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Wednesday, November 4, 2015

10 Frequently asked SQL Query Interview Questions

In this article, I am giving some examples of SQL queries which is frequently asked when you go for a programming interview, having one or two year experience on this field. Whether you go for Java developer position, QA, BA, supports professional, project manager or any other technical position, may interviewer expect you to answer basic questions from Database and SQL. It's also obvious that if you are working from one or two years on any project there is good chance that you come across to handle database, writing SQL queries to insert, update, delete and select records. One simple but



effective way to check candidate's SQL skill is by asking these types of simple query. They are are neither very complex nor very big, but yet they cover all key concept a programmer should know about SQL.

These queries test your SQL skill on Joins, both INNER and OUTER join, filtering records by using WHERE and HAVING clause, grouping records using GROUP BY clause, calculating sum, average and counting records using aggregate function like AVG(), SUM() and COUNT(), searching records using wildcards in LIKE operator, searching records in a bound using BETWEEN and IN clause, DATE and TIME queries etc. If you have faced any interesting SQL query or you have any problem and searching for the solution, you can post it here for everyone's benefit. If you are looking for more challenging SQL query exercises and puzzles then you can also check Joe Cleko's SQL Puzzles And Answers, one of the best books to really check and improve your SQL skills.

SQL Query Interview Questions and Answers

Question 1: SQL Query to find second highest salary of Employee

Answer: There are many ways to find second highest salary of Employee in SQL, you can either use SQL Join or Subquery to solve this problem. Here is SQL query using Subquery:

select MAX(Salary) from Employee WHERE Salary NOT IN (select MAX(Salary) fro
m Employee);

See How to find second highest salary in SQL for more ways to solve this problem.

Question 2: SQL Query to find Max Salary from each department.

Answer: You can find the maximum salary for each department by grouping all records by DeptId and then using MAX() function to calculate maximum salary in each group or each department.

SELECT DeptID, MAX(Salary) FROM Employee GROUP BY DeptID.

These questions become more interesting if Interviewer will ask you to print department name instead of department id, in that case, you need to join Employee table with Department using foreign key <code>DeptID</code>, make sure you do LEFT or RIGHT OUTER JOIN to include departments without any employee as well. Here is the query

SELECT DeptName, MAX(Salary) FROM Employee e RIGHT JOIN Department d ON e.DeptId = d
.DeptID GROUP BY DeptName;

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In this query, we have used RIGHT OUTER JOIN because we need the name of the department from Department table which is on the right side of JOIN clause, even if there is no reference of dept_id on Employee table.

Question 3: Write SQL Query to display the current date.

Answer: SQL has built-in function called GetDate() which returns the current timestamp. This will work in Microsoft SQL Server, other vendors like Oracle and MySQL also has equivalent functions.

```
SELECT GetDate();
```

Question 4: Write an SQL Query to check whether date passed to Query is the date of given format or not.

Answer: SQL has IsDate () function which is used to check passed value is a date or not of specified format, it returns 1 (true) or 0 (false) accordingly. Remember ISDATE() is an MSSQL function and it may not work on Oracle, MySQL or any other database but there would be something similar.

```
SELECT ISDATE('1/08/13') AS "MM/DD/YY";
```

It will return o because passed date is not in correct format.

Question 5: Write an SQL Query to print the name of the distinct employee whose DOB is between 01/01/1960 to 31/12/1975.

Answer: This SQL query is tricky, but you can use BETWEEN clause to get all records whose date fall between two dates.

```
SELECT DISTINCT EmpName FROM Employees WHERE DOB BETWEEN '01/01/1960' AND '
31/12/1975;
```

Question 6: Write an SQL Query find number of employees according to gender whose DOB is between 01/01/1960 to 31/12/1975.

Answer:

```
SELECT COUNT(*), sex from Employees WHERE DOB BETWEEN '01/01/1960' AND '31/12/1975
  GROUP BY sex;
```

Question 7: Write an SQL Query to find an employee whose Salary is equal or greater than 10000.

Answer:

```
SELECT EmpName FROM Employees WHERE Salary>=10000;
```

Question 8: Write an SQL Query to find name of employee whose name Start with 'M' Answer:

```
SELECT * FROM Employees WHERE EmpName like 'M%';
```

Question 9: find all Employee records containing the word "Joe", regardless of whether it was stored as JOE, Joe, or joe.

