



Field Audit Trail Implementation Guide

Salesforce, Summer '25

Summer '25



CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| FIELD AUDIT TRAIL | 1 |
| DELETE FIELD HISTORY AND FIELD AUDIT TRAIL DATA | 3 |
| EXAMPLES | 5 |
| METADATA API REFERENCE | 8 |
| HistoryRetentionPolicy | 8 |
| SOAP API REFERENCE | 10 |
| FieldHistoryArchive | 10 |
| TOOLING API REFERENCE | 14 |
| HistoryRetentionJob | 14 |
| SOQL REFERENCE | 17 |
| SOQL with FieldHistoryArchive | 17 |
| Query Batches of Archived Field History Data | 18 |
| INDEX | 20 |

FIELD AUDIT TRAIL

Define a policy to retain archived field history data. Comply with industry regulations related to audit capability and data retention. Field history tracking data and Field Audit Trail data don't count against your data storage limits.

Use Salesforce Metadata API to define a field history retention policy for the fields that have history tracking enabled. Then use REST API, SOAP API, and Tooling API to work with your archived data. For information about enabling Field Audit Trail, contact your Salesforce representative.

Field history is copied from the History related list into the `FieldHistoryArchive` big object. To specify Field Audit Trail retention policies for the objects that you want to archive, define a `HistoryRetentionPolicy` for your related history lists, such as Account History. Then, deploy your policy by using Metadata API. You can update the retention policy on an object as often as needed. With Field Audit Trail, you can track up to 60 fields per object, and Salesforce retains archived field history data until you delete it. You can delete data that falls outside of your policy window. Without Field Audit Trail, you can track only up to 20 fields per object.

You can set field history retention policies on these objects.

- Accounts, including Person Accounts
- Assets
- Authorization Form Consent
- Campaigns
- Cases
- Communication Subscription Consent
- Contacts
- Contact Point Consent
- Contact Point Type Consent
- Contracts
- Contract Line Items
- Crisis
- Employee
- Employee Crisis Assessment
- Entitlements
- Individuals
- Internal Organization Unit
- Leads
- Net Zero Cloud objects
- Opportunities
- Orders
- Order Products
- Party Consent

EDITIONS

Available in: Salesforce Classic ([not available in all orgs](#)), Lightning Experience, and the Salesforce mobile app

Available in: **Enterprise**, **Performance**, and **Unlimited** Editions

Field Audit Trail

- Price Books
- Price Book Entries
- Products
- Service Appointments
- Service Contracts
- Solutions
- Work Orders
- Work Order Line Items
- Custom objects with field history tracking enabled

 **Note:** When Field Audit Trail is turned on, Salesforce relates `HistoryRetentionPolicy` automatically to the supported objects. By default, Salesforce archives data after 18 months in production, after one month in sandboxes, and stores all archived data until you delete it. Salesforce doesn't include the default retention policy when you retrieve the object's definition through Metadata API. Salesforce retrieves only custom retention policies with the object definition.

You can include field history retention policies in managed and unmanaged packages.

You can't track these fields:

- Formula, roll-up summary, or auto-number fields
- Created By and Last Modified By
- Expected Revenue field on opportunities
- Master Solution Title or the Master Solution Details fields on solutions
- Long text fields
- Multi-select fields

After you define and deploy a Field Audit Trail policy, Salesforce migrates production data from related history lists such as Account History into the `FieldHistoryArchive` big object. The first copy writes the field history that's defined by your policy to archive storage and sometimes takes a long time. Subsequent copies transfer only the changes since the last copy and are faster. A bounded set of SOQL is available to query your archived data. If you delete a record in your production data, the delete cascades to the related history tracking records, but Salesforce doesn't delete the history copied into the `FieldHistoryArchive` big object. For information about deleting data in `FieldHistoryArchive`, see [Delete Field History and Field Audit Trail Data](#).

 **Tip:** If you turn on Platform Encryption, the previously archived data remains unencrypted. For example, your organization uses Field Audit Trail to define a data history retention policy for an account field, such as the phone number field. After you turn on Platform Encryption, Salesforce encrypts the phone number data in the account, as well as new phone number records and previous updates stored in the Account History related list. But phone number history data already archived in the `FieldHistoryArchive` object remains stored without encryption. To encrypt previously archived data, contact Salesforce to encrypt and rearchive the stored field history data, and then delete the unencrypted archive.

