The ALTER TABLE statement in MySQL

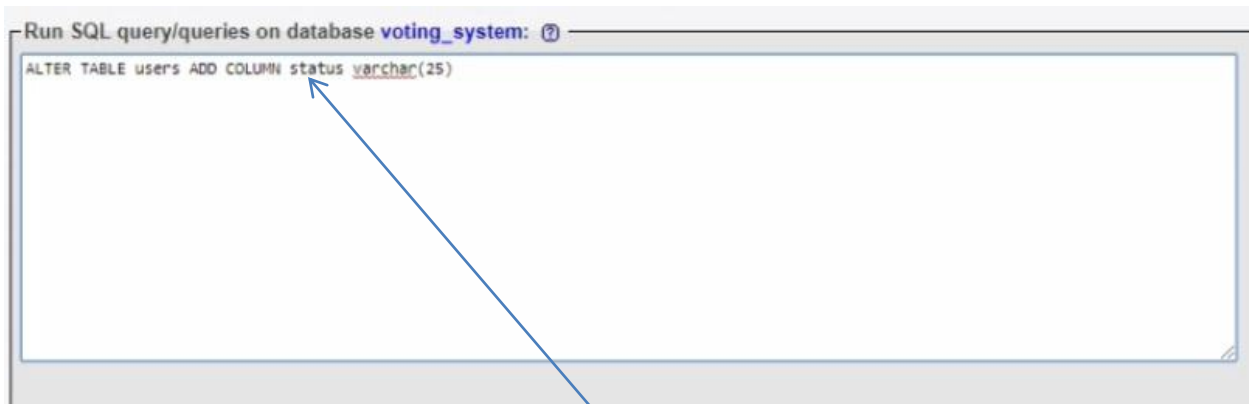You can alter the structure of a table using the "**ALTER TABLE**" statement.

This statement first makes a temporary copy of the original table, then deletes the original table, and finally modifies the temporary table. The temporary table serves as the new table and is given the same name of the original table name.

You can access the data of a table even when it is being altered.

Using the ALTER TABLE statement, you can perform a number of modifications on a table for example:
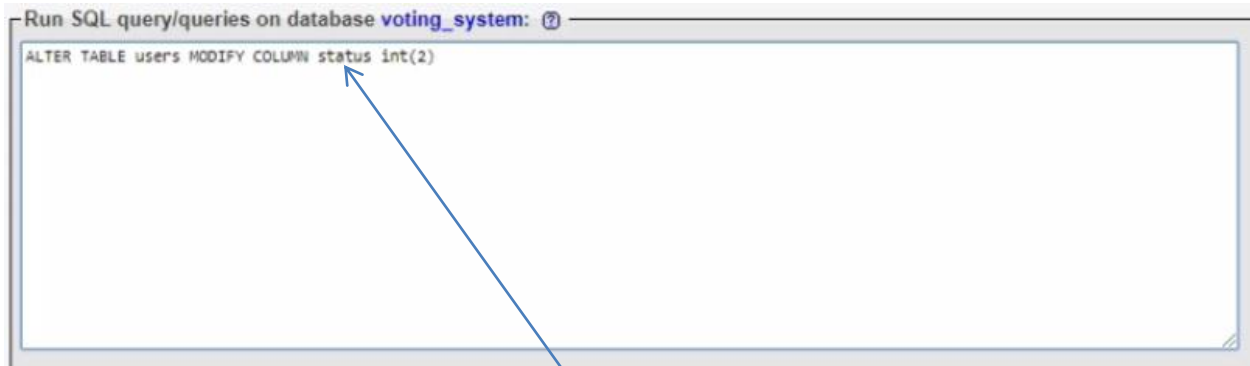
- Add a new column to the table.
- Change the data type of a column.
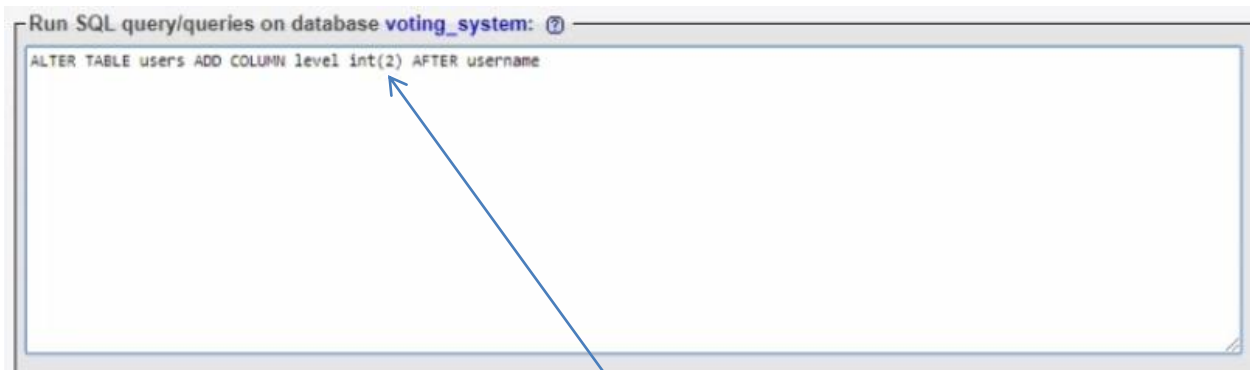- Change the size of a column.
- Drop a column.

