSL/TLS (or 587 with STARTTLS), user name equal to the full address.

6 **Test without a VPN and without the antivirus scanning e-mail.** If it connects that way, add Outlook to that program's exceptions.

! **Webmail working does not fix Outlook.**
If webmail opens and Outlook says "Disconnected", the server is answering: the problem is on the computer, the network or Outlook's settings. Changing the mailbox in cPanel will not help.

Quick trick:
Closing Outlook completely (check Task Manager that it is not still running) and opening it again clears many hung connections after the computer wakes from sleep.

NEED A HAND?

Still "Disconnected" on every network? Send us a screenshot of Outlook's bottom bar and your address.

Open a support ticket →

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