

TASK

Databases and the MongoDB Database

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Introduction

WELCOME TO THE DATABASES AND THE MONGODB DATABASE TASK!

Dynamic web applications rely on data. Storing data about your users is a good starting point if you want to make a web application more dynamic. In this task, you will learn about various types of databases. You will also be introduced to MongoDB (a very popular database), and shown how to use MongoDB to create a database-as-a-service (DBaaS) architecture or implementation.

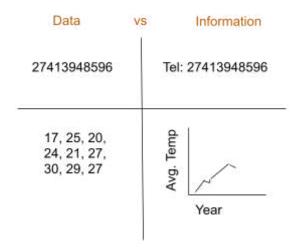
DATABASES

Data is core to software development. Programs are designed to manipulate, create, and visualise data. Therefore, it is important for all software developers and web developers to be able to access, manipulate, and store data.

Databases are used to store data. A database is simply a large container of data with the ability to order the data in multiple ways while providing easy access to the data itself. Web developers often have to manipulate the data stored in databases. For instance, you may need to store your users' usernames, passwords, names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc. Therefore, full-stack web developers need to be able to work proficiently with databases.

DATA VERSUS INFORMATION

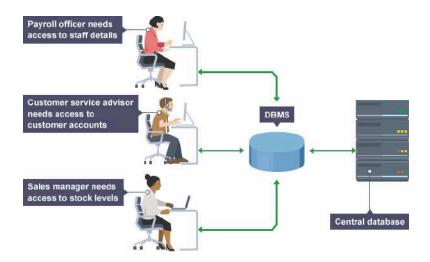
To properly understand databases, you must first understand the difference between data and information. Simply put, data are **raw** facts. The word raw indicates that the facts have not yet been processed to create meaning. Information, on the other hand, is the result of processing raw data to make it meaningful. Data processing can be as simple as organising data to reveal patterns, or as complex as drawing inferences using statistical modelling.



The production of accurate, relevant, and timely information is the key to good decision-making. In turn, good decision-making is the key to a business's survival in a competitive global environment. Timely and useful information requires accurate data, which must be captured properly and stored in a format that is easy to access and process. The data environment should be carefully managed.

DATABASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A database can be thought of as a well-organised electronic filing cabinet where powerful software, known as a database management system (DBMS), helps manage the contents of the cabinet. A database management system is a collection of programs that manage the database structure and control access to the data stored in the database.



Bell, C. (2015). Database Management System (DBMS) Relationships [Illustration]. Chrisbell.com.

https://www.chrisbell.com/SNHU/IT-510-Advanced-Information-Technology/databasemanagement-system-DBMS-relationships.php

The illustration above shows how the DBMS acts as an intermediary between the user and the database, handling requests and translating them into operations. It hides the database's complexity, allowing data to be shared among multiple users and integrating different views into a single data repository.

The DBMS helps make data management much more efficient and effective; and provides advantages such as:

- **Improved data sharing:** the DBMS helps create an environment in which end users have better access to more and better-managed data.
- **Better data integration:** an integrated view of the organisation's operations and a clearer view of the big picture is promoted by wider access to well-managed data.

- **Minimised data inconsistency:** data inconsistency occurs when different versions of the same data appear in different places. A properly designed database greatly reduces the probability of data inconsistency.
- **Improved data access:** a query is a specific request for data manipulation (e.g. to read or update the data) sent to the DBMS. The DBMS makes it possible to produce quick answers to spur-of-the-moment queries.
- Improved decision-making: better-quality information (on which to base decisions) is generated, due to better-managed data and improved data access.
- **Increased end-user productivity:** the availability of data and the tools that transform data into usable information encourage end users to make quick, informed decisions.

TYPES OF DATABASES

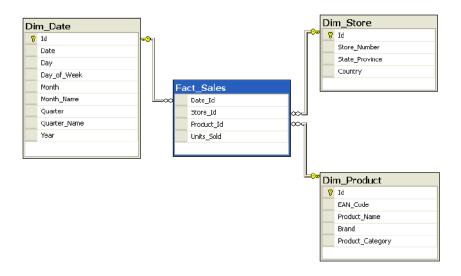
Databases can be classified based on users, location, type, usage, and structure.

