

Breaking Bad Habits:

Solutions for Common Query Antipatterns

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Who in the world is Jeff Iannucci?

I live in Arizona, and I sell used cars!

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Session Goals

What are some T-SQL antipatterns?

What makes them antipatterns?

How can we correct them?

WARNING!

Some index discussion!

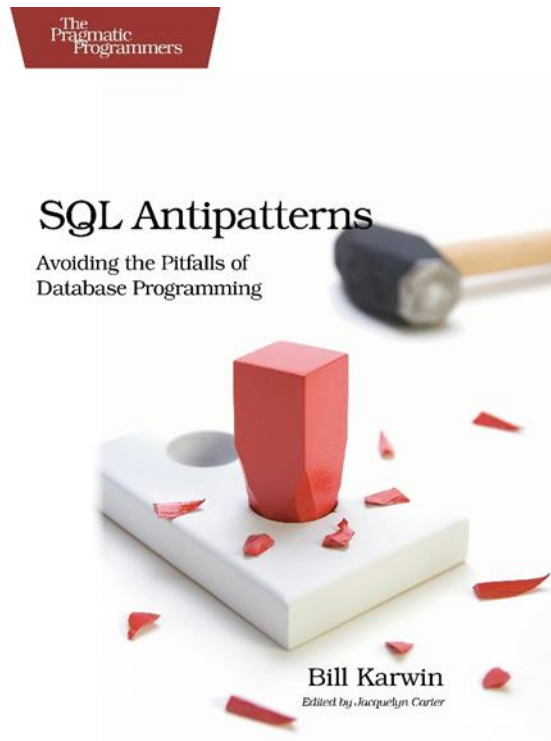
Execution plans ahead!

...and more dog pictures!



(Image courtesy of designerpoint via pixabay)

What is an antipattern?



"A technique that is intended to solve a problem but often leads to other problems."
-Bill Karwin

About the antipatterns we will discuss

They are all common T-SQL solutions

They all return a correct result set

...but they perform unnecessary work

Who is using antipatterns?

"Boss"



"Junior"



Selection antipatterns



(Image courtesy of TheDigitalWay via pixabay)

Boss request #1



Hey!
Let's find anyone
Named "Barker"
Because maybe
We are related!

Junior's query #1

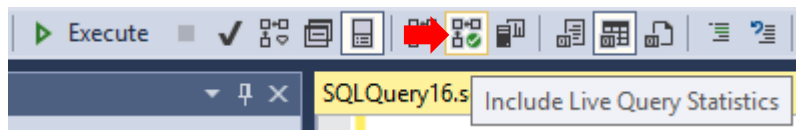
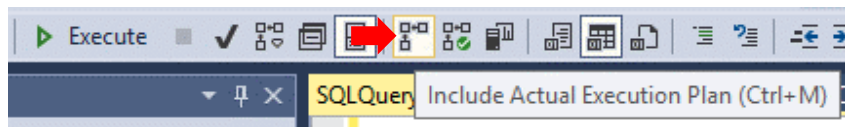
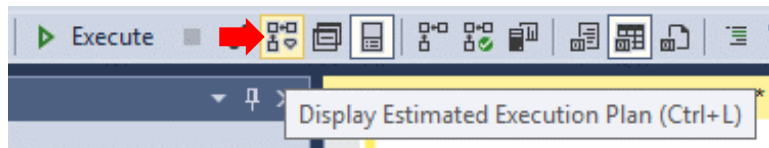
```
SELECT *
```

```
FROM Person.Person
```

```
WHERE LastName = 'Barker'
```