Answer:

```
SELECT * from Employees WHERE UPPER(EmpName) like '%JOE%';
```



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Question 10: Write an SQL Query to find the year from date.

Answer: Here is how you can find Year from a Date in SQL Server 2008

```
SELECT YEAR(GETDATE()) as "Year";
```

Question 11: Write SQL Query to find duplicate rows in a database? and then write SQL query to delete them?

Answer: You can use the following query to select distinct records:

```
SELECT * FROM emp a WHERE rowid = (SELECT MAX(rowid) FROM EMP b WHERE a.empno=b.empn
```

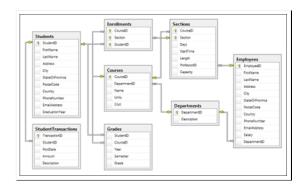
to Delete:

```
DELETE FROM emp a WHERE rowid != (SELECT MAX(rowid) FROM emp b WHERE a.empno=b.empno
```

Question 12: There is a table which contains two column Student and Marks, you need to find all the students, whose marks are greater than average marks i.e. list of above average students.

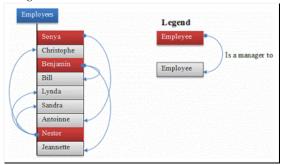
Answer: This query can be written using subquery as shown below:

```
SELECT student, marks from table where marks > SELECT AVG(marks) from table)
```



Question 13: How do you find all employees which are also manager? .

You have given a standard employee table with an additional column mgr_id, which contains employee id of the manager.



Answer: You need to know about self-join to solve this problem. In Self Join, you can join two instances of the same table to find out additional details as shown below

SELECT e.name, m.name FROM Employee e, Employee m WHERE e.mgr_id = m.emp_id;

this will show employee name and manager name in two column e.g.

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name manager_name John David

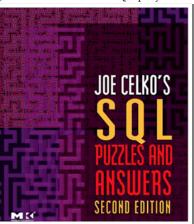
One follow-up is to modify this query to include employees which don't have a manager. To solve that, instead of using the inner join, just use left outer join, this will also include employees without managers.

Question 14: You have a composite index of three columns, and you only provide the value of two columns in WHERE clause of a select query? Will Index be used for this operation? For example if Index is on <code>EmpId</code>, <code>EmpFirstName</code>, and <code>EmpSecondName</code> and you write query like

SELECT * FROM Employee WHERE EmpId=2 and EmpFirstName='Radhe'

If the given two columns are secondary index column then the index will not invoke, but if the given 2 columns contain the primary index(first column while creating index) then the index will invoke. In this case, Index will be used because EmpId and EmpFirstName are primary columns.

Hope this article will help you to take a quick practice whenever you are going to attend any interview and not have much time to go into the deep of each query, but if you have good time to prepare then I suggest you to read and solve SQL queries from **Joe Celko's SQL Puzzles and Answers**, **Second edition**, one of the best book for SQL query lovers and enthusiastic.



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77 comments:

narasimha May 1, 2013 at 12:13 PM

Questions Answers Programmers

How many interview ques prepare before going for a Java interview? not many article, we will explor...



Really gud bro iam seraching for two months onwards thnxs...

Reply

Anonymous May 15, 2013 at 7:06 AM

Nice stuffs...Thanks..pls also try to update something new if you have Reply

Pritam_Ghosh May 16, 2013 at 12:20 PM

Excellent Yaar..I was searching such question..Thanks keep posting Reply

jaya June 12, 2013 at 6:12 AM

very nice, really helpful need more such type of questions.

Reply

Anonymous June 12, 2013 at 11:30 AM

thnx bro it's really helpful

Reply

Anonymous June 27, 2013 at 2:33 AM

Thanks For uploading............

And please upload for subqueries Also...........

Reply

Replies

Anonymous July 3, 2013 at 3:57 AM

Thanks pal...I needed these things...

Unknown October 12, 2015 at 9:52 AM

Good queries for practice SQL

Reply

Anonymous July 6, 2013 at 10:49 AM

Question 9: find all Employee records containing the word "Joe", regardless of whether it was stored as JOE, Joe, or joe.

