Undocumented Commands

Erin Stellato

@erinstellato | www.SQLskills.com

What This Module Covers

A review of undocumented commands, that are safe to use, including any risks and how to minimize them

Undocumented Commands

There are many undocumented commands that exist in SQL Server		
The commands we will cover are safe for use against a production environment, and will not alter or harm your system in any way	It is still recommended to run them first against a test/development/QA environment so you understand what they do and what to expect	Note that the functionality/output of an undocumented command can (and likely will) change from release to release, without warning or notification

DBCC LOGINFO

- Display information about the VLFs in a transaction log

- Most often used to determine whether you have a high number of VLFs

- This command will not affect system performance

- Requires sysadmin

DBCC IND

- Lists pages allocated to an index
- Typically used when trying to understand and research SQL Server internals
  - Can also be used to help investigate database corruption
- This command will not affect system performance
- Requires sysadmin

DBCC PAGE

- View contents of a database page

- Can be used to try to determine what data is on a page when it is corrupt

- Running this command will not affect system performance

- Requires sysadmin
  - Also requires trace flag 3604 to get any output

DBCC DBINFO

- View contents of database boot page
  - Boot page stores important database information that can be of use to a DBA
- Running this command will not affect system performance
- Requires sysadmin

Using Undocumented Commands

The undocumented DBCC commands shared here are non-invasive and will not create performance issues

Test the commands in a test/development/QA environment first

Be aware that changes may be introduced at any time, and behavior may change between releases

The commands covered here are discussed and demonstrated in further detail in Paul Randal's Pluralsight course, *SQL Server: Detecting and Correcting Database Corruption*

What This Module Covered

A review, with examples, of undocumented commands that are safe to use

Where To Go Next?

Start testing supported commands in a non-production environment

You cannot anticipate every scenario, but you should be comfortable running most of these commands

Use undocumented commands to further understand SQL Server internals

Course Summary

DBCC commands can provide information about your environment, or they can introduce a change (for better or worse)

Understand what each command does before running it against a production instance!

Pay attention to those commands which can change data, or potentially introduce a performance issue

    - Remember: first, do no harm ☺

Thanks for watching!