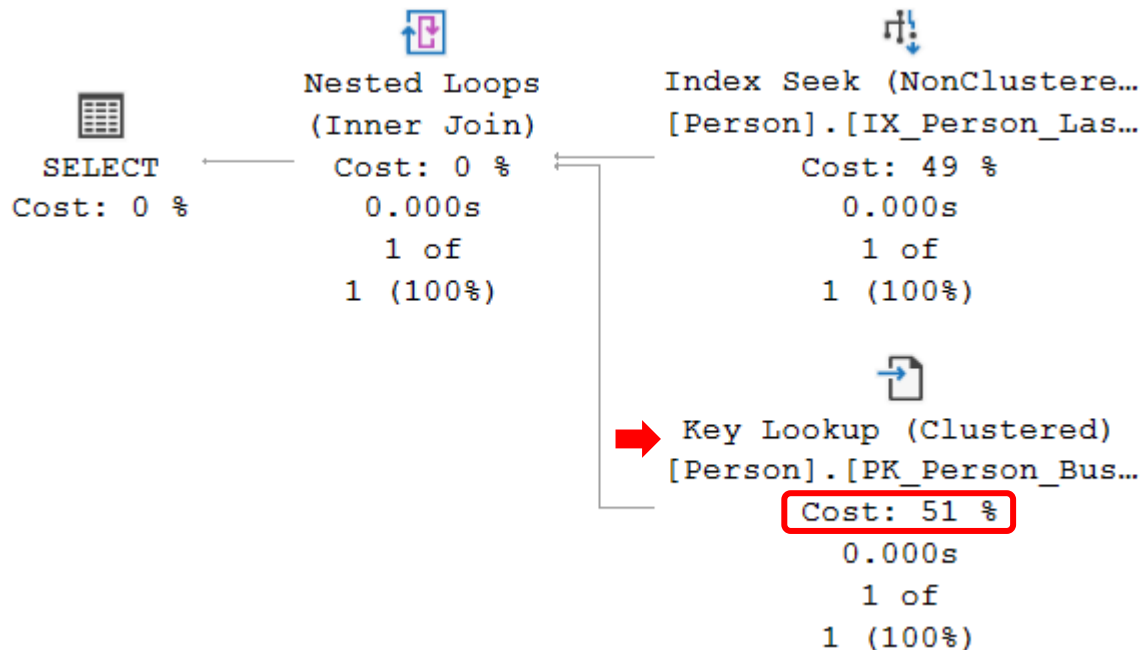
How to see an execution plan



`SET SHOWPLAN_TEXT ON;`

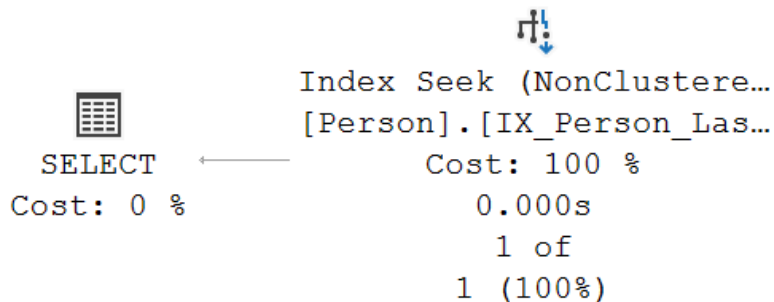
Query		Project	Tools	Window	Help
Connection					
Open Server in Object Explorer					Alt+F8
Specify Values for Template Parameters...					Ctrl+Shift+M
Execute					F5
Cancel Executing Query					Alt+Break
Parse					Ctrl+F5
Display Estimated Execution Plan					Ctrl+L
IntelliSense Enabled					Ctrl+B, Ctrl+I
Trace Query in SQL Server Profiler					Ctrl+Alt+P
Analyze Query in Database Engine Tuning Advisor					
Design Query in Editor...					Ctrl+Shift+Q
Include Actual Execution Plan					Ctrl+M
Include Live Query Statistics					
Include Client Statistics					Shift+Alt+S
Reset Client Statistics					
SQLCMD Mode					
Results To					
Query Options...					

Antipattern: Unnatural SELECTION



A better way

```
SELECT FirstName, LastName  
FROM Person.Person  
WHERE LastName = 'Barker'
```



How can we measure the difference?

SET STATISTICS IO ON

```
Table 'Person'. Scan count 1, logical reads 3821, physical reads 3, read-ahead reads 3866,  
lob logical reads 0, lob physical reads 0, lob read-ahead reads 0.
```

Let's compare the logical reads

SET STATISTICS IO ON

```
SELECT *  
FROM Person.Person  
WHERE LastName = 'Barker'
```

logical reads 5

```
SELECT FirstName, LastName  
FROM Person.Person  
WHERE LastName = 'Barker'
```

logical reads 2

Boss request #2



Hey!

I just had a killer workout

Chasing a yellow car

It looked magnificent!

I want a list of orders

With any yellow products

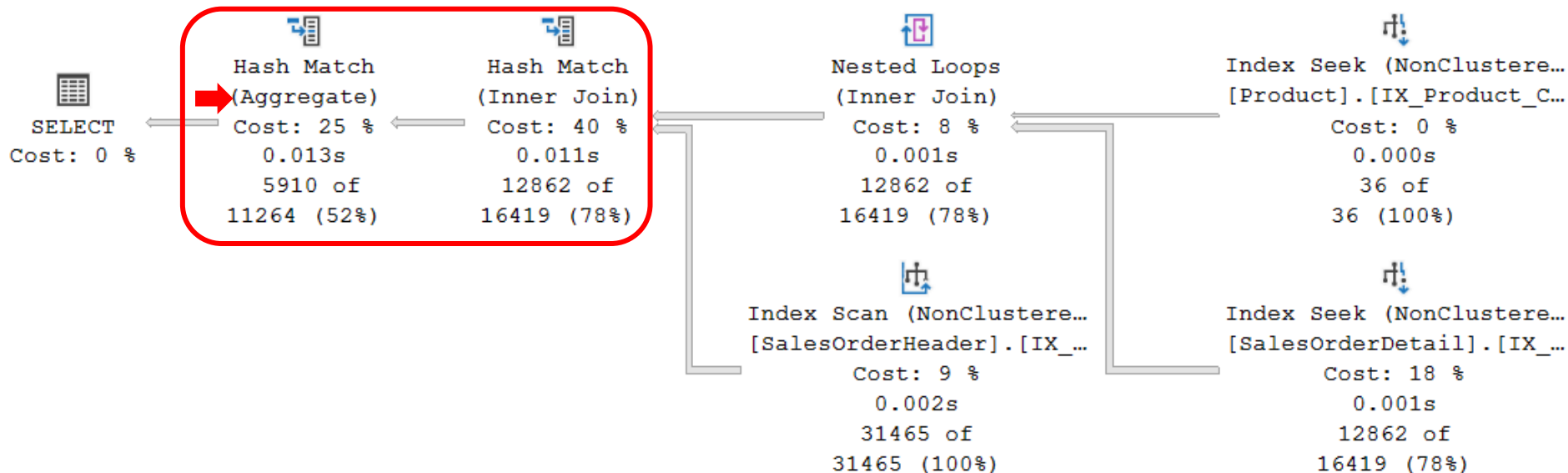
ASAP!

Junior's query #2

```
SELECT DISTINCT soh.SalesOrderID  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader soh  
INNER JOIN Sales.SalesOrderDetail sod  
  ON soh.SalesOrderID = sod.SalesOrderID  
INNER JOIN Production.Product pd  
  ON sod.ProductID = pd.ProductID  
WHERE pd.Color = 'Yellow'
```



