**How to find the characterset of a database (Doc ID 110552.1)**

\*\*\*Checked for relevance on 15-Dec-2016\*\*\*  
PURPOSE  
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How to find the (national) characterset of a database.  
  
   
SCOPE & APPLICATION  
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You are trying to identify the characterset of the database you are in.  
  
HOW TO FIND CHARACTERSET OF DATABASE  
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To identify the characterset of the database you are in, issue one of the   
the following queries:  
  
SQL> select value from NLS\_DATABASE\_PARAMETERS where parameter like 'NLS%CHARACTERSET';  
  
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VALUE  
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------  
  
NLS\_CHARACTERSET  
WE8MSWIN1252  
  
NLS\_NCHAR\_CHARACTERSET  
AL16UTF16  
  
SQL> select parameter, value from nls\_database\_parameters where parameter like '%CHARACTERSET%';  
PARAMETER  
------------------------------  
VALUE  
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------  
  
NLS\_CHARACTERSET  
WE8MSWIN1252  
  
NLS\_NCHAR\_CHARACTERSET  
AL16UTF16  
  
SQL> select parameter, value from v$nls\_parameters where parameter like '%CHARACTERSET%';  
PARAMETER  
------------------------------  
VALUE  
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------  
  
NLS\_CHARACTERSET  
WE8MSWIN1252  
  
NLS\_NCHAR\_CHARACTERSET  
AL16UTF16  
  
You can also find the characterset of the database in a trace of the controlfile.  
(this will NOT show the national characterset)  
  
SQL> alter database backup controlfile to trace;  
Statement processed.  
  
In your USER\_DUMP\_DEST, edit the trace file created and search for the string  
'CHARACTER SET'  
  
e.g. excerpt of controlfile to trace  
...  
DATAFILE  
 '/u02/oradata/R815/oradata/R815/system01.dbf',  
 '/u02/oradata/R815/oradata/R815/rbs01.dbf',  
 '/u02/oradata/R815/oradata/R815/temp01.dbf',  
 '/u02/oradata/R815/oradata/R815/indx01.dbf',  
CHARACTER SET WE8MSWIN1252;  
RECOVER DATABASE  
...  
  
Related Notes:  
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[Note:241047.1](https://support.oracle.com/epmos/faces/DocumentDisplay?parent=DOCUMENT&sourceId=110552.1&id=241047.1) The Priority of NLS Parameters Explained.  
[Note:226692.1](https://support.oracle.com/epmos/faces/DocumentDisplay?parent=DOCUMENT&sourceId=110552.1&id=226692.1) Finding out your NLS Setup.  
[Note:276914.1](https://support.oracle.com/epmos/faces/DocumentDisplay?parent=DOCUMENT&sourceId=110552.1&id=276914.1) The National Character Set in Oracle 9i 10g and 11g