SQL>SELECT * FROM Employees
WHERE UPPER(EmpName) LIKE '%JOE%';

Reply

Replies



Ravi Krishna November 8, 2013 at 4:53 AM

Select * from employee where EmpName in ('Joe','JOE','joe')

Anonymous June 4, 2014 at 8:59 PM

This wont find jOE, jOe kind of names. Query given by previous Anonymous is correct.

Anonymous June 12, 2015 at 12:59 PM

select * from employee Where EmpName like '%Joe%'

This will help you find any name whose name came with joe but if u want find only starting 3 letter who start with name Joe. That time u having use below query.

select * from employee

Where EmpName like 'Joe%'

and vice versa for last name word was joe use this

select * from employee Where EmpName like '%Joe'

Reply

Anonymous July 8, 2013 at 5:06 AM

Even a children can create all these query's

Reply

Anonymous July 16, 2013 at 1:33 AM

good effort publish more queries

Reply

Replies

Anonymous April 16, 2015 at 12:39 AM

OK

Reply

Anonymous July 16, 2013 at 2:16 AM

I was asked this SQL Question in recent interview:

1) You have a composite index of three columns, and you only provide value of two columns in WHERE clause of a select query? Will Index be used for this operation?

Can any one please help here?

Reply

Replies

Anonymous September 24, 2013 at 3:15 AM

If the given two columns are secondary index column then index will not invoke

but if the given 2 columns contain primary index(first col while creating index) then index will invoke.

Jaspreet Banga September 29, 2013 at 7:43 AM

in your case the composite index would not work because of the column not included in the where clause.

Still you want to use an index you give an index hint select /*+ INDEX(TABLE_NAME IDX_NAME) */ * from table_name;

After imposing the force index you can read the explain plan and verify the cost , if index scan is more costlier than the FTS then its not a good idea to go with index

Reply

Anonymous July 30, 2013 at 11:24 PM

Good Questions.

Need more sql questions of this kind. :)

Thanks.

Reply



Keshav Singh August 21, 2013 at 11:30 PM

Initial few question are upto standard . Other are very very basic SQL queries

Reply

suresh kumar August 30, 2013 at 10:23 AM

Good Questions

Reply



bhavesh September 25, 2013 at 4:05 AM

nice upload some query for experience developer

Reply

Anonymous October 30, 2013 at 12:14 AM

Some queries are very good but some one is very basic and please update this page after some period.

Anonymous November 11, 2013 at 12:09 AM

My list of some good SQL Query based interview Questions:

- 1) Write SQL Query to find duplicate rows in a database? and then write SQL query to delete them? 2) TODO
- 3) TODO
- 4) TODO

ha ha ha

Reply

Replies

Anonymous November 13, 2013 at 11:25 PM

for selecting the distinct records:

select * from emp a where rowid = (select $\max(\text{rowid})$ from emp b where a.empno=b.empno)

to Delete:

delete from emp a where rowid != (select max(rowid) from emp b where a.empno=b.empno);

Jagadish K November 21, 2013 at 10:44 PM

I know to ways one way use max and another way use distinct

one way :DELETE

FROM TestTable

WHERE ID NOT IN

(

SELECT MAX(ID)

FROM TestTable

GROUP BY NameCol)

GO

and

another way

Select Distinct id, name into #temp from emp;

Truncate table emp;

Insert into emp(id,name) select id,name from #temp;



Nandakumar Govindarajulu Ethirajulu January 14, 2016 at 11:47 AM

Ans: Select Key column --> Group by Key column --> Having count(*) > 1 Will give Duplicate records Replace select with Delete statement



Nandakumar Govindarajulu Ethirajulu January 14, 2016 at 11:54 AM

eg., Delete from customer where cus $_\mathrm{id}$ in (select cus $_\mathrm{id}$ from customer group by cus $_\mathrm{id}$

having count(*) > 1)



Nandakumar Govindarajulu Ethirajulu January 14, 2016 at 12:02 PM

For performance (Millions of records) Use exists instead of in and Constant for Existence Checking

eg..

delete from customer a where exists (select 1 from customer b where a.cus_id = b.cus_id group by cus_id having count(*) > 1)

Reply

Anonymous January 18, 2014 at 1:02 PM

Really good ones, Can you add more do this list please?

