The SQL DISTINCT Keyword

The SQL **DISTINCT** keyword is used in conjunction with the SELECT statement to fetch unique records from a table.

We use the DISTINCT keyword with the SELECT statement when there is a need to avoid duplicate values present in any specific columns/tables. When we use the DISTINCT keyword, the SELECT statement returns only the unique records available in the table.

Syntax :

The basic syntax of SQL DISTINCT keyword is as follows –

```
SELECT DISTINCT column1, column2,.....columnN

FROM table_name;
```

Example:

```
SELECT DISTINCT salary FROM customers;
```

DISTINCT Keyword on Multiple Columns

We can also use the DISTINCT keyword on multiple columns to retrieve all unique combinations of values across those columns. This is often used to get a summary of distinct values in multiple columns, or to eliminate redundant data.

Example:

```
SELECT DISTINCT age, salary FROM customers  ORDER BY age;
```

DISTINCT Keyword with COUNT() Function

The COUNT() function is used to get the number of records returned by the SELECT query. We need to pass an expression to this function so that the SELECT query returns the number of records that satisfy the specified expression.

If we pass the DISTINCT keyword to the COUNT() function as an expression, it returns the number of unique values in a column of a table.

Syntax:

```
SELECT COUNT(DISTINCT column_name)
FROM table_name
[WHERE condition];
[ORDER BY column_name] ASC/ DESC
```

Example 1:

```
SELECT COUNT(DISTINCT age) as UniqueAge  FROM customers;
```

Example 2:

```
SELECT DISTINCT salary FROM customers ORDER BY salary;
```