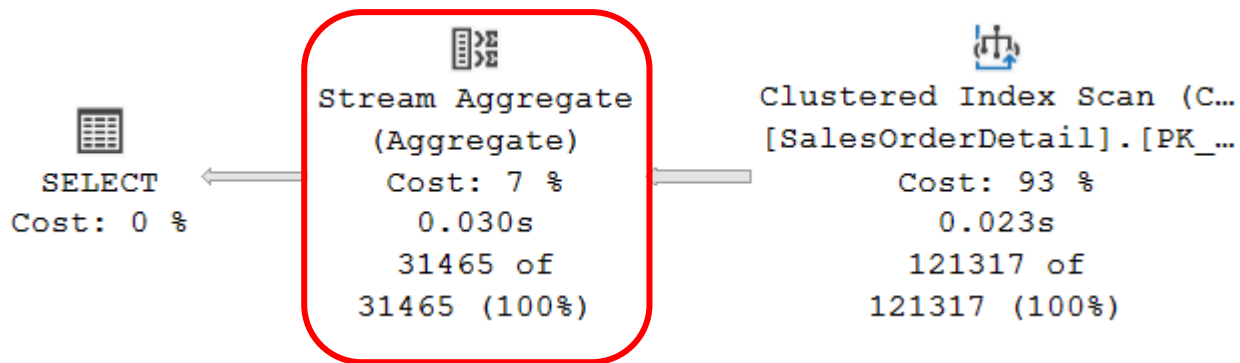
Antipattern: DISTINCT disadvantage



DISTINCT = GROUP BY

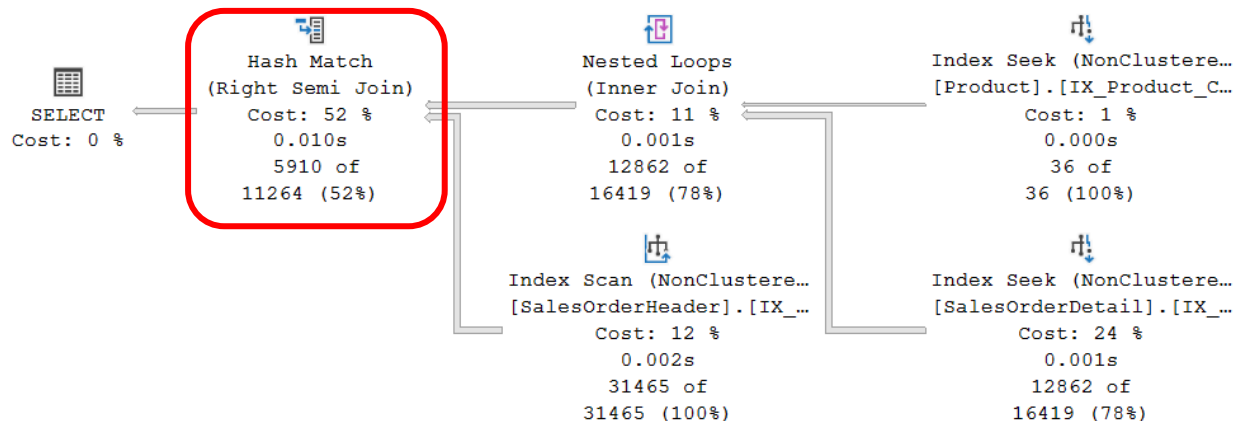
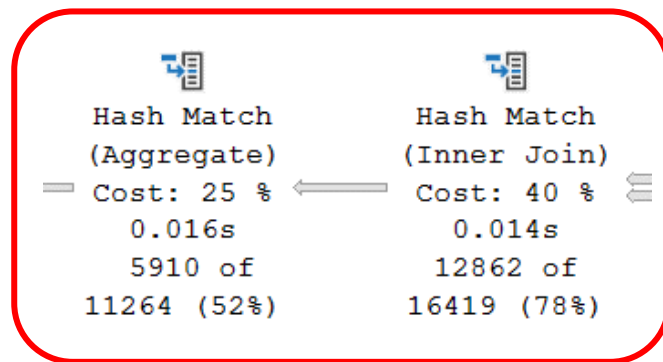
```
SELECT DISTINCT SalesOrderID  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderDetail
```

```
SELECT SalesOrderID  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderDetail  
GROUP BY SalesOrderID
```



A better way

```
SELECT soh.SalesOrderID
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader soh
WHERE soh.SalesOrderID IN (
    SELECT sod.SalesOrderID
    FROM Sales.SalesOrderDetail sod
    INNER JOIN Production.Product pd
    ON sod.ProductID = pd.ProductID
    WHERE pd.Color = 'Yellow');
```



What about the logical reads?

```
SELECT DISTINCT soh.SalesOrderID
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader soh
INNER JOIN Sales.SalesOrderDetail sod
  ON soh.SalesOrderID = sod.SalesOrderID
INNER JOIN Production.Product pd
  ON sod.ProductID = pd.ProductID
WHERE pd.Color = 'Yellow';
```

Table 'SalesOrderDetail'

logical reads 214,

```
SELECT soh.SalesOrderID
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader soh
WHERE soh.SalesOrderID IN (
  SELECT sod.SalesOrderID
  FROM Sales.SalesOrderDetail sod
  INNER JOIN Production.Product pd
    ON sod.ProductID = pd.ProductID
  WHERE pd.Color = 'Yellow');
```

logical reads 128,

Joining antipatterns



(Image courtesy of violeta via pixabay)

Boss request #3



Hey!

Let's find any US State

With Persons named "Jr"

