# Troubleshooting in PostgreSQL

Estimated time needed: 30 minutes

In this lab, you will obtain hands-on experience in troubleshooting common issues you may encounter as a database administrator. The most common problems encountered with databases are caused by poor performance, improper configuration, or poor connectivity. You will use a PostgreSQL server instance to explore some of these possible problems and rectify them.

## **Objectives**

After completing this lab, you will be able to:

- Enable error logging for your PostgreSQL instance.
- Access server logs for troubleshooting.
- · Diagnose commonly encountered issues caused by poor performance, improper configuration, or poor connectivity.
- · Resolve common issues you may encounter as a database administrator.

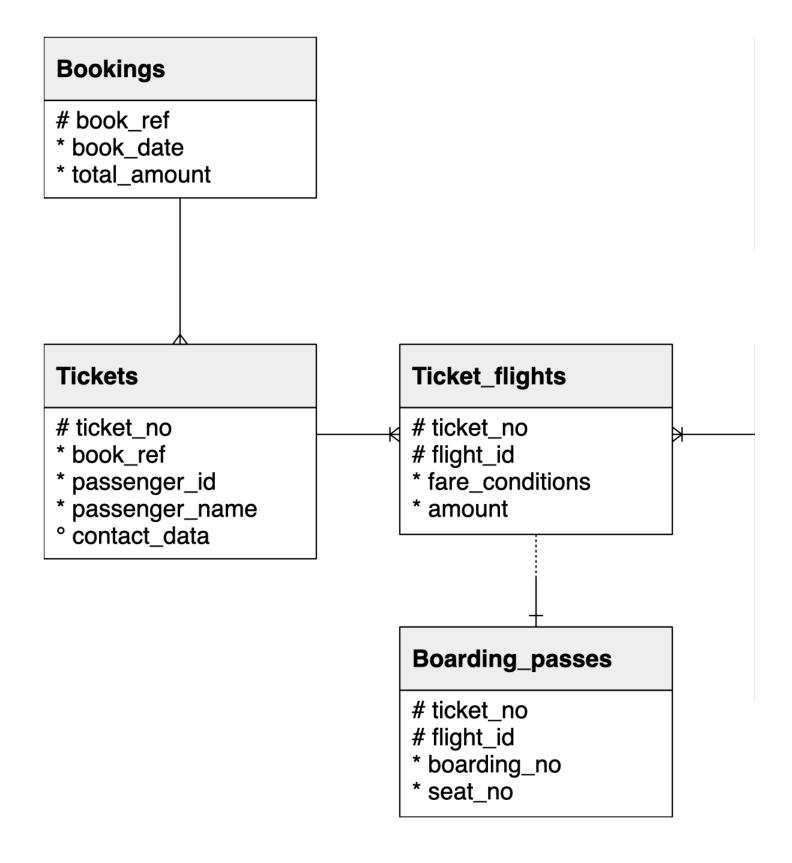
#### **Software Used in This Lab**

In this lab, you will be using PostgreSQL. It is a popular open source object relational database management system (RDBMS) capable of performing a wealth of database administration tasks, such as storing, manipulating, retrieving, and archiving data.

To complete this lab, you will be accessing the PostgreSQL service through the IBM Skills Network (SN) Cloud IDE, which is a virtual development environnement you will use throughout this course.

### **Database Used in This Lab**

In this lab, you will use a database from <a href="https://postgrespro.com/education/demodb">https://postgrespro.com/education/demodb</a> distributed under the <a href="https://postgresQL license">PostgreSQL license</a>. It stores a month of data about airline flights in Russia and is organized according to the following schema:

