

# **SQL Server Query Execution and Plans**

Module 6

# Learning Units covered in this Module

- Lesson 1: SQL Server Query Execution
- Lesson 2: SQL Server Query Plan Analysis

**Lesson 1: SQL Server Query Execution** 

## **Objectives**

After completing this learning, you will be able to:

- Explain Query Compilation and Optimization Process.
- Explain Query Execution Process.
- · Explain Recompilation causes.



#### **SQL Server Execution Plan**

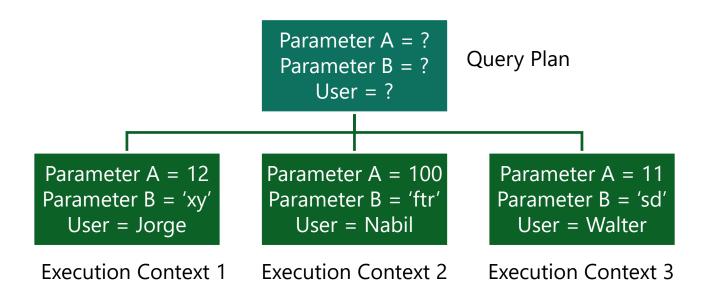
Main components

#### **Compiled Plan (or Query Plan)**

Compilation produces a query plan, which is a read-only data structure used by any number of users.

#### **Execution Context**

A data structure used to hold information specific to a query execution, such as parameter values.



## **SQL Server Execution Plan Caching**

Overview

Part of the memory pool used to store execution plans – also known as plan cache.

The plan cache has two stores for all compiled plans:

The **Object Plans** cache store (OBJCP) used for plans related to persisted objects (stored procedures, functions, and triggers).

The **SQL Plans** cache store (SQLCP)

used for plans related to autoparameterized, dynamic, or prepared queries.

## **SQL** Server compilation and execution

Concepts

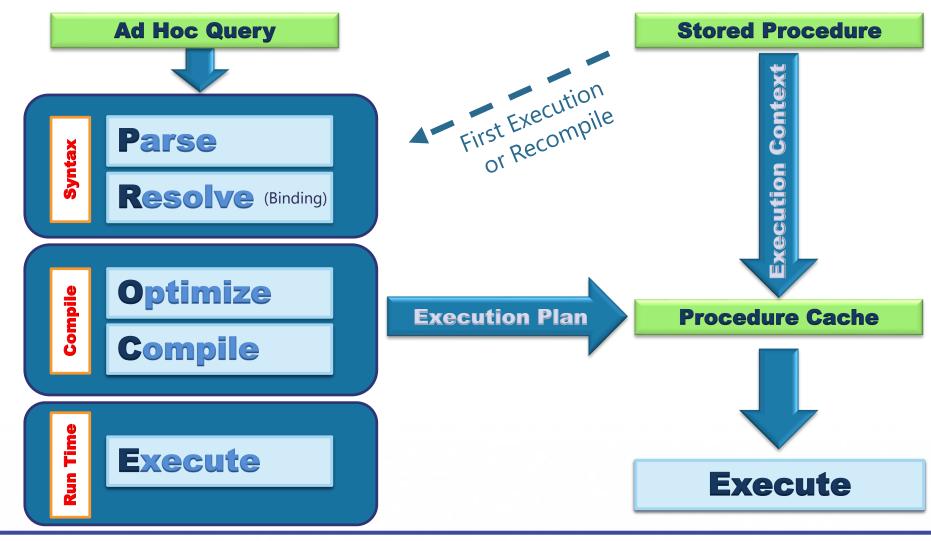
#### Compilation

Process of creating a good enough query execution plan, as quickly as possible for a query batch.

Refer to both the compilation of non-DML constructs in SQL statements (control flow, DDL, etc.) and the process of Query Optimization.

#### **Query Execution**

Process of executing the plan that is created during query compilation and optimization.





Sets

empid	lastname	firstna	title	titleofcourt	birthdate
1	Davis	Sara	CEO	Ms.	1958-12-08 00:00:00.000
2	Funk	Don	Vice President, Sales	Dr.	1962-02-19 00:00:00.000
3	Lew	Judy	Sales Manager	Ms.	1973-08-30 00:00:00.000
4	Peled	Yael	Sales Representative	Mrs.	1947-09-19 00:00:00.000
5	Buck	Sven	Sales Manager	Mr.	1965-03-04 00:00:00.000

## What does the binding step resolve?

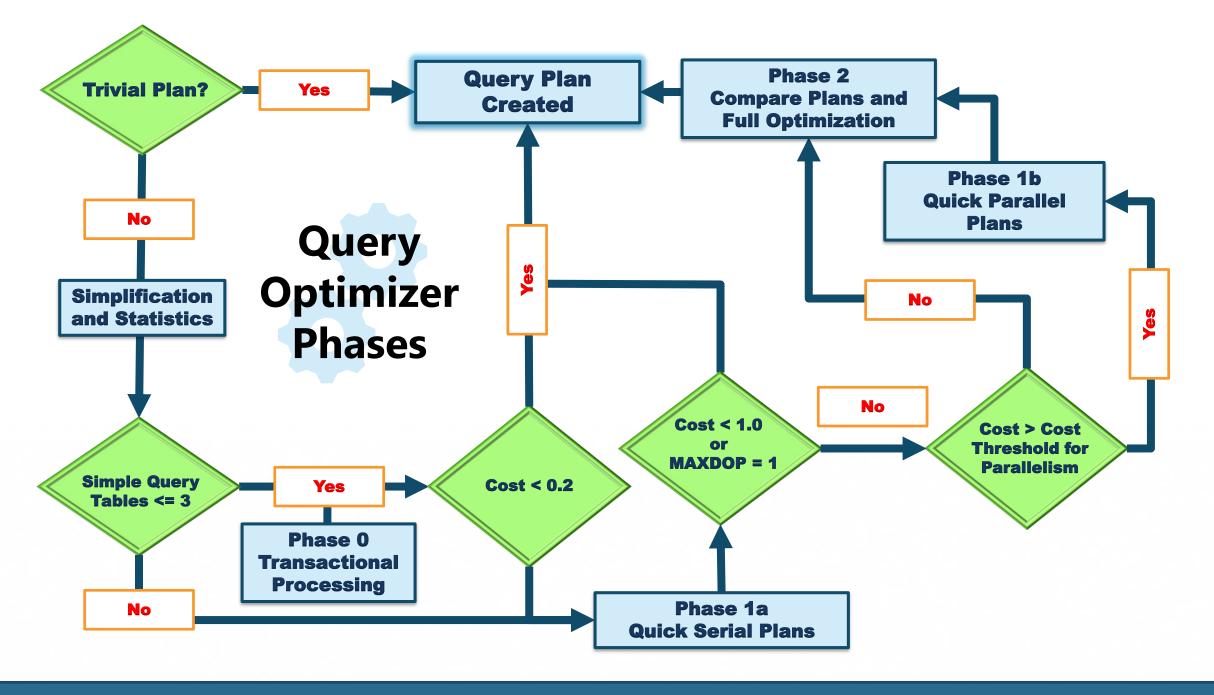
User permissions are checked.

Does a cached plan exist?

Object names (Tables, Views, Columns, etc.) to see if they exist.

Resolve aliases of columns and tables

Data types and if implicit data type conversions are needed.



# Query Simplification phases

Constant Folding: Expressions with constant values are reduced

- Quantity = 2 + 3 becomes Quantity = 5
- 10 < 20 becomes **True**

Contradiction Detection: Removes criteria that doesn't match table constraints

- Constraint: Age > 18
- **Contradiction:** WHERE Age < 18

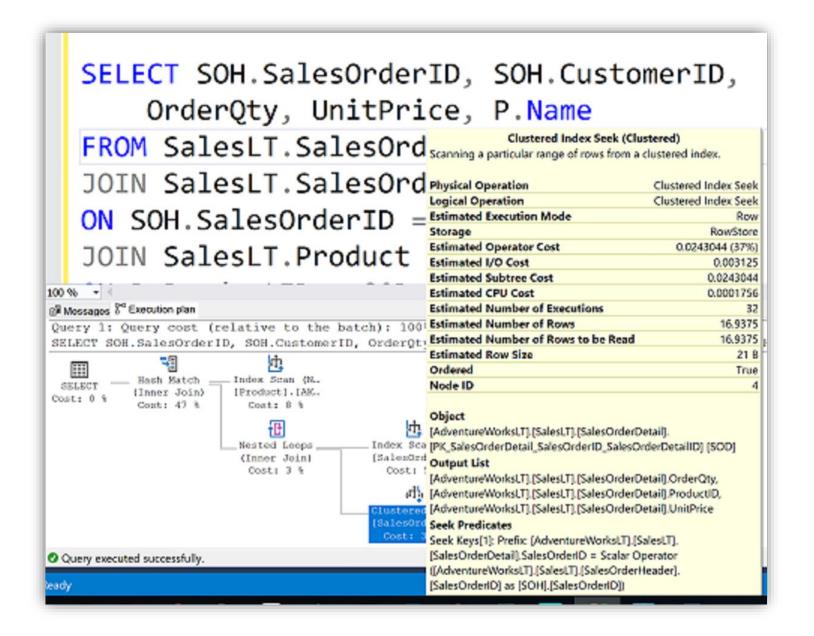
Domain Simplification: Reduces complex ranges to simple ranges

- Complex range: ID > 10 and ID < 20 or ID > 30 and < 50
- Simplified range: ID > 10 and < 50

Join Simplification: Removes redundant joins that are not necessary

Predicate Pushdown: Perform calculations only on rows returned

#### What is an Execution Plan?



## How to see the query plan

Graphical execution plan

#### **Estimated Execution Plan (Before Execution)**

• The compiled plan.

#### **Actual Execution Plan (After Execution)**

- •The same as the compiled plan plus its execution context.
- •This includes runtime information available after the execution completes, such as execution warnings, or in newer versions of the Database Engine, the elapsed and CPU time used during execution.

#### **Live Query Statistics (During Execution)**

- •The same as the compiled plan plus its execution context.
- •This includes runtime information during execution progress and is updated every second. Runtime information includes for example the actual number of rows flowing through the operators.
- •Enables rapid identification of potential bottlenecks.

#### **SQL Server Execution Plan**

**Execution modes** 

#### Row mode execution

- Efficient for OLTP scenarios
- Used with traditional tables, where data is stored in row-wise format.
- Operators read all columns from qualifying rows based on predicate, and for each row it retrieves columns needed for the result set

#### **Batch mode execution**

- Efficient for Data Warehousing scenarios
- Used to process multiple rows together
- Closely integrated with, and optimized around the ColumnStore storage format
- Operators read only the columns required for the result, from group of rows together.
- Starting SQL Server 2019, Batch mode does not require a ColumnStore index as in the previous versions.

## **SQL Server Execution Plan Recompilations**

Overview

Most recompilations are required either for statement correctness or to obtain potentially faster query execution plan.

The engine detects changes that invalidate execution plan(s) and marks those as not valid. New plan must be recompiled for the next query execution.

Starting with SQL Server 2005, whenever a statement within a batch causes recompilation, only the statement inside the batch that triggers recompilation is recompiled.

## **SQL Server Execution Plan Recompilations**

Recompilation reasons

# Table / Index Changes

- Changes made to objects referenced by the query (ALTER TABLE and ALTER VIEW).
- Changing or dropping any indexes used by the execution plan.

# Stored Procedures

- Changes made to a single procedure, which would drop all plans for that procedure from the cache (ALTER PROCEDURE).
- Explicit call to sp\_recompile.
- Executing a stored procedure using the WITH RECOMPILE option.