A **single-user database** supports one user at a time, like a desktop database. A **multi-user database** allows simultaneous users; a workgroup database supports fewer than 50 users, while an enterprise database supports many users across departments.

By location, databases can be **centralised** (data at one site) or **distributed** (data spread across multiple sites). Based on usage, **operational databases** support day-to-day activities, while **analytical databases** store historical data for decision-making.

Databases also differ in structure. **Unstructured data** are raw, as collected, while **structured data** are organised for specific use, like in a spreadsheet for calculations.

The two most common types are **relational databases**, which store entities and relationships (as shown in the entity-relationship diagram below), and **NoSQL databases**:



N.d. (2023). *Star schema*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star schema#/media/File:Star-schema-example.png

In a relational database, an entity is a table that stores all the data about a certain thing. For example, you may want to store information about all your customers in a database. You would then create a customer table (customer entity), which could look something like the one shown below:

C_NAME	C_PHONE	C_ADDRESS	C_POST CODE	A_NAME	A_PHONE	TP	АМТ	REN
Alfred Smith	082 345 2341	207 Willow St, Port Elizabeth	6390	Leah Hahn	084 259 2073	Π	R100.00	05-Apr-2 021
Kathy Dunne	083 567 9012	556 Bad St, Cape Town	7100	Alex Alby	085 785 3938	S2	R250.00	16-Jun-2 021
Paul Farris	076 782 1232	2148 High St, Benoni	1522	Leah Hahn	084 259 2073	T2	R850.00	22-Sep-2 021

Customer entity fields:

C_NAME = customer name

C_PHONE = customer phone

C_ADDRESS = customer address

C_POSTCODE = customer postcode

A_NAME = agent name

A_PHONE = agent phone

TP = insurance type

AMT = insurance policy amount in thousands of R

REN = insurance renewal date

The CUSTOMER table contains three records. Each record is composed of nine fields: C_NAME, C_PHONE, C_ADDRESS, C_POSTCODE, A_NAME, A_PHONE, TP, AMT, and REN. Each record describes a specific customer; each customer is an instance of the customer entity.

In a store database, you'd have a product table and a customer table to store product and customer info. The database would also track relationships, such as which products a customer bought on a specific date. Details on how this is implemented in a relational database are beyond this course's scope.

NoSQL databases

Relational databases struggle with performance as data volume grows, especially for large-scale web applications like Amazon or Google. This led to the creation of NoSQL databases, which you use when searching on Amazon, watching YouTube, or messaging on Facebook. NoSQL databases typically have the following characteristics:

- They are not based on the relational model.
- They support distributed database architectures, i.e. servers in different areas.
- They provide high scalability, high availability, and fault tolerance.
- They support very large amounts of sparse data (data in which there are a

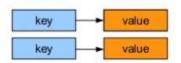


lot of attributes, but many of these are not populated).

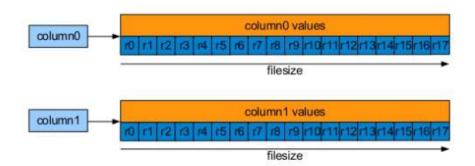
• They are geared toward performance rather than transaction consistency.

There are several types of NoSQL databases. Some of these are briefly described below:

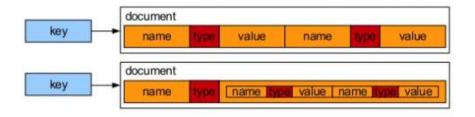
1. **Key-value store databases**: This is the simplest form of the NoSQL database. Every item in the database is stored as a key (used to identify the value) and its value.



2. **Column-oriented databases**: Like key-value store databases, a key is used to identify values, but instead of the key identifying only one value, it can be used to identify multiple values.

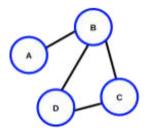


3. **Document-store databases**: With this type of database, a key is used to identify a particular document. Documents are stored in recognised formats like XML, JSON, PDF, etc.



4. **Graph databases**: This database uses the graph data structure to store data. Graphs contain nodes (A, B, C, and D in the image below) and edges (the lines connecting the nodes, so AB, BD, BC, and DC in the image below). In graph databases, nodes are objects and edges are the relationships between these objects. Social networking applications, like Facebook, often store data using graph databases because this model is good for tracking

the relationships between objects.



5. **Object-oriented databases**: These databases combine object-oriented programming and database principles. These databases are tied to specific programming languages.

MONGODB

In this bootcamp, you will be working with MongoDB, a document store and NoSQL database. MongoDB is made up of collections and documents.

- **Collection:** A collection is a group of documents. It is similar to an entity or table when working with relational databases.
- Documents: In relational databases, records are stored in tables; for instance, Alfred Smith would be a record in the CUSTOMER table. In contrast, MongoDB stores data in documents rather than rows. MongoDB uses BSON (Binary JSON) documents, which include type information, making it faster and more efficient than standard JSON files that require parsing (see an example below):

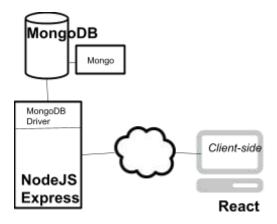


The following **playlist** from the MongoDB YouTube channel has a few reasonably short videos that can assist with getting the full picture of what MongoDB is all about and how it compares to

relational databases such as SQL-based databases.

MONGODB IN A FULL-STACK WEB APPLICATION

Before we start using MongoDB, it is important to first see how it fits into full-stack web development and what other tools are needed to get it to work properly.



Consider the image above. The app uses Node.js for server-side logic and request routing. For persistent data, it connects to a MongoDB database. MongoDB's admin shell, Mongo, allows command-line database interactions using MongoDB's query language.

For Node.js to be able to communicate with MongoDB, it also makes use of *MongoDB drivers*. The official MongoDB driver can be installed using NPM (more on this later).

MONGODB AS A SERVICE

Previously, running a database required dedicated servers and administrators. Today, the database as a service (DBaaS) offers an alternative. With cloud computing's rise, developers can use cloud-hosted databases like MongoDB Atlas instead of managing their own servers. This approach offers several benefits:

- 1. It is often cheaper than having your own database server, because you only pay for what you use.
- 2. The cloud service provider deals with all the hassle of managing the configuration, backup, maintenance, and security of the database server.
- 3. It is quick and easy to start using a database with minimal configuration.

In this task, you will create your first database using MongoDB. Before you can do this, though, you are first going to:

- 1. download and install MongoDB on your local machine so that you can use Mongo, the administrative shell;
- 2. use Atlas to create and host a MongoDB on the cloud; and
- 3. use Mongo to access and manipulate your database cluster on Atlas.

INSTALL MONGODB

For this course, we will be installing MongoDB's Community Server. This edition provides everything you need to learn MongoDB and is a free alternative to the Enterprise Server. Follow the steps linked below to get started with MongoDB.

• MongoDB Community Edition Installation Steps

The steps to set up and configure MongoDB differ slightly depending on the operating system (OS) you are using. The installation instructions given above contain instructions for running MongoDB on your specific OS.

Your Mongo shell is now ready to be used to connect to a database server. MongoDB Atlas will provide the platform and infrastructure we need for a database server on the cloud.

SETUP MONGODB ATLAS

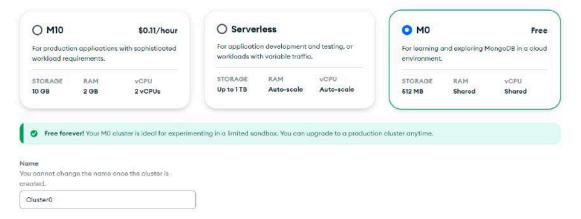
As previously stated, in this bootcamp, we will be using MongoDB's DBaaS solution: Atlas. To get a quick (two-minute) overview of what Atlas is and why we are using it, watch this **short video**.

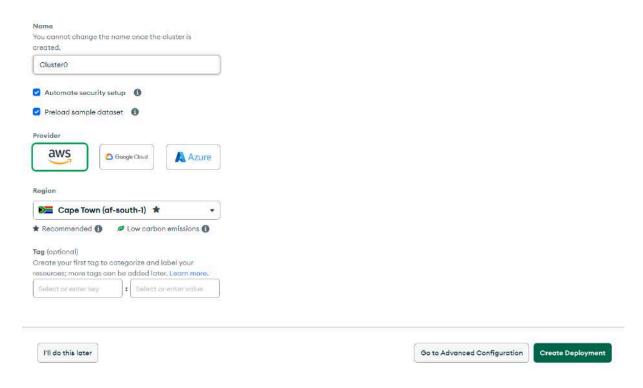
To configure MongoDB Atlas, do the following:

- Go here and enter your information to get started with Atlas.
- You will then be taken to the "Database Deployments" page:
 - Click on the "Build a Database" button on screen.
 - You'll be redirected to a new screen.
 - Under "Cloud provider and Region", select AWS and any free tier region.
 - o Under "Cluster Tier", select the free M0 option.
 - You can rename your cluster under "Cluster Name".

Deploy your cluster

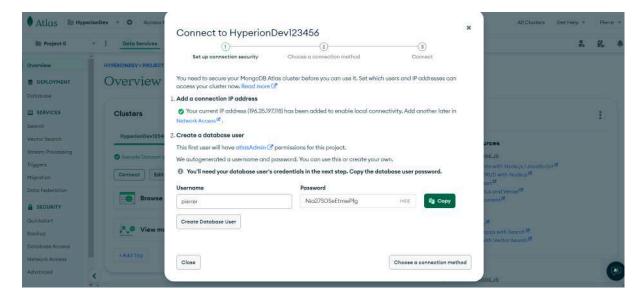
Use a template below or set up advanced configuration options, You can also edit these configuration options once the cluster is created.





Click on the "Create Deployment" button at the bottom of the page to create your cluster.

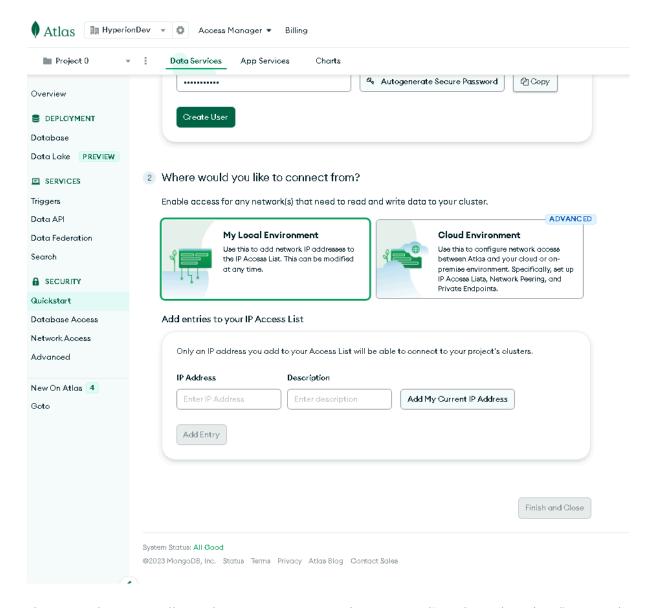
Once you have created your cluster, you will be taken to a page similar to the one shown below. You can change the username and other settings for your database user as shown in the image.



You have successfully created a database cluster. You will now use the administrative shell, Mongo, to add a database to this cluster. Before you do this, though, there are some security settings that you need to tweak to make sure that you can access the Atlas cluster from your computer.

Security settings

One of the ways that MongoDB ensures security is by only allowing certain machines (IP addresses) access to your cluster. You can whitelist your IP by scrolling down on the "Quickstar" tab and clicking "Add my current IP Address". After also adding a user, click "Finish and Close" at the bottom to continue.



The IPs that are allowed to access your cluster are listed under the "Network Access" tab in the left-hand navigation bar. If you currently have a dynamic IP address, you'll need to allow access from anywhere.

To do so, click on the "Network Access" tab and then click on the "ADD IP ADDRESS" button. The following pop-up will then appear.

Click "ALLOW ACCESS FROM ANYWHERE" and click "Confirm".

The following entry should appear in your "Network Access" tab, confirming you've allowed access from anywhere:



It is not good practice to allow all IP addresses to access your database for obvious security reasons, but for the purposes of the next few tasks, we are going to ask you to do this. The reason for this is that you will need to give a mentor access to your database, and you won't know their IP address ahead of time. In professional practice, however, it is advisable to have a limited IP whitelist.



Configure the IP whitelist when deploying your app. Your Express app will access the database, and if deployed to the cloud (like AWS), the web server's IP address may change. If it isn't added to the Atlas IP whitelist, your app won't communicate with the database.

To address this problem, you can use Render's Static Outbound IP Addresses. According to an **article by Render**, "You can use these addresses to connect to IP-restricted environments outside your Render network." Outbound requests from those apps

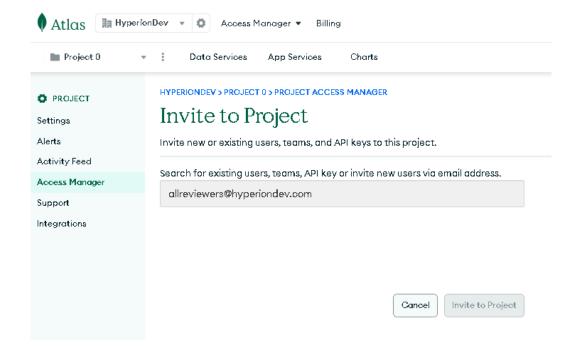
originate from a set of static IP addresses, which allows you to securely communicate with IP whitelisted services on-premise (hosted on-site) or on other networks.

If your machine is protected by a firewall, you also have to ensure that this doesn't block access to Atlas. Atlas servers run on **port 27017** on Amazon AWS. Check **here** to see if this port is blocked on your machine or not. If **this page** doesn't load, your firewall is probably blocking port 27017. If it is blocked, make sure to unblock it before you proceed. How this is done will depend on the firewall you are using. Google the appropriate instruction to unblock port 27017 for the firewall you are running.

From the "Security" tab, you can also add users and manage the rights of the users you allow to access your database.

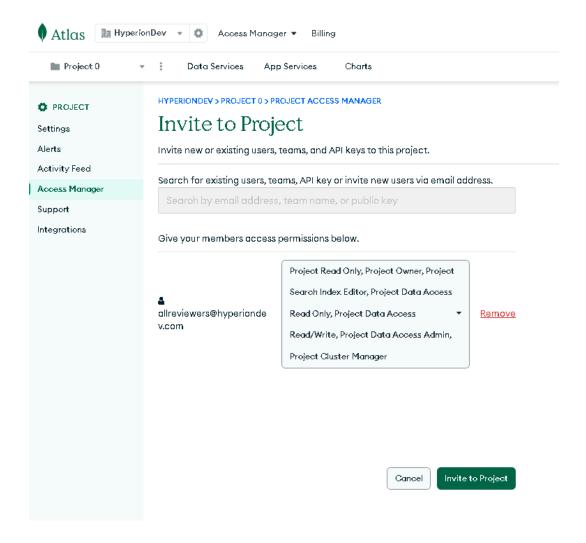
Manage users and teams

As the database administrator, you have to manage who is able to access your database and what they can do with your database. For your next MongoDB tasks, you are required to give a mentor access to your database. To do this, select "Access Manager" and then click on "Project Access", along with your current project displayed next to it on the drop-down. On the next screen, click on "Invite to Project". You can then invite a mentor to be a user of your database by entering an email address, as indicated in the image below. Please use the email address: allreviewers@hyperiondev.com.



After pasting the email address, a suggestion should appear below it, and you'll need to click it in order to select the user.

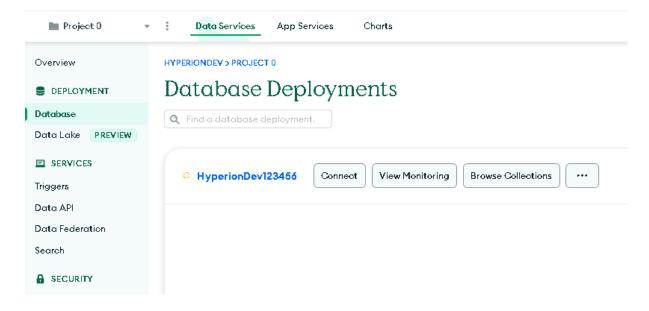
Note: please ensure you give the code reviewer full access to your project.



