

Third Normal Form (3NF)

[Create A Website](#) [SQL](#) [Data Warehousing](#) [CSS](#) [PHP](#) [HTML](#) [Database Normalization](#)

3rd Normal Form Definition

A database is in third normal form if it satisfies the following conditions:

- It is in second normal form
- There is no transitive functional dependency

By transitive functional dependency, we mean we have the following relationships in the table: A is functionally dependent on B, and B is functionally dependent on C. In this case, C is transitively dependent on A via B.

3rd Normal Form Example

Consider the following example:

TABLE_BOOK_DETAIL

Book ID	Genre ID	Genre Type	Price
1	1	Gardening	25.99
2	2	Sports	14.99
3	1	Gardening	10.00
4	3	Travel	12.99
5	2	Sports	17.99

In the table above, [Book ID] determines [Genre ID], and [Genre ID] determines [Genre Type]. Therefore, [Book ID] determines [Genre Type] via [Genre ID] and we have transitive functional dependency, and this structure does not satisfy third normal form.

To bring this table to third normal form, we split the table into two as follows:

TABLE_BOOK

Book ID	Genre ID	Price
1	1	25.99
2	2	14.99
3	1	10.00
4	3	12.99
5	2	17.99

TABLE_GENRE

Genre ID	Genre Type
1	Gardening
2	Sports
3	Travel

Now all non-key attributes are fully functional dependent only on the primary key. In [TABLE_BOOK], both [Genre ID] and [Price] are only dependent on [Book ID]. In [TABLE_GENRE], [Genre Type] is only dependent on [Genre ID].

Return to [Database Normalization](#)

Other Normal Forms: [First Normal Form](#) [Second Normal Form](#)

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