

Keep your StoryMap light

A one-minute guide for students: keep your ArcGIS Online storage small so your maps and stories load fast, stay easy to edit, and stay under the target.

2 GB storage

5,000 credits

Students

StoryMaps

Your storage target

How much space you have, and why it's plenty.

2 GB

STORAGE
TARGET
PER STUDENT
ACCOUNT

This is plenty, and it covers your whole account. Your 2 GB is the total for everything you keep in ArcGIS Online, not just one project: StoryMaps, web maps, uploaded and hosted layers, images, and files all count together. Two gigabytes holds hundreds of photos plus all the maps and text a year-long project needs. The one thing that fills it fast is uploading large video and audio.



Good to know

2 GB is a courtesy target, not a hard wall. Nothing stops working the moment you cross it. Your work still loads and saves. But storage is a shared campus resource, so if your account stays well over the target, you'll eventually get a notice asking you to trim back under it. Follow the two habits below and you'll never see that email.



StoryMaps are the focus here

because that's what most students build, but the target and the habits apply to your whole ArcGIS Online account. Mind your storage and follow these best practices whether you're making a StoryMap, a web map, or anything else.



You also get 5,000 credits

Credits are ArcGIS Online's separate currency for certain operations, such as spatial analysis, geocoding addresses, and publishing some kinds of data. 5,000 is plenty for typical coursework, and most people never come close to using them up. If you ever do need more, a self-service tool to request additional credits is coming soon.

Habit 1: host big video and audio elsewhere, then embed it

Do these two things and you almost certainly never have to think about storage again.

A single phone video can be larger than everything else combined. Keep big media out of ArcGIS Online, whether it's in a StoryMap or anywhere else, and put it somewhere built for streaming.

Best: YouTube or Vimeo (embeds and plays inside your story)

Upload your video to YouTube and set it to **Unlisted**, so it isn't publicly searchable but anyone with your story can watch. Copy the video link, then in your StoryMap add a **Video block** and paste it. These are streaming platforms, so playback is smooth on any device and StoryMaps supports them directly. Vimeo works the same way.

Okay: Google Drive (as a link, not an embedded player)

Google Drive is file storage, not a streaming service, so Drive videos often won't play reliably inside a StoryMap. If your file is already in your UCI Google Drive, add it as a **hyperlink or button** that opens the video in a new tab instead of trying to embed it. Two things to check: set sharing to "**Anyone with the link**" (the UCI-only default blocks classmates' guests, public viewers, and anyone not signed in to a UCI Google account), and expect viewers to leave your story briefly to watch.

Result: your media plays or opens right from your story, and it counts as almost no ArcGIS storage.



What about photos? Keep those in ArcGIS Online.

Photos belong right in your story. Once resized they're small (a web photo rarely needs to be over 1 to 2 MB), so they barely touch your storage, and outside sites like Google Drive aren't built to display images inside a StoryMap. It really is just large video and audio, plus any very large downloadable files, that are worth hosting elsewhere.

Habit 2: add maps and data that already exist, don't upload a copy

Most common data (historical maps, census figures, city and county layers) is already published online. Point to it instead of storing your own copy.

- 1. In the Map or your content, use **Add** → **Search** and look in the **ArcGIS Living Atlas** or your instructor's shared layers.
- 2. Add the layer **by reference**. You are borrowing it, not saving a second copy.
- 3. Only upload data you made yourself (your own survey, your own map points).

Popular places to pull from:

- **ArcGIS Living Atlas** (built into Add → Search, or livingatlas.arcgis.com): basemaps, satellite imagery, demographics, and boundaries.
- **David Rumsey Historical Map Collection** (davidrumsey.com): thousands of georeferenced historical maps, great for humanities projects.
- **U.S. Census data** (data.census.gov, or the Census layers already in Living Atlas): population and demographic figures you can map.

Result: rich maps with almost no storage cost, and one less thing to manage.

At a glance

DO THIS	INSTEAD OF
✓ Embed video from YouTube (Unlisted) or Vimeo with a Video block	✗ Uploading raw video files into ArcGIS Online
✓ Link out to Google Drive files (sharing set to "Anyone with the link")	✗ Trying to embed Drive videos as an in-story player
✓ Add existing layers from the Living Atlas by reference	✗ Uploading your own copy of data that is already published

DO THIS	INSTEAD OF
✓ Resize big photos before uploading (a web photo rarely needs to be over 1 to 2 MB)	✗ Uploading full-resolution camera images
✓ Delete practice items and drafts you no longer need	✗ Leaving old test maps and duplicates in your account

Check your storage anytime

1. Sign in to ArcGIS Online and open **Content** (your items).
2. Each item shows its size. Your largest items are almost always uploaded media or data.
3. If something is big and you no longer need it, delete it, or swap an uploaded video for an embedded YouTube link.

Need help?

Ask your instructor or your course GIS support first. For account or storage help, email oit-licenses@uci.edu and the OIT team will help you out.