Who ordered anything black

Because your name

And my color

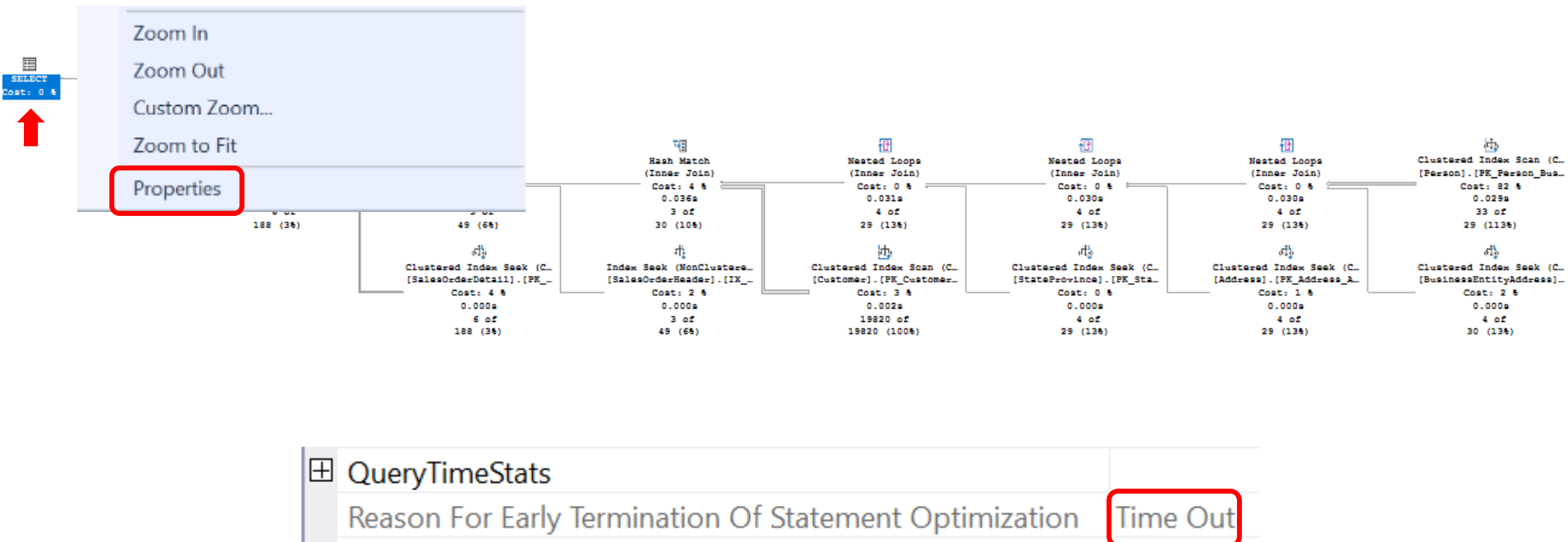
Are awesome!

Junior's query #3

```
SELECT sp.[Name]
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader soh
INNER JOIN Sales.SalesOrderDetail sod
  ON soh.SalesOrderID = sod.SalesOrderID
INNER JOIN Production.Product pd
  ON sod.ProductID = pd.ProductID
INNER JOIN Sales.Customer c
  ON soh.CustomerID = c.CustomerID
INNER JOIN Person.Person pr
  ON c.PersonID = pr.BusinessEntityID
INNER JOIN Person.BusinessEntityAddress bea
  ON pr.BusinessEntityID = bea.BusinessEntityID
INNER JOIN Person.Address a
  ON bea.AddressID = a.AddressID
INNER JOIN Person.StateProvince sp
  ON a.StateProvinceID = sp.StateProvinceID
WHERE pr.Suffix = 'Jr.'
AND pd.Color = 'Black'
```



Antipattern #3: JOIN-zilla



A better way

➡ `SELECT c.CustomerID, sp.[Name] as StateProvince
INTO #JrState
FROM Sales.Customer c
INNER JOIN Person.Person pr
ON c.PersonID = pr.BusinessEntityID
INNER JOIN Person.BusinessEntityAddress bea
ON pr.BusinessEntityID = bea.BusinessEntityID
INNER JOIN Person.Address a
ON bea.AddressID = a.AddressID
INNER JOIN Person.StateProvince sp
ON a.StateProvinceID = sp.StateProvinceID
WHERE Suffix = 'Jr.'`

➡ `SELECT ProductID
INTO #Black
FROM Production.Product
WHERE Color = 'Black'`

`SELECT jr.StateProvince
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader soh
INNER JOIN Sales.SalesOrderDetail sod
ON soh.SalesOrderID = sod.SalesOrderID
➡ INNER JOIN #Black black
ON sod.ProductID = black.ProductID
➡ INNER JOIN #JrState jr
ON soh.CustomerID = jr.CustomerID`



















⊞ QueryTimeStats

Reason For Early Termination Of Statement Optimization

Good Enough Plan Found



Temporary Table or Table Variable?

Characteristic	#TempTable	@TableVariable
Can be altered		
Can be truncated		
Can be used with SELECT INTO		
Has statistics		
Can participate in a transaction		
Writes only to memory		
Avoids writing to the log file		
Avoids a recompile in procedure		
Can be passed from a function		

What about Common Table Expressions?

CTEs are not materialized

Can have poor estimates

...and poor execution plans

Hash Match	
Use each row from the top input to build a hash table, and each row from the bottom input to probe into the hash table, outputting all matching rows.	
Physical Operation	Hash Match
Logical Operation	Inner Join
Actual Execution Mode	Row
Estimated Execution Mode	Row
Actual Number of Rows	1
Actual Number of Batches	0
Estimated Operator Cost	0.0195657 (1%)
Estimated I/O Cost	0
Estimated CPU Cost	0.0195662
Estimated Subtree Cost	3.48525
Number of Executions	1
Estimated Number of Executions	1
Estimated Number of Rows	65.5432
Estimated Row Size	61 B
Actual Rebinds	0
Actual Rewinds	0
Node ID	0

Boss request #4



Hey!

