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## neo4j Cypher delete won't commit

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I have been experimenting with the REST API recently. My work cycle involves running my test program which add nodes a relationships to my graphDB, then deleting them by using neo4j-shell with a Cypher command as preparation for the next test run. All was well until the deletions started failing. At first I thought this was because my deletions encompassed too many nodes for a single transaction, so I tried to restrict the scope. It doesn't help. I'm seeing this...

```
neo4j-sh (?)$ match (s:Twitter)-[m:Tweet]->(r:Twitter) where s.handle =~ '@C.*' delete
+-----+
| No data returned. |
+-----+
Nodes deleted: 12
Relationships deleted: 21
80 ms
TransactionFailureException: Transaction was marked as successful, but unable to com
```

I don't know what to try next. I see no clues in the server log.

neo4j

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asked Mar 29 at 16:54

[Bill Michaelson](#)  
50 ● 6

- 1 I suspect that my deletions started failing after I increased the complexity of the relations by adding new node types. By using deletions with more constraints, then following up with the original attempts, I think I am getting past this. – [Bill Michaelson](#) Mar 29 at 17:08

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### 2 Answers

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Maybe you need to delete the relationships for the nodes?

```
MATCH
(s:Twitter)-[m:Tweet]->(r:Twitter)
WHERE s.handle =~ '@C.*'
OPTIONAL MATCH
s-[orel1]-(),
r-[orel2]-()
DELETE s,m,r,orel1,orel2;
```

share improve this answer

answered Mar 29 at 18:53



[Brian Underwood](#)  
4,364 ● 4 ● 18

Thanks for the response. I'm not familiar with option match, but I'll look into. In my case, I think the solution is different. See my answer below. – [Bill Michaelson](#) Mar 29 at 21:16

`OPTIONAL MATCH` works just like `MATCH` but it will give you a `null` value for any variables that you try to use in a `WITH` or `RETURN` if they don't exist. I think this would address what you're saying below because this deletes any relationships associated with the `Twitter` nodes at the same time – [Brian Underwood](#) Mar 29 at 22:32

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I think the problem began when I added a second type of target node to the mix with a different label. I have since change the cleanup to delete all relationships first, then each of the node types. It's working reliably so far.

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answered Mar 29 at 21:21

[Bill Michaelson](#)  
50 ● 6

I suppose that I had cases where I tried to delete a "s:Tweeter" node that was related to a "r:Tweeter" and identified by the query, but there were remaining relationship to a "r:Hashtag" node from the same source node that hadn't been identified by the query. So it couldn't leave the relationship hanging without a source node. If so, I wish it would have spelled it out more explicitly. – [Bill Michaelson](#) Mar 29 at 21:31

Duh, yeah. This works fine: match (s)-[m:Tweet]-(r) delete s,m,r; – [Bill Michaelson](#) Mar 29 at 21:33

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