



Socrata was acquired by Tyler Technologies in 2018 and is now the Data and Insights division of Tyler. The platform is still powered by the same software formerly known as Socrata but you will see references to Data & Insights going forward.

[Learn more...](#)

(<https://www.tylertech.com/solutions/transformational-technology/data-insights>)

Row Identifiers

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What is a Row Identifier?

Socrata datasets are essentially a collection of rows. Each row can be uniquely designated by its “row identifier”, much like a driver’s license number or social security number identifies an individual. For those familiar with database concepts, they essentially act the same way as primary keys (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Primary_key).

Internal Identifiers vs Publisher-Specified Identifiers

Row identifiers come in two flavors:

- Internal identifiers are auto-generated by the Socrata platform every time a new row is created.
- Publisher-specified identifiers are configured by the dataset owner and use a field of unique values within the dataset as the row identifier.

Depending on what dataset you’re accessing, internal row identifiers may be simple integers, or alphanumeric strings. There’s no difference between the two in how you use them.

To learn more about how to access internal row identifiers, read the [System Fields \(/docs/system-fields\)](/docs/system-fields) documentation.

Retrieving Rows By Their Identifiers

To use a row identifier to look up a row, simply append it to the resource endpoint for that dataset. For example, to look up row `row-pdxn~kakk.kfji` from the Chicago Salaries Dataset (<https://data.cityofchicago.org/d/tt4n-kn4t>) dataset using its row identifier:

▶ try it (<https://data.cityofchicago.org/resource/tt4n-kn4t/row-pdxn~kakk.kfji.json>)
docs (/foundry/data.cityofchicago.org/tt4n-kn4t)
copy
</>

⚙️ <https://data.cityofchicago.org/resource/tt4n-kn4t/row-pdxn~kakk.kfji.json>
(<https://data.cityofchicago.org/resource/tt4n-kn4t/row-pdxn~kakk.kfji.json>)

In contrast, the Chicago Crimes (<https://data.cityofchicago.org/d/ijzp-q8t2>) dataset is configured to use a publisher-specified identifier. To look up the earthquake with the `id` of `10666780`:

▶ try it (<https://data.cityofchicago.org/resource/6zsd-86xi/10666780.json>)
docs (/foundry/data.cityofchicago.org/6zsd-86xi)
copy
</> json

⚙️ <https://data.cityofchicago.org/resource/6zsd-86xi/10666780.json> (<https://data.cityofchicago.org/resource/6zsd-86xi/10666780.json>)

Establishing a Publisher-Specified Identifier

Setting a row identifier requires that you are either the owner of a dataset, or that you’ve been granted a role of Publisher or Administrator on a Socrata customer site. Basically, if you can’t modify the dataset, you can’t set a row identifier.

A publisher-specified row identifier can be established for any Socrata dataset. A common column to use as a row identifier is an ‘ID’ column with some kind of number or code that uniquely identifies that row of data. For example, the ‘Inspection ID’ column of Chicago’s Food Inspections dataset (<https://data.cityofchicago.org/Health-Human-Services/Food-Inspections/4ijn-s7e5>) is a Publisher-specified row identifier.

How to Set a Row Identifier

See this helpful guide (<https://support.socrata.com/hc/en-us/articles/360008065493>) on how to set a row identifier in Socrata.