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PostgreSQL: Select data with a like on timestamp field



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I am trying to select data from a table, using a "like" on date field "date_checked" (timestamp). But I have this error:





SQLSTATE[42883]: Undefined function: 7 ERROR: operator does not exist: timestamp



My request is:

```
SELECT my table.id
FROM my table
WHERE my table.date checker LIKE '2011-01-%'
```

I don't want to use:

```
SELECT my table.id
FROM my table
WHERE my table.date checker >= '2011-01-01 00:00:00'
   AND my table.date checker < '2011-02-01 00:00:00'
```

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```
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```

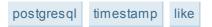
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iOS Engineer / Mobile Developer (100% telecommute)



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asked Jan 25 '11 at 22:31

Kevin Campion
529 • 2 • 6 • 17

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4 Answers

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It's all very well not "wanting to use" < and > with timestamps, but those operators can be converted into index scans, and a string-match... well, it can, but EWWWW.

Well, the error is occurring because you need to explicitly convert the timestamp to a string before using a string operation on it, e.g.:

date_checker::text LIKE '2011-01-%'

and I *suppose* you could then create an index on (date_checker::text) and that expression would become an index scan but.... EWWWW.

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answered Jan 25 '11 at 22:46



araqnid 28.6k •4 •51 •67

- 1 +1 for discouraging the use of such a solution a_horse_with_no_name Jan 25 '11 at 23:27
- 1 I think if index scans are you primary concern, you'd probably have a better change with the LIKE approach. The selectivity estimations of inequalities can fall down pretty quickly. Just saying ... ;-) Peter Eisentraut Jan 26 '11 at 5:14
- 1 +1 for the "EWWWWWW":) divesh premdeep Aug 31 '12 at 11:15

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Perhaps the date trunc function would be more to your liking:

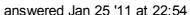


```
... WHERE date_trunc('month', my_table.date_checker) = '2011-01-01'
```

You can also put an index on that expression, if needed.

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Peter Eisentraut

10.6k • 2 • 21 • 31

If you need to do a comparison on some part of a timestamp, it's far better to use extract:



http://www.postgresql.org/docs/8.4/static/functions-datetime.html#FUNCTIONS-DATETIME-EXTRACT

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or date_trunc if you need something like the first x part of a date. you can turn '2011-01-13 12:15:23' into '2011-01-01 00:00:00' - Scott Marlowe Jan 26 '11 at 8:18

add comment



I don't believe you can do a like on a date column without converting it to a string representation first.

1

You can use the between query to select between two dates, for instance:

 \blacksquare

SELECT id FROM my table WHERE date checker BETWEEN '2011-01-01' AND '2011-02-01';

NULL difference

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* Patrick

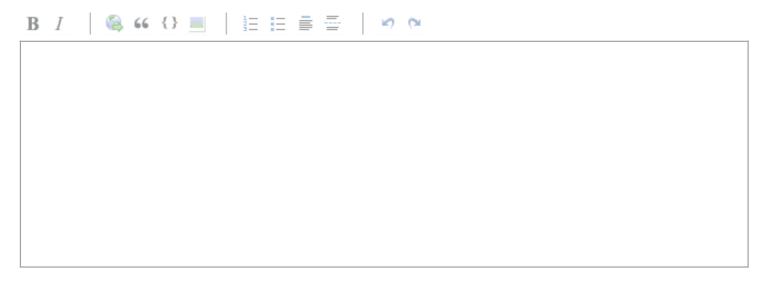
. 6,010 ○2 ■ 19 ● 45

It's possible to do a like on a date column – Kevin Campion Nov 22 '11 at 21:20

@KevinCampion: No it's not. Not without converting it first. - Patrick Nov 22 '11 at 23:41

add comment

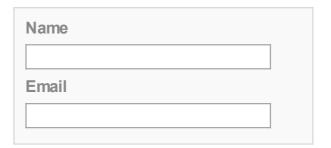
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