PostgreSQL Exercises

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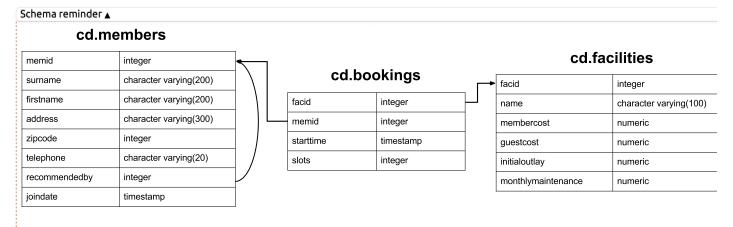
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Produce a list of all members, along with their recommender

Question

How can you output a list of all members, including the individual who recommended them (if any)? Ensure that result are ordered by (surname, firstname).



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Expected Results		
memfname	memsname	recfname
Florence	Bader	Ponder
Anne	Baker	Ponder
Timothy	Baker	Jemima
Tim	Boothe	Tim
Gerald	Butters	Darren
Joan	Coplin	Timothy
Erica	Crumpet	Tracy
Nancy	Dare	Janice
David	Farrell	
Jemima	Farrell	



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Answers and Discussion

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Let's introduce another new concept: the LEFT OUTER JOIN. These are best explained by the way in which they diffe from inner joins. Inner joins take a left and a right table, and look for matching rows based on a join condition (ON). Wh the condition is satisfied, a joined row is produced. A LEFT OUTER JOIN operates similarly, except that if a given row on the left hand table doesn't match anything, it still produces an output row. That output row consists of the left han table row, and a bunch of NULLS in place of the right hand table row.

This is useful in situations like this question, where we want to produce output with optional data. We want the names of all members, and the name of their recommender *if that person exists*. You can't express that properly with an inne join.

As you may have guessed, there's other outer joins too. The RIGHT OUTER JOIN is much like the LEFT OUTER JOIN except that the left hand side of the expression is the one that contains the optional data. The rarely-used FULL OUTE JOIN treats both sides of the expression as optional.

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