



FETCHING DATA

- #1 Only select the columns you need. **Avoid** using `SELECT *`
- #2 **Avoid** using `DISTINCT` or `ORDER BY` unless absolutely necessary, as they can slow down queries
- #3 For exploration, **limit** the number of rows using `TOP` to avoid fetching unnecessary data

FILTERING DATA

- #4 Create **non-clustered indexes** on columns **frequently** used in the `WHERE` to speed up queries
- #5 **Avoid functions** e.g., `UPPER()` , `YEAR()` to columns in the `WHERE` , as this prevents indexes from being used
- #6 **Avoid** starting string searches with a **wildcard** (`%example`), as this disables index usage
- #7 Use `IN` instead of multiple `OR` conditions for better readability and performance

JOINING DATA

- #8 Understand the performance implications of different join types. Use `INNER JOIN` when possible for efficiency
- #9 Always use **explicit** (ANSI-style) joins (`INNER JOIN`, `LEFT JOIN`, etc.) instead of older implicit join syntax
- #10 Ensure that the columns in the `ON` of your joins are **indexed** for optimal performance
- #11 **Filter before joining** large tables to reduce the size of the dataset being joined
- #12 **Aggregate before joining** large tables to reduce the size of the dataset being joined
- #13 **Replace** `OR` conditions in join logic with `UNION` where possible to improve query performance
- #14 Be aware of **nested loops** in your query execution plan. Use **SQL Hints** if needed to optimize performance
- #15 Use `UNION ALL` instead of `UNION` if duplicates are acceptable, as it is faster
- #16 When duplicates are not acceptable, use `UNION ALL + DISTINCT` instead of `UNION` for better performance

AGGREGATING DATA

- #17 Use **columnstore indexes** for queries involving heavy aggregations on **large tables**
- #18 **Pre-aggregate data** and store the results in a separate table for faster reporting

SUBQUERIES

- #19 Understand when to use JOIN, EXISTS, or IN. Avoid IN with large lists as it can be inefficient
- #20 Simplify your queries by **eliminating redundant logic** and conditions by using **CTE**

DDL

- #21 Avoid `VARCHAR` or `TEXT` types unnecessarily; choose precise data types to save storage and improve performance
- #22 Avoid defining excessive lengths in your data types (e.g., `VARCHAR (MAX)`) unless truly needed
- #23 Use `NOT NULL` constraints wherever possible to enforce data integrity
- #24 Ensure all tables have a **clustered primary key** to provide structure and improve query performance
- #25 Add **non-clustered indexes** to foreign keys that are frequently queried to speed up lookups

INDEXING

- #26 **Avoid Over Indexing**, as it can slow down insert, update, and delete operations
- #27 Regularly review and **drop unused indexes** to save space and improve write performance
- #28 Update **table statistics weekly** to ensure the query optimizer has the most up-to-date information
- #29 **Reorganize** and **rebuild** fragmented indexes weekly to maintain query performance.
- #30 For large tables (e.g., fact tables), **partition the data** and then apply a **columnstore index** for best performance results