

T-SQL supports two “not equal to” operators: <> and !=. The former is standard and the latter is not. T-SQL supports multiple functions that convert a source value to a target type. Among them are the CAST and CONVERT functions. The former is standard

and the latter isn’t. The nonstandard CONVERT function has a style argument that CAST doesn’t support. Because CAST is standard, you should consider it your default choice for conversions. You should consider using CONVERT only when you need to rely on the style

argument. Yet another example of choosing the standard form is in the termination of T-SQL statements. According to standard SQL, you should terminate your statements with a semicolon. T-SQL currently doesn’t make this a requirement for all statements, only in cases where there would otherwise be ambiguity of code elements, such as in the WITH clause of a common table expression (CTE). You should still follow the standard and terminate all of your statements even where it is currently not required.

A relation in the relational model is what SQL calls a *table*. The two are not synonymous. A *predicate* is an expression that when attributed to some object, makes a proposition either true or false. For example, “salary greater than $50,000” is a predicate. You can evaluate

this predicate for a specific employee, in which case you have a proposition. For example, suppose that for a particular employee, the salary is $60,000. When you evaluate the proposition for that employee, you get a true proposition. In other words, a predicate is a parameterized proposition.