Collations & Character Sets

This lesson is a brief introduction of collations and character sets.

Collation & Character Sets

A character set defines what characters MySQL can store. A database may contain characters from non-English languages. While a collation set decides how strings are ordered. For example, languages often share characters. A character may occur at different positions in the alphabet of different languages. An example is the ü character, which occurs at different positions in the German, Swedish, and Finnish alphabet.

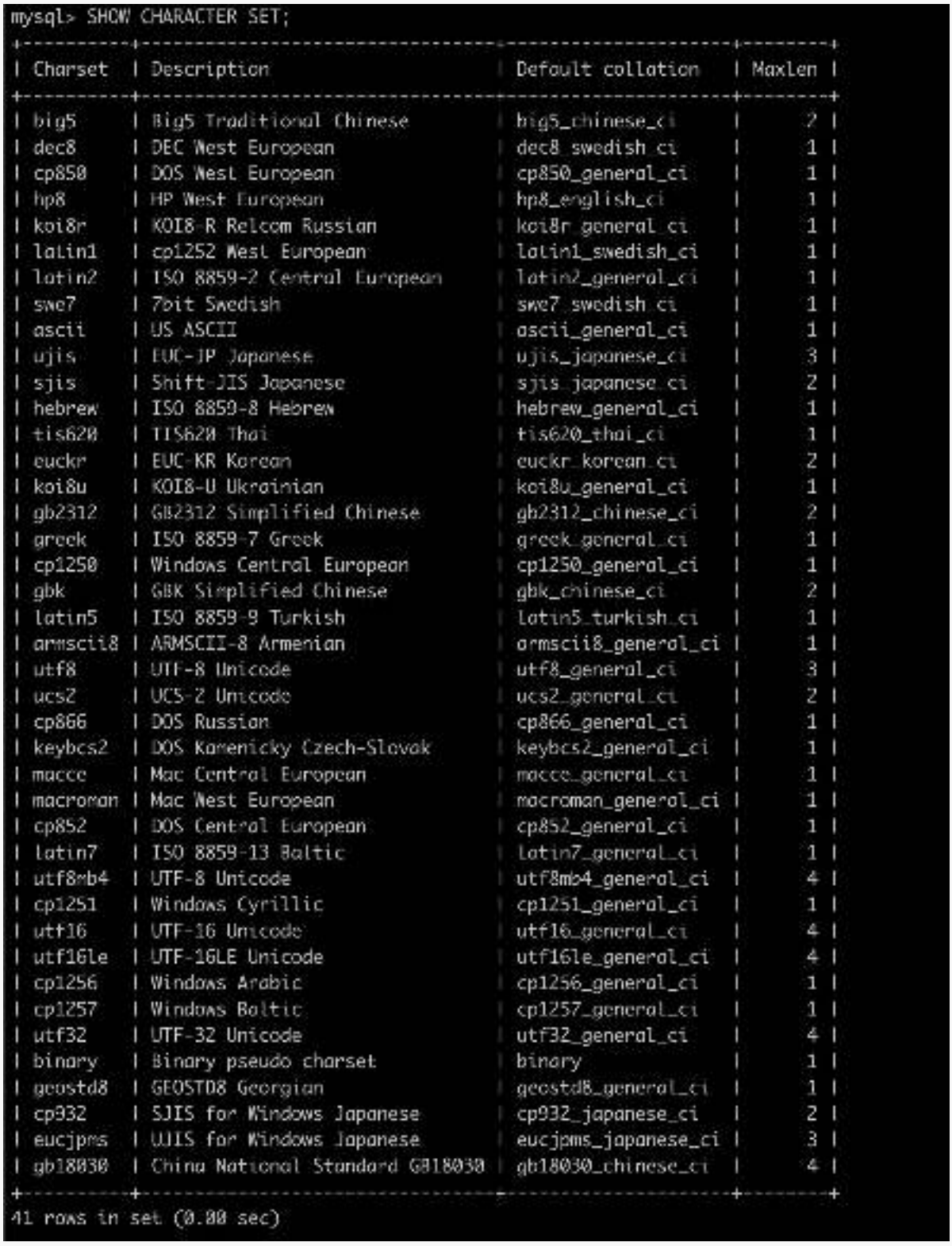
> Connect to the terminal below by clicking in the widget. Once connected, the command line prompt will show up. Enter or copy and paste the command **./DataJek/Lessons/6lesson.sh** and wait for the MySQL prompt to start-up.

```
-- The lesson queries are reproduced below for convenient copy/paste into the terminal.

-- Query 1
SHOW CHARACTER SET;

-- Query 2
SHOW COLLATION;

-- Query 3
SHOW VARIABLES LIKE "c%";
```