Reply

Replies



Javin Paul January 18, 2014 at 7:00 PM

Hi Anonymous, I am planning to add more such SQL queries, but if you have been asked something then you can also share with us. Thanks

Reply

Shubhangi January 23, 2014 at 8:02 PM

I was asked to write following SQL queries in interview. There is a table which contains two column Student and Marks, you need to find all the students, whose marks are greater than average marks i.e. list of above average students. Here is what I wrote:

SELECT Student, Marks FROM Products WHERE Marks> AVG(Marks);

And he says WRONG? Hmmmmm.

Reply

Replies



Rahul Askar February 4, 2014 at 10:41 AM

Hi Shubhangi,

You can not use the where clause with SQL functions. Instead you should use HAVING. So, correct query will be-SELECT Student,Marks FROM Products HAVING Marks>AVG(Marks);

Anonymous July 22, 2014 at 7:58 AM

select student, marks from table where marks > (select avg(marks) from table)....

will this work?

Anonymous September 2, 2014 at 5:18 AM

rahul's not right answer.....above subquery will be good......

Anonymous September 21, 2014 at 1:28 AM

Shubhangi, Aggreate functions can't be used in WHERE clause.

Rahul, HAVING can not be used without GROUP BY.

Subquery will serve the purpose.

е

Himanshu shekhar October 19, 2014 at 11:01 AM

SELECT Student, Marks FROM products

WHERE marks>(select avg(marks) from products);

Here we can't use having clause as it is not a group by expression. We can't use group functions like avg, sum, max in where clause even it is a group by expression.

Anonymous October 19, 2014 at 1:34 PM

I think this is right

SELECT Student, Marks FROM Products WHERE Marks > (SELECT AVG(Marks) FROM Products);

Anonymous November 6, 2014 at 6:12 PM

You can try this WITH cte_mks(Student,AvgMarks)
AS
(SELECT Student,AVG(marks)mks
FROM GROUP BY Student)
SELECT s.Student,Marks
FROM s
INNER JOIN cte_mks m on s.Student=m.Student
and s.marks>m.AvgMarks

Reply



Mahesh Thorat February 3, 2014 at 5:24 PM

Gud job, plz keep it up!

Reply



samiu June 11, 2014 at 11:55 AM

its very helpful for all give some more example

Reply

Anonymous August 31, 2014 at 10:55 PM

Another interesting query I come across on an interview was "how do you find all employees which are also manager?". give an standard employee table with an additional column mgr_id, which contains employee id of manager.

Answer: You need to know about self join to solve this problem. In Self Join, you join two instances of same table as shown below

 $Select\ e.name,\ m.name\ from\ Employee\ e,\ Employee\ m\ where\ e.mgr_id = m.emp_id;$

this will show employee name and manger name in two column e.g.

surabhi Balaji snhea Balaji

One follow-up is to modify this query to include employees which doesn't have manager. To solve that, instead of using inner join, just use left outer join, this will include employees without managers.

Reply

Anonymous September 8, 2014 at 9:31 PM

 $\operatorname{querys} r$ very helpful to me need more querys to practice

Reply

Replies

vinodhini September 24, 2014 at 4:56 AM

sql is not case sensitive

Reply

vinodhini September 24, 2014 at 4:52 AM

SELECT *
FROM Customer_Entry
WHERE (Customer_Name LIKE '%JOE%')

Reply

Anonymous November 14, 2014 at 7:42 AM

The answers given certainly aren't portable or platform independent SQL

Reply

Replies

Anonymous December 10, 2014 at 10:43 PM

Yes, I believe GETDATE() method works only SQL Server, not sure if it works on Oracle or MySQL. Though in MSSQL it returns :

SELECT GETDATE()

2014-12-11 15:40:02.910

Mansi December 10, 2014 at 10:51 PM

Hi

I was asked following SQL query in a recent interview:

You have an Employee table with id, name, salary, manager_id and dept_id and you have a Deparatment table with dept_id and dept_name. Write SQL queries to

- 1) Print name of Employee and their Manager's name
- 2) Print All deparatment and number of employees on it
- 3) Print all employees who has higher salary than average salary of their department.

I solved them like following, but he says not correct

- ı) SELECT e1.
name, e2.name as manager FROM Employee e1 JOIN Employee e2 WHERE e1.
manager_id = e2.id
- 2) SELECT d.dept_name, count(*) as NumOfEmploye FROM Employee e, Department d WHERE e.dept_id = d.dept_id

third one I couldn't able to solve in limited time.

