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### [Should I add a lifetime for variable or pass it between functions Rust](#)

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I have an LdapConn that I am passing around to multiple functions. Currently I'm passing the ldap variable to a function and then returning it. Inside of the function I'm not doing any dangerous modification of the LdapConn, I'm just changing the search result part. Passing it around works, but what's the best way to make a variable last the length of my program?

```
//main.rs
let mut ldap: LdapConn = LdapConn::with_settings(
    LdapConnSettings::new()
        .set_no_tls_verify(true)
        .set_starttls(true),
    "ldaps://ldap.example.com:636",
)
.unwrap();

//other_file.rs
pub fn get_group_members(group: &str, mut conn: LdapConn) -> (LdapConn, Vec<String>) {
    let (s_filter, ou) = split_dn(group);
    let search_result = conn
        .search(
            &ou,
            Scope::Subtree,
            &format!("(&(objectClass=group)({}))", s_filter),
            vec![ "member" ],
        )
        .unwrap();
    let resp: Vec<
        std::collections::HashMap<std::string::String, std::vec::Vec<std::string::String>>,
    > = search_result
        .0
        .iter()
        .map(|x| SearchEntry::construct(x.clone()).attrs)
        .collect();

    (conn, trim_users(resp[0].get("member").unwrap().to_vec()))
}
```

```
//main.rs
let (ldap, users) = get_group_members(group, ldap);
```

PS: LdapConn is not cloneable

<https://docs.rs/ldap3/latest/ldap3/struct.LdapConn.html>

The API is virtually identical to the asynchronous one. The chief difference is that LdapConn is not cloneable: if you need another handle, you must open a new connection.

- [rust](#)

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[edited Aug 2, 2022 at 15:45](#)[Silvio Mayolo](#)

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asked Aug 2, 2022 at 15:35

[Brandon Kauffman](#)

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## 1 Answer

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2

You should always take the least intrusive thing you can. That means: If you can take a `&`, you should do that. If not, you should take a `&mut` if you can. And only if you have no other option should you take ownership of a value. In your case, you're going to need unique access to the connection, so `&` is out of the question. `&mut`, however, is fair game.

```
pub fn get_group_members(group: &str, conn: &mut LdapConn) -> Vec<String> {
    ...
}

// main.rs
let mut ldap = ...;
let users = get_group_members(group, &mut ldap);
```

What you've stumbled upon (namely, that you can pass ownership and take it back) is called [linear typing](#). It's the origin of Rust's type system, on which the borrow checker is built. There's nothing inherently *wrong* (mathematically) with always passing ownership and taking it back, except that it gets very tedious to constantly be accepting ownership back of things you just gave away. That's exactly why Rust allows borrowing, to prevent that sort of situation from getting out of hand.

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answered Aug 2, 2022 at 15:41

[Silvio Mayolo](#)

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Brandon Kauffman

[Brandon Kauffman](#) Over a year ago

Awesome. This makes a lot of sense. I was previously try `fn(mut conn: &LdapConn)` which lead me down a wrong path. I now understand the difference of what I am borrowing.

2022-08-02T15:46:13.617Z+00:00

0

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Silvio Mayolo

[Silvio Mayolo](#) Over a year ago

`mut conn: &LdapConn` is a mutable variable containing an immutable reference, so in that case you would be permitted to reassign the variable to point to something else, but you can't mutate what's inside of it. `conn: &mut LdapConn` is a mutable reference and allows you to deeply change what's inside.

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Sven Marnach

[Sven Marnach](#) Over a year ago

Sometimes you take ownership even if you don't have to to improve ergonomics, e.g. when using the [builder pattern](#). For the case the OP asked about I can't see any advantage of passing ownership, though.

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