DELETE FIELD HISTORY AND FIELD AUDIT TRAIL DATA

Use Apex or SOAP to delete field history and field history archive data.

To delete field history and audit trail data, the user permissions Delete From Field History and Delete From Field History Archive must be enabled through a permission set or a user profile. The org preferences to enable these permissions, Delete From Field History and Delete From Field History Archive, are located in **Setup | User Interface**.

Delete field history data, such as AccountHistory, by passing in a list of ID values as strings using the Apex or SOAP `delete()` method. The Apex `delete()` method also works with a list of `sObjects` with the `Id` field populated. Delete field history archive data from the `FieldHistoryArchive` big object using the SOAP `deleteByExample()` or Apex `Database.deleteImmediate()` methods.

The `sObject` acts like a template. All rows that match the `sObject`'s fields and values are deleted. You can only specify fields that are part of the big object's index. You must specify all fields in the index. You can't include a partially specified index or non-indexed field, and wildcards are not supported.

Sample for deleting AccountHistory:

```
List<AccountHistory> ah = new List<sObject>();
ah.addAll( [ SELECT Id FROM AccountHistory
WHERE AccountId = '001d000000Ky3xIAB' and CreatedDate = YESTERDAY ] );
Database.delete(ah);
```

Samples for deleting from FieldHistoryArchive:

```
List<FieldHistoryArchive> fha = new List<sObject>();
fha.addAll([SELECT FieldHistoryType, ParentId, CreatedDate, HistoryId FROM
FieldHistoryArchive
WHERE FieldHistoryType = 'Account' AND ParentId = '001d000000Ky3xIAB' AND CreatedDate =
'2017-11-28T19:13:36.000z' AND HistoryId = '017D000000ESURXIA5']);
Database.deleteImmediate(fha);
```

Alternatively, delete field history archive data with the SOAP call `deleteByExample()`. Declare an `sObject` containing the fields and values in the `FieldHistoryArchive` big object to delete. This example deletes all rows that meet the specified criteria.

```
public static void main(String[] args) {
    try{
        //Create two sObjects to delete and place them in an array of sObjects to pass to
        the delete method
        FieldHistoryArchive[] sObjectsToDelete = new FieldHistoryArchive[2];
        FieldHistoryArchive fha_1 = new FieldHistoryArchive();
        fha_1.setFieldHistoryType("Account");
        fha_1.setParentId("001d000000Ky3xIAB");
        Calendar dt = connection.getServerTimestamp().getTimestamp();
        dt.add(Calendar.DAY_OF_MONTH, -7);
        fha_1.setCreatedDate(dt);
        fha_1.setHistoryId("017D000000ESURXIA5");
        sObjectsToDelete[0] = fha_1;

        FieldHistoryArchive fha_2 = new FieldHistoryArchive();
        fha_2.setFieldHistoryType("Account");
        fha_2.setParentId("001d000000Ky3xIAB");
```

Delete Field History and Field Audit Trail Data

```
fha_2.setCreatedDate(dt);
fha_2.setHistoryId("017D000000ESURXIA5");
sObjectsToDelete[1] = fha_2;
DeleteByExampleResult[] result = connection.deleteByExample(sObjectsToDelete);
} catch (ConnectionException ce) {
    ce.printStackTrace();
}
}
```

 **Note:** Repeating a successful `deleteByExample()` operation produces a success result, even if the rows have already been deleted.

SEE ALSO:

[deleteByExample\(\)](#)

EXAMPLES

Here are some examples of field history workflows.

Set Data Retention Policy for Field History

This example demonstrates how to set a field history data retention policy using Metadata API. By default, field history data is not automatically deleted. Edit the metadata only if you want to override the default policy values of 18 months of production storage. Setting a data retention policy involves creating a metadata package and deploying it. The package consists of a `.zip` file and a project manifest that lists the objects and the API version to use. The `.zip` file contains an `objects` folder with the XML that defines each object's retention policy.