#### Data Volume

- Updates on statistics used by the execution plan
- For tables with triggers, if the number of rows in the inserted or deleted tables grows significantly.

#### Other

- Large numbers of changes to keys (generated by statements from other users that modify a table referenced by the query).
- Temporary table changes

**Questions?** 



## **Knowledge Check**

What is meant by SQL Server's query optimizer being cost-based?

When is a query considered for a parallel execution plan?

Will SQL Server evaluate **every** possible query plan in the process of optimization? Why?

Name two recompilation causes.

Lesson 2: SQL Server Query Plan Analysis

## **Objectives**

After completing this learning, you will be able to:

- · Read execution plans.
- · Understand logical and physical join operators.
- · Describe data access.



## How to see the query plan

Graphical execution plan

#### **Estimated Execution Plan (Before Execution)**

• The compiled plan.

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- •The same as the compiled plan plus its execution context.
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- •The same as the compiled plan plus its execution context.
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#### Contents of an Execution Plan

Sequence in which the source tables are accessed.

Methods used to extract data from each table.

How data is joined

Use of temporary worktables and sorts

Estimated rowcount, iterations, and costs from each operator

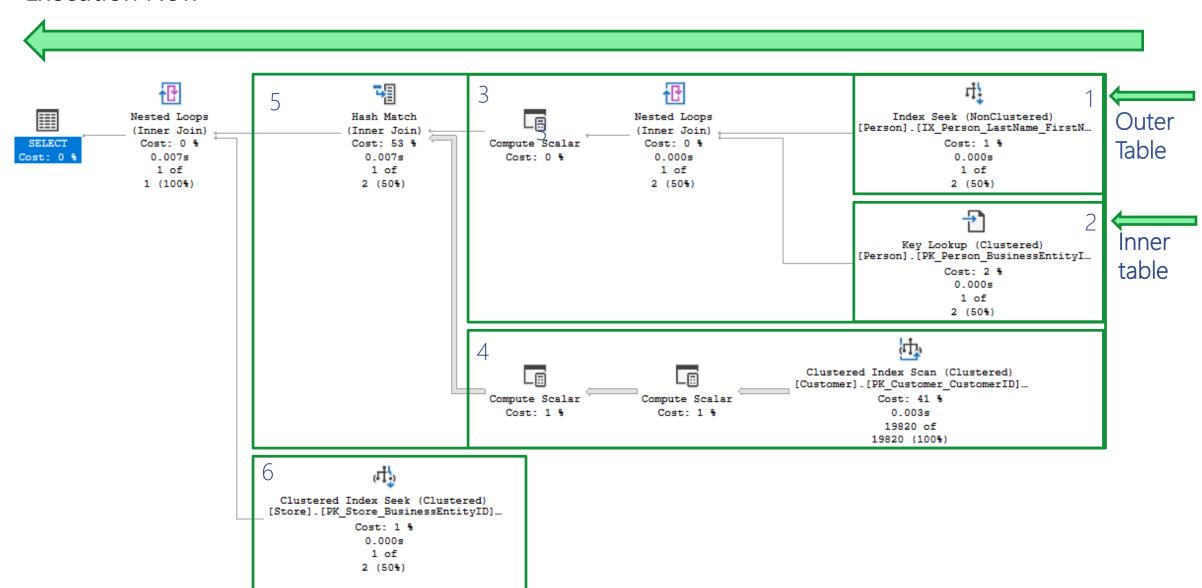
Actual rowcount and iterations

## How to see the query plan

Text and XML

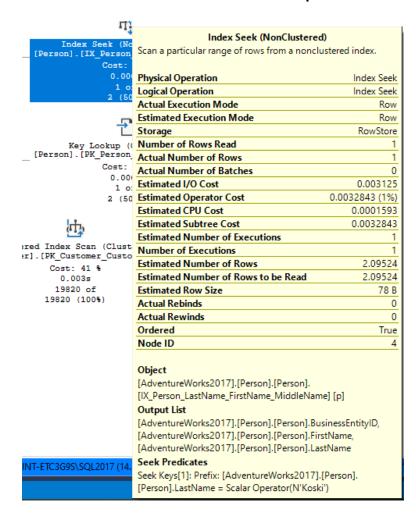
	Command	Execute query?	Include estimated row counts & stats (Estimated Query Plan)	Include actual row counts & stats (Actual Query Plan)
Text Plan	SET SHOWPLAN_TEXT ON	No	No	No
	SET SHOWPLAN_ALL ON	No	Yes	No
	SET STATISTICS PROFILE ON	Yes	Yes	Yes
XML Plan	SET SHOWPLAN_XML ON	No	Yes	No
	SET STATISTICS PROFILE XML	Yes	Yes	Yes

**Execution Flow** 

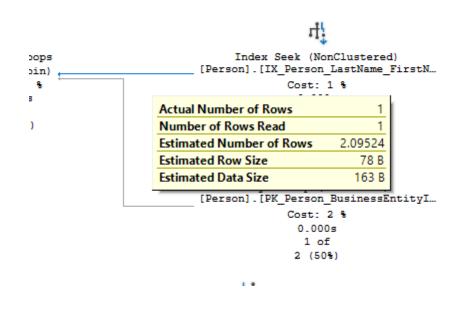


Data flow between the operators and statistical data of each operator

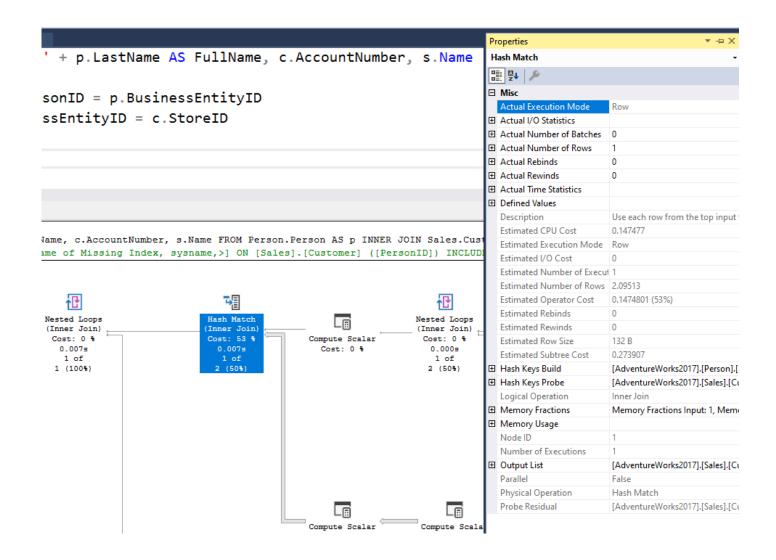
#### Statistical data for the operator



#### Data flow statistics



#### Properties sheet



Management Studio
Properties sheet includes
even more detailed
information about each
operator and about the
overall query plan.

Use the most recent version of Management Studio as every new version display more detailed information about the Query Plan when examining the plan in graphical mode.

**Live Query Statistics** 

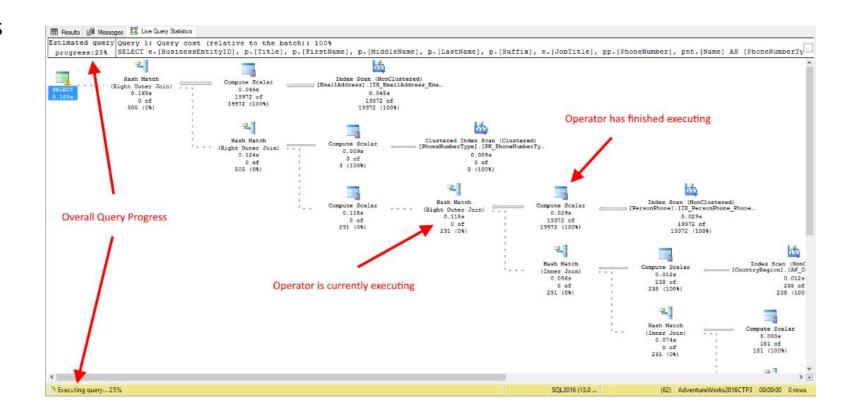
View CPU/memory usage, execution time, and query progress

Allows drill down to live operatorlevel statistics, such as:

- Number of generated rows
- Elapsed time
- Operator progress
- Live warnings

This feature is primarily intended for troubleshooting purposes.

Using this feature can moderately slow the overall query performance.



#### **Execution Plan**

Notable operators

Operators describe how SQL Server executes a query. The query optimizer uses operators to build a query plan to create the result specified in the query.



Table scan



Clustered index scan



Clustered index seek



RID lookup



Key lookup



ColumnStore Index Scan



Nonclustered index scan



Nonclustered index seek



Sort



Table spool



Index spool



Stream Aggregation

## **Execution Plan Table Operators**

Data stored in a Heap is not stored in any order and normally does not have a Primary Key.

Clustered Index data is stored in sorted order by the Clustering key. In many cases, this is the same value as the Primary Key.

Using a WHERE statement on an Index could possibly have the Execution Plan seek the Index instead of scan.





Clustered Index Scan (Cluste... [BankAccounts].[pk\_acctID]

Cost: 100 %



Clustered Index Seek (Cluste... [BankAccounts].[pk\_acctID]

Cost: 100 %

## **Execution Plan Join Operators (Code)**

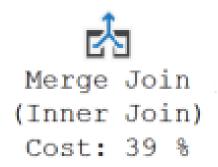
```
SELECT SOH.SalesOrderID, SOH.CustomerID,
    OrderQty, UnitPrice, P.Name
FROM SalesLT SalesOrderHeader as SOH
JOIN SalesLT SalesOrderDetail AS SOD
ON SOH.SalesOrderID = SOD.SalesOrderID
JOIN SalesLT.Product AS P
ON P.ProductID = SOD.ProductID
```

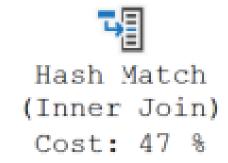
## **Execution Plan Join Operators**

A Merge Join is useful if both table inputs are in the same sorted order on the same value.

A Hash Match is used when the tables being joined are not in the same sorted order.

A Nested Loop is use when a small (outer) table is used to lookup a value in a larger (inner) table.







## What to look for in the query plan

Warnings	Information about possible issues with the plan		
Left Most Operator	Overall properties of the plan to establish baseline		
Right to Left	Solve issues early in the plan		
Expensive Operators	Look from most expensive to least expensive		
Sort Operators	Locate why there is a sort operation and is it needed		
Data Flow Statistics	Thicker arrows mean more data is being passed		
Nested Loop Operator	Possible to create index that covers query		
Scans vs Seeks	Not necessarily bad, but could indicate I/O issues		
Skewed Estimates	Statistics could be stale or invalid		

#### **Demonstration**

#### **Query Plan Analysis**

- Use the graphical execution plan and IO statistics to tune a query.
- Explore Live Query Statistics.



## **Query Plan Analysis**

 Identifying and tuning high cost operators in the query plan



**Questions?** 



## **Knowledge Check**

What are the physical join operators?

What is a method to eliminate a lookup?

Is it recommended to eliminate all lookups operators?

Under what circumstances would a table scan be more efficient than an index seek on a non-clustered, non-covering index?

Is a Clustered Index Scan more efficient than a Table Scan?

Lesson 3: SQL Server Intelligent Query Processing

#### **Objectives**

After completing this learning, you will be able to:

- · Understand the Intelligent query processing features.
- · Enable/disable Intelligent query processing features.



