SQL - LIKE Clause

The SQL **LIKE** clause is used to compare a value to similar values using wildcard operators. There are two wildcards used in conjunction with the LIKE operator.

- The percent sign (%)
- The underscore (_)

The percent sign represents zero, one or multiple characters. The underscore represents a single number or character. These symbols can be used in combinations.

Syntax

The basic syntax of % and _ is as follows −

```
SELECT FROM table_name
WHERE column LIKE 'XXXX%'

or

SELECT FROM table_name
WHERE column LIKE '%XXXX%'

or

SELECT FROM table_name
WHERE column LIKE 'XXXX_'

or

SELECT FROM table_name
WHERE column LIKE '_XXXX'

or

SELECT FROM table_name
WHERE column LIKE '_XXXX_'
```

You can combine N number of conditions using AND or OR operators. Here, XXXX could be any numeric or string value.

Example

The following table has a few examples showing the WHERE part having different LIKE clause with '%' and '_' operators −

Sr.No.	Statement & Description
1	**WHERE SALARY LIKE '200%'** Finds any values that start with 200.
2	**WHERE SALARY LIKE '%200%'** Finds any values that have 200 in any position.
3	**WHERE SALARY LIKE '_00%'** Finds any values that have 00 in the second and third positions.
4	**WHERE SALARY LIKE '2_%_%'** Finds any values that start with 2 and are at least 3 characters in length.
5	**WHERE SALARY LIKE '%2'** Finds any values that end with 2.
6	**WHERE SALARY LIKE '_2%3'** Finds any values that have a 2 in the second position and end with a 3.
7	**WHERE SALARY LIKE '2___3'** Finds any values in a five-digit number that start with 2 and end with 3.

Let us take a real example, consider the CUSTOMERS table having the records as shown below.

```
+----+----------+-----+-----------+----------+
| ID | NAME     | AGE | ADDRESS   | SALARY   |
+----+----------+-----+-----------+----------+
|  1 | Ramesh   |  32 | Ahmedabad |  2000.00 |
|  2 | Khilan   |  25 | Delhi     |  1500.00 |
|  3 | kaushik  |  23 | Kota      |  2000.00 |
|  4 | Chaitali |  25 | Mumbai    |  6500.00 |
```

```
|    5 |  Hardik   |   27 |  Bhopal    |   8500.00 |
|    6 |  Komal    |   22 |  MP        |   4500.00 |
|    7 |  Muffy    |   24 |  Indore    |  10000.00 |
+----+----------+-----+----------+----------+
```

Following is an example, which would display all the records from the CUSTOMERS table, where the SALARY starts with 200.

```
SQL> SELECT * FROM CUSTOMERS
WHERE SALARY LIKE '200%';
```

This would produce the following result −

```
+----+----------+-----+----------+----------+
| ID | NAME     | AGE | ADDRESS  | SALARY   |
+----+----------+-----+----------+----------+
|  1 | Ramesh   |  32 | Ahmedabad |  2000.00 |
|  3 | kaushik  |  23 | Kota     |  2000.00 |
+----+----------+-----+----------+----------+
```