 **Note:** The first copy writes the entire field history that's defined by your policy to archive storage and takes a long time. Subsequent copies transfer only the changes since the last copy, and are faster.

1. Define a field history data retention policy for each object. The policy specifies the number of months that you want to maintain field history in Salesforce. The following sample file defines a policy of archiving the object after six months.

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<CustomObject xmlns="http://soap.sforce.com/2006/04/metadata">
  <historyRetentionPolicy>
    <archiveAfterMonths>6</archiveAfterMonths>
    <archiveRetentionYears>5</archiveRetentionYears>
    <description>My field history retention</description>
  </historyRetentionPolicy>
  ...
</CustomObject>
```

The file name determines the object to which the policy is applied. For example, to apply the preceding policy to the Account object, save the file as `Account.object`. For existing custom objects, the file is also named after the custom object. For example: `myObject__c.object`.

2. Create the project manifest, which is an XML file that's called `package.xml`. The following sample file lists several objects for which data retention policy is to be applied. With this manifest file, you expect the objects folder to contain five files: `Account.object`, `Case.object`, and so on.

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<Package xmlns="http://soap.sforce.com/2006/04/metadata">
  <types>
    <members>Account</members>
    <members>Case</members>
    <members>Contact</members>
    <members>Lead</members>
    <members>Opportunity</members>
    <name>CustomObject</name>
  </types>
  <version>45.0</version>
</Package>
```

Examples

3. Create the `.zip` file and use the `deploy()` function to deploy your changes to your production environment. For more information, see the [Metadata API Guide](#).

 **Note:** This feature doesn't support deployment from sandbox to production environments.

That's it! Your field history retention policy goes into effect according to the time periods that you set.

Create a Custom Object and Set Field History Retention Policy at the Same Time

You can use Metadata API to create a custom object and set retention policy at the same time. Specify the minimum required fields when creating a custom object. This sample XML creates an object and sets field history retention policy.

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<CustomObject xmlns="http://soap.sforce.com/2006/04/metadata">
  <deploymentStatus>Deployed</deploymentStatus>
  <enableHistory>true</enableHistory>
  <description>just a test object with one field for eclipse ide testing</description>
  <historyRetentionPolicy>
    <archiveAfterMonths>3</archiveAfterMonths>
    <archiveRetentionYears>10</archiveRetentionYears>
    <gracePeriodDays>1</gracePeriodDays>
    <description>Transaction Line History</description>
  </historyRetentionPolicy>
  <fields>
    <fullName>Comments__c</fullName>
    <description>add your comments about this object here</description>
    <inlineHelpText>This field contains comments made about this object</inlineHelpText>

    <label>Comments</label>
    <length>32000</length>
    <trackHistory>true</trackHistory>
    <type>LongTextArea</type>
    <visibleLines>30</visibleLines>
  </fields>
  <label>MyFirstObject</label>
  <nameField>
    <label>MyFirstObject Name</label>
    <type>Text</type>
  </nameField>
  <pluralLabel>MyFirstObjects</pluralLabel>
  <sharingModel>ReadWrite</sharingModel>
</CustomObject>
```

Set `trackHistory` to `true` on the fields that you want to track and `false` on the other fields.

Update Data Retention Policy for Field History

If a field history data retention policy is already defined on an object, you can update the policy by specifying a new value of `HistoryRetentionPolicy` in the metadata for that object. When you deploy the metadata changes, the new policy overwrites the previous one.

 **Note:** To check the current data retention policy for any object, retrieve its metadata using Metadata API and look up the value of `HistoryRetentionPolicy`.

Query Archived Data

You can retrieve archived data by making SOQL queries on the `FieldHistoryArchive` object. You can filter on the `FieldHistoryType`, `ParentId`, and `CreatedDate` fields, as long as you specify them in that order. For example:

```
SELECT ParentId, FieldHistoryType, Field, Id, NewValue, OldValue FROM FieldHistoryArchive
WHERE FieldHistoryType = 'Account' AND ParentId='001D000000INjVe'
```

METADATA API REFERENCE

HistoryRetentionPolicy

Represents the policy for archiving field history data. When you set a policy, you specify the number of months that you want to keep field history in Salesforce before archiving it. By default, when Field Audit Trail is enabled, all field history is retained.

This component is only available to users with the RetainFieldHistory permission.

Declarative Metadata File Suffix and Directory Location

Field history retention policies are defined as part of a standard or custom object. You can set field history retention policies for objects individually. See CustomObject for more information.

Version

Available in API version 31.0 and later.

Fields

| Field Name | Field Type | Description |
|------------------------------------|------------|---|
| <code>archiveAfterMonths</code> | int | Required. The number of months that you want to keep field history data in Salesforce before archiving. You can set a minimum of 1 month and a maximum of 18 months. If you don't set a number, the default is 18 months. (That is, Salesforce maintains data for 18 months before archiving.) |
| <code>archiveRetentionYears</code> | int | The number of years until you manually delete data from the archive. Use this field as a reminder for manually deleting data. By default, field history data isn't automatically deleted when Field Audit Trail is enabled. |
| <code>description</code> | string | A text description for the history retention. |
| <code>gracePeriodDays</code> | int | The number of days of extra time after the <code>archiveAfterMonths</code> period before the data is archived. The <code>gracePeriodDays</code> interval applies only to the first time that the data is archived; because all the data is copied the first time, the operation can take longer than subsequent times when only the data that changed since the last archival operation is copied. The <code>gracePeriodDays</code> provides extra time for the administrator to prepare the organization before the initial archive operation. You can set a minimum of zero days and a maximum of 10 days. If no number is set, the default is 1 day. |

Declarative Metadata Sample Definition

This sample shows the definition of a history retention policy for a custom object.

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<CustomObject xmlns="http://soap.sforce.com/2006/04/metadata">
  <historyRetentionPolicy>
    <archiveAfterMonths>6</archiveAfterMonths>
    <archiveRetentionYears>5</archiveRetentionYears>
    <description>My field history retention</description>
  </historyRetentionPolicy>

  ...
</CustomObject>
```

SOAP API REFERENCE

FieldHistoryArchive

Represents field history values for all objects that retain field history. `FieldHistoryArchive` is a big object, available only to users with the "Retain Field History" permission. This object is available in API version 29.0 and later.

Each instance of the `FieldHistoryArchive` object represents a single change in the value of a field. `FieldHistoryArchive` stores history for both standard and custom fields.

The `Field` field returns the name of the field unless the parent field or object is deleted, in which case it returns the field ID. You can use the ID to retrieve the old field and object name from the `FieldNameAfterArchival` and `ParentNameAfterArchival` fields, respectively.

Supported Calls

`describeSObjects()`, `query()`

Fields

| Field Name | Details |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <code>ArchiveFieldName</code> | <p>Type string</p> <p>Properties Nillable</p> <p>Description The name of the field at the time the data was archived. If the field name changed, the name is sometimes not the same for all records related to a single field.</p> |
| <code>ArchiveParentName</code> | <p>Type string</p> <p>Properties Nillable</p> <p>Description The name of the parent object at the time the data was archived. If the object name changed, the name is sometimes not the same for all records related to a single field.</p> |
| <code>ArchiveParentType</code> | <p>Type string</p> <p>Properties Nillable</p> |

| Field Name | Details |
|------------------|---|
| | <p>Description</p> <p>The type of the field at the time the data was archived. If the field type changed, the type is sometimes not the same for all records related to a single field.</p> |
| ArchiveTimestamp | <p>Type</p> <p>dateTime</p> <p>Properties</p> <p>Nullable</p> <p>Description</p> <p>The date and time at which the data was archived.</p> |
| CreatedById | <p>Type</p> <p>reference</p> <p>Properties</p> <p>Nullable</p> <p>Description</p> <p>The user ID of the user who created the original record.</p> |
| CreatedDate | <p>Type</p> <p>dateTime</p> <p>Properties</p> <p>Nullable, Sort</p> <p>Description</p> <p>The date and time at which the original record was created.</p> |
| Field | <p>Type</p> <p>picklist</p> <p>Properties</p> <p>Restricted picklist</p> <p>Description</p> <p>The name of the field that was changed. If the field is deleted from the parent object, the <code>Field</code> field contains the field ID instead.</p> |
| FieldHistoryType | <p>Type</p> <p>picklist</p> <p>Properties</p> <p>Filter, Nullable, Restricted picklist, Sort</p> <p>Description</p> <p>The name of the object that contains the field history. Possible values are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Account • Article |