I just went for another run

Actually, I fetched the mail

And now I am exhausted

But I was wondering

Are any of our customers

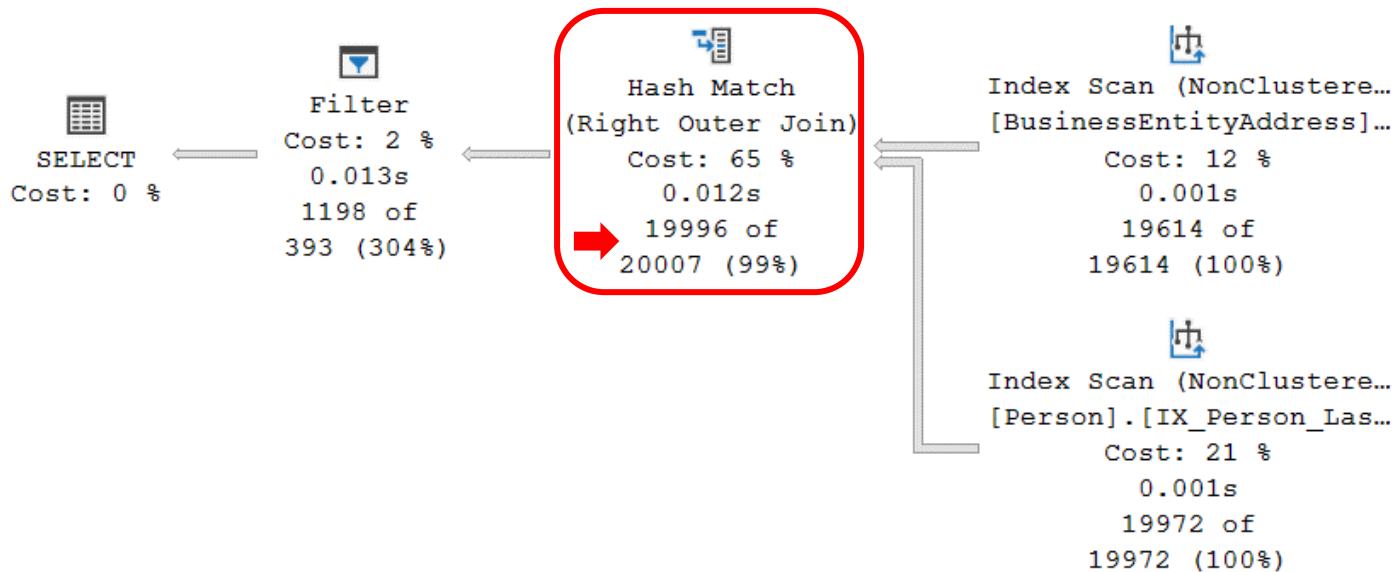
Missing a mailing address?

Junior's query #4

```
SELECT p.FirstName, p.LastName  
FROM Person.Person p  
LEFT OUTER JOIN Person.BusinessEntityAddress a  
  ON p.BusinessEntityID = a.BusinessEntityID  
WHERE a.BusinessEntityID IS NULL;
```

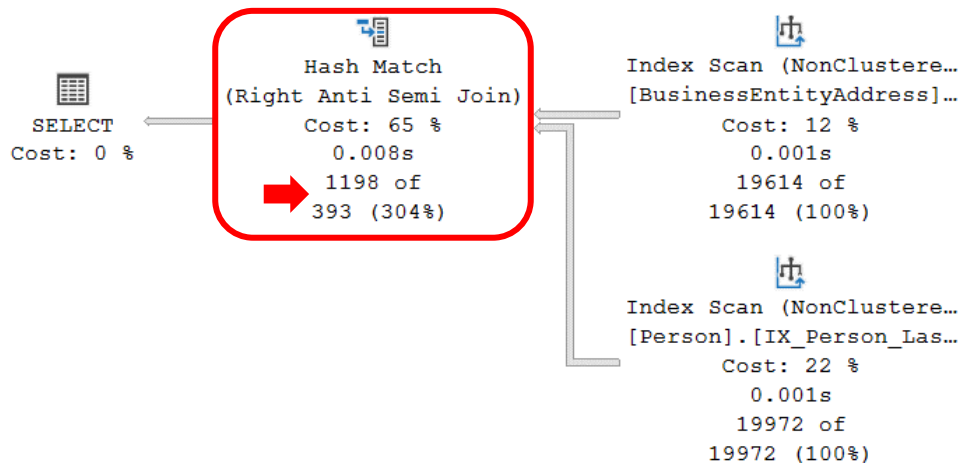


Antipattern: Avoiding the Semi



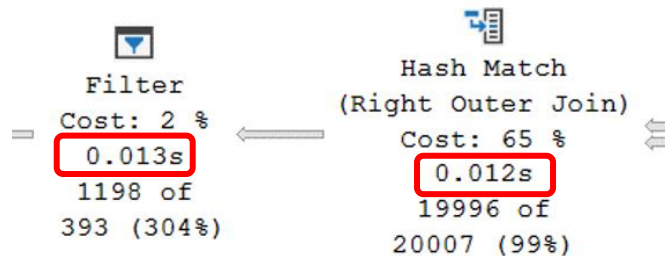
A better way

```
SELECT p.FirstName, p.LastName  
FROM Person.Person p  
WHERE NOT EXISTS (  
    SELECT 1  
    FROM Person.BusinessEntityAddress a  
    WHERE p.BusinessEntityID = a.BusinessEntityID);
```

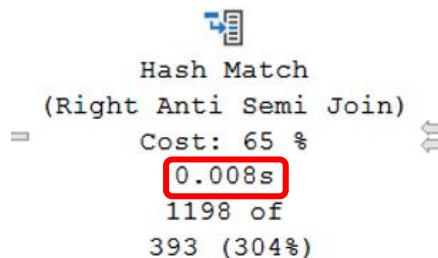


Comparison: Actual Elapsed CPU Time

```
SELECT p.FirstName, p.LastName
FROM Person.Person p
LEFT OUTER JOIN Person.BusinessEntityAddress a
  ON p.BusinessEntityID = a.BusinessEntityID
WHERE a.BusinessEntityID IS NULL;
```



```
SELECT p.FirstName, p.LastName
FROM Person.Person p
WHERE NOT EXISTS (
  SELECT 1
  FROM Person.BusinessEntityAddress a
  WHERE p.BusinessEntityID = a.BusinessEntityID);
```



Predicate antipatterns



(Image courtesy of Pezibear via pixabay)

Boss request #5



Hey!

I was born in 2012

It is my favorite year

Let's find how many orders

We had that year

Because

It is my favorite year!

