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SQL

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How to Order By Two Columns in SQL?

Database: SQL   MySQL   MS SQL Server   PostgreSQL
                 Oracle   SQLite   Operators: `ORDER BY`   `ASC`
                                                                                      `DESC`

Problem:

You need to display records from a given table sorted by two columns.

Example:

Our database has a table named `employee` with the following columns: `id` ,
`first_name` , `last_name` , and `salary` .

id	first_name	last_name	salary
1	**Lisa**	**Ulman**	**3000**
2	Ada	Muller	2400
3	Thomas	Green	2400

id	first_name	last_name	salary
4	**Michael**	**Muller**	**3000**
5	Mary	Green	2400

Let's display all information for each employee but sort the records according to salary in descending order first and then by last name in ascending order.

Solution:

```
SELECT id,
   first_name,
   last_name,
   salary
FROM employee
ORDER BY salary DESC, last_name;
```

This query returns sorted records according to two columns: *salary* and *last_name*.

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id	first_name	last_name	salary
4	Michael	Muller	**3000**
1	Lisa	Ulman	**3000**
3	Thomas	Green	**2400**
5	Mary	Green	**2400**
2	Ada	Muller	**2400**

Discussion:

If you want to select records from a table but would like to see them sorted according to two columns, you can do so with `ORDER BY`. This clause comes at the end of your SQL query.

After the `ORDER BY` keyword, add the name of the column by which you'd like to sort records first (in our example, salary). Then, after a comma, add the second column (in our example, `last_name`). You can modify the sorting order (ascending or descending) separately for each column. If you want to use ascending (low to high) order, you can use the `ASC` keyword; this keyword is optional, though, as that is the default order when none is specified. If you want to use descending order, put the `DESC` keyword after the appropriate column (in the example, we used descending order for the `salary` column).

In our example, we first sorted the result by salary in descending order (higher salaries to lower ones) and then by last name in ascending order within those already sorted records.

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