Some data analysts use the expression **SUM(1)**instead of **COUNT(\*)**. These two aggregate expressions do the same thing: they count the number of rows in a table.

This is because when you use a *scalar argument*(in this case, **1**) to an aggregate function (in this case, **SUM**), then the aggregate function aggregates that same value over all the rows.

For example, here is the **toys**table in the **toy**database:

| **id** | **name** | **price** | **maker\_id** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 21 | Lite-Brite | 14.47 | 105 |
| 22 | Mr. Potato Head | 11.50 | 105 |
| 23 | Etch A Sketch | 29.99 | 106 |

Imagine executing **SELECT SUM(price) FROM toys;**You can think of this as running through the rows in the table, and for each row, add the value in **price**to a running total. So you would get 14.47, then 14.47 + 11.50, then 14.47 + 11.50 + 29.99.

If instead you execute **SELECT SUM(1) FROM toys;**the result would be like substituting the value **1**for each of those prices. Instead of 14.47 + 11.50 + 29.99, you would have 1 + 1 + 1. That is, each row contributes 1 to the sum. This is the same as counting the rows.