

Scale	Examples	Comments
Kilobytes (1955–1965)	Econometric models	Computerized econometric models work with kilobytes of data.
Megabytes (1965–1985)	US Census	Individual records from the US Census are aggregated into data files which are megabytes in size.
Gigabytes (1990–2000)	Human genome	The human genome is about 4 gigabytes.
Terabytes (1995–2015)	Sloan Digital Sky Survey	Scientific instruments can produce terabytes of data. For example, the Sloan Digital Sky Survey (data release 1) was a 2.5 terabyte size atlas of the sky.
Petabytes (2005–2025)	Climate simulations	Numerical simulations of global warming can produce petabytes of data.

Table 5.2: This table shows the approximate size of a data set that could be analyzed using the technology from the five different eras of computing that are described in Chapter 1. As the table shows, the scale of the data we can store, analyze, and use as a basis for discovery and decision support has increased by a factor of over a trillion in less than fifty years.