

# Best Practices for Databases

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## Data Is Power

Behind every website, every app, every digital experience is a **database** — an organized collection of information that makes everything work. Understanding databases isn't just for engineers. It's for anyone who wants to build something that lasts.

## What Databases Do

A database stores, organizes, and retrieves information. When you:

- Search for a product on an e-commerce site
- Log into an account
- Post content to a blog
- Save a document in the cloud

...you're interacting with a database. It's the foundation of digital infrastructure.

## Best Practices for Builders

Whether you're building a simple website or a complex application, these principles apply:

**1. Start with structure.** Before you build anything, map out what data you need and how it relates. A blog needs posts, authors, categories. An e-commerce site needs products, customers, orders. Plan first.

**2. Normalize thoughtfully.** Avoid duplicating data. If an author's name changes, you should only update it in one place. But don't over-normalize — sometimes duplicating data improves

performance.

**3. Index strategically.** Indexes make searches fast, but they slow down writes and take up space. Index the fields you actually search on.

**4. Back up religiously.** Data loss is catastrophic. Automated, tested backups are non-negotiable.

**5. Secure everything.** Encrypt sensitive data. Use strong authentication. Limit access to who needs it. Your users trust you with their information.

## The Bigger Picture

Databases aren't just technical artifacts. They're **structures of power**. Who designs the database decides what gets remembered and what gets forgotten. What's easy to find and what's invisible.

When The Pillars build their own databases — their own archives, their own knowledge systems — they reclaim the power to define their own narratives.

**Data infrastructure is cultural infrastructure. Build it with intention.**