# A History of Intelligent Query Processing



Adaptive Query Processing (2017)

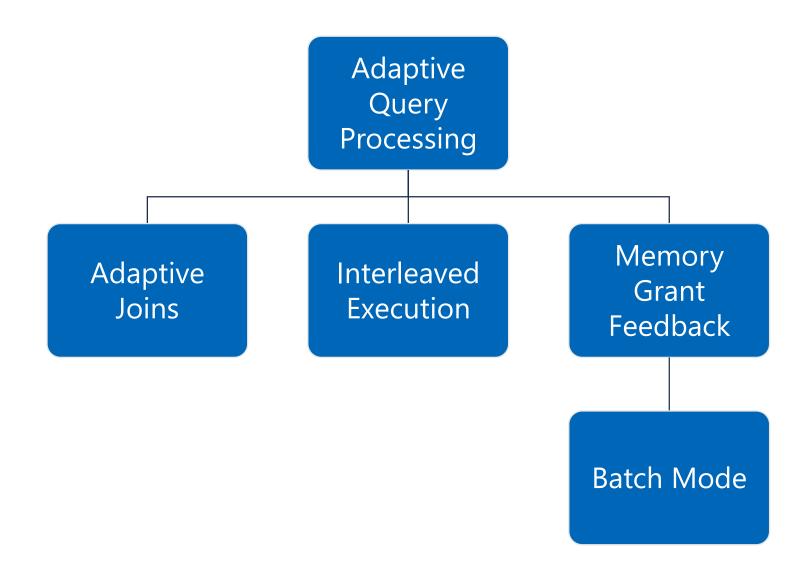


Intelligent Query Processing (2019)

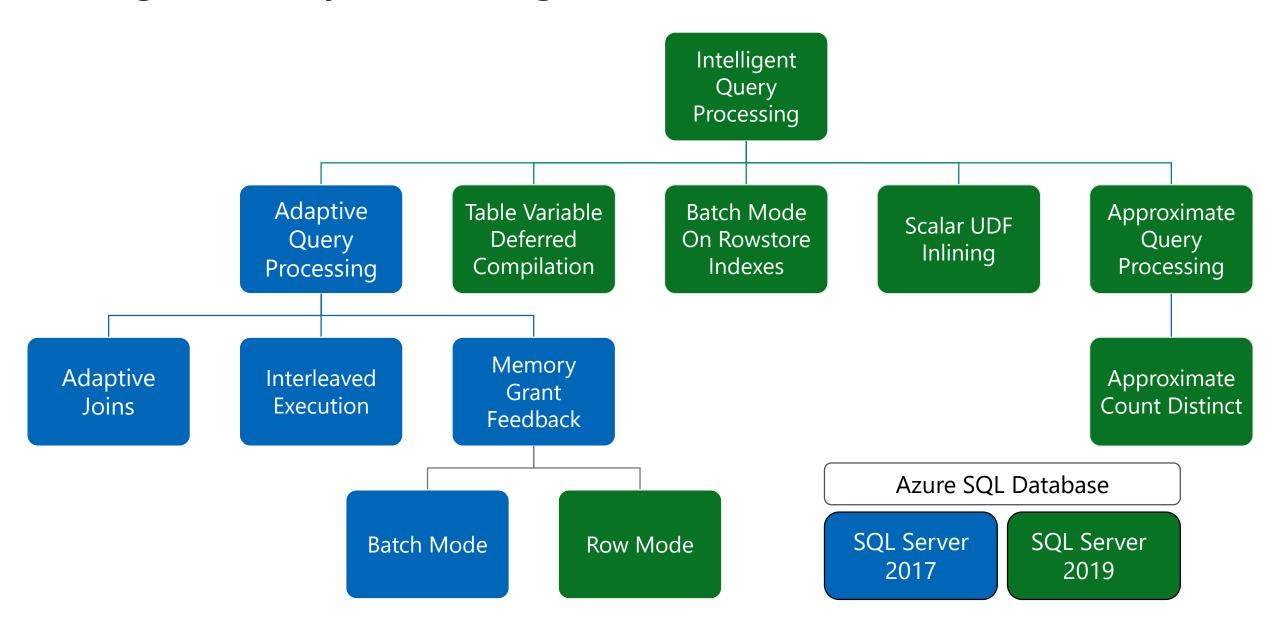


New Features of IQP (2022)

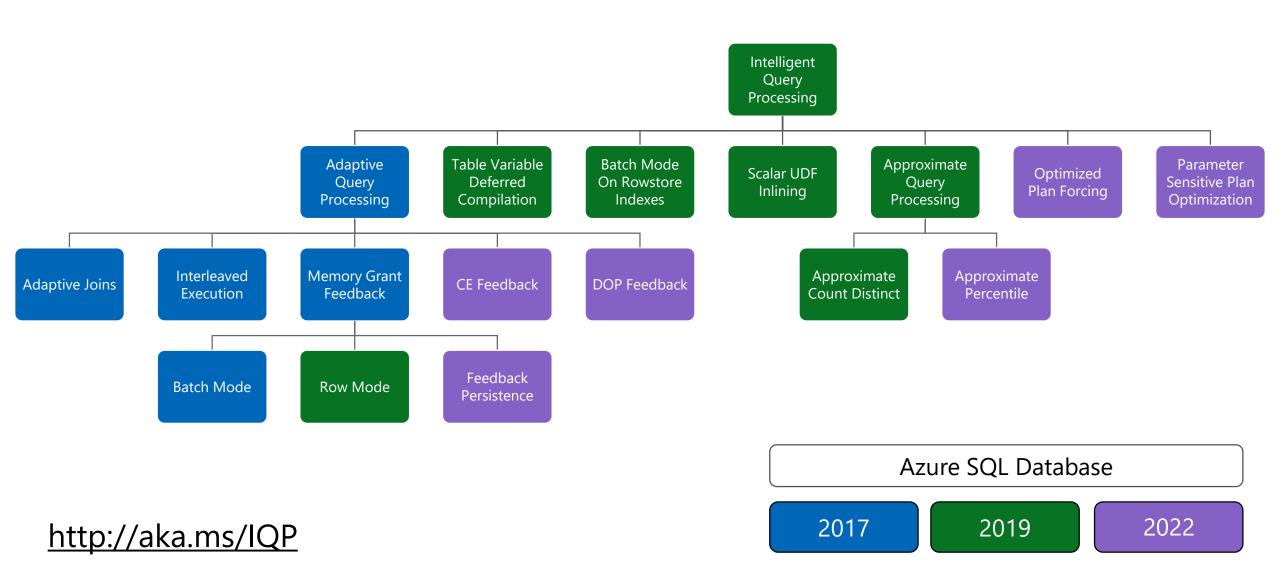
# **Adaptive Query Processing (2017)**



# **Intelligent Query Processing (2019)**



# **Intelligent Query Processing (2022)**



#### **Enabling and Disabling – Instance Level**

# For SQL Server 2017 Features

- Enabled by default in Compatibility level 140 or higher
- To disable change compatibility level to 130 or lower

# For SQL Server 2019 Features

- Enabled by default in Compatibility level 150 or higher
- To disable change compatibility level to 140 or lower

# For SQL Server 2022 Features

- Enabled by default in Compatibility level 160 or higher
- To disable change compatibility level to 150 or lower

#### **Enabling and Disabling – Database Level**

Different settings for 2017 vs Azure SQL, SQL Server 2019 and higher

```
ALTER DATABASE SCOPED CONFIGURATION SET DISABLE_BATCH_MODE_ADAPTIVE_JOINS = ON OFF;
```

```
ALTER DATABASE SCOPED CONFIGURATION SET BATCH_MODE_ADAPTIVE_JOINS = ON OFF;
```

To get a list of Database Scoped Configuration settings

```
SELECT * From sys.database_scoped_configurations;
```

configuration_id	name	value
7	INTERLEAVED_EXECUTION_TVF	1
8	BATCH_MODE_MEMORY_GRANT_FEEDBACK	1
9	BATCH_MODE_ADAPTIVE_JOINS	1
10	TSQL_SCALAR_UDF_INLINING	1
16	ROW_MODE_MEMORY_GRANT_FEEDBACK	1
18	BATCH_MODE_ON_ROWSTORE	1
19	DEFERRED_COMPILATION_TV	1
28	PARAMETER_SENSITIVE_PLAN_OPTIMIZATION	1
31	CE_FEEDBACK	1
33	MEMORY_GRANT_FEEDBACK_PERSISTENCE	1
34	MEMORY_GRANT_FEEDBACK_PERCENTILE_GRANT	1
35	OPTIMIZED_PLAN_FORCING	0

#### **Enabling and Disabling – Statement Level**

You can disable features at the statement scope if necessary.

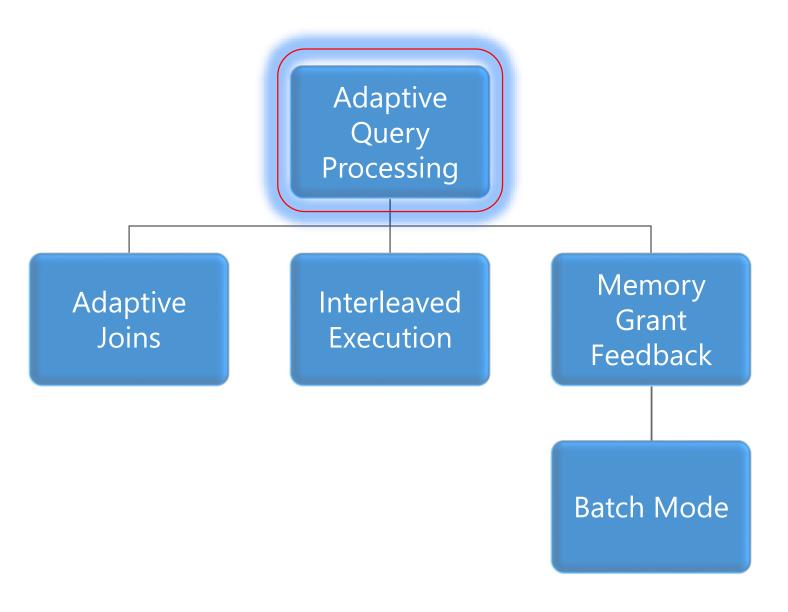
```
<statement>
OPTION (USE HINT('DISABLE_BATCH_MODE_ADAPTIVE_JOINS'));
```

To get a list of valid query use hints

```
SELECT * FROM sys.dm_exec_valid_use_hints;
```

```
DISABLE_INTERLEAVED_EXECUTION_TVF
DISABLE_BATCH_MODE_MEMORY_GRANT_FEEDBACK
DISABLE_BATCH_MODE_ADAPTIVE_JOINS
DISABLE_ROW_MODE_MEMORY_GRANT_FEEDBACK
DISABLE_DEFERRED_COMPILATION_TV
DISABLE_TSQL_SCALAR_UDF_INLINING
ASSUME_FULL_INDEPENDENCE_FOR_FILTER_ESTIMATES
ASSUME_PARTIAL_CORRELATION_FOR_FILTER_ESTIMATES
DISABLE_CE_FEEDBACK
DISABLE_MEMORY_GRANT_FEEDBACK_PERSISTENCE
DISABLE_DOP_FEEDBACK
DISABLE_OPTIMIZED_PLAN_FORCING
```

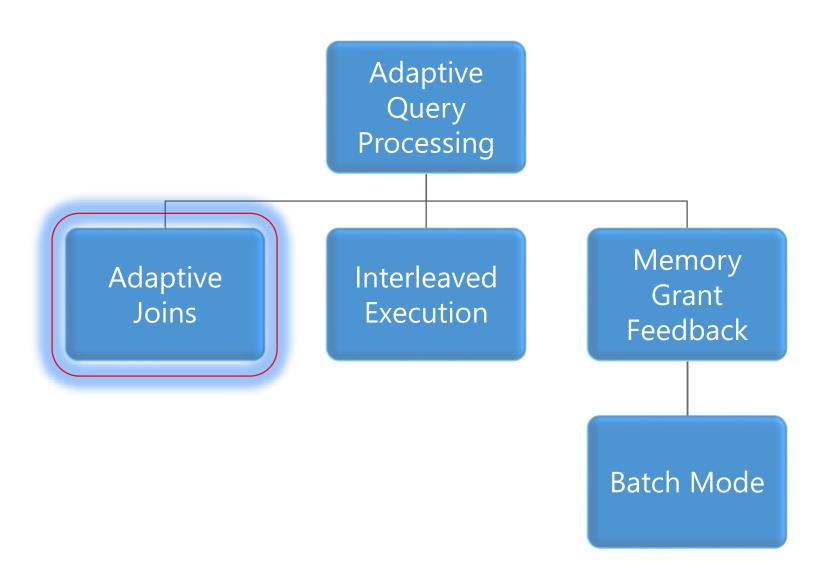
# **Adaptive Query Processing (2017)**



Addresses performance issues related to the cardinality estimation of an execution plan.

