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## Cascade Keys

Q: A short Word document describing the benefits and liabilities of each approach to the key structure.

A surrogate or substitute key helps keep attributes small. There are fewer attributes to copy from a parent to a child. Having surrogate keys keeps a key hidden from the user and is only accessible inside access to the database. Most ID numbers are good for using as surrogate keys. Unlike natural attributes, there is no descriptive value in surrogate keys so it depends on what you are going for. It is fine to have surrogate keys as long as there is a candidate key in the class table before adding your surrogate key. The liability here is that we are stuck to data types like ID numbers. Another liability is that for the use of surrogate keys to be justified, you must have a large enough candidate key already present that would be cumbersome to copy to multiple child table values.