| Field Name | Details |
|------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset • AuthorizationFormConsent – Available in version 58.0 and later. • Case • CommSubscriptionConsent – Available in version 58.0 and later. • Contact • ContactPointConsent – Available in version 58.0 and later. • ContactPointTypeConsent – Available in version 58.0 and later. • Contract • ContractLineItem • Crisis • Employee • EmployeeCrisisAssessment • Entitlement • Individual • InternalOrganizationUnit • Knowledge • Lead • Opportunity • Order • OrderItem • PartyConsent – Available in version 58.0 and later. • Pricebook2 • PricebookEntry • Product2 • ServiceAppointment • ServiceContract • Solution • WorkOrder • WorkOrderLineItem |
| HistoryId | <p>Type reference</p> <p>Properties Filter, Sort</p> <p>Description The ID of the relevant history object (for example, AccountHistory). This field is available in versions 42.0 and later.</p> |

| Field Name | Details |
|------------|---|
| Id | <p>Type ID</p> <p>Properties Defaulted on create, Filter, idLookup</p> <p>Description The ID of the archived record. It's useful to have a field's ID for fields that you've deleted. (Field names aren't retained in history when you delete fields from Salesforce.)</p> |
| NewValue | <p>Type anyType</p> <p>Properties Nillable</p> <p>Description The new value of the modified field.</p> |
| OldValue | <p>Type anyType</p> <p>Properties Nillable</p> <p>Description The previous value of the modified field.</p> |
| ParentId | <p>Type reference</p> <p>Properties Filter, Sort</p> <p>Description The ID of the object that contains the field (the parent object).</p> |

Usage

When sorting fields, order them as follows:

1. FieldHistoryType ASC
2. ParentID ASC
3. CreatedDate DESC

TOOLING API REFERENCE

HistoryRetentionJob

Represents the body of retained data from the archive, and the status of the archived data. Available in API version 29.0 or later.

Supported SOAP API Calls

`describeSObjects()`, `query()`

Supported REST API HTTP Methods

GET

Fields

| Field Name | Details |
|------------------------------|--|
| <code>DurationSeconds</code> | <p>Type int</p> <p>Properties Filter, Group, Nillable, Sort</p> <p>Description How many seconds the field history retention job took to complete (whether successful or not).</p> |
| <code>HistoryType</code> | <p>Type picklist</p> <p>Properties Create, Filter, Group, Nillable, Restricted picklist, Sort</p> <p>Description The object type that contains the field history that you retained. Valid values for standard objects are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Account• Case• Contact• Leads• Opportunity <p>For custom objects, use the object name.</p> |

| Field Name | Details |
|----------------------|--|
| NumberOfRowsRetained | <p>Type int</p> <p>Properties Filter, Group, Nillable, Sort</p> <p>Description The number of field history rows that a field history retention job has retained.</p> |
| RetainOlderThanDate | <p>Type dateTime</p> <p>Properties Filter, Sort</p> <p>Description The date and time before which all field history data was retained.</p> |
| StartDate | <p>Type dateTime</p> <p>Properties Filter, Nillable, Sort</p> <p>Description The start date of the field history retention job.</p> |
| Status | <p>Type picklist</p> <p>Properties Filter, Group, Nillable, Restricted picklist, Sort</p> <p>Description Provides the status of the field history retention job. By default, field history tracking copies data to the archive, leaving a duplicate of the archived data in Salesforce. You can delete data from Salesforce manually after it's archived.</p> <p>Status can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CopyScheduled • CopyRunning • CopySucceeded • CopyFailed • CopyKilled • NothingToArchive • DeleteScheduled • DeleteRunning • DeleteSucceeded • DeleteFailed |

Field Name

Details

-
- DeleteKilled
-

SOQL REFERENCE

SOQL with FieldHistoryArchive

You can use a subset of SOQL commands to query `FieldHistoryArchive`.

