

The N+1 Query Trap

When Correlated Subqueries kill your DB performance.

slow_query.sql

SELECT

o.order_id,

o.total_amount,

-- ⚠ Subquery runs for EVERY row

(SELECT customer_name

FROM customers c

WHERE c.id = o.customer_id),

(SELECT COUNT(*)

FROM order_items oi

WHERE oi.order_id = o.order_id)

FROM orders o

WHERE o.order_date > '2024-01-01';



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PATTERN

Row-by-Row vs Set-Based

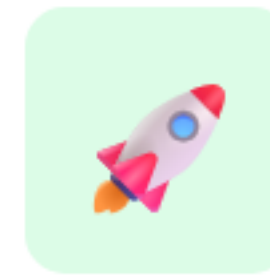
Why your database is struggling.



The Trap

3,001

Total Queries (For 1k rows)
1 Main Query +
3 Subqueries × 1,000 Rows



The Fix

1

Total Query (JOIN Pattern)
Process all data in a single pass using
Set Operations



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SOLUTION

The JOIN Pattern

Aggregate First, Then Join.

```
SELECT
  o.order_id, c.customer_name,
  COALESCE(oi.item_count, 0) AS count
FROM orders o
LEFT JOIN customers c ON c.id = o.customer_id
-- ✅ Pre-aggregate the "Many" side
LEFT JOIN (
  SELECT
    order_id, COUNT(*) AS item_count
  FROM order_items
  GROUP BY order_id
) oi ON oi.order_id = o.order_id
WHERE o.order_date > '2024-01-01';
```



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SUMMARY

Optimization Checklist



Audit SELECT Clauses

Ensure no subqueries inside column list.



Aggregate First

Group data in derived tables before joining.



Use LEFT JOIN

Process all data in one efficient pass.

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