

Eric Schmidt

Check constraints are conditions set forth by the user to limit what can enter a column. It only lets values be entered to column that are valid under the conditions created by the check constraint. This allows a database manager to have a heightened sense of control of the data that is inputting into the database, which allows for an easier transition from data to information.

A good example of a check constraint is with social security numbers. Within this restraint, you can enforce that no data value be entered that is invalid being allowed into the database. It ensures that a number is being inputted as well as one that is the proper number of digits. Not null is also used as a check constraint on primary keys as there can be no null value that is designated as a primary key in a table.

A bad example of check constraint is home phone, not null. This is a possibly bad example because some people that should be entered the database may not have a home phone anymore. With more and more people switching from landlines to cell phones, the possibility of not having a landline is increasing. With adding the not null constraint, it would not allow an individual from being entered in the database if they did not have a home phone number.

Check constraints are a wonderful tool for database managers to allow information is being entered properly the first time to cause less confusion and error messages later in the databases' lifetime. When a check constraint is in good use, it can allow novice users to enter data into a system and show clear error messages when information is implemented incorrectly.