

Data types specify the type of data for a particular column.

If a column called "LastName" is going to hold names, then that particular column should have a "varchar" (variable-length character) data type.

The most common data types:

Numeric

INT - A normal-sized integer that can be signed or unsigned.

FLOAT(M,D) - A floating-point number that cannot be unsigned. You can optionally define the display length (M) and the number of decimals (D).

DOUBLE(M,D) - A double precision floating-point number that cannot be unsigned. You can optionally define the display length (M) and the number of decimals (D).

Date and Time

DATE - A date in *YYYY-MM-DD* format.

DATETIME - A date and time combination in *YYYY-MM-DD HH:MM:SS* format.

TIMESTAMP - A timestamp, calculated from midnight, January 1, 1970

TIME - Stores the time in *HH:MM:SS* format.

String Type

CHAR(M) - Fixed-length character string. Size is specified in parenthesis. Max 255 bytes.

VARCHAR(M) - Variable-length character string. Max size is specified in parenthesis.

BLOB - "Binary Large Objects" and are used to store large amounts of binary data, such as images or other types of files.

TEXT - Large amount of text data.



Choosing the correct data type for your columns is the key to good database design.