

Frequently asked questions regarding Google Takeout and its use for clinical research

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What is data portability and Google Takeout?

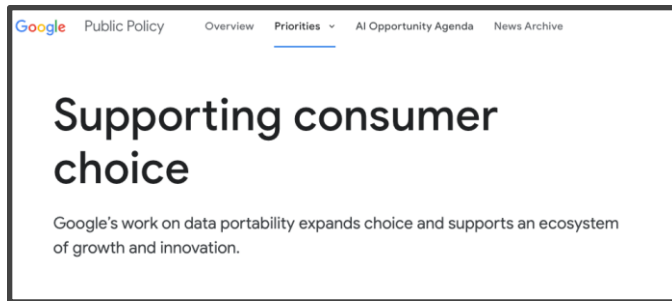
Data portability is the ability for users to obtain a copy of their data and move it to another service. Google Takeout is a centralized data portability tool that allows users to request a copy of their Google data.

Here is a YouTube video explaining data portability (not created by Google). It is quite easy (non-technical) viewing, using simple graphics to explain this concept

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= mVhmDnhrWo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVhmDnhrWo)

Why does Google offer Google Takeout?

Starting with the [formation of the Data Liberation team](#) in 2009, Google supports consumer choice: <https://publicpolicy.google/consumer-choice/>



What products can a user request their data for?

Google Takeout supports both content and activity data from over 80+ products including Search, Chrome, Youtube, Maps, Photos and more.

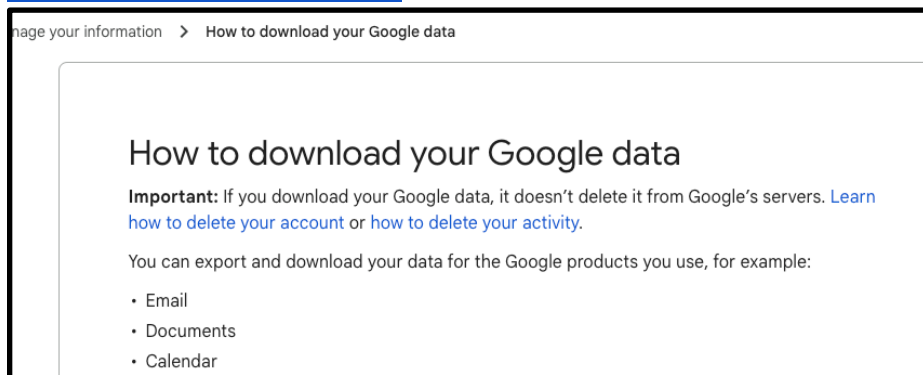
How do users receive their data and use it? What about the format?

Users can request a copy of their data to download to their personal device or export it to a cloud storage destination such as Drive, Dropbox, Box, and OneDrive. Once they have their data they can store it safely or upload it to another service.

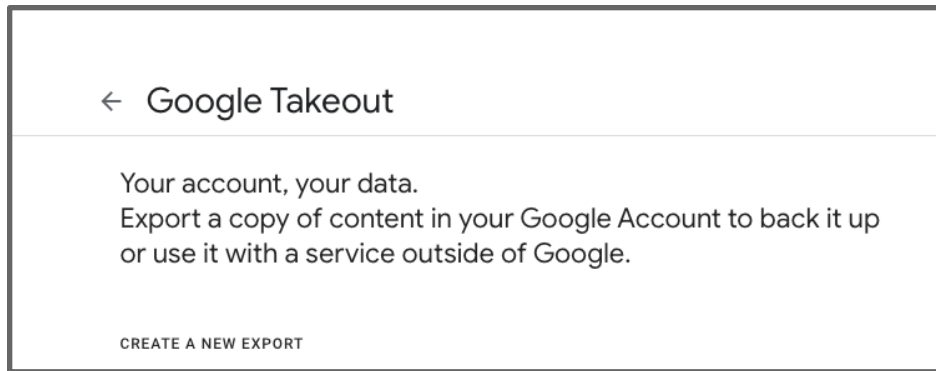
Data is exported in commonly used and machine readable formats such as JSON, CSV, or industry standard formats like MBOX.

Here are some user guides that are designed to help individuals download their Google data
'How to download your Google data'

<https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/3024190?hl=en#zippy=%2Ccan-my-app-customize-the-takeout-user-interface%2Chow-do-i-share-my-exported-takeout-data-with-a-third-party-app-or-website>



When an individual wants to download their Google data, they go to
<https://takeout.google.com/>



How far back can users get their data for?

Google Takeout will provide users with their data as far back as it is still stored. Unless a user turned off or changed their [web and app activity controls](#), then the user can receive their data from as far back as they have been using Google.

Does a user have to be logged into a Google account for their search history to be recorded?

Yes, a user needs to be logged into their Google account for search activity to be logged against their account.

If a user has different devices (phone, laptop), is the Takeout data aggregated?

Yes, all activity shows in one takeout request

For internet search history, does Takeout include just the words used in the search bar OR the search results, which ones the user might click on, and how long they spend there?

Search history includes your search terms and what sites you visited.

Some researchers used Google natural language processing (NLP) API to label search queries. Is this still an option to use?

Other researchers labeled search queries manually, and others have used Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) to analyze words in the search terms.

Cloud NLP API - <https://cloud.google.com/natural-language>

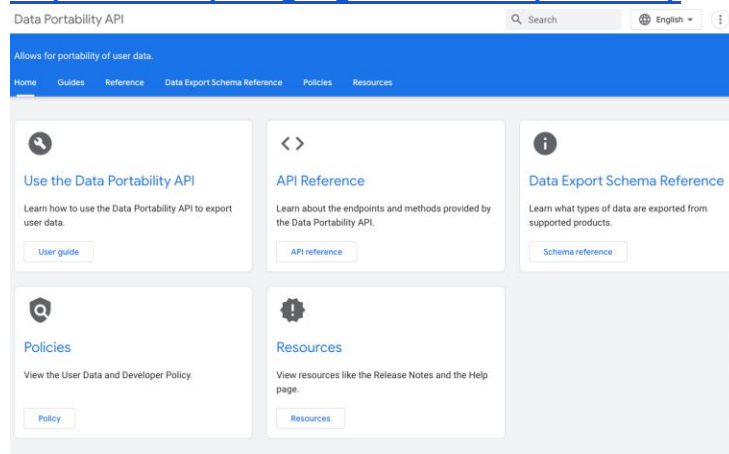
What are the different formats or methods by which Takeout data can be shared between a user and an academic researcher (with the user's consent)?

Three main methods:

1. Download and send to a researcher via email, SMTP server, or mail on a flash drive.
2. Export to a cloud storage (i.e. dropbox) and grant access to the researcher
3. ONLY available as of this year in the EU and UK - this aims to make it simpler than the above options. This **new API** lets a researcher build applications that request

authorization from a user to move a copy of their data (after they have given consent) into your application.

<https://developers.google.com/data-portability>



Some studies note that research participants were able to review their Takeout files/download and decide which parts they wanted to share with the researchers. Is this possible?

Not through Google Takeout.

Does Takeout search data differentiate search terms that the user entered correctly versus those where autocorrect occurred?

Only search terms that were submitted