Common conversions

The following table summarizes some of the more common conversions made with the **CAST** function. Refer to [Conversion Rules in Standard SQL](https://cloud.google.com/bigquery/docs/reference/standard-sql/conversion_rules) for a full list of functions and associated rules.

| **Starting with** | **CAST function can convert to:** |
| --- | --- |
| Numeric (number) | - Integer - Numeric (number) - Big number - Floating integer - String |
| String | - Boolean - Integer - Numeric (number) - Big number - Floating integer - String - Bytes - Date - Date time - Time - Timestamp |
| Date | - String - Date - Date time - Timestamp |

In the above SQL statement, the following occurs:

* **SELECT** indicates that you will be selecting data from a table
* **CAST** indicates that you will be converting the data you select to a different data type
* **AS** indicates that you are assigning an alias to the data in the table
* **STRING** indicates that you are converting the data to a string
* **FROM** indicates which table you are selecting the data from

Datetime values have the format of YYYY-MM-DD hh: mm: ss format, so date and time are retained together. The following **CAST** statement returns a datetime value from a date.

The SAFE\_CAST function

Using the **CAST** function in a query that fails returns an error in BigQuery. To avoid errors in the event of a failed query, use the **SAFE\_CAST** function instead. The **SAFE\_CAST** function returns a value of Null instead of an error when a query fails.

The syntax for **SAFE\_CAST** is the same as for **CAST**. Simply substitute the function directly in your queries. The following **SAFE\_CAST** statement returns a string from a date.