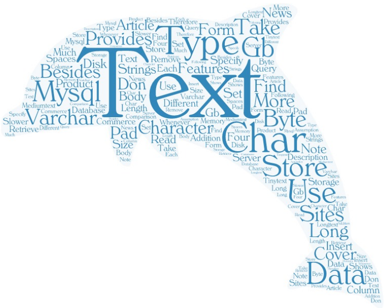
MySQL TEXT Data Type

Summary: in this tutorial, you will learn how to use MySQL `TEXT` for storing text data in the database table.

Introduction to MySQL TEXT data type



Besides `CHAR` and `VARCHAR` character types, MySQL supports the `TEXT` type that provides more features.

The `TEXT` is useful for storing long-form text strings that can take from 1 byte to 4GB. In practice, you often use the `TEXT` data type for storing articles in news sites, and product descriptions in e-commerce sites.

Unlike `CHAR` and `VARCHAR` type, you don't have to specify a storage length when you use a `TEXT` type for a column.

Also, MySQL does not remove or pad spaces when retrieving or inserting text data like `CHAR` and `VARCHAR`.

Note that the `TEXT` data is not stored in the database server's memory. Therefore, when you query `TEXT` data, MySQL has to read from it from the disk, which is much slower in comparison with `CHAR` and `VARCHAR`.

MySQL provides four `TEXT` types:

- `TINYTEXT`
- `TEXT`
- `MEDIUMTEXT`
- `LONGTEXT`

The following shows the size of each `TEXT` type with the assumption that you are using a character set that takes one byte to store a character

TINYTEXT – 255 Bytes (255 characters)

The maximum number of characters that `TINYTEXT` can store is 255 (2^8 = 256, 1 byte overhead).

In practice, you use `TINYTEXT` for the column that requires less than 255 characters, has inconsistent length, and does not require sorting. For example, you can use the TINYTEXT to store the excerpt of a blog post.

The following example creates a new table called `articles` that has a `summary` column with the data type is `TINYTEXT`:

```
CREATE TABLE articles (
    id INT AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY,
    title VARCHAR(255),
    summary TINYTEXT
);
```

TEXT – 64KB (65,535 characters)

The `TEXT` data type can hold up to 64 KB which is equivalent to 65535 (2^16 – 1) characters. The `TEXT` datatype also requires 2 bytes overhead.

The following example adds the column body with the `TEXT` type to the `articles` table using the `ALTER TABLE` statement:

```
ALTER TABLE articles
```

```
ADD COLUMN body TEXT NOT NULL
AFTER summary;
```

MEDIUMTEXT – 16MB (16,777,215 characters)

The `MEDIUMTEXT` can hold up to 16MB text data which is equivalent to 16,777,215 characters. It requires 3 bytes overhead.

The `MEDIUMTEXT` is useful for storing quite large text data like the text of a book, white papers, etc. For example:

```
CREATE TABLE whitepapers (
    id INT AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY,
    body MEDIUMTEXT NOT NULL,
    published_on DATE NOT NULL
);
```

LONGTEXT – 4GB (4,294,967,295 characters)

The `LONGTEXT` can store text data up to 4GB, which is quite big in common scenarios. It has 4 bytes overhead.

Summary

- Use the `TEXT` data type to store long texts in the database.

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