

Table 1.2 The time aspect in observational studies.

Design	Time		
	Past	Present	Future
Ecological studies		Collect all information	
Cross sectional studies		Collect all information	
Case-control studies	←	Define cases and controls. Retrospective exposure assessment	
Cohort studies Prospective		Define a cohort and record exposure	→ Prospective follow-up of endpoint(s)
Retrospective	←	Define a cohort and collect exposure and endpoint(s) from available records.	