13.2.5 IMPORT TABLE Statement

```
IMPORT TABLE FROM sdi_file [, sdi_file] ...
```

The `IMPORT TABLE` statement imports `MyISAM` tables based on information contained in `.sdi` (serialized dictionary information) metadata files. `IMPORT TABLE` requires the `FILE` privilege to read the `.sdi` and table content files, and the `CREATE` privilege for the table to be created.

Tables can be exported from one server using `mysqldump` to write a file of SQL statements and imported into another server using `mysql` to process the dump file. `IMPORT TABLE` provides a faster alternative using the “raw” table files.

Prior to import, the files that provide the table content must be placed in the appropriate schema directory for the import server, and the `.sdi` file must be located in a directory accessible to the server. For example, the `.sdi` file can be placed in the directory named by the `secure_file_priv` system variable, or (if `secure_file_priv` is empty) in a directory under the server data directory.

The following example describes how to export `MyISAM` tables named `employees` and `managers` from the `hr` schema of one server and import them into the `hr` schema of another server. The example uses these assumptions (to perform a similar operation on your own system, modify the path names as appropriate):

- For the export server, *`export_basedir`* represents its base directory, and its data directory is *`export_basedir`*`/data`.
- For the import server, *`import_basedir`* represents its base directory, and its data directory is *`import_basedir`*`/data`.
- Table files are exported from the export server into the `/tmp/export` directory and this directory is secure (not accessible to other users).
- The import server uses `/tmp/mysql-files` as the directory named by its `secure_file_priv` system variable.

To export tables from the export server, use this procedure:

1. Ensure a consistent snapshot by executing this statement to lock the tables so that they cannot be modified during export:

   ```
   mysql> FLUSH TABLES hr.employees, hr.managers WITH READ LOCK;
   ```

   While the lock is in effect, the tables can still be used, but only for read access.

2. At the file system level, copy the `.sdi` and table content files from the `hr` schema directory to the secure export directory:

   - The `.sdi` file is located in the `hr` schema directory, but might not have exactly the same basename as the table name. For example, the `.sdi` files for the `employees` and `managers` tables might be named `employees_125.sdi` and `managers_238.sdi`.
   - For a `MyISAM` table, the content files are its `.MYD` data file and `.MYI` index file.

   Given those file names, the copy commands look like this:

   ```
   shell> cd export_basedir/data/hr
   shell> cp employees_125.sdi /tmp/export
   shell> cp managers_238.sdi /tmp/export
   shell> cp employees.{MYD,MYI} /tmp/export
   ```