MySQL DELETE JOIN

Summary: in this tutorial, we will show you how to delete data from multiple tables by using **MySQL DELETE JOIN** statement.

In the previous tutorial, you learned how to delete rows of multiple tables by using:

- A single `DELETE` statement on multiple tables.
- A single `DELETE` statement on multiple related tables which the child table have an `ON DELETE CASCADE` referential action for the foreign key.

This tutorial introduces to you a more flexible way to delete data from multiple tables using `INNER JOIN` or `LEFT JOIN` clause with the `DELETE` statement.

MySQL DELETE JOIN with INNER JOIN

MySQL also allows you to use the `INNER JOIN` clause in the `DELETE` statement to delete rows from a table and the matching rows in another table.

For example, to delete rows from both `T1` and `T2` tables that meet a specified condition, you use the following statement:

```
DELETE T1, T2
FROM T1
INNER JOIN T2 ON T1.key = T2.key
WHERE condition;
```

Notice that you put table names `T1` and `T2` between the `DELETE` and `FROM` keywords. If you omit `T1` table, the `DELETE` statement only deletes rows in `T2` table. Similarly, if you omit `T2` table, the `DELETE` statement will delete only rows in `T1` table.

The expression `T1.key = T2.key` specifies the condition for matching rows between `T1` and `T2` tables that will be deleted.

The condition in the `WHERE` clause determine rows in the `T1` and `T2` that will be deleted.

MySQL DELETE JOIN with INNER JOIN example

Suppose, we have two tables `t1` and `t2` with the following structures and data:

```
DROP TABLE IF EXISTS t1, t2;

CREATE TABLE t1 (
    id INT PRIMARY KEY AUTO_INCREMENT
);

CREATE TABLE t2 (
    id VARCHAR(20) PRIMARY KEY,
    ref INT NOT NULL
);

INSERT INTO t1 VALUES (1),(2),(3);

INSERT INTO t2(id,ref) VALUES('A',1),('B',2),('C',3);
```

id
1
2
3

id	Ref
A	1
B	2
C	3

```
DELETE
      t1 , t2
FROM
      t1
      INNER JOIN t2
            ON t2.ref = t1.id
WHERE
      t1.id = 1;
```

The following statement deletes the row with id 1 in the `t1` table and also row with `ref` 1 in the `t2` table using `DELETE...INNER JOIN` statement:

```
DELETE t1,t2 FROM t1
        INNER JOIN
    t2 ON t2.ref = t1.id
```

```
WHERE
    t1.id = 1;
```

The statement returned the following message:

```
2 row(s) affected
```

It indicated that two rows have been deleted.

MySQL DELETE JOIN with LEFT JOIN

We often use the `LEFT JOIN` clause in the `SELECT` statement to find rows in the left table that have or don't have matching rows in the right table.

We can also use the `LEFT JOIN` clause in the `DELETE` statement to delete rows in a table (left table) that does not have matching rows in another table (right table).

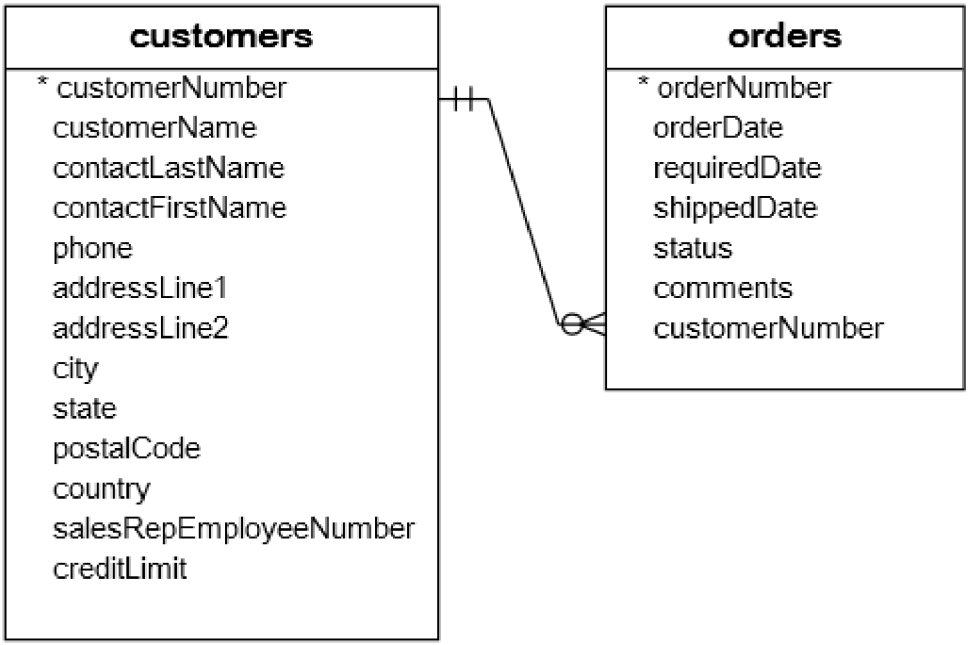
The following syntax illustrates how to use `DELETE` statement with `LEFT JOIN` clause to delete rows from `T1` table that does not have corresponding rows in the `T2` table:

```
DELETE T1
FROM T1
        LEFT JOIN
    T2 ON T1.key = T2.key
WHERE
    T2.key IS NULL;
```

Note that we only put `T1` table after the `DELETE` keyword, not both `T1` and `T2` tables like we did with the `INNER JOIN` clause.

MySQL DELETE JOIN with LEFT JOIN example

See the following `customers` and `orders` tables in the sample database:



Each customer has zero or more orders. However, each order belongs to one and only one customer.

We can use `DELETE` statement with `LEFT JOIN` clause to clean up our customers master data. The following statement removes customers who have not placed any order:

```
DELETE customers
FROM customers
        LEFT JOIN
    orders ON customers.customerNumber = orders.customerNumber
WHERE
    orderNumber IS NULL;
```

We can verify the delete by finding whether customers who do not have any order exists using the following query:

```
SELECT
    c.customerNumber,
    c.customerName,
    orderNumber
FROM
    customers c
        LEFT JOIN
    orders o ON c.customerNumber = o.customerNumber
WHERE
    orderNumber IS NULL;
```

The query returned an empty result set which is what we expected.

In this tutorial, you have learned how to use the MySQL `DELETE JOIN` statement to delete data from two or more tables.