Junior's query #5

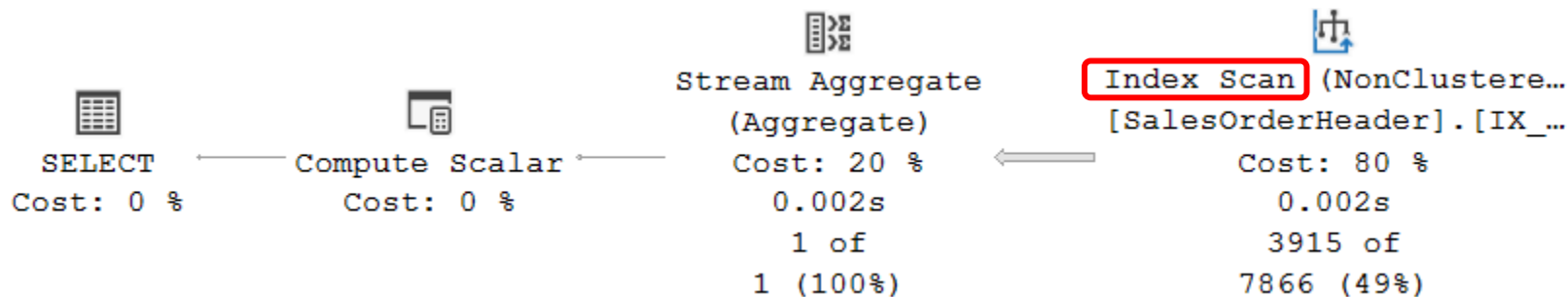
```
DECLARE @Year int;
```

```
SET @Year = 2012;
```

```
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE YEAR(OrderDate) = @Year;
```



Antipattern: Fallacious arguments



This is not "SARGable"

SARGable - Able to efficiently use an index
for a search argument

So...what else is not SARGable?



Conversions on indexed columns

```
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader
WHERE CAST(OrderDate AS CHAR(10)) = '2016-01-01';
```

Functions on indexed columns

```
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader
WHERE DATEADD(YEAR, -1, OrderDate) = GETDATE();
```

Operators on indexed columns

```
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader
WHERE TotalDue - 1000.00 > 0;
```

What's the solution?

Vern Rabe says:

“Embrace Verbosity!”



A better way

```
DECLARE @Year int;
```

```
SET @Year = 2012;
```

```
DECLARE @YearStart datetime, @YearEnd datetime
```

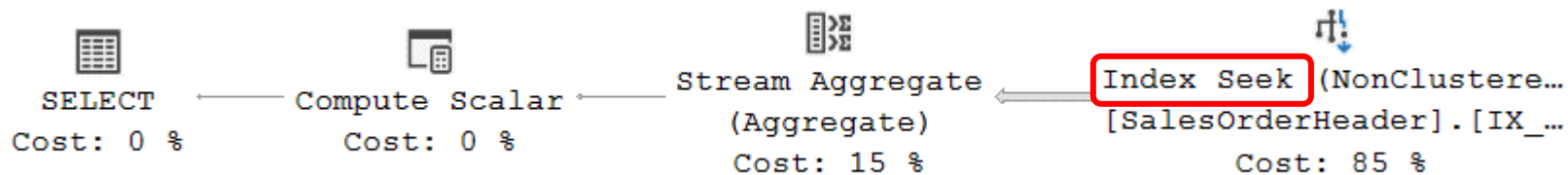
```
SELECT @YearStart = CAST(CAST(@Year as VARCHAR(4)) + '-01-01' AS DATETIME)
```

```
SELECT @YearEnd = CAST(CAST(@Year as VARCHAR(4)) + '-12-31' AS DATETIME)
```

```
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)
```

```
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader
```

```
WHERE OrderDate BETWEEN @YearStart AND @YearEnd;
```



But...what about 12-31 after midnight?

```
DECLARE @Year int;
```

```
SET @Year = 2012;
```

```
DECLARE @YearStart datetime, @YearEnd datetime
```

```
SELECT @YearStart = CAST(CAST(@Year as VARCHAR(4)) + '-01-01' AS DATETIME)
```

```
SELECT @YearEnd = CAST(CAST(@Year as VARCHAR(4)) + '-12-31' AS DATETIME)
```

```
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)
```

```
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader
```

```
WHERE OrderDate BETWEEN @YearStart AND @YearEnd;
```

SalesOrderID	RevisionNumber	OrderDate
45296	8	2012-01-01 00:00:00.000
45297	8	2012-01-01 00:00:00.000
45298	8	2012-01-01 00:00:00.000
45299	8	2012-01-01 00:00:00.000

An even better way

```
DECLARE @Year int;
```

```
SET @Year = 2012;
```

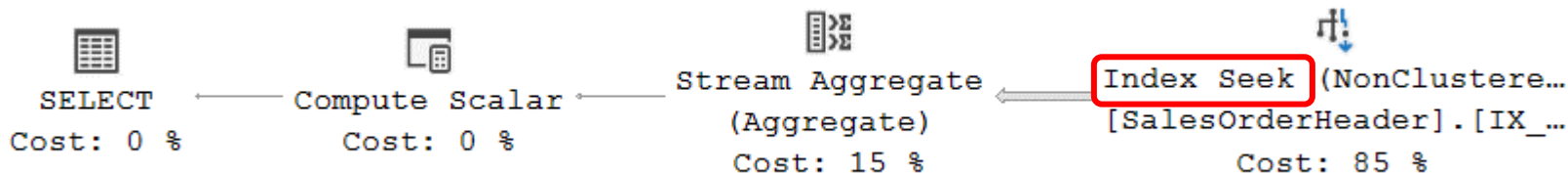
```
DECLARE @YearStart datetime
```

```
SELECT @YearStart = CAST(CAST(@Year as VARCHAR(4)) + '-01-01' AS DATETIME)
```

```
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)
```

```
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader
```

```
WHERE OrderDate >= @YearStart  
AND OrderDate < DATEADD(YY, 1, @YearStart);
```



Show me the logical reads!

```
DECLARE @Year int;  
  
SET @Year = 2012;  
  
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE YEAR(OrderDate) = @Year;
```

logical reads 73,

```
DECLARE @Year int;  
  
SET @Year = 2012;  
  
DECLARE @YearStart datetime  
  
SELECT @YearStart = CAST(CAST(@Year as VARCHAR(4)) + '-01-01' AS DATETIME)  
  
SELECT COUNT(SalesOrderID)  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE OrderDate >= @YearStart  
AND OrderDate < DATEADD(YY, 1, @YearStart);
```

logical reads 12,

Boss request #6



Hey!

