

Normalization

A large database defined as a single relation may result in data duplication. This repetition of data may result in:

- Making relations very large.
- It isn't easy to maintain and update data as it would involve searching many records in relation.
- Wastage and poor utilization of disk space and resources.
- The likelihood of errors and inconsistencies increases.

So to handle these problems, we should analyze and decompose the relations with redundant data into smaller, simpler, and well-structured relations that satisfy desirable properties. Normalization is a process of decomposing the relations into relations with fewer attributes.

What is Normalization?

- Normalization is the process of organizing the data in the database.
- Normalization is used to minimize the redundancy from a relation or set of relations. It is also used to eliminate undesirable characteristics like Insertion, Update, and Deletion Anomalies.
- Normalization divides the larger table into smaller and links them using relationships.
- The normal form is used to reduce redundancy from the database table.

Why do we need Normalization?

The main reason for normalizing the relations is removing these anomalies. Failure to eliminate anomalies leads to data redundancy and can cause data integrity and other problems as the database grows. Normalization consists of a series of guidelines that helps to guide you in creating a good database structure.

Data modification anomalies can be categorized into three types:

- **Insertion Anomaly:** Insertion Anomaly refers to when one cannot insert a new tuple into a relationship due to lack of data.
- **Deletion Anomaly:** The delete anomaly refers to the situation where the deletion of data results in the unintended loss of some other important data.

- **Updation Anomaly:** The update anomaly is when an update of a single data value requires multiple rows of data to be updated.

Advantages of Normalization

- Normalization helps to minimize data redundancy.
- Greater overall database organization.
- Data consistency within the database.
- Much more flexible database design.
- Enforces the concept of relational integrity.

Disadvantages of Normalization

- You cannot start building the database before knowing what the user needs.
- The performance degrades when normalizing the relations to higher normal forms, i.e., 4NF, 5NF.
- It is very time-consuming and difficult to normalize relations of a higher degree.

First Normal Form (1NF)

- A relation will be 1NF if it contains an atomic value.
- It states that an attribute of a table cannot hold multiple values. It must hold only single-valued attribute.
- First normal form disallows the multi-valued attribute, composite attribute, and their combinations.

Example: Relation EMPLOYEE is not in 1NF because of multi-valued attribute EMP_PHONE.

EMPLOYEE table:

EMP_ID	EMP_NAME	EMP_PHONE	EMP_STATE
14	John	7272826385, 9064738238	UP

20	Harry	8574783832	Bihar
12	Sam	7390372389, 8589830302	Punjab

The decomposition of the EMPLOYEE table into 1NF has been shown below:

EMP_ID	EMP_NAME	EMP_PHONE	EMP_STATE
14	John	7272826385	UP
14	John	9064738238	UP
20	Harry	8574783832	Bihar
12	Sam	7390372389	Punjab
12	Sam	8589830302	Punjab

Second Normal Form (2NF)

- In the 2NF, relational must be in 1NF.
- In the second normal form, all non-key attributes are fully functional dependent on the primary key

Example: Let's assume, a school can store the data of teachers and the subjects they teach. In a school, a teacher can teach more than one subject.

TEACHER table

TEACHER_ID	SUBJECT	TEACHER_AGE
25	Chemistry	30

25	Biology	30
47	English	35
83	Math	38
83	Computer	38

In the given table, non-prime attribute TEACHER_AGE is dependent on TEACHER_ID which is a proper subset of a candidate key. That's why it violates the rule for 2NF.

To convert the given table into 2NF, we decompose it into two tables:

<u>TEACHER_ID</u>	<u>TEACHER_AGE</u>
25	30
47	35
83	38

TEACHER_DETAIL table:

TEACHER_SUBJECT table:

<u>TEACHER_ID</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>
25	Chemistry
25	Biology

47	English
83	Math
83	Computer

Third Normal Form (3NF)

- A relation will be in 3NF if it is in 2NF and not contain any transitive partial dependency.
- 3NF is used to reduce the data duplication. It is also used to achieve the data integrity.
- If there is no transitive dependency for non-prime attributes, then the relation must be in third normal form.

A relation is in third normal form if it holds atleast one of the following conditions for every non-trivial function dependency $X \rightarrow Y$.

1. X is a super key.
2. Y is a prime attribute, i.e., each element of Y is part of some candidate key.

Example:

EMPLOYEE_DETAIL table:

EMP_ID	EMP_NAME	EMP_ZIP	EMP_STATE	EMP_CITY
222	Harry	201010	UP	Noida
333	Stephan	02228	US	Boston
444	Lan	60007	US	Chicago
555	Katharine	06389	UK	Norwich

666	John	462007	MP	Bhopal
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Super key in the table above:

1. {EMP_ID}, {EMP_ID, EMP_NAME}, {EMP_ID, EMP_NAME, EMP_STATE, EMP_CITY, EMP_ZIP}....so on

EMP_ID	EMP_NAME	EMP_ZIP
222	Harry	201010
333	Stephan	02228
444	Lan	60007
555	Katharine	06389
666	John	462007

Candidate key: {EMP_ID}

Non-prime attributes: In the given table, all attributes except EMP_ID are non-prime.

Here, EMP_STATE & EMP_CITY dependent on EMP_ZIP and EMP_ZIP dependent on EMP_ID. The non-prime attributes (EMP_STATE, EMP_CITY) transitively dependent on super key(EMP_ID). It violates the rule of third normal form.

That's why we need to move the EMP_CITY and EMP_STATE to the new <EMPLOYEE_ZIP> table, with EMP_ZIP as a Primary key.

EMPLOYEE table:

EMPLOYEE_ZIP table:

EMP_ZIP	EMP_STATE	EMP_CITY
201010	UP	Noida
02228	US	Boston
60007	US	Chicago
06389	UK	Norwich
462007	MP	Bhopal