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## Unique key constraint - Part 9

We use UNIQUE constraint to enforce uniqueness of a column i.e the column shouldn't allow any duplicate values. We can add a Unique constraint thru the designer or using a query.

**To add a unique constraint using SQL server management studio designer:**

1. Right-click on the table and select Design
2. Right-click on the column, and select Indexes/Keys...
3. Click Add
4. For Columns, select the column name you want to be unique.
5. For Type, choose Unique Key.
6. Click Close, Save the table.



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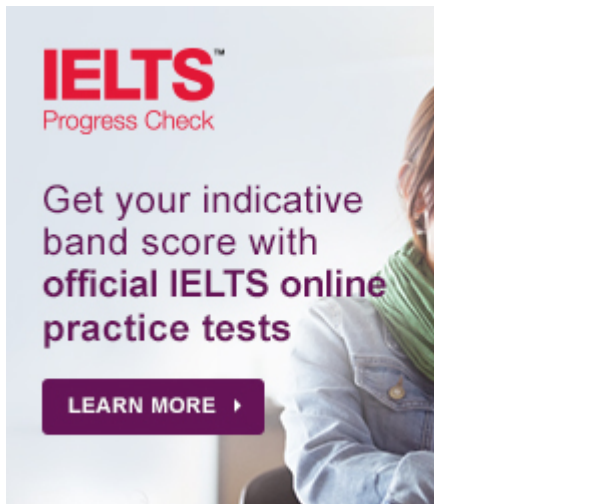
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## Unique key constraint - Part 9



**To create the unique key using a query:**

[Alter Table](#) Table\_Name

[Add Constraint](#) Constraint\_Name [Unique](#)(Column\_Name)

**Both primary key and unique key are used to enforce, the uniqueness of a column. So, when do you choose one over the other?**

A table can have, only one primary key. If you want to enforce uniqueness on 2 or more columns, then we use unique key constraint.

**What is the difference between Primary key constraint and Unique key**

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**constraint? This question is asked very frequently in interviews.**

1. A table can have only one primary key, but more than one unique key
2. Primary key does not allow nulls, where as unique key allows one null

**To drop the constraint**

1. Right click the constraint and delete.

Or

2. Using a query

[Alter Table](#) tblPerson

[Drop CONSTRAINT](#) UQ\_tblPerson\_Email

12 comments:



**DigvijayRaje Ghatage** February 5, 2015 at 2:09 AM

can we create foreign key on unique key in sql?

[Reply](#)

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**Anonymous** March 18, 2015 at 3:03 PM

As far as I understand: NO, bcoz unique key column holds unique values just like primary key coulumn BUT FK is a subset of the values of the PK in the other table and hence can be duplicated.



**justme** February 17, 2017 at 7:53 AM

Wouldn't it be possible to do it if the number of entries in the table referenced by the FK is greater than those in the first table? Theoretically,I mean.



**Vijay** July 30, 2017 at 12:52 AM

Yes, You can create foreign key on Unique key with the below conditions  
-- We should forget the definition "Foreign key allows duplicate values and OK them to contain multiple null values "

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Since foreign key on unique column will allow only Unique values including only one null.

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### Reply

**Anonymous** June 11, 2017 at 4:04 AM

Iam sure it is possible to create a primary key for multiple column at a same time while creating a table..

Reply

### Replies



**Vijay** July 30, 2017 at 12:19 AM

I don't think so, it will say "Cannot add multiple primary key constraints to the table".



**Unknown** December 17, 2018 at 6:15 PM

Yes, multiple columns combined can be primary key. Then the combination will be checked for uniqueness.

---

### Reply



**Vipul Pathak** July 27, 2017 at 10:53 AM

Can we insert multiple null values in unique key ,then how it enforces uniqueness

Reply

### Replies



**Vijay** July 30, 2017 at 12:54 AM

We cannot insert multiple null values in unique key column,

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Unique key allows only one null value.

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### Reply



**jagdiz sai** August 9, 2017 at 6:48 AM

may i know why unique key wont allow multiple null values

### Reply

### Replies

**Anonymous** October 6, 2017 at 11:20 PM

Because,two null values are same like duplicate..Unique key will not allow duplicate values.you enter two null values it must be duplicate..that's why unique key does not allow duplicate values..

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### Reply



**Kishan Kumar** January 27, 2018 at 2:05 AM

yeah.. SQL server will not allow this.Other DB may

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