**SQL Learning Journey** with **Epic 1 → Chapter 1: Install SQL Server & SSMS**.

**✅ Epic 1: SQL Server Basics**

**📘 Chapter 1: Install SQL Server & SSMS (Environment Setup)**

| **Objective** | **Install SQL Server + SSMS to prepare your local SQL development environment.** |
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**🔧 Step-by-Step Setup Guide**

**🟢 1. Download SQL Server (Developer Edition)**

* Go to the official download page:  
  👉 <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/sql-server/sql-server-downloads>
* Choose **SQL Server 2019** or **SQL Server 2022 Developer Edition**.
* Download and run the installer.

**⚙️ 2. Install SQL Server**

* Select **Basic** installation type.
* Note down your **SQL Server instance name** (default: MSSQLSERVER or SQLEXPRESS).
* Enable **Mixed Mode Authentication** (choose a password for sa user).
* Complete installation.

**🟢 3. Download SSMS (SQL Server Management Studio)**

* Download SSMS:  
  👉 <https://aka.ms/ssmsfullsetup>
* Install SSMS after downloading (this is the GUI to connect and manage databases).

**🔑 4. Connect to SQL Server**

* Open **SSMS**.
* Connect to:
  + **Server name**: localhost or ., or .\SQLEXPRESS
  + **Authentication**: SQL Server Authentication
  + **Username**: sa, **Password**: (your chosen password)

**📌 Verification Steps**

1. Open SSMS → Connect to server.
2. Run this SQL to confirm everything is working:
3. SELECT @@VERSION;

It should show SQL Server version details.

**🧠 Concepts to Understand**

| **Concept** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| SQL Server Instance | A running SQL Server engine that can host databases. |
| SSMS | Management GUI for SQL Server. |
| Authentication Modes | Windows Authentication vs. SQL Server (Mixed Mode). |
| Localhost / . | Refers to your local machine as the SQL Server host. |

| **Task** |  |
| --- | --- |
| SQL Server Installed |  |
| SSMS Installed |  |
| Can connect to SQL Server via SSMS |  |
| Ran SELECT @@VERSION; |  |