

# How can I get temporary storage space?

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### Overview

If you need a large amount of disk space for a brief period, such as storing an ISO image before burning it to a CD or for compiling software, or manipulating large data sets, you have several options:

### /var/tmp

You can use the /var/tmp directory on your local workstation (if you're on an Athena dialup server, keep in mind that you're sharing this space with hundreds of other users, so don't use too much). To do that, just store files in /var/tmp/filename. Be sure to get rid of them when you log out, though! Use the "rm" command (making sure you are in the /var/tmp directory when doing so), otherwise you risk filling up the /var/tmp directory on the workstation, thus making it unusable.



Data stored in /var/tmp will be automatically removed after 3 days. However, it is a good idea to remove data from /var/tmp when you're done with it, particularly if it contains confidential information.



#### Private Workstation Owners Only

If you administer a private workstation, you can store data under /var/local. While data in /var/tmp will be removed after 3 days, data in /var/local will persist indefinitely. For more information, see the [Private Workstation Owners Guide](#).

### USB storage devices

For larger quantities of data, you may be able to use a USB hard drive. See [\[archive:How do I use USB drives on Athena?\]](#) for more information.

### Departmental Resources

Many departments maintain file servers or other electronic storage that you can use for academic purposes. Check with your department or professor for more information.

### Quota Increase

Depending on the amount of space you need, a quota increase might be the right choice. For more information, see [How can I increase my MIT Kerberos account quota?](#).