

LEFT JOIN

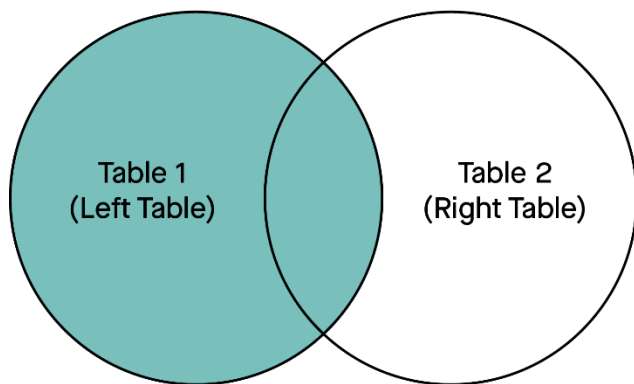
When a join is performed on two tables, there is a chance that although they share a common column, not all values are present in both tables. In other words, there may only be some matches. Fortunately, SQL has different join commands that let you choose what you want to see in your output.

The **LEFT JOIN** command returns all records from the left table (Table 1), along with matching records from the right table (Table 2). If there are no matches at all, then only the left table (Table 1) records are returned. This is useful when you want to add matching columns from the right table to your left table to create a more complete table.

Calling one table a left table and one table a right table can be confusing; after all, the tables have no physical location. The important thing to remember is that you get to pick which table is left and which table is right, based on the output that you want.

The Venn diagram below shows the data that is returned from a LEFT JOIN. The returned data is represented by the teal shaded area.

Left Join



This is the structure of LEFT JOIN:

```
1 SELECT column_name(s)
2 FROM table1_name
3 LEFT JOIN table2_name
4 ON table1.column_name = table2.column_name;
```

The LEFT JOIN command specifies that a LEFT JOIN should take place. The LEFT JOIN clause specifies the second table to be used in the join. The ON clause specifies the column names in Table 1 and Table 2 that are used to link the tables. The column names may be the same, or they may be different; either case is fine. As long as the column's values are present in both columns, the tables can be joined.