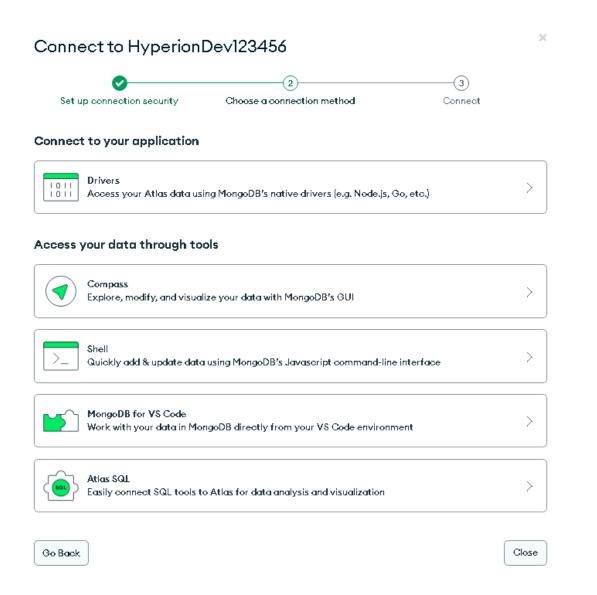
ACCESS THE DATABASE ON THE CLOUD USING THE MONGO SHELL

You are now ready to access the database server you have configured on MongoDB Atlas using the Mongo shell on your local machine. Remember that Mongo is the administrative shell used to run instructions on your MongoDB server.

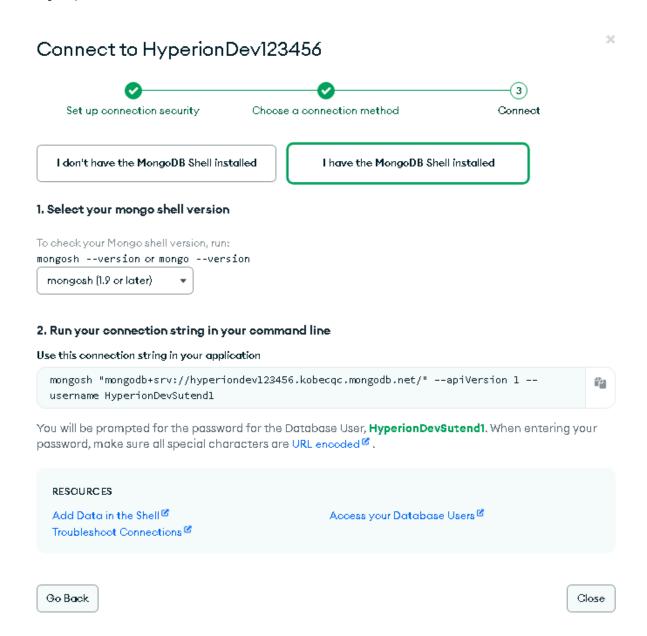
To connect to the database server using Mongo, you need a connection string that specifies everything needed for this connection. Atlas provides this connection string for you. Select "Connect" as shown below, to find the connection string.



The following pop-up window will appear:



From the window above, select "Shell". The window below should then appear. Select the version of Mongo shell you have installed (for example, in our case I selected: "mongosh (1.9 or later)", but you may need to select the version that works for you):



This will create a new connection string. Copy and paste the connection string that appears there into your command-line interface. You should see output similar to that shown in the image below:

```
E:\>mongo "mongodb+srv://hyperion-f78fc.mongodb.net/test" --username hyperionDB

MongoDB shell version v3.6.2
Enter password:
connecting to: mongodb+srv://hyperion-f78fc.mongodb.net/test

2018-05-09T10:06:44.519+0200 I NETWORK [thread1] Starting new replica set monitor for hyperion-shard

0-00-f78fc.mongodb.net.:27017,hyperion-shard-00-01-f78fc.mongodb.net.:27017,hyperion-shard-00-02-f787

2018-05-09T10:06:45.554+0200 I NETWORK [ReplicaSetMonitor-TaskExecutor-0] Successfully connected to

0-f78fc.mongodb.net.:27017 (1 connections now open to hyperion-shard-00-00-f78fc.mongodb.net.:27017

out)

2018-05-09T10:06:45.568+0200 I NETWORK [thread1] Successfully connected to hyperion-shard-00-02-f787

7 (1 connections now open to hyperion-shard-00-02-f78fc.mongodb.net.:27017 with a 5 second timeout)

2018-05-09T10:06:45.823+0200 I NETWORK [thread1] changing hosts to hyperion-shard-0/hyperion-shard-

net:27017,hyperion-shard-00-00-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017,hyperion-shard-00-02-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017

0/hyperion-shard-00-00-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017,hyperion-shard-00-00-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017

2018-05-09T10:06:46.838+0200 I NETWORK [ReplicaSetMonitor-TaskExecutor-0] Successfully connected to 2-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017 with

2018-05-09T10:06:46.838+0200 I NETWORK [thread1] Successfully connected to hyperion-shard-00-00-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017 with

2018-05-09T10:06:46.848+0200 I NETWORK [thread1] Successfully connected to hyperion-shard-00-00-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017 with a 5 second timeout)

2018-05-09T10:06:46.848+0200 I NETWORK [ReplicaSetMonitor-TaskExecutor-0] Successfully connected to 1-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017 with a 5 second timeout)

2018-05-09T10:06:46.848+0200 I NETWORK [ReplicaSetMonitor-TaskExecutor-0] Successfully connected to 1-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017 with a 5 second timeout)

2018-05-09T10:06:46.848+0200 I NETWORK [ReplicaSetMonitor-TaskExecutor-0] Successfully connected to 1-f78fc.mongodb.net:27017 with a 5 second timeout)

2018-05-09T10:06:46.848-05-09T10:06:46.848-05-09T10:06:46.848-05-09T10:06:46.848-05-09T
```

You have connected to your MongoDB server hosted by Atlas! You are now able to use the Mongo shell to create and modify databases on your server.



CREATE A DATABASE

Once you can access your database server (run by Atlas), you can issue instructions using Mongo to change your database. We are going to create a database.

To do this, type the following using the Mongo shell: **use test** (where 'test' is the name of the database). If the database does not already exist, this instruction will create it.

```
MongoDB Enterprise hyperion-shard-0:PRIMARY> use test switched to db test MongoDB Enterprise hyperion-shard-0:PRIMARY>
```

MONGODB COMPASS

You may have noticed that when you installed MongoDB, **MongoDB Compass** was also installed. Compass allows you to interface with your database. You should be able to connect to your database using Compass, too. Give it a try.

QUIT MONGO

To quit mongo, type quit() into the Mongo shell.



Take note

The tasks below are **auto-graded**. An auto-graded task still counts towards your progression and graduation. Give the task your best attempt and submit it when you are ready.

After you click "Request review" on your student dashboard, you will receive a 100% pass grade if you've submitted the task.

When you submit the task, you will receive an email with a link to a model answer, as well as an overview of the approach taken to reach this answer. Take some time to review and compare your work against the model answer. This exercise will help solidify your understanding and provide an opportunity for reflection on how to apply these concepts in future projects.

In the same email, you will also receive a link to a survey for this task, which you can use as a self-assessment tool. Please take a moment to complete the survey.

Once you've done that, feel free to progress to the next task.

Instructions

Take your time and work carefully through the practical task instructions below, one point at a time.

Auto-graded task

Follow these steps:

- Install MongoDB. See appropriate detailed installation instructions on MongoDB's download centre for details.
- Create a cluster on MongoDB Atlas.
- Add a mentor or code reviewer as a user to your cluster on Atlas, using the email address allreviewers@hyperiondev.com.
- Ensure that your firewall isn't blocking access to MongoDB.
- Connect to your cluster using the Mongo shell.
- Make a database called **test**.
- Create a document called **myMongoDB**, in which you include the following:
 - A screenshot that shows that you have added a mentor or code reviewer as a MongoDB user to your Atlas cluster.
 - A screenshot of your command-line interface that shows how you have used the Mongo shell to connect to your MongoDB Atlas cluster.
 - A screenshot of your command-line interface that shows that you have successfully created a database called 'test' on your MongoDB Atlas cluster.

Be sure to place files for submission inside your task folder and click "Request review" on your dashboard.



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Think that the content of this task, or this course as a whole, can be improved, or think we've done a good job?

<u>Click here</u> to share your thoughts anonymously.