I need a report

To find any order shipped

On a given day

Or, any unshipped orders

Also, I am tired

And wish to take a nap

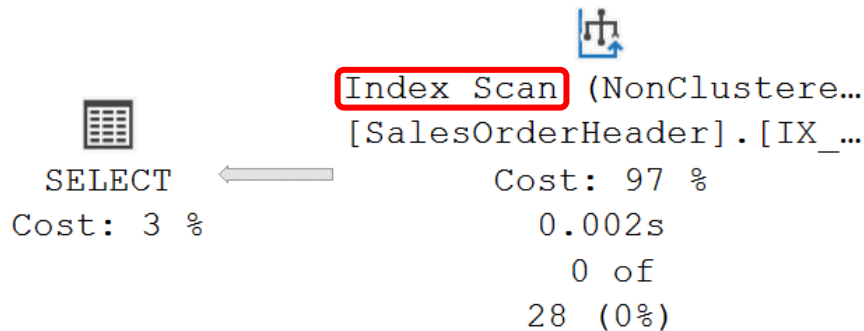
Junior's query #6

```
CREATE PROCEDURE usp_GetShippedOrders  
    @ShipDate datetime  
AS
```

```
SELECT SalesOrderID, ShipDate  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE ISNULL(ShipDate, '19010101')  
= ISNULL(@ShipDate, '19010101');
```



Antipattern: A Lot of Nothing

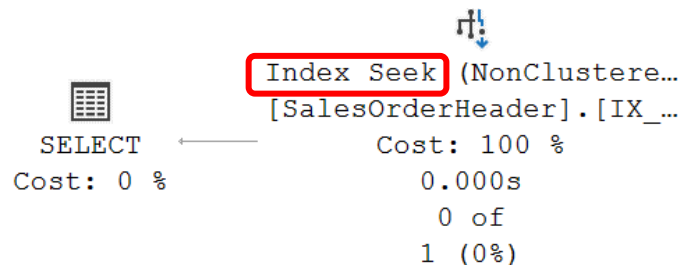


Déjà vu - this is also not "SARGable"

A better way

```
CREATE PROCEDURE usp_GetShippedOrders  
    @ShipDate datetime  
AS
```

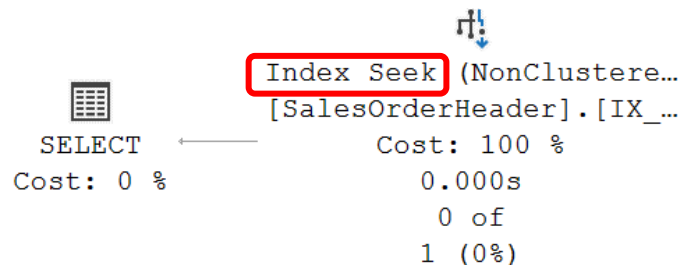
```
SELECT SalesOrderID, ShipDate  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE ShipDate = @ShipDate  
OR (ShipDate IS NULL AND @ShipDate IS NULL);
```



An even better way

```
CREATE PROCEDURE usp_GetShippedOrders  
    @ShipDate datetime  
AS
```

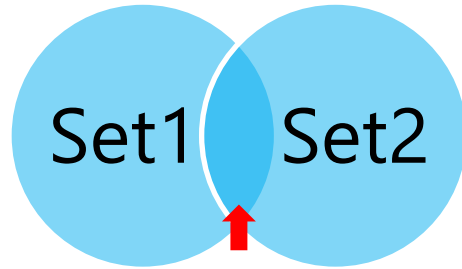
```
SELECT SalesOrderID, ShipDate  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE EXISTS (  
    SELECT ShipDate INTERSECT SELECT @ShipDate  
);
```



Tell me more about INTERSECT

INNER JOIN – matches data

INTERSECT – finds distinct common values



Rule #1: column name & order must match

Rule #2: column data types must match

How many logical reads this time?

```
CREATE PROCEDURE usp_GetShippedOrders  
    @ShipDate datetime  
AS
```

```
SELECT SalesOrderID, ShipDate  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE ISNULL(ShipDate, '19010101')  
= ISNULL(@ShipDate, '19010101');
```

logical reads 73,

```
CREATE PROCEDURE usp_GetShippedOrders  
    @ShipDate datetime  
AS
```

```
SELECT SalesOrderID, ShipDate  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE EXISTS (  
    SELECT ShipDate INTERSECT SELECT @ShipDate  
);
```

logical reads 2,

Boss request #7



Hey!

