For a NUMBER datatype precision and scale are two optional parameters. The precision parameters specifies the total number of digits that a number can use and the scale specifies the number of digits after the decimal point. Oracle gurantees the precision of less than 38 digits. Some examples of use of precision and scale are as follows.

E.g

1234567.891 would be stored as 1234567.89 if we stored it using NUMBER(9,2). Here the value is rounded off.
12345678.23 would be stored as 12345600 if we stored it using NUMBER(8, -2). In this case last two digits before the decimal point are changed to 0.
1234567.891 would be stored as 1234568 if we store it using NUMBER(11). Here scale is considered to be 0, and the number rounds-off to the next integer.
1234567.89 would not be accepted if we try to store it using NUMBER(4). Here the storage space is smaller than the number itself.
1234567.891 would be stored as 1234567.891 if we store it using NUMBER. Here the number will accommodate for a precision of 38 and the scale is maintained.