

A data definition language (DDL) is a computer language used to create and modify the structure of database objects in a database. These database objects include views, schemas, tables, indexes, etc.

This term is also known as data description language in some contexts, as it describes the fields and records in a database table.

The present database industry incorporates DDL into any formal language describing data. However, it is considered to be a subset of SQL (Structured Query Language). SQL often uses imperative verbs with normal English such as sentences to implement database modifications. Hence, DDL does not show up as a different language in an SQL database, but does define changes in the database schema.

Commonly used DDL in SQL querying are:

- **CREATE:** This command builds a new table and has a predefined syntax. The CREATE statement syntax is `CREATE TABLE [table name] ([column definitions]) [table parameters]`. `CREATE TABLE Employee (Employee Id INTEGER PRIMARY KEY, First name CHAR (50) NULL, Last name CHAR (75) NOT NULL)`.
- **ALTER:** An alter command modifies an existing database table. This command can add up additional column, drop existing columns and even change the data type of columns involved in a database table. An alter command syntax is `ALTER object type object name parameters`. `ALTER TABLE Employee ADD DOB Date`.
- **DROP:** A drop command deletes a table, index or view. Drop statement syntax is `DROP object type object name`. `DROP TABLE Employee`.