**State management:**

We application works on http/https protocol which is stateless (data will not be stored after post back or when browser will refresh). State management is technique to maintain the state of data or keep data as it is after post back or refresh.

**There are several ways to do this in ASP.NET MVC -**

* Hidden Field
* Cookies
* Query String
* ViewData
* ViewBag
* TempData
* Session (pure server side)

**Hidden Field**

It is not new, we all know it from HTML programming. Hidden field is used to hide your data on client side. It is not directly visible to the user on UI but we can see the value in the page source. So, this is not recommended if you want to store a sensitive data. It’s only used to store a small amount of data which is frequently changed.

The following code is storing the Id of employee and its value is 1001.

@Html.HiddenFor(x=>x.Id)

@Html.Hidden(id=”ab”)

If you open the page source code for that page in the browser, you will find the following line of code, which is nothing but the HTML version of the above code with value. Just focus on last three attributes.

<input data-val="true" data-val-number="The field Id must be a number." data-val-required="The Id field is required." id="Id" name="Id" type="hidden" value="1001" />

**Cookies**

Cookies are used for storing the data but that data should be small. It is like a small text file where we can store our data. The good thing is that a cookie is created on client side memory in the browser. Most of the times, we use a cookie for storing the user information after login with some expiry time.

Basically, a cookie is created by the server and sent to the browser in response. The browser saves it in client-side memory.

We can also use cookies in ASP.NET MVC for maintaining the data on request and respond. It can be like the below code.

HttpCookie cookie = new HttpCookie("TestCookie");

cookie.Value = "This is test cookie";

HttpCookie cookie2 = new HttpCookie("TestCookie2");

Cookie2.Value = "This is test cookie";

this.ControllerContext.HttpContext.Response.Cookies.Add(cookie);

this.ControllerContext.HttpContext.Response.Cookies.Add(cookie2);

Here, we have created one cookie and named it as “TestCookie”. We can create multiple cookies and add with Response. For getting the value from an existing cookie, we first need to check that the cookie is available or not; then, we can access the value of the cookie.

if (this.ControllerContext.HttpContext.Request.Cookies.AllKeys.Contains("TestCookie"))

{

HttpCookie cookie = this.ControllerContext.HttpContext.Request.Cookies["TestCookie"];

ViewBag.CookieMessage = cookie.Value;

}

Cookies are all depended on expiry, you can create a cookie on one action method in a controller and it will save on the client side and can be accessed in another action method easily.

**Query String**

In ASP.NET, we generally use a query string to pass the value from one page to the next page. Same we can do in ASP.NET MVC as well.

http://localhost:49985/home/editemployee?name=TestValue

public string editemployee(string name){

}

**ViewData**

It helps us to maintain your data when sending the data from Controller to View. It is a dictionary object and derived from ViewDataDictionary. As it is a dictionary object, it takes the data in a key-value pair.

Once you create ViewData object, pass the value, and make redirection; the value will become null. The data of ViewData is not valid for next subsequent request. Take care of two things when using ViewData, first, check for null and second, check for typecasting for complex data types.

public ActionResult Index()

{

Employee emp = new Employee()

{

Id = 1001,

Name = "Jatin",

Address = "New Delhi",

Age = 25

};

ViewData["Message"] = "This is ViewData";

ViewData["Emp"] = emp;

return View();

}

The above code contains two ViewData dictionary objects - ViewData["Message"] and ViewData["Emp"]. The first one is a simple string value but the next one contains complex employee data. When the View is going to render, we need to first check the ViewData for null and if it is not, then we can get the value.

@{

ViewBag.Title = "Home Page";

}

<div class="row">

<div class="col-md-4">

<h2>Employee Details</h2>

<br />

<p>

@if(ViewData["Message"] !=null)

{

<b>@ViewData["Message"].ToString();</b>

}

</p>

<br />

@if (ViewData["Emp"] != null)

{

var emp = (MVCStateManagement.Models.Employee)ViewData["Emp"];

<table>

<tr>

<td>

Name :

</td>

<td>

@emp.Name

</td>

</tr>

<tr>

<td>

Address :

</td>

<td>

@emp.Address

</td>

</tr>

<tr>

<td>

Age :

</td>

<td>

@emp.Age

</td>

</tr>

</table>

}

</div>

</div>

ASP.NET

**ViewBag**

The ViewBag’s task is same as that of ViewData. It is also used to transfer the data from Controller to View. However, the only difference is that ViewBag is an object of Dynamic property introduced in C# 4.a. It is a wrapper around ViewData. If you use ViewBag rather than ViewData, you will not have to do typecasting with the complex objects and do not need to check for null.

