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**Introduction to Liquibase**

[**Liquibase**](http://www.liquibase.org/) is an open source solution for managing revisions of your databse schema scripts. It works across various types of databases, and supports various file formats for defining the DB structure. The feature that is probably most attractive in Liquibase is its ability to roll changes back and forward from a specific point — saving you from the need to know what was the last change/script you ran on a specific DB instance.



Liquibase uses scripts — referred to as “changesets” — to manage the changes you do to your DB. The changesets files can be in various formats including XML, JSON, YAML, and SQL. In the examples below I’m using the XML format.

As you continue to change an enhance your DB structure through the development lifecycle you’ll add more changesets. A master file lists all the changeset files (or the directories where they are). In parallel Liquibase tracks in your database which changesets have already run.

When you issue a liquibase update command, liquibase looks at the current state of your DB, and identifies which changes have already happened. Then it run the rest of the changes — getting you to the latest revision of the structure you are defining.

**Liquibase Prerequisites**

Liquibase 3.x requires Java 1.6+.

**Liquibase Setup**

1. Download the latest distribution from Liquibase site
   1. Linux - <https://github.com/liquibase/liquibase/releases/download/liquibase-parent-3.5.3/liquibase-3.5.3-bin.tar.gz>
   2. Windows - <https://github.com/liquibase/liquibase/releases/download/liquibase-parent-3.5.3/liquibase-3.5.3-bin.zip>
2. On the terminal, extract the downloaded distribution, the extracted files contain `liquibase` shell script for Linux
3. Within the distribution, add liquibase.jar file to your classpath. If you are using JSON/YAML based changelogs you also need to add the snakeyaml.jar found in the included lib directory