# SQL Server backup types cheat sheet by



This explains the differences between Full, Differential and Transaction Log backups in MS SQL Server

#### 1. Full backup



For smaller databases with less important, read-only or easily-recoverable data

PROS: Easy to restore (just a single file), no transaction logs (simpler)

CONS: Can be restored only up to the time of a backup, takes a lot of space

Create diff-backups till they grow to size of full backup. Contains all the data since the last full backup.

#### 2. Full + Differential backup



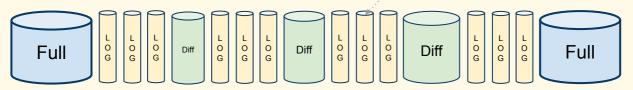
For larger databases or databases with low transaction density where some data loss can be tolerated

PROS: Takes less space than full backup, no logs (simpler), more precise restore

CONS: Can be restore only up to the time of a backup, more complicated restore (needs two files)

## Backup frequency may vary depending of transaction density

### 3. Full + Differential + Transaction log backup



For databases with high transaction density and/or important data where little data loss is tolerated

PROS: Database can be restored to any point of time with almost no data loss

CONS: A database needs transaction log management, larger in size, effortful restore process

Requires SIMPLE recovery model