If we consider the same above code with ViewBag, the output will be same.

public ActionResult Index()

{

Employee emp = new Employee()

{

Id = 1001,

Name = "Mukesh Kumar",

Address = "New Delhi",

Age = 25

};

ViewBag.Message = "This is ViewBag";

ViewBag.Emp = emp;

return View();

}

On View, you have to change ViewData with ViewBag.

@{

ViewBag.Title = "Home Page";

}

<div class="row">

<div class="col-md-4">

<h2>Employee Details</h2>

<br />

<p>

<b>@ViewBag.Message</b>

</p>

<br />

@{

var emp = ViewBag.Emp;

<table>

<tr>

<td>

Name :

</td>

<td>

@emp.Name

</td>

</tr>

<tr>

<td>

Address :

</td>

<td>

@emp.Address

</td>

</tr>

<tr>

<td>

Age :

</td>

<td>

@emp.Age

</td>

</tr>

</table>

}

</div>

</div>

**Note:**

If you are using ViewData that is not defined on Controller, then it will throw an error; but with ViewBag, it will not.

Do not use ViewBag and ViewData with the same name, otherwise, only one message will display. See the following code in the controller is using both ViewData and ViewBag with same name “Message”.

public ActionResult Index()

{

ViewData["Message"] = "This is ViewData";

ViewBag.Message = "This is ViewBag";

return View();

}

On view defined both as following.

<b>@ViewBag.Message</b>

@if(ViewData["Message"]!=null)

{

ViewData["Message"].ToString();

}

The output will show only one message and that will be the last one [in this case, message will be “This is ViewBag”].

**TempData:**

TempData is also a dictionary object as ViewData and stores value in key/value pair. It is derived from TempDataDictionary. It is mainly used to transfer the data from one request to another request or we can say subsequent request. If the data for TempData has been read, then it will get cleaned. To persist the data, there are different ways. It all depends on how you read the data.

If you haven’t read the data in redirection process, then your data is available with the next subsequent request. You can see that in the following code, we have set up a TempData[“Emp”] but neither read it in any action method nor in view.

So, once the “About” page renders and if we move to “Contact” page, the TempData[“Emp”] will be available.

Note

Do not read data on View.

public ActionResult Index()

{

Employee emp = new Employee() { Id = 1001, Name = "Mukesh Kumar", Address = "New Delhi", Age = 25 };

//Setting the TempData

TempData["Emp"] = emp;

return RedirectToAction("Index1");

}

public ActionResult Index1()

{

//Not reading TempData

return RedirectToAction("Index2");

}

public ActionResult Index2()

{

//Not reading TempData

return RedirectToAction("About");

}

public ActionResult About()

{

//Not reading TempData

return View();

}

public ActionResult Contact()

{

//Data will available here because we have not read data yet

var tempEmpData = TempData["Emp"];

return View();

}

Normal Data Read

If you read the data on “About” page when it will render and try to access the value on “Contact” page, it will not be available.

@{

ViewBag.Title = "About";

}

<h2>About Page</h2>

<br />

@{

var data = (MVCStateManagement.Models.Employee)TempData["Emp"];

}

TempData will not be available with Contact page because we have already read that data on “About” page. TempData is only available with subsequent request if you have not read yet.

public ActionResult Contact()

{

//Data will not available here because already read on About page

var tempEmpData = TempData["Emp"];

return View();

}

Keep TempData

If you still want to persist your data with the next request after reading it on “About” page that you can use “Keep()” method after reading data on “About” page. The Keep method will persist your data for next subsequent request.

@{

var data = (MVCStateManagement.Models.Employee)TempData["Emp"];

TempData.Keep();

}

public ActionResult Contact()

{

//TempData will available here because we have keep on about page

var tempEmpData = TempData["Emp"];

return View();

}

Peek TempData

Using Peek() method, we can directly access the TempData value and keep it for next subsequent request.

@{

var data = (MVCStateManagement.Models.Employee)TempData.Peek("Emp");

}

When we move to “Contact” page, the TempData will be available.

public ActionResult Contact()

{

//TempData will available because we have already keep data using Peek() method.

var tempEmpData = TempData["Emp"];

return View();

}