Please suggest why he said my answers are wrong, I still didn't get it. thank you are wrong, I still didn't get it.

Rajeev December 15, 2014 at 6:42 PM

Hello Mansi, I think your first query is correct. That's the right way to do the self join. but you second query has a little mistake. Since Question was about print all deparatments, you should have used left outer join instead of innner join. In your query it will not print departments where no employee is working. So the correct query would be:

SELECT d.dept_name, count(*) as NumOfEmploye FROM Depatment d LEFT JOIN Employee e ON d.dept_id = e.dept_id

Remeber I have also change the order, bringing Department table at left.

3) For third query I think you can use a subquery to solve the problem. First find out average salary of the department and then print all employee whose salry is greater than average salary.

Amit December 17, 2014 at 11:04 PM

Hi Mansi, Amit here. You can use correlated subquery to find all employees whose salary is greater than average salary in their department, here is the SQL query:

SELECT emp_name, salary FROM Employee e1 WHERE salary >= (SELECT AVG(salary) FROM Employee e2 where e1.department = e2.department)

Let me know if you have any question, happy to help.

Reply

Anonymous December 17, 2014 at 12:44 AM

An interesting question for freshers, you have a table called Scorecard with a numeric column score, containing last 6 scores of a cricket player as shown below:

create table Scorecard (int score)

insert into Scorecard values (144);

insert into Scorecard values (144);

insert into Scorecard values (99);

insert into Scorecard values (23);

insert into Scorecard values (68);

insert into Scorecard values (105);

Can you write a SQL query to find the second largest score from this table? for example in this case it shoul return 105 $\,$

Reply

Replies

Amit December 17, 2014 at 11:09 PM

This question can be solved with and without correlated subquery:

without correlated sub query:

select MAX(score) from Scorecard where score NOT IN (select MAX(score) from Scorecard)

using correlated sub query

select MAX(score) from Scorecard s1 where 2 = (select count(distinct score) from Scorecard s2 where s2.score >= s1.score)

Anonymous December 26, 2014 at 9:29 PM

Top n Analysis-SELECT * FROM (SELECT ROWNUM AS RANK,S1.SCORE FROM (SELECT SCORE FROM Scorecard ORDER BY SCORE DESC)S1)S2 WHERE S2.RANK=2

Reply

Anonymous January 21, 2015 at 2:12 AM

thanks guys all post are awesome

Reply

Pankaj February 16, 2015 at 10:06 AM

I asked one Q that in a column positive and negative numbers are there(like 10 20 30 100 -10 -20 -30 -200) now with single select statement I want positive and negative numbers separately. Can anyone explain this?

Reply

Replies

poly sinha March 10, 2015 at 12:07 AM

Hi pankaj, please check this query hope it will satisfy ur criteria.

select * from number1 where digit >= 10 or digit <= 10;

if m wrong please guide.

kisan swain April 4, 2015 at 2:14 PM

select (case when digit>=0 then digit end) positive, (case when digit<=0 then digit end) negative from t.n;

Reply

Anonymous March 27, 2015 at 7:29 AM

On Question 2, your left outer join is incorrect. You stated, "make sure you do LEFT OUTER JOIN to include departments without any employee as well. Here is the query"

SELECT DeptName, MAX(Salary) FROM Employee LEFT JOIN Department d ON e.DeptId = d.DeptID;

Problem is, this join will give you all employees whether or not they belong to a department.

Reply



alo April 15, 2015 at 4:50 AM

SELECT DeptName, MAX(Salary) FROM Employee e LEFT JOIN Department d $\,$ ON e.DeptId = $\rm d.DeptId$

in most SQL dialects will miserably fail due to the missing GROUP BY clause.

Even if your SQL dialect will permit it (which I seriously doubt) it

would return not departments without employees but employees without department, to reach claimed goal you have either write

SELECT DeptName, MAX(Salary) FROM Department d LEFT JOIN Employee e ON e.DeptId = d.DeptId

or

SELECT Dept
Name, MAX(Salary) FROM Employee e RIGHT JOIN Department d
 ON e.DeptId = d.DeptId $\,$

SELECT GetDate();

Many if not most SQL dialects mandate FROM clause.

I am to lazy to read this crap further - if someone would give such answer to me his chances to get the job will be around zero.

Reply



shukur May 18, 2015 at 4:40 AM

Very nice queries for experience....

