

Data Sources

Data sources work pretty much as “read-only” resources, in the sense that we can get information about existing ones but can't create or change them. They are usually used to fetch parameters needed to create other resources.

Data sources allow Terraform to use information defined outside of Terraform.

Using Data Sources

A data source is accessed via a special kind of resource known as a *data resource*, declared using a `data` block:

```
data "aws_ami" "example" {  
}
```

A `data` block requests that Terraform read from a given data source ("aws_ami") and export the result under the given local name ("example"). The name is used to refer to this resource from elsewhere in the same Terraform module.

The data source and name together serve as an identifier for a given resource and so must be unique within a module.

Within the block body (between `{` and `}`) are query constraints defined by the data source. Most arguments in this section depend on the data source, and indeed in this example `most_recent`, `owners` and `tags` are all arguments defined specifically for [the aws_ami data source](#).