These options can provide improved join type selection, row-calculations for Multi-Statement Table-Valued Functions, and memory allocation of row storage.

#### **Batch Mode Adaptive Joins (2017)**

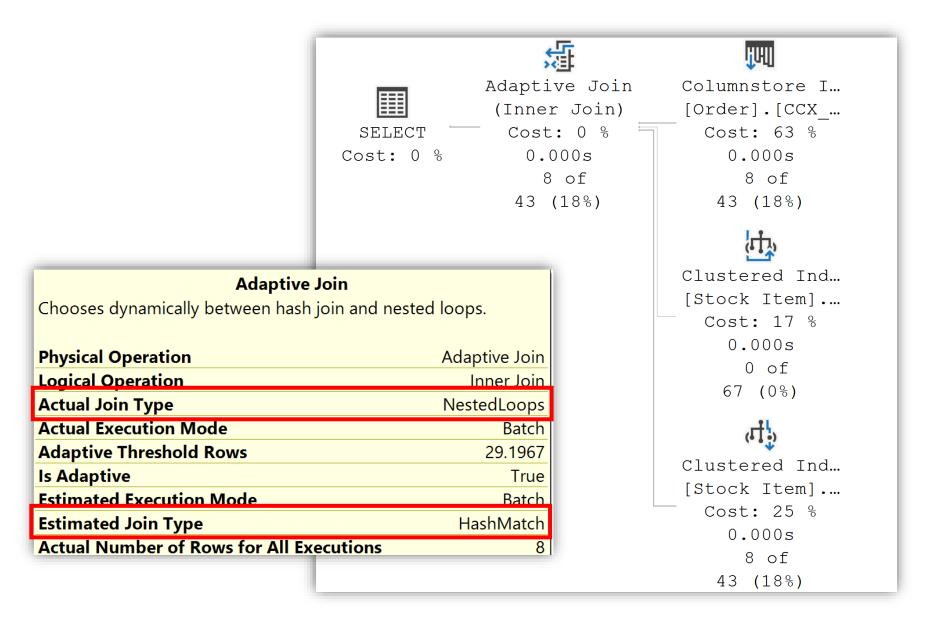


This feature enables the choice of either the Hash or the Nested Loop join type.

Decision is deferred until statement execution.

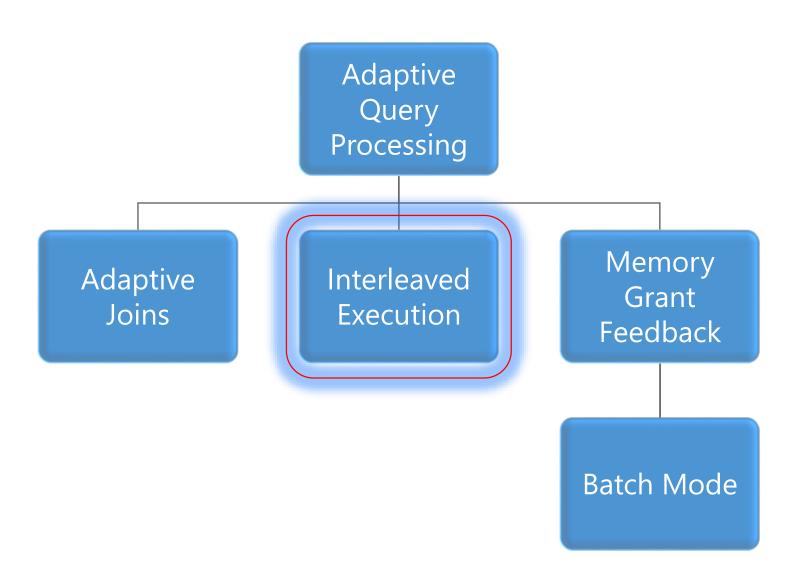
No need to use join hints in queries.

#### Batch Mode Adaptive Joins (2017)



# Adaptive Joins

#### **Interleaved Execution (2017)**



Previously, when a Multi-Statement Table-Valued Function was executed, it used a fixed row estimate of 100 rows.

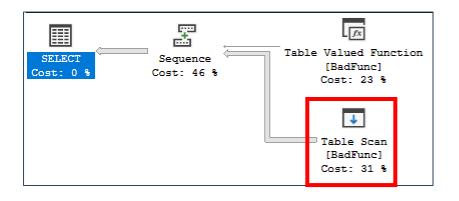
Now execution is paused so a better cardinality estimate can be captured.

#### **Interleaved Execution (2017)**



#### Compatibility Level 120/130

Physical Operation	Table Scan
Logical Operation	Table Scan
Actual Execution Mode	Row
Estimated Execution Mode	Row
Storage	RowStore
Number of Rous Read	122/15
Actual Number of Rows	12345
Actual Number of Batches	U
Estimated Operator Cost	0.003392 (92%)
Estimated I/O Cost	0.003125
Estimated CPU Cost	0.000267
Estimated Subtree Cost	0.003392
Number of Executions	1
Estimated Number of Executions	1
Estimated Number of Rows to be Read	100
Estimated Number of Rows	100
Estimated Kow Size	67 B
Actual Rebinds	0
Actual Rewinds	0
Ordered	False
Node ID	2

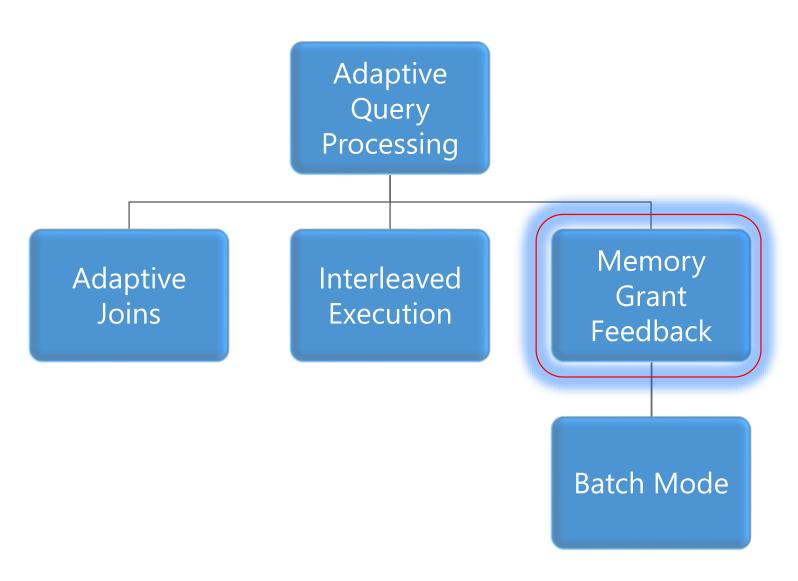


During optimization if SQL Server encounter a read-only multistatement table-valued function (MSTVF), it will pause optimization, execute the applicable subtree, capture accurate cardinality estimates, and then resume optimization for downstream operations.

#### Compatibility Level 140 or higher

Physical Operation	Table Scan
Logical Operation	Table Scan
Actual Execution Mode	Row
Estimated Execution Mode	Row
Storage	RowStore
Number of Rows Read	12345
Actual Number of Rows	12345
Actual Number of Batches	Ū
Estimated Operator Cost	0.0168615 (31%)
Estimated I/O Cost	0.003125
Estimated CPU Cost	0.0137365
Estimated Subtree Cost	0.0168615
Number of Executions	1
Estimated Number of Executions	1
Estimated Number of Rows to be Read	12345
Estimated Number of Rows	12345
Estimated Now Size	07 B
Actual Rebinds	0
Actual Rewinds	0
Ordered	False
Node ID	2

# Batch Mode Memory Grant Feedback (2017)

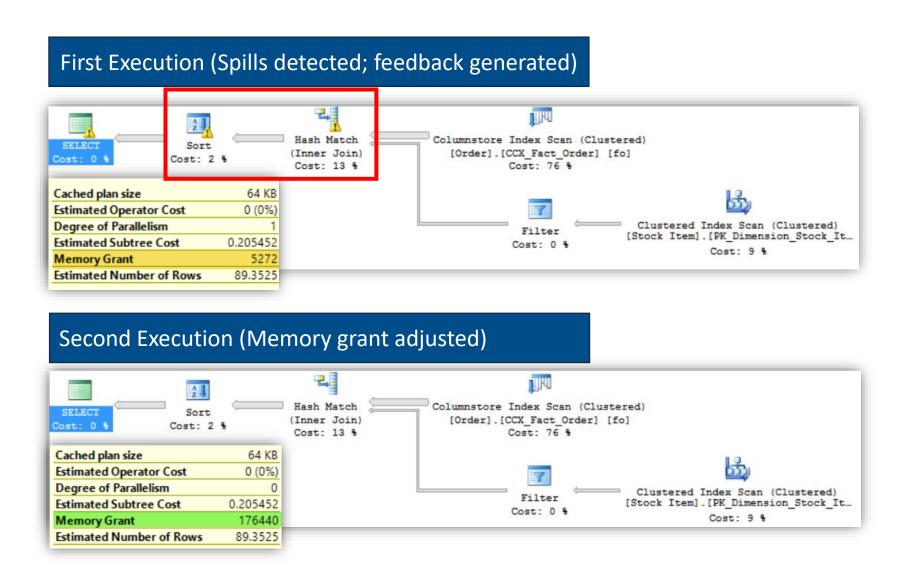


When compiling an execution plan, the query engine estimates how much memory is needed to store rows during join and sort operations.

Too much memory allocation may impact performance of other operations. Not enough will cause a spill over to disk.

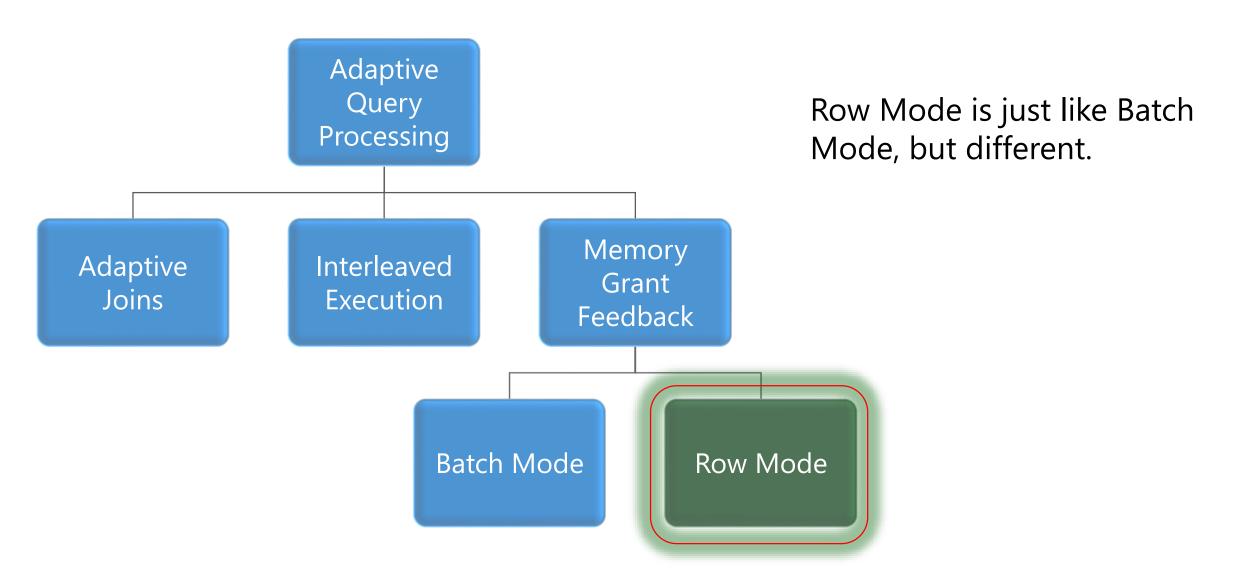
This feature recalculates memory on first execution and updates the cached plan.

#### Batch Mode Memory Grant Feedback (2017)



Memory Grant Feedback (Batch Mode)

#### Row Mode Memory Grant Feedback (2019)



#### Row Mode Memory Grant Feedback (2019)

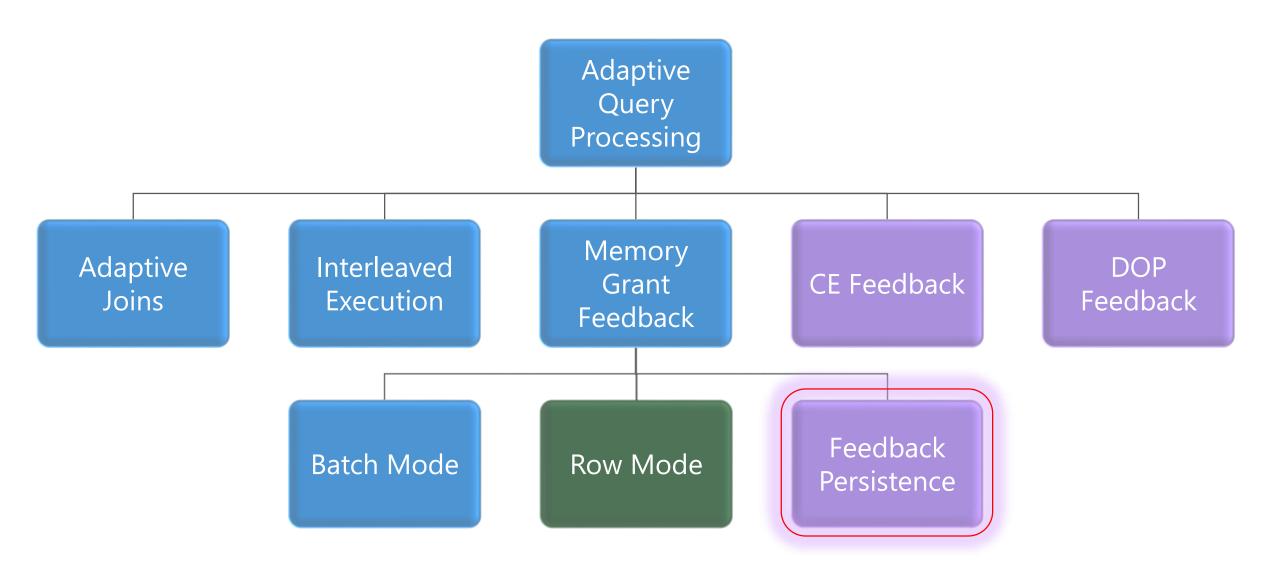
Expands on the batch mode memory grant feedback feature by also adjusting memory grant sizes for row mode operators.

DesiredMemory	13992
*	
GrantedMemory	13992
GrantWaitTime	0
lsMemoryGrantFeedbackAdjusted	YesStable
LastRequestedMemory	13992
MaxQueryMemory	1497128
MaxUsedMemory	3744

Memory Grant Feedback (Row Mode)

Two new query plan attributes will be shown for actual post-execution plans.

#### Feedback Persistence (2022)



#### Feedback Persistence and Percentile (2022)

#### **Problem**: Cache Eviction

- Feedback is not persisted if the plan is evicted from cache or failover
- Record of how to adjust memory is lost and must re-learn

#### **Solution**: Persist the feedback

• Persist the memory grant feedback in the Query Store

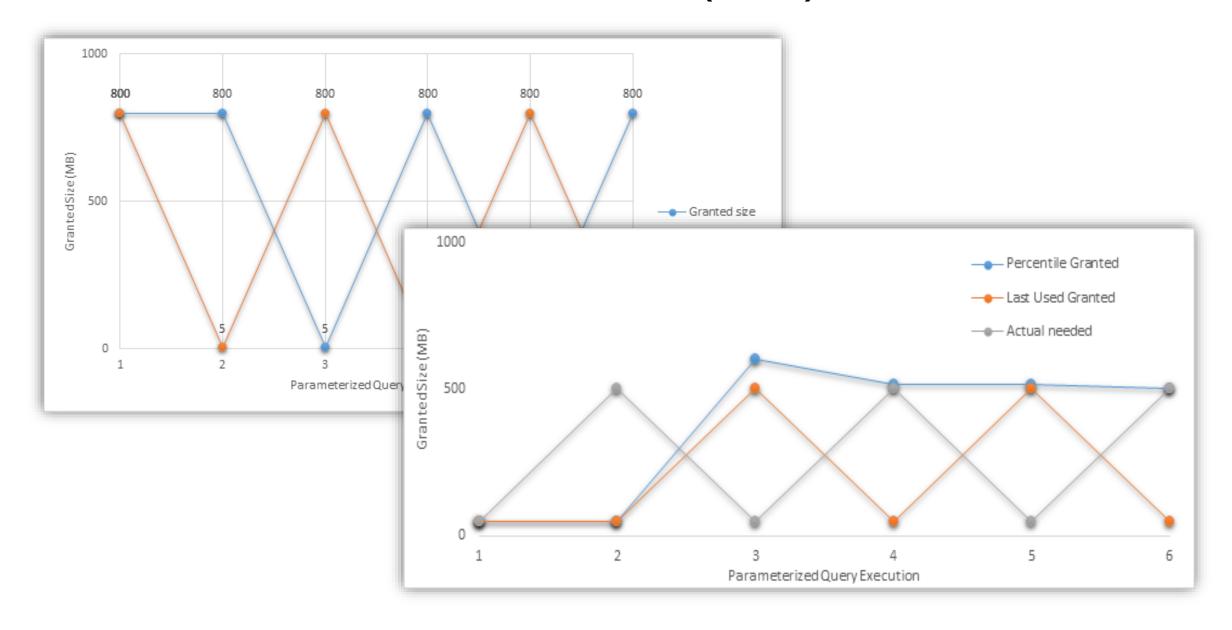
#### **Problem**: Oscillating Feedback

- Memory grants adjusted based on last feedback
- Parameter Sensitive Plans could change feedback

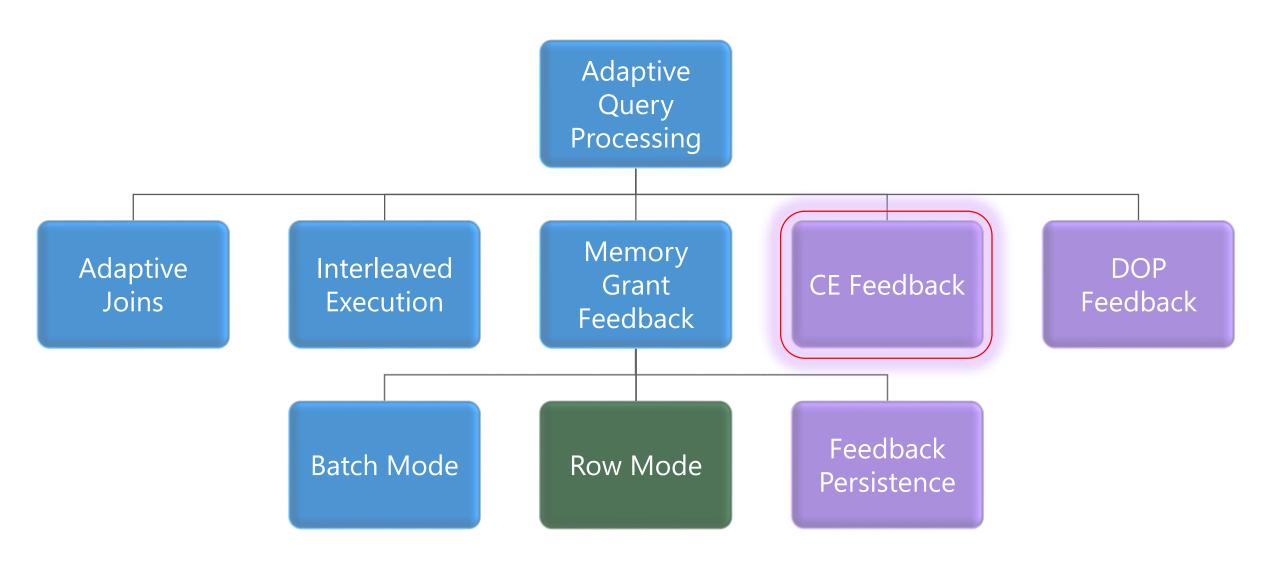
#### **Solution**: Percentile-based calculation

• Smooths the grant size values based on execution usage history

#### Feedback Persistence and Percentile (2022)



# Cardinality Estimator Feedback (2022)



# Cardinality Estimator Feedback (2022)

#### **Cardinality Estimation Today**

- CE determines the estimated number of rows for a query plan
- CE models are based on statistics and assumptions about the distribution of data
- Learn more about CE models and assumptions <a href="https://aka.ms/sqlCE">https://aka.ms/sqlCE</a>

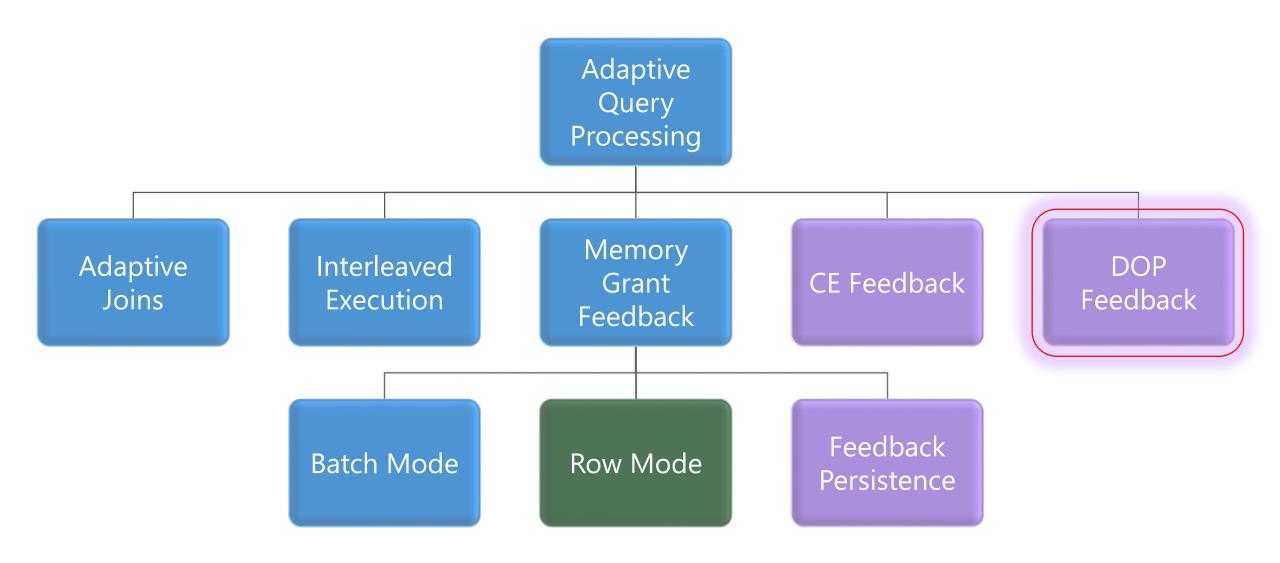
#### **Problem**: Incorrect Assumptions for Cardinality Estimates

- The cardinality estimator sometimes makes incorrect assumptions
- Poor assumptions leads to poor query plans.
- One CE models doesn't fit all scenarios

#### **Solution**: Learn from historical CE model assumptions

- CE Feedback will evaluate accuracy for repeated queries
- If assumption looks incorrect, test a different CE model assumption and verify if it helps
- If a CE model assumption does help, it will replace the current plan in cache.

#### Degree of Parallelism Feedback (2022)



#### Degree of Parallelism Feedback (2022)

#### **Parallelism Today**

• Parallelism is often beneficial for querying large amounts of data, but transactional queries could suffer when time spent coordinating threads outweighs the advantages of using a parallel plan

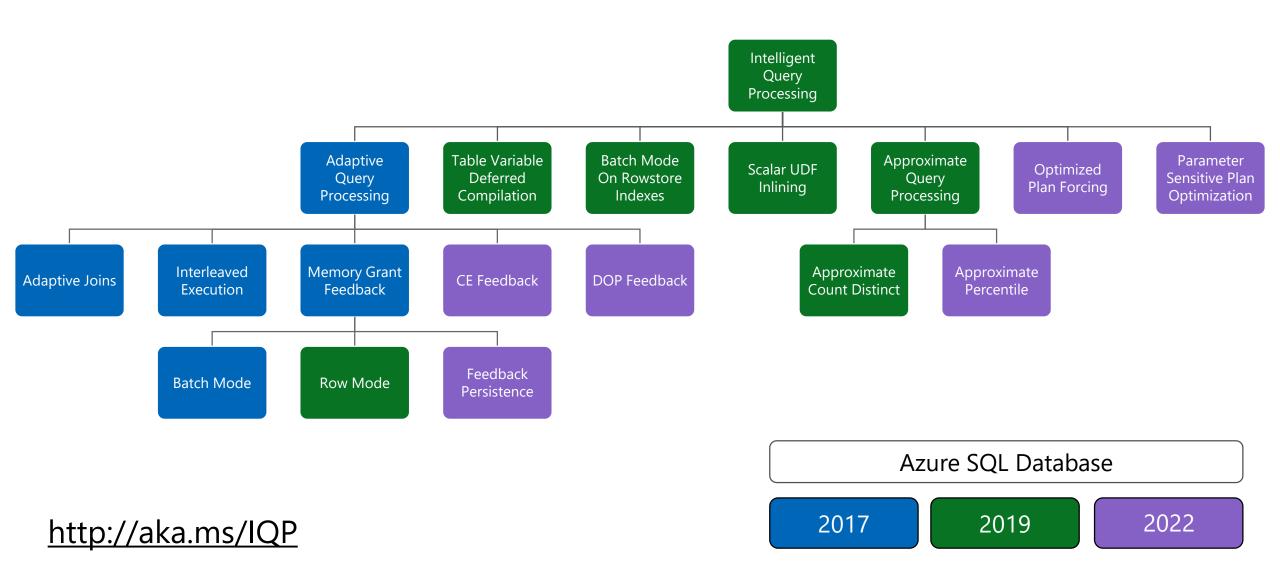
#### **Current Settings**

- Before SQL Server 2019, default value for MAXDOP = 0
- With SQL Server 2019, default is calculated at setup based on available processors
- Azure SQL Database the default MAXDOP is 8

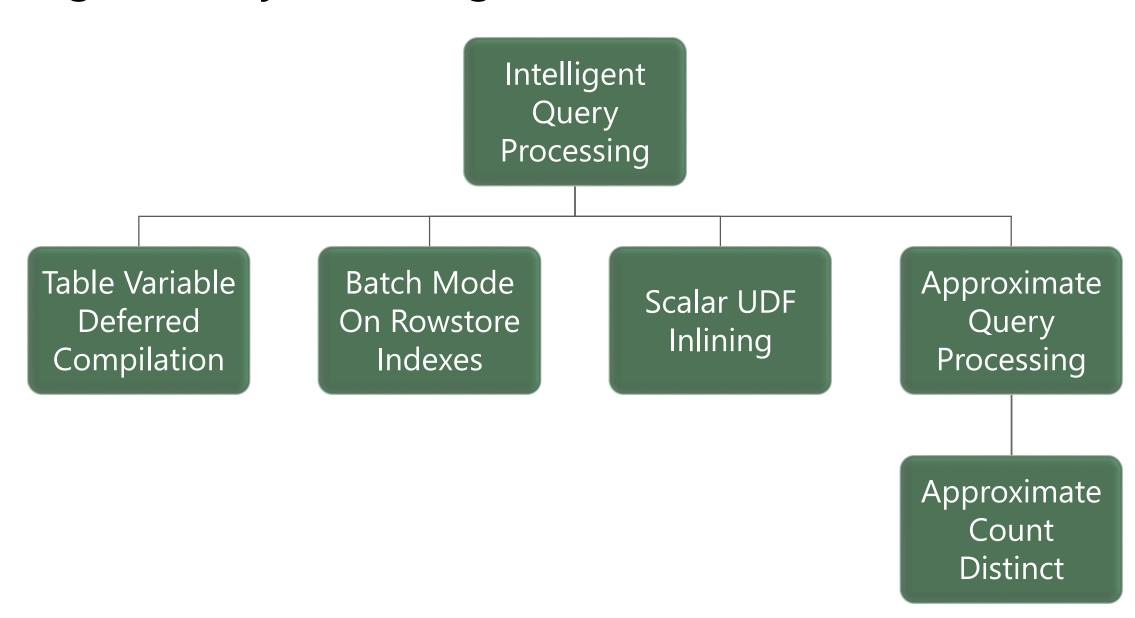
#### DOP Feedback

- DOP Feedback will identify parallelism inefficiencies for repeating queries, based on CPU time, elapsed time, and waits
- If parallelism usage is inefficient, the DOP will be **lowered** for next execution (min DOP = 2) and then **verify** if it helps
- Only verified feedback is persisted (Query Store).
  - If next execution regresses, back to last good known DOP

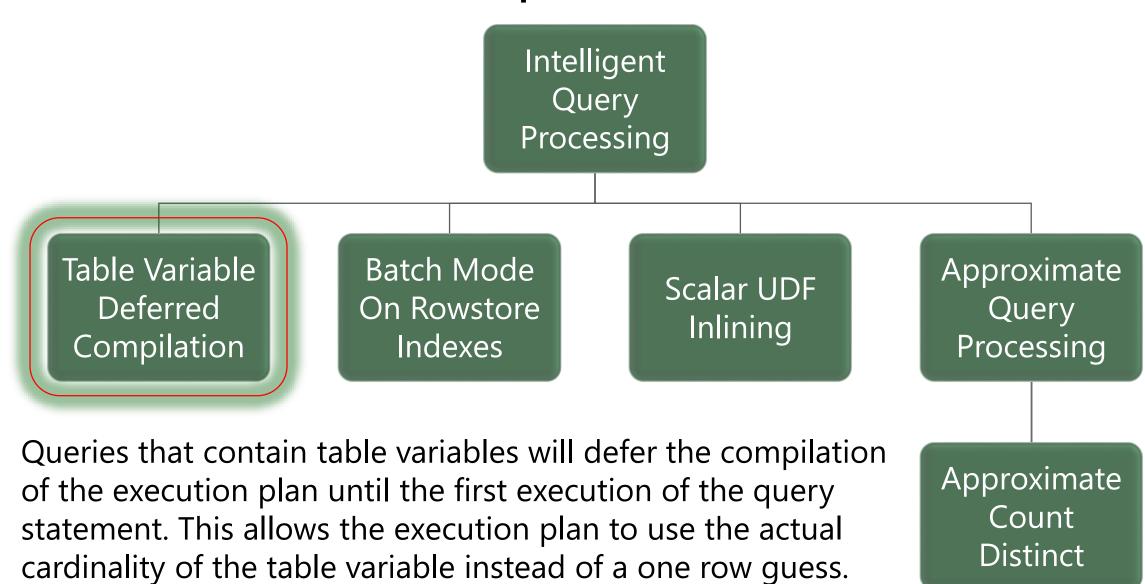
# **Intelligent Query Processing (2022)**



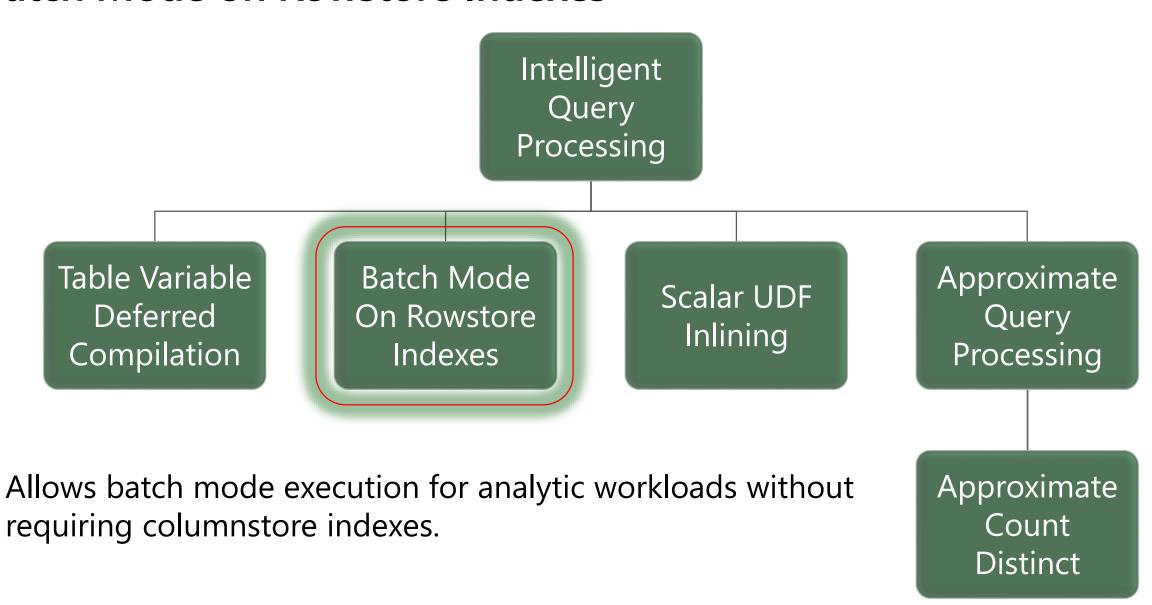
# **Intelligent Query Processing (2019 Features)**



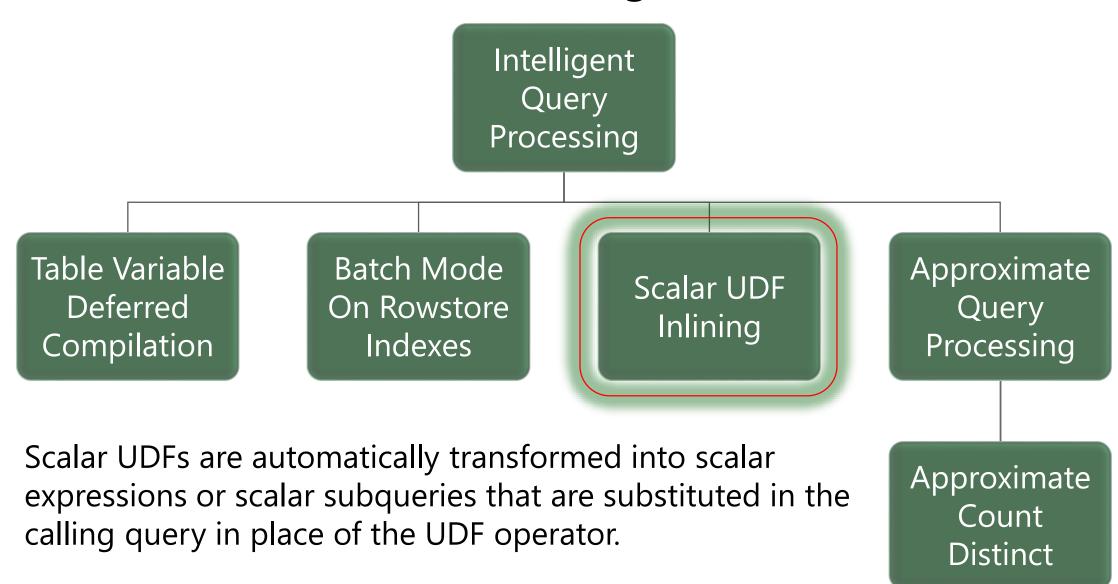
#### **Table Variable Deferred Compilation**



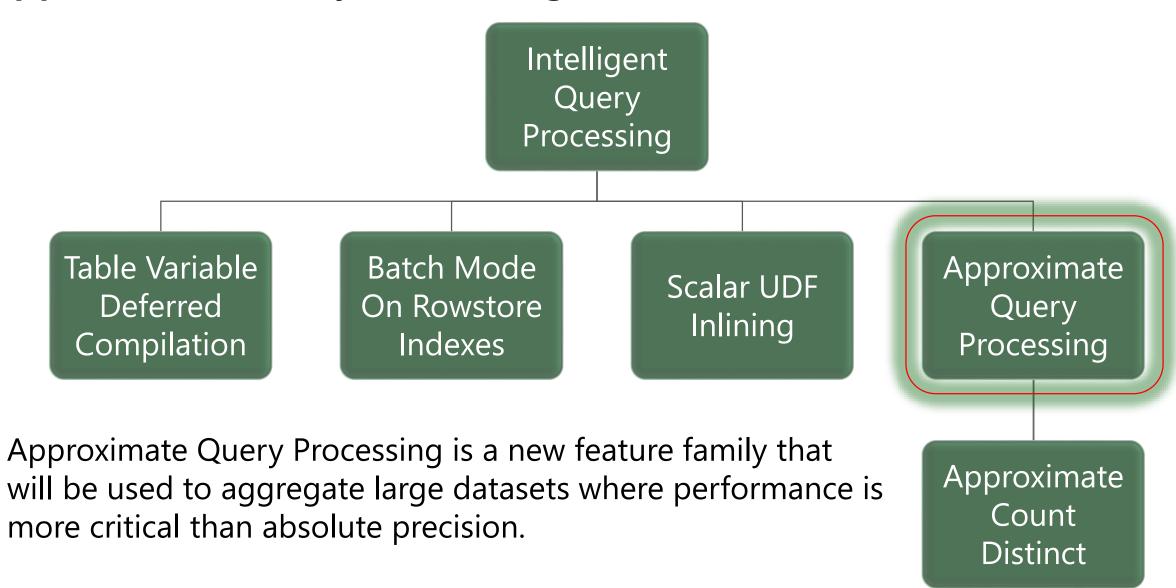
#### **Batch Mode on Rowstore Indexes**



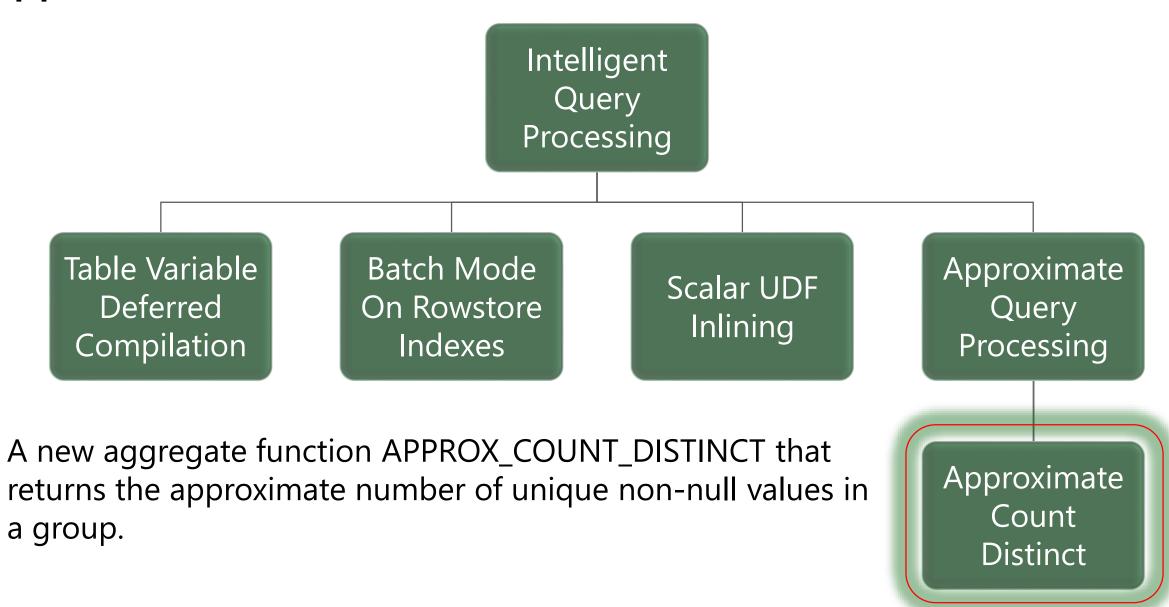
#### Scalar User-Defined Function Inlining



# **Approximate Query Processing**



# **Approximate Count Distinct (2019)**



#### **Approximate Count Distinct**

It returns the approximate number of unique non-null values in a group.

It is designed to provide aggregations across large data sets where responsiveness is more critical than absolute precision.

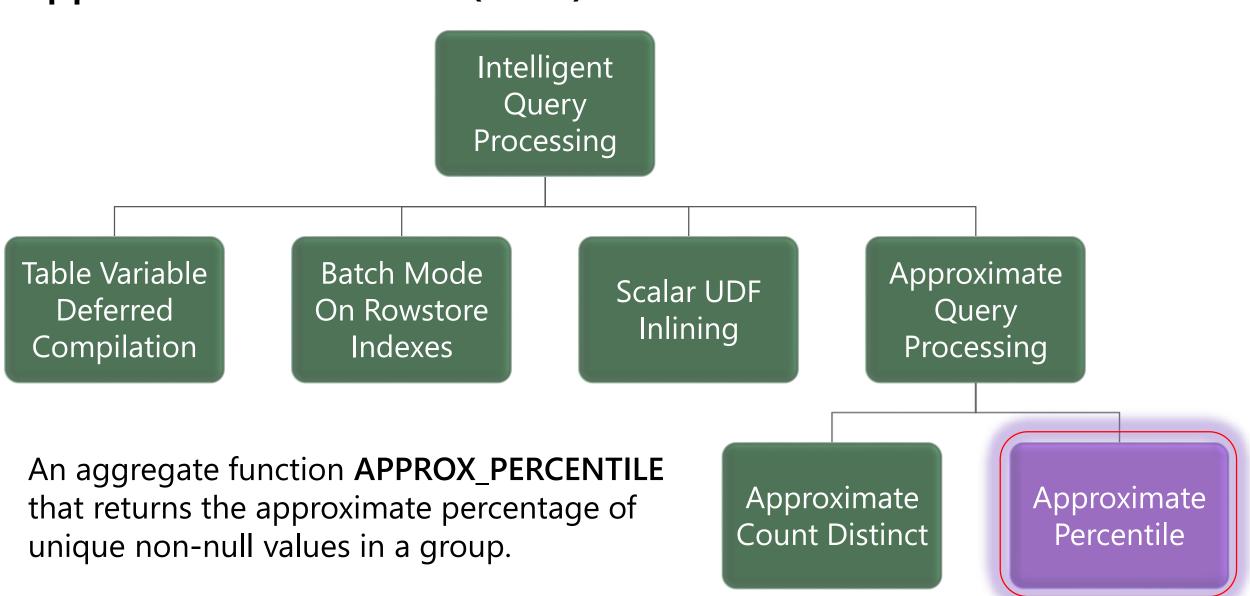
Guarantees up to a 2% error rate within a 97% probability.

Requires less memory than an exhaustive COUNT DISTINCT operation so it is less likely to spill memory to disk compared to COUNT DISTINCT.

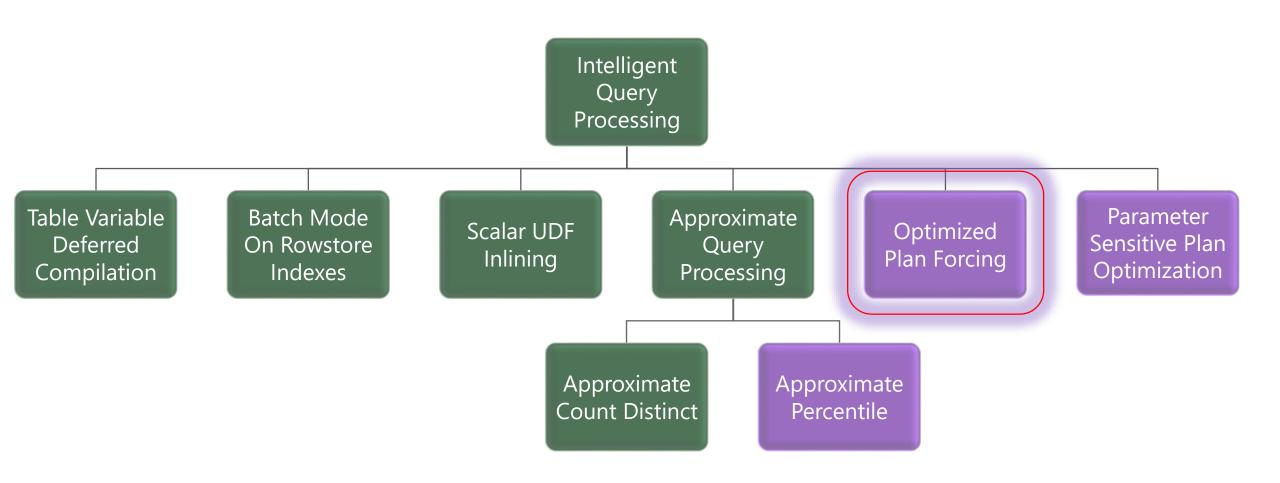
# Approximate Count Distinct

SELECT APPROX\_COUNT\_DISTINCT(O\_OrderKey) AS Approx\_Distinct\_OrderKey
FROM dbo.Orders;

# Approximate Percentile (2022)



# **Optimized Plan Forcing (2022)**



# **Optimized Plan Forcing (2022)**

#### **Query Compilation Today**

- Query optimization and compilation is a multi-phased process of quickly generating a "good-enough" query execution plan
- Query execution time includes compilation. Can be time and resource consuming
- To reduce compilation overhead for repeating queries, SQL caches query plans for re-use

Plans can be evicted from cache due to restarts or memory pressure

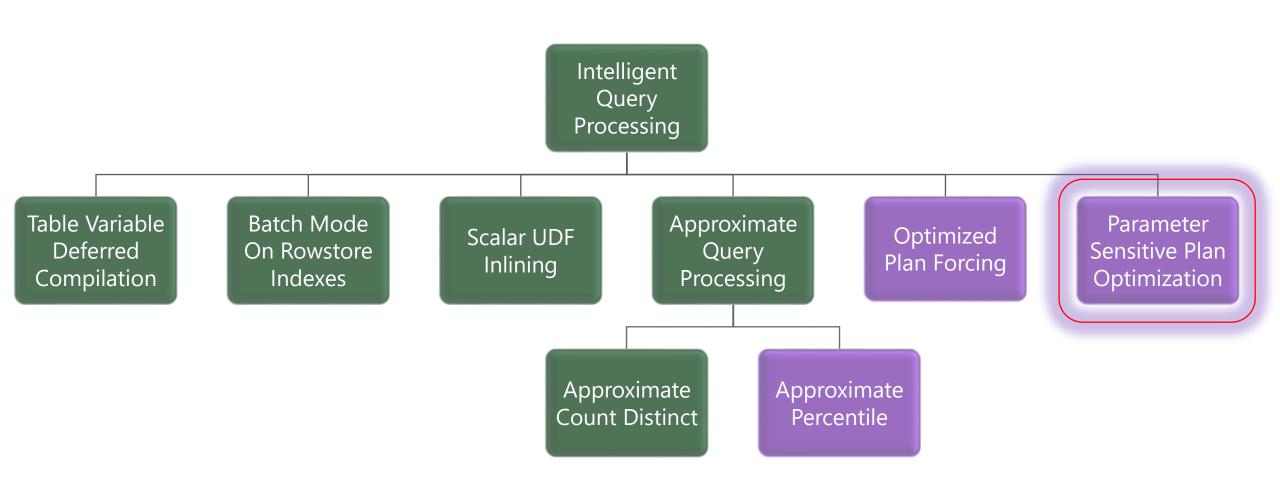
Subsequent calls to the query require a full new compilation

## Optimized Plan Forcing (2022)

#### Query Compilation Replay

- Stores a *compilation replay script* (CRS) that persists key compilation steps in Query Store (not user visible)
- Version 1 targets previously forced plans through Query Store and Automatic Plan Correction
- Uses those previously-recorded CRS to quickly reproduce and cache the original forced plan at a fraction of the original compilation cost
- Compatible with Query Store hints and secondary replica support

## Parameter Sensitive Plan Optimization (2022)



## Parameter Sensitive Plans (2022)

#### **Parameter Sensitive Plans Today**

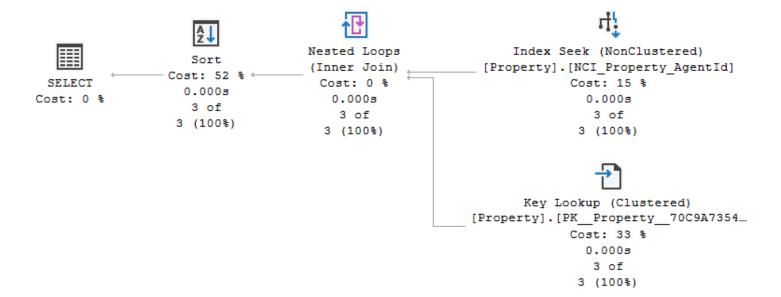
- Parameter-sniffing problem refers to a scenario where a **single** cached plan for a parameterized query is **not optimal for all** possible input parameter values
- If plan is not representative of most executions, you have a perceived "bad plan"

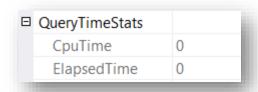
#### **Current Workarounds**

- RECOMPILE
- OPTION (OPTIMIZE FOR...)
- OPTION (OPTIMIZE FOR UNKNOWN)
- Disable parameter sniffing entirely
- KEEPFIXEDPLAN
- Force a known plan
- Nested procedures
- Dynamic string execution

## PSP today (Example of Real Estate agent's portfolio)

#### New compile on Agent 4

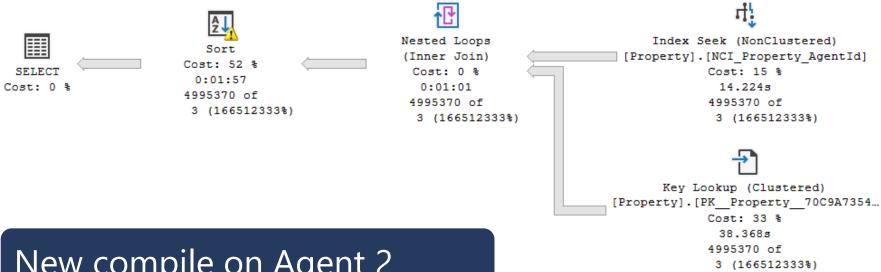




This example was borrowed from Pedro Lopes @SQLPedro

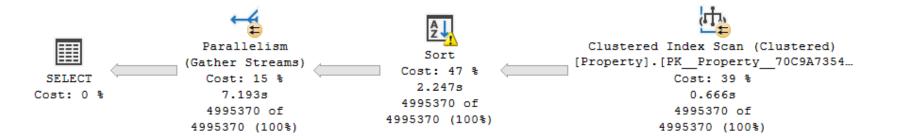
## PSP today (Example of Real Estate agent's portfolio)

### Using cached plan for Agent 2



⊟	QueryTimeStats	
	CpuTime	88667
	ElapsedTime	214222

### New compile on Agent 2



☐ QueryTimeStats	
CpuTime	46620
ElapsedTime	105288

## **PSP Optimization (2022)**

Automatically enables multiple, active cached plans for a single parameterized statement

Cached execution plans will accommodate different data sizes based on the customer-provided runtime parameter value(s)

## Design considerations

- Too many plans generated could create cache bloat, so limit # of plans in cache
- Overhead of PSP optimization must not outweigh downstream benefit
- Compatible with Query Store plan forcing

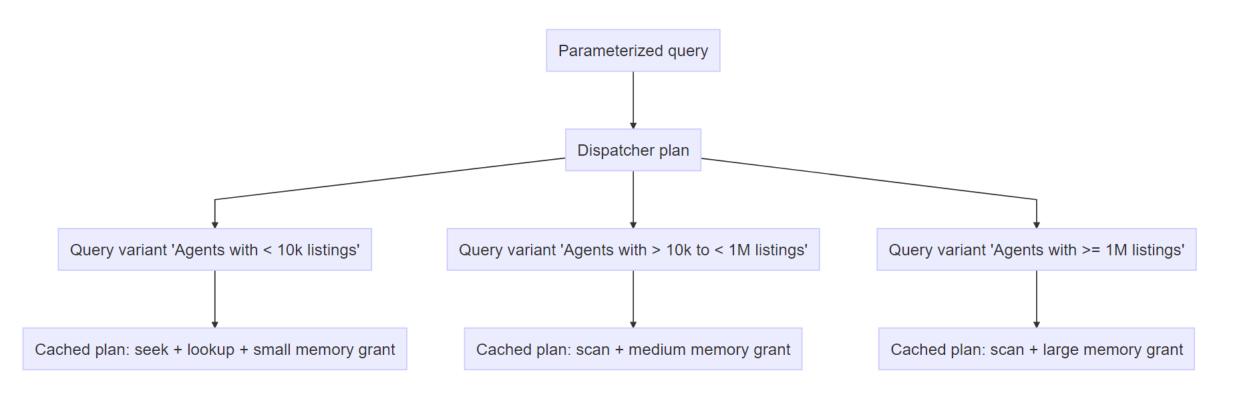
## **PSP Predicate Selection (2022)**

During initial compilation PSP optimization will evaluate the most "at risk" parameterized predicates (up to three out of all available)

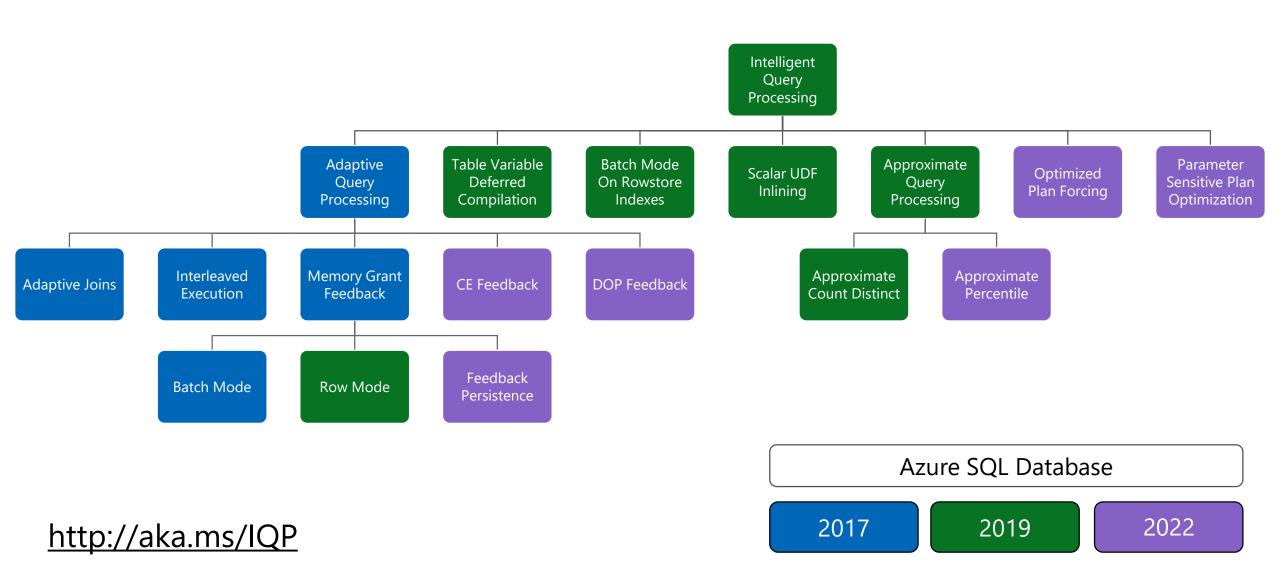
First version is scoped to equality predicates referencing statistics-covered columns; WHERE AgentId = @AgentId

Uses the statistics histogram to identify non-uniform distributions

## **Boundary Value Selection (Dispatcher Plan)**



# **Intelligent Query Processing (2022)**



## **Demonstration**

#### **Intelligent query processing**

- Interleaved Execution
- Batch Mode on RowStore
- Memory Grant Feedback (Row Mode)



# Intelligent query processing

- Observing Batch-Mode Memory Grant Feedback
- Using APPROX\_COUNT\_DISTINCT to improve performance
- Observing Table Variable Deferred Compilation
- Observing Scalar UDF Inlining



**Questions?** 



## **Knowledge Check**

Is it possible to disable Intelligent Query Processing features?

On queries not using Interleaved execution for MSTVFs. How many rows are estimated for a MSTVFs?

Does table variable deferred compilation increase the recompilation frequency?

On queries not using table variable deferred compilation. How many rows are estimated for a table variable?

What is the minimum compatibility level that supports Batch mode on rowstore?