The allowed subset of SOQL commands lets you retrieve archived data for finer-grained processing. You can use the `WHERE` clause to filter the query by specifying comparison expressions for the `FieldHistoryType`, `ParentId`, and `CreatedDate` fields. You must specify the `FieldHistoryType` first, followed by either `ParentId` or `CreatedDate`. You can use `=`, `<`, `>`, `<=`, or `>=`, or `IN` on the last field in your query. Any prior fields in your query can only use the `=` operator. The `!=`, `LIKE`, `NOT IN`, `EXCLUDES`, and `INCLUDES` operators are not valid in any query.

You can use the `LIMIT` clause to limit the number of returned results. If you don't use the `LIMIT` clause, a maximum of 2,000 results are returned. You can retrieve more batches of results by using `queryMore()`.

```
SELECT fieldList
FROM FieldHistoryArchive
[WHERE FieldHistoryType expression [AND ParentId expression[AND CreatedDate expression]]
]
[LIMIT rows]
```

Examples: Allowed Queries

Unfiltered

```
SELECT ParentId, FieldHistoryType, Field, Id, NewValue, OldValue
FROM FieldHistoryArchive
```

Filtered on FieldHistoryType

```
SELECT ParentId, FieldHistoryType, Field, Id, NewValue, OldValue
FROM FieldHistoryArchive
WHERE FieldHistoryType = 'Account'
```

Filtered on FieldHistoryType and ParentId

```
SELECT ParentId, FieldHistoryType, Field, Id, NewValue, OldValue
FROM FieldHistoryArchive
WHERE FieldHistoryType = 'Account' AND ParentId='906F00000008unAIAQ'
```

Filtered on FieldHistoryType, ParentId, and CreatedDate

```
SELECT ParentId, FieldHistoryType, Field, Id, NewValue, OldValue
FROM FieldHistoryArchive
WHERE FieldHistoryType = 'Account' AND ParentId='906F00000008unAIAQ' AND CreatedDate >
LAST_MONTH
```

Filtered on FieldHistoryType and CreatedDate

```
SELECT ParentId, FieldHistoryType, Field, Id, NewValue, OldValue
FROM FieldHistoryArchive
WHERE FieldHistoryType = 'Account' AND CreatedDate >= LAST_MONTH
```

The following table describes the SOQL functions that are available for querying archived fields.



Note: All number fields that are returned from a SOQL query of archived objects are in standard notation, not scientific notation as in the number fields in the entity history of standard objects.

Table 1: SOQL Functions Available for Archived Fields

| Functionality | Details |
|---------------|--|
| DATE LITERALS | <i>yesterday, last_week</i> , and so on |
| LIMIT | |
| WHERE | Filtering only on <code>FieldHistoryType</code> , <code>ParentId</code> , and <code>CreatedDate</code> |

Query Batches of Archived Field History Data

You can query Field Audit Trail entries stored on the `FieldHistoryArchive` object.

To return a large number of results, use a URL query.

EDITIONS

Available in: Salesforce Classic ([not available in all orgs](#)), Lightning Experience, and the Salesforce mobile app

Available in: **Enterprise**, **Performance**, and **Unlimited** Editions

```
/services/data/vXX.X/jobs/query
```

Here's an example Post request.

```
{
  "operation": "query",
  "query": "SELECT ParentId, FieldHistoryType, Field, Id, NewValue, OldValueFROM
FieldHistoryArchive WHERE FieldHistoryType = 'Account' AND CreatedDate > LAST_MONTH"
}
```

For more information about Bulk API queries, read [Get Results for a Query Job](#) in the Bulk API 2.0 and Bulk API Developer Guide.

You can also make a CURL request.

```
curl --include --request GET \
--header "Authorization: Bearer token" \
--header "Accept: text/csv" \
```

```
https://instance.salesforce.com/services/data/vXX.X/jobs/query/750R0000000zxr8IAA/results  
?maxRecords=50000
```

These examples result in a CSV file that you can examine for auditing purposes.

INDEX

D

Delete [3](#)

S

SOQL

Supported by Field Audit Trail [17](#)