1)

This SQL query adds a new column (**status**) to the table (**users**)

2)

Run SQL query/queries on database **voting_system**: ⑦

```
ALTER TABLE users MODIFY COLUMN status int(2)
```
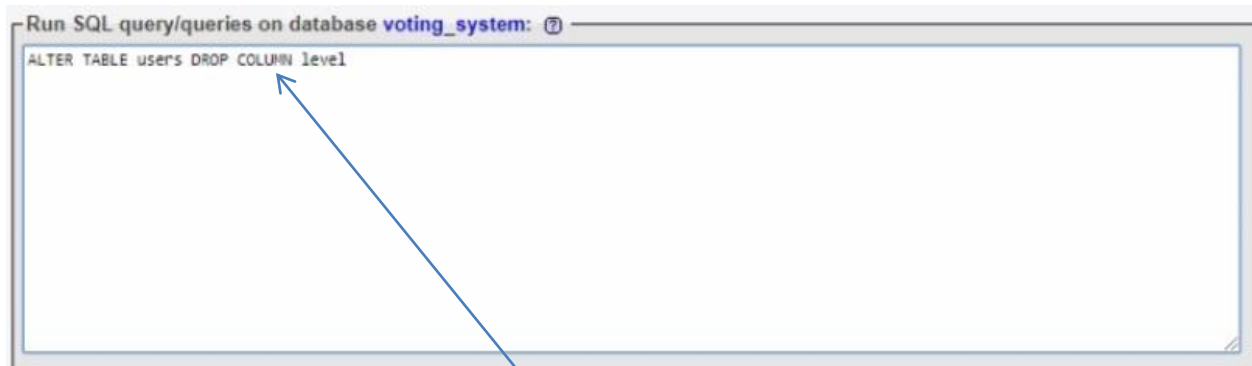
This SQL query modifies the **status** column; when you look at the first example, the **status** column has a data type of **varchar** while as in this example; the data type has been changed to **int** with a maximum size of (**2**)

3)

Run SQL query/queries on database **voting_system**: ⑦

```
ALTER TABLE users ADD COLUMN level int(2) AFTER username
```

It is possible to create a new column in SQL after an existing column; when you look at the SQL query in the screenshot above, a new column (**level**) is created after the column **username**

4)

Run SQL query/queries on database **voting_system:** ⑦

```
ALTER TABLE users DROP COLUMN level
```

In this SQL query, the **DROP COLUMN** statement is used to drop a column in SQL

NB: You should be careful when using the "DROP COLUMN" statement because once you drop a column, you cannot retrieve it back.