SQL TOP, LIMIT, FETCH FIRST or ROWNUM Clause

The SQL SELECT TOP Clause

The `SELECT TOP` clause is used to specify the number of records to return.

The `SELECT TOP` clause is useful on large tables with thousands of records. Returning a large number of records can impact performance.

Note: Not all database systems support the `SELECT TOP` clause. MySQL supports the `LIMIT` clause to select a limited number of records, while Oracle uses `FETCH FIRST` *n* `ROWS ONLY` and `ROWNUM`.

SQL Server / MS Access Syntax:

```
SELECT TOP number|percent column_name(s)
FROM table_name
WHERE condition;
```

MySQL Syntax:

```
SELECT column_name(s)
FROM table_name
WHERE condition
LIMIT number;
```

Oracle 12 Syntax:

```
SELECT column_name(s)
FROM table_name
```

```
ORDER BY column_name(s)
FETCH FIRST number ROWS ONLY;
```

Older Oracle Syntax:

```
SELECT column_name(s)
FROM table_name
WHERE ROWNUM <= number;
```

Older Oracle Syntax (with ORDER BY):

```
SELECT *
FROM (SELECT column_name(s) FROM table_name ORDER BY column_name(s))
WHERE ROWNUM <= number;
```

Demo Database

Below is a selection from the "Customers" table in the Northwind sample database:

CustomerID	CustomerName	ContactName	Address	City	PostalCode
1	Alfreds Futterkiste	Maria Anders	Obere Str. 57	Berlin	12209
2	Ana Trujillo Emparedados y helados	Ana Trujillo	Avda. de la Constitución 2222	México D.F.	05021
3	Antonio Moreno Taquería	Antonio Moreno	Mataderos 2312	México D.F.	05023
4	Around the Horn	Thomas Hardy	120 Hanover Sq.	London	WA1 1DP
5	Berglunds snabbköp	Christina Berglund	Berguvsvägen 8	Luleå	S-958 22

SQL TOP, LIMIT and FETCH FIRST Examples

The following SQL statement selects the first three records from the "Customers" table (for SQL Server/MS Access):

Example   Get your own SQL Server

```
SELECT TOP 3 * FROM Customers;
```

Try it Yourself »

The following SQL statement shows the equivalent example for MySQL:

Example

```
SELECT * FROM Customers
LIMIT 3;
```

Try it Yourself »

The following SQL statement shows the equivalent example for Oracle:

Example

```
SELECT * FROM Customers
FETCH FIRST 3 ROWS ONLY;
```

SQL TOP PERCENT Example

The following SQL statement selects the first 50% of the records from the "Customers" table (for SQL Server/MS Access):

Example

```
SELECT TOP 50 PERCENT * FROM Customers;
```

Try it Yourself »

The following SQL statement shows the equivalent example for Oracle:

Example

```
SELECT * FROM Customers
FETCH FIRST 50 PERCENT ROWS ONLY;
```

ADD a WHERE CLAUSE

The following SQL statement selects the first three records from the "Customers" table, where the country is "Germany" (for SQL Server/MS Access):

Example

```
SELECT TOP 3 * FROM Customers
WHERE Country='Germany';
```

Try it Yourself »

The following SQL statement shows the equivalent example for MySQL:

Example

```
SELECT * FROM Customers
WHERE Country='Germany'
LIMIT 3;
```

Try it Yourself »

The following SQL statement shows the equivalent example for Oracle:

Example

```sql
SELECT * FROM Customers
WHERE Country='Germany'
FETCH FIRST 3 ROWS ONLY;
```