A **Left Outer Join** in SQL, often referred to simply as a **Left Join**, is used to combine rows from two tables based on a related column between them. The result of a Left Join includes:

1. **All records from the left table** (the table specified before the JOIN keyword).
2. **Matching records from the right table** (the table specified after the JOIN keyword).
3. If no match is found in the right table, the result will include **NULL values** for all columns from the right table.

**Syntax**

SELECT columns

FROM table1

LEFT JOIN table2

ON table1.common\_column = table2.common\_column;

**Key Points**

* The **left table** is the one that retains all its rows in the result set.
* The **right table** contributes rows only where there is a match; otherwise, its columns contain NULL.

**Example**

**Tables:**

**Customers**

| **CustomerID** | **CustomerName** | **Country** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Alice | USA |
| 2 | Bob | Canada |
| 3 | Charlie | UK |

**Orders**

| **OrderID** | **CustomerID** | **Amount** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 101 | 1 | 500 |
| 102 | 3 | 300 |

**Query:**

SELECT Customers.CustomerID, Customers.CustomerName, Orders.OrderID, Orders.Amount

FROM Customers

LEFT JOIN Orders

ON Customers.CustomerID = Orders.CustomerID;

**Result:**

| **CustomerID** | **CustomerName** | **OrderID** | **Amount** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Alice | 101 | 500 |
| 2 | Bob | NULL | NULL |
| 3 | Charlie | 102 | 300 |

**Use Cases**

* To find all records in one table with optional matching data in another table.
* For reports that require all rows from a primary dataset, regardless of whether related data exists in a secondary dataset.
* For troubleshooting or identifying records with missing relationships.

The **Left Outer Join** is a powerful tool for ensuring that no data from the left table is excluded, even when there are no corresponding matches in the right table.