MySQL Delimiter

When you write SQL statements, you use the semicolon (;) to separate two statements like the following example:

**SELECT** \* **FROM** products;

**SELECT** \* **FROM** customers;

Code language: SQL (Structured Query Language) (sql)

A MySQL client program such as MySQL Workbench or mysql program uses the (;) delimiter to separate statements and executes each statement separately.

A stored procedure, however, consists of multiple statements separated by a semicolon (;).

If you use a MySQL client program to define a stored procedure that contains semicolon characters, the MySQL client program will not treat the whole stored procedure as a single statement, but many statements.

Therefore, you must redefine the delimiter temporarily so that you can pass the whole stored procedure to the server as a single statement.

To redefine the default delimiter, you use the DELIMITER command:

DELIMITER delimiter\_character

The delimiter\_character may consist of a single character or multiple characters e.g., // or $$. However, you should avoid using the backslash (\) because this is the escape character in MySQL.

For example, this statement changes the delimiter to //:

DELIMITER //

Once change the delimiter, you can use the new delimiter to end a statement as follows:

DELIMITER //

**SELECT** \* **FROM** customers //

**SELECT** \* **FROM** products //

To change the delimiter back to semicolon, you use this statement:

DELIMITER ;