Terminal

1. The available character sets on the server can be listed using the following query:

```
SHOW CHARACTER SET;
```



```
mysql> SHOW CHARACTER SET;
+----------+---------------------------------+--------------------+--------+
| Charset  | Description                     | Default collation  | Maxlen |
+----------+---------------------------------+--------------------+--------+
| big5     | Big5 Traditional Chinese        | big5_chinese_ci    |      2 |
| dec8     | DEC West European               | dec8_swedish_ci    |      1 |
| cp850    | DOS West European               | cp850_general_ci   |      1 |
| hp8      | HP West European                | hp8_english_ci     |      1 |
| koi8r    | KOI8-R Relcom Russian           | koi8r_general_ci   |      1 |
| latin1   | cp1252 West European            | latin1_swedish_ci  |      1 |
| latin2   | ISO 8859-2 Central European     | latin2_general_ci  |      1 |
| swe7     | 7bit Swedish                    | swe7_swedish_ci    |      1 |
| ascii    | US ASCII                        | ascii_general_ci   |      1 |
| ujis     | EUC-JP Japanese                 | ujis_japanese_ci   |      3 |
| sjis     | Shift-JIS Japanese              | sjis_japanese_ci   |      2 |
| hebrew   | ISO 8859-8 Hebrew               | hebrew_general_ci  |      1 |
| tis620   | TIS620 Thai                     | tis620_thai_ci     |      1 |
| euckr    | EUC-KR Korean                   | euckr_korean_ci    |      2 |
| koi8u    | KOI8-U Ukrainian                | koi8u_general_ci   |      1 |
| gb2312   | GB2312 Simplified Chinese       | gb2312_chinese_ci  |      2 |
| greek    | ISO 8859-7 Greek                | greek_general_ci   |      1 |
| cp1250   | Windows Central European        | cp1250_general_ci  |      1 |
| gbk      | GBK Simplified Chinese          | gbk_chinese_ci     |      2 |
| latin5   | ISO 8859-9 Turkish              | latin5_turkish_ci  |      1 |
| armscii8 | ARMSCII-8 Armenian              | armscii8_general_ci|      1 |
| utf8     | UTF-8 Unicode                   | utf8_general_ci    |      3 |
| ucs2     | UCS-2 Unicode                   | ucs2_general_ci    |      2 |
| cp866    | DOS Russian                     | cp866_general_ci   |      1 |
| keybcs2  | DOS Kamenicky Czech-Slovak      | keybcs2_general_ci |      1 |
| macce    | Mac Central European            | macce_general_ci   |      1 |
| macroman | Mac West European               | macroman_general_ci|      1 |
| cp852    | DOS Central European            | cp852_general_ci   |      1 |
| latin7   | ISO 8859-13 Baltic              | latin7_general_ci  |      1 |
| utf8mb4  | UTF-8 Unicode                   | utf8mb4_general_ci |      4 |
| cp1251   | Windows Cyrillic                | cp1251_general_ci  |      1 |
| utf16    | UTF-16 Unicode                  | utf16_general_ci   |      4 |
| utf16le  | UTF-16LE Unicode                | utf16le_general_ci |      4 |
| cp1256   | Windows Arabic                  | cp1256_general_ci  |      1 |
| cp1257   | Windows Baltic                  | cp1257_general_ci  |      1 |
| utf32    | UTF-32 Unicode                  | utf32_general_ci   |      4 |
| binary   | Binary pseudo charset           | binary             |      1 |
| geostd8  | GEOSTD8 Georgian                | geostd8_general_ci |      1 |
| cp932    | SJIS for Windows Japanese       | cp932_japanese_ci  |      2 |
| eucjpms  | UJIS for Windows Japanese       | eucjpms_japanese_ci|      3 |
| gb18030  | China National Standard GB18030 | gb18030_chinese_ci |      4 |
+----------+---------------------------------+--------------------+--------+
41 rows in set (0.00 sec)
```