We got a charge back

And we might have more

We need to find the SalesID

For an approval code

I will Slack you the code

And then take another nap

Junior's query #7

```
CREATE PROCEDURE usp_GetShippedOrders  
    @CCApprovalCode NVARCHAR(15)
```

```
AS
```

```
SELECT SalesOrderID  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE CreditCardApprovalCode = @CCApprovalCode;
```

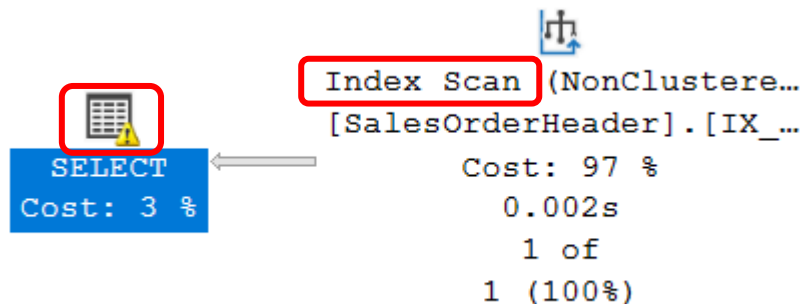
[-] [table icon] Sales.SalesOrderHeader

[-] [folder icon] Columns

[+] CreditCardApprovalCode (varchar(15), null)



Antipattern: Involuntary conversion



SELECT	
Cached plan size	16 KB
Estimated Operator Cost	0.003147 (3%)
Degree of Parallelism	1
Estimated Subtree Cost	0.116596
Estimated Number of Rows	1.04303

Statement

```
SELECT SalesOrderID
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader
WHERE CreditCardApprovalCode =
@CCApprovalCode
```

Warnings

Type conversion in expression
(**CONVERT_IMPLICIT**(nvarchar(15),
[AdventureWorks2017].[Sales].
[SalesOrderHeader].
[CreditCardApprovalCode],0)=
[@CCApprovalCode]) may affect "SeekPlan" in
query plan choice

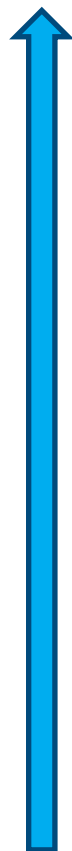
What are Implicit Conversions?

Did you say...?



(Image courtesy of BarkPost)

What about Precedence?



Precedence Chart*

DATETIME

SMALLDATETIME

FLOAT

DECIMAL

MONEY

BIGINT

INT

SMALLINT

TINYINT

BIT

NVARCHAR (including MAX)

NCHAR

VARCHAR (including MAX)

CHAR

Data of lower precedence must be implicitly converted to be compared to data of higher precedence



@CCApprovalCode NVARCHAR(15)



⌘ CreditCardApprovalCode (varchar(15), null)

*The Fine Print

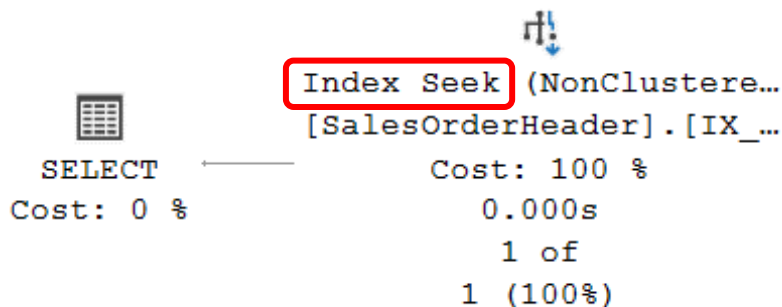
Abbreviated chart.
Includes only commonly used data types. There are 30 different data types in the full chart, with User-Defined Data Types occupying the highest precedence.

A better way

```
CREATE PROCEDURE usp_GetShippedOrders  
    @CCApprovalCode VARCHAR(15)  
AS
```

```
SELECT SalesOrderID  
FROM Sales.SalesOrderHeader  
WHERE CreditCardApprovalCode = @CCApprovalCode;
```

☰ CreditCardApprovalCode (**varchar(15)**, null)



“sql authority find implicit conversion”

Pinal Dave says:

```
-- (c) https://blog.sqlauthority.com  
SELECT TOP(50) DB_NAME(t.[dbid]) AS [Database Name],  
t.text AS [Query Text],  
qs.total_worker_time AS [Total Worker Time],  
qs.total_worker_time/qs.execution_count AS [Avg Worker Time],  
qs.max_worker_time AS [Max Worker Time],  
qs.total_elapsed_time/qs.execution_count AS [Avg Elapsed Time],  
qs.max_elapsed_time AS [Max Elapsed Time],  
qs.total_logical_reads/qs.execution_count AS [Avg Logical Reads],  
qs.max_logical_reads AS [Max Logical Reads],  
qs.execution_count AS [Execution Count],  
qs.creation_time AS [Creation Time],  
qp.query_plan AS [Query Plan]  
FROM sys.dm_exec_query_stats AS qs WITH (NOLOCK)  
CROSS APPLY sys.dm_exec_sql_text(plan_handle) AS t  
CROSS APPLY sys.dm_exec_query_plan(plan_handle) AS qp  
WHERE CAST(query_plan AS NVARCHAR(MAX)) LIKE ('%CONVERT_IMPLICIT%')  
AND t.[dbid] = DB_ID()  
ORDER BY qs.total_worker_time DESC OPTION (RECOMPILE);
```



<https://blog.sqlauthority.com/2017/01/29/find-all-queries-with-implicit-conversion-in-sql-server-interview-question-of-the-week-107/>

"A final ask"



Hey!

I just woke up from a nap
And I wanted to reach out
To briefly touch base
With a final ask
To see if we can circle back
For a helicopter view

Junior's Summary

Something about Index Seeks

Confusing execution plans

A bunch of dog pictures



Summary

Antipattern	Characteristic	Solution
Unnatural SELECTION	SELECT *	Limit column selection
DISTINCT Disadvantage	SELECT DISTINCT...	WHERE IN (...)
JOIN-zilla	Optimization "Time Out"	Break it up
Avoiding the Semi	LEFT JOIN...WHERE NULL	WHERE NOT EXISTS (...)
Fallacious Arguments	Not SARGable	"Embrace verbosity"
A Lot of Nothing	ISNULL() = ISNULL()	EXISTS & INTERSECT
Involuntary Conversion	CONVERT_IMPLICIT	Match all data types

That's the end. Thank you!

"Seven"



desertdba.com



jeff@desertdba.com



[@desertdba](https://twitter.com/desertdba)

"Daphne"