Reply



Amit Choudhury May 25, 2015 at 1:55 PM

You have an Employee table with id, name, salary, manager_id and dept_id and you have a Deparatment table with dept_id and dept_name. Write SQL queries to Print All deparatment and number of employees on it

ANSWER ASAP if possible....thanx in advance

Reply

Anonymous May 27, 2015 at 2:11 AM

@Amit, the key here is to use LEFT or RIGHT outer join because Interviewer is looking for ALL department i.e. dpeartment with no employees. Your query should be like

SELECT d.dept_name, COUNT(id) from Department d LEFT JOIN Employee e ON d.dept_id = e.dept_id

GROUP BY dept_name;

Since we have put Department table on left, it will include all department, those also for which dept_id is not available in Employee table.

Reply

Anonymous June 22, 2015 at 6:36 AM

 $FInd \ more \ sql \ querys \ for \ interview \ practice \ on \ below \ link....good \ collection$

 $http://datawearhouse biworld.blogspot.com/p/blog-page_44.html$

Reply

Anonymous June 23, 2015 at 11:42 AM

I was asked to write the SQL for - Display numbers of customers who ordered and bought the items in the same month?

Reply

Anonymous September 28, 2015 at 5:59 AM

Mostily asked sql developer interview questions:

Q1. What is the use of GRANT command?

Ans. GRANT command is used to grant specific user to perform specific task.

Q2. What is the use of SQL check constraint?

Ans. CHECK constraint limits the value range that can be placed in a column.

Reply

Anonymous October 9, 2015 at 11:26 AM

Thanks for the article. Some of the SQL statements are running to the right hand side, could you make them wrap around please? Thanks.

Reply

vikas October 30, 2015 at 12:08 AM

SELECT ISDATE('1/08/13') AS "MM/DD/YY"; why this will return 0. it returns 1 because value is datetime

Reply

Anonymous November 4, 2015 at 6:36 PM

These SQL queries are good to ask for freshers, or 1 to 2 years experience programmer but any experienced SQL or Web developer surely can answer all of these questions. I would probably include more SQL queries on joins because that's the one area where both junior and senior developer struggle e..g giving them couple of tables with more than 20 columns on each and then asking some SQL queries for generating daily reports. I also try to minimize database specific questions e.g. something which is only applicable to MySQL, SQL SERVER or Oracle should not be asked unless you are tied to just one and really need expert on those database.

A good interview for SQL should include

- joins
- stored procedure
- and joins again

Good luck

Reply

Unknown November 25, 2015 at 4:52 AM

Why my query doesn't work?

The query is:

SELECT MGHEAD.MGLINE, MGHEAD.MTRESP, MGHEAD.MTTRDT, MGHEAD.MTWHLO, MGHEAD.MTTRNR, MGHEAD.MTTRNH

FROM MVXBE.MVXCDTMESP.MGHEAD

WHERE (MGHEAD.MGLINE ='100') AND (MGHEAD.MTWHLO='R31') AND (MGHEAD.MTTRSH='15')

When I run, I have an error: Column MTTRSH not in table MGHEAD in MVXCDTMESP Can you help me?

Reply

Sandeep Yadav November 25, 2015 at 5:18 AM

please any one know how to find employee who working more than one department ,write the syntex

only. Reply Replies bhavin relwani January 12, 2016 at 3:05 AM select emp,count(dept) from emp e inner join dept on e.emp=d.emp group by emp having count(dept)>1 Reply Anonymous December 8, 2015 at 12:10 AM A good exercise for brains:) Reply Anonymous December 8, 2015 at 12:13 AM Good work . it is really helpful Reply В Unknown December 8, 2015 at 11:51 PM *** using lpad and rpad Reply Khan Saadi December 18, 2015 at 6:01 AM The first Query can also be written as select max(sal) from emp where sal < (select max(sal) from emp where sal; It can be nested thrice also so it will give third highest salaries among employees.. Reply raj December 23, 2015 at 8:26 PM е Thank you.. For Good Post. Reply Unknown January 5, 2016 at 2:51 AM е Thanks a lot, Really nice Interview Questions. Reply Enter your comment... Comment as: Unknown (Goc ▼ Sign out Publish ☐ Notify me Newer Post Home Older Post Subscribe to: Post Comments (Atom)

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