Static Site Generation (SSG)

▶ **Examples**

If a page uses **Static Generation**, the page HTML is generated at **build time**. That means in production, the page HTML is generated when you run `next build`. This HTML will then be reused on each request. It can be cached by a CDN.

In Next.js, you can statically generate pages **with or without data**. Let's take a look at each case.

Static Generation without data

By default, Next.js pre-renders pages using Static Generation without fetching data. Here's an example:

```
function About() {
  return <div>About</div>;
}

export default About;
```

Note that this page does not need to fetch any external data to be pre-rendered. In cases like this, Next.js generates a single HTML file per page during build time.

Static Generation with data

Some pages require fetching external data for pre-rendering. There are two scenarios, and one or both might apply. In each case, you can use these functions that Next.js provides:

1. Your page **content** depends on external data: Use `getStaticProps`.
2. Your page **paths** depend on external data: Use `getStaticPaths` (usually in addition to `getStaticProps`).

Scenario 1: Your page content depends on external data

Example: Your blog page might need to fetch the list of blog posts from a CMS (content management system).

```
// TODO: Need to fetch `posts` (by calling some API endpoint)
//       before this page can be pre-rendered.
export default function Blog({ posts }) {
  return (
    <ul>
      {posts.map((post) => (
        <li>{post.title}</li>
      ))}
    </ul>
  );
}
```

To fetch this data on pre-render, Next.js allows you to `export` an `async` function called `getStaticProps` from the same file. This function gets called at build time and lets you pass fetched data to the page's `props` on pre-render.

```
export default function Blog({ posts }) {
  // Render posts...
}

// This function gets called at build time
export async function getStaticProps() {
  // Call an external API endpoint to get posts
  const res = await fetch('https://.../posts');
  const posts = await res.json();

  // By returning { props: { posts } }, the Blog component
  // will receive `posts` as a prop at build time
  return {
    props: {
      posts,
    },
  };
}
```

To learn more about how `getStaticProps` works, check out the Data Fetching documentation.

Scenario 2: Your page paths depend on external data

Next.js allows you to create pages with **dynamic routes**. For example, you can create a file called `pages/posts/[id].js` to show a single blog post based on `id`. This will allow you to show a blog post with `id: 1` when you access `posts/1`.

To learn more about dynamic routing, check the Dynamic Routing documentation.

However, which `id` you want to pre-render at build time might depend on external data.

Example: suppose that you've only added one blog post (with `id: 1`) to the database. In this case, you'd only want to pre-render `posts/1` at build time.

Later, you might add the second post with `id: 2`. Then you'd want to pre-render `posts/2` as well.

So your page **paths** that are pre-rendered depend on external data**.** To handle this, Next.js lets you `export` an `async` function called `getStaticPaths` from a dynamic page (`pages/posts/[id].js` in this case). This function gets called at build time and lets you specify which paths you want to pre-render.

```
// This function gets called at build time
export async function getStaticPaths() {
  // Call an external API endpoint to get posts
  const res = await fetch('https://.../posts');
  const posts = await res.json();

  // Get the paths we want to pre-render based on posts
  const paths = posts.map((post) => ({
    params: { id: post.id },
  }));

  // We'll pre-render only these paths at build time.
  // { fallback: false } means other routes should 404.
  return { paths, fallback: false };
}
```

Also in `pages/posts/[id].js`, you need to export `getStaticProps` so that you can fetch the data about the post with this `id` and use it to pre-render the page:

```
export default function Post({ post }) {
  // Render post...
}

export async function getStaticPaths() {
  // ...
}

// This also gets called at build time
export async function getStaticProps({ params }) {
  // params contains the post `id`.
  // If the route is like /posts/1, then params.id is 1
  const res = await fetch(`https://.../posts/${params.id}`);
  const post = await res.json();

  // Pass post data to the page via props
  return { props: { post } };
}
```

To learn more about how `getStaticPaths` works, check out the Data Fetching documentation.

When should I use Static Generation?

We recommend using **Static Generation** (with and without data) whenever possible because your page can be built once and served by CDN, which makes it much faster than having a server render the page on every request.

You can use Static Generation for many types of pages, including:

- Marketing pages
- Blog posts and portfolios
- E-commerce product listings
- Help and documentation

You should ask yourself: "Can I pre-render this page **ahead** of a user's request?" If the answer is yes, then you should choose Static Generation.

On the other hand, Static Generation is **not** a good idea if you cannot pre-render a page ahead of a user's request. Maybe your page shows frequently updated data, and the page content changes on every request.

In cases like this, you can do one of the following:

- Use Static Generation with **Client-side data fetching:** You can skip pre-rendering some parts of a page and then use client-side JavaScript to populate them. To learn more about this approach, check out the Data Fetching documentation.
- Use **Server-Side Rendering:** Next.js pre-renders a page on each request. It will be slower because the page cannot be cached by a CDN, but the pre-rendered page will always be up-to-date. We'll talk about this approach below.