there are no Dumb Questions

Q: Why would I ever use a CHAR when a VARCHAR does the same thing with more flexibility?

A: The answer is accuracy and efficiency. From a design perspective, you should always design your tables to model your data as rigidly as possible. If you know without a shadow of a doubt that a state column will always hold exactly a two-character abbreviation, then it makes sense to only allot two characters of storage for it with `CHAR(2)`. However, if a password column can contain up to 10 characters, then `VARCHAR(10)` makes more sense. That's the design side of things. So `CHAR` is a little more efficient than `VARCHAR` because it doesn't have to keep track of a variable length. Therefore, it's more desirable when you know for certain a text column has an exact length.

Q: Why do I need these numeric types like `INT` and `DEC`?

A: It all comes down to database storage and efficiency. Choosing the best matching data type for each column in your table will reduce the size of the table and make operations on your data faster. Storing a number as an actual number (`INT`, `DEC`, etc.) instead of text characters is usually more efficient.

Q: Is this it? Are these all the types?

A: No, but these are the most commonly used ones. We'll get up and running with these for now, rather than bogging things down by looking at data types you may never need.

WHAT'S MY PURPOSE?

Match each MySQL data type to each description of some data you might store in a table.

Data Type	Description
`INT`	Your full name
`CHAR(1)`	A two letter state abbreviation
`DATE`	Cost of an Elvis wig: 48.99
`TIME`	How much money Elvis's best-selling album made.
`VARCHAR(2)`	Date of alien abduction: 2/19/2004
`DEC(4,2)`	Number of Elvis sideburns in stock: 93
`VARCHAR(60)`	Did you see Owen's dog? Y or N
`CHAR(2)`	Your email address
`DATETIME`	When you eat dinner
`DEC(10,2)`	How many aliens you saw when you were abducted
	When Elvis was born