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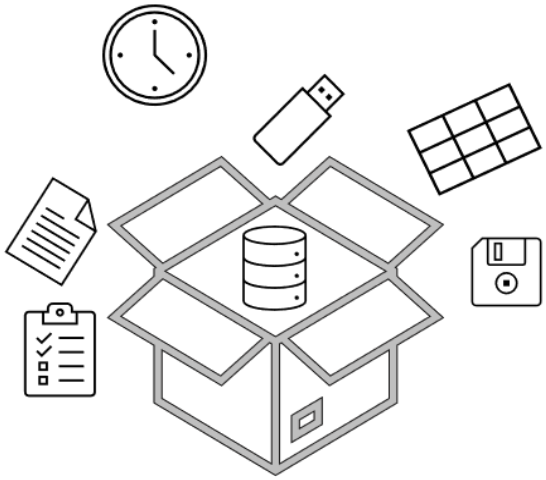
DATA NUDGE

A monthly reminder to manage your data

You can store all your data some of the time and some of your data all the time, but you cannot store all your data all of the time. How long should you keep your data? This is such a tricky topic that many times there are no strict rules. Instead, many organizations provide "frameworks" to help researchers think about retention periods -- for example, in NIH's Policy for Data Management and Sharing and the UK's Medical Research Council.

The reason that retention is murky is because how long research data should be kept depends on the nature of the research project and the type of the data. In the first Nudge of 2021, we introduce common factors to help you determine a retention period.



Considerations	
Federal regulatory policies	◦ If you have to keep your data to meet the compliance requirements, check the compliance policies for the data retention period. ◦ For example, federal award guidelines often point to the federal retention regulations: records shall be retained for at least 3 years after completion of the research.
Publisher requirements	◦ Publishers may also have specific requirements, which

	should be explicitly stated in their policy. ◦ For example, the Journal of Immunology's policy is 6 years based on federal records retention for research misconduct.
Potential re-use	◦ Retain your data as long as possible after the project for potental re-use.
Storage cost	◦ The cost of storage can be an important consideration. Check our Nudge on UIUC storage options that are free for affiliates. ◦ Other cloud services, like Amazon Web Services, offer many types of storage with different access and cost considerations.

How do I destroy my data when needed?

- Visit Data Destruction Nudge for more information on how to destroy your data.

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