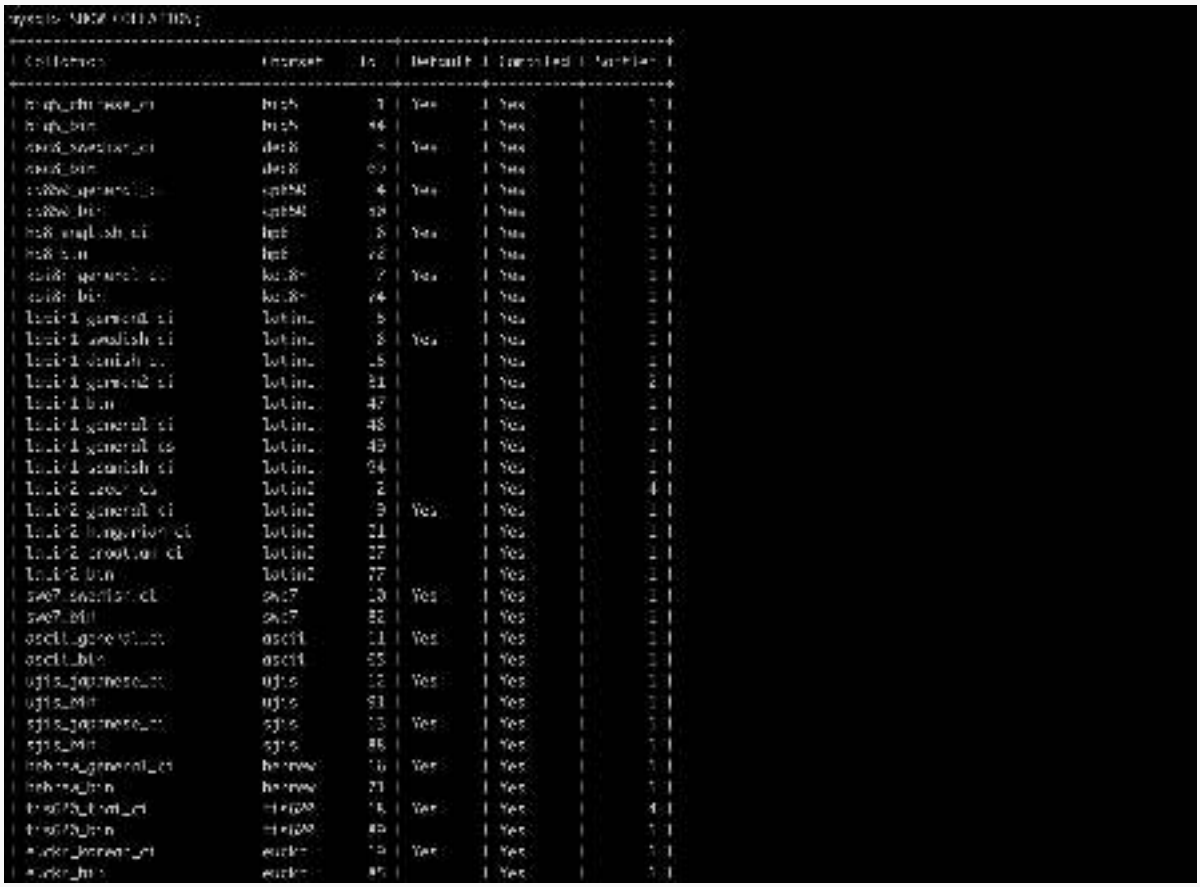
   By default, MySQL uses the **latin-1** character set that has an associated default **latin1_swedish_ci** collation. The **ci** in the name

implies case insensitive and the accented characters are sorted using Swedish conventions.

```
root@0c82101c601e:/# cat ./var/lib/mysql/MovieIndustry/db.opt
default-character-set=latin1
default-collation=latin1_swedish_ci
```

2. Similarly, we can list the collations as follows:

```
SHOW COLLATION;
```



3. You can inspect the defaults for your server using the following query:

```
SHOW VARIABLES LIKE "c%";
```

```
mysql> SHOW VARIABLES LIKE "c%";
+--------------------------+-----------------------------+
| Variable_name            | Value                       |
+--------------------------+-----------------------------+
| character_set_client     | latin1                      |
| character_set_connection | latin1                      |
| character_set_database   | latin1                      |
| character_set_filesystem | binary                      |
| character_set_results    | latin1                      |
| character_set_server     | latin1                      |
| character_set_system     | utf8                        |
| character_sets_dir       | /usr/share/mysql/charsets/ |
| check_proxy_users        | OFF                         |
| collation_connection     | latin1_swedish_ci           |
| collation_database       | latin1_swedish_ci           |
| collation_server         | latin1_swedish_ci           |
| completion_type          | NO_CHAIN                    |
| concurrent_insert        | AUTO                        |
| connect_timeout          | 10                          |
| core_file                | OFF                         |
+--------------------------+-----------------------------+
16 rows in set (0.02 sec)
```