***CURSORS:***

Oracle creates a memory area, known as the context area, for processing an SQL statement, which contains all the information needed for processing the statement; for example, the number of rows processed, etc.

A **cursor** is a pointer to this context area. PL/SQL controls the context area through a cursor. A cursor holds the rows (one or more) returned by a SQL statement. The set of rows the cursor holds is referred to as the **active set**.

You can name a cursor so that it could be referred to in a program to fetch and process the rows returned by the SQL statement, one at a time. There are two types of cursors −

* Implicit cursors
* Explicit cursors

***Implicit Cursors***

Implicit cursors are automatically created by Oracle whenever an SQL statement is executed, when there is no explicit cursor for the statement. Programmers cannot control the implicit cursors and the information in it.

Whenever a DML statement (INSERT, UPDATE and DELETE) is issued, an implicit cursor is associated with this statement. For INSERT operations, the cursor holds the data that needs to be inserted. For UPDATE and DELETE operations, the cursor identifies the rows that would be affected.

In PL/SQL, you can refer to the most recent implicit cursor as the **SQL cursor**, which always has attributes such as **%FOUND, %ISOPEN, %NOTFOUND**, and **%ROWCOUNT**. The SQL cursor has additional attributes, **%BULK\_ROWCOUNT** and **%BULK\_EXCEPTIONS**, designed for use with the **FORALL** statement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **S.No** | **Attribute & Description** |
| 1 | **%FOUND**  Returns TRUE if an INSERT, UPDATE, or DELETE statement affected one or more rows or a SELECT INTO statement returned one or more rows. Otherwise, it returns FALSE. |
| 2 | **%NOTFOUND**  The logical opposite of %FOUND. It returns TRUE if an INSERT, UPDATE, or DELETE statement affected no rows, or a SELECT INTO statement returned no rows. Otherwise, it returns FALSE. |
| 3 | **%ISOPEN**  Always returns FALSE for implicit cursors, because Oracle closes the SQL cursor automatically after executing its associated SQL statement. |
| 4 | **%ROWCOUNT**  Returns the number of rows affected by an INSERT, UPDATE, or DELETE statement, or returned by a SELECT INTO statement. |

Example:

DECLARE

total\_rows number(2);

BEGIN

UPDATE customers

SET salary = salary + 500;

IF sql%notfound THEN

dbms\_output.put\_line('no customers selected');

ELSIF sql%found THEN

total\_rows := sql%rowcount;

dbms\_output.put\_line( total\_rows || ' customers selected ');

END IF;

END;

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***Explicit Cursors***

Explicit cursors are programmer-defined cursors for gaining more control over the **context area**. An explicit cursor should be defined in the declaration section of the PL/SQL Block. It is created on a SELECT Statement which returns more than one row.

The syntax for creating an explicit cursor is −

CURSOR cursor\_name IS select\_statement;

Working with an explicit cursor includes the following steps −

* Declaring the cursor for initializing the memory
* Opening the cursor for allocating the memory
* Fetching the cursor for retrieving the data
* Closing the cursor to release the allocated memory

Example:

DECLARE

c\_id customers.id%type;

c\_name customers.name%type;

c\_addr customers.address%type;

CURSOR c\_customers is

SELECT id, name, address FROM customers;

BEGIN

OPEN c\_customers;

LOOP

FETCH c\_customers into c\_id, c\_name, c\_addr;

EXIT WHEN c\_customers%notfound;

dbms\_output.put\_line(c\_id || ' ' || c\_name || ' ' || c\_addr);

END LOOP;

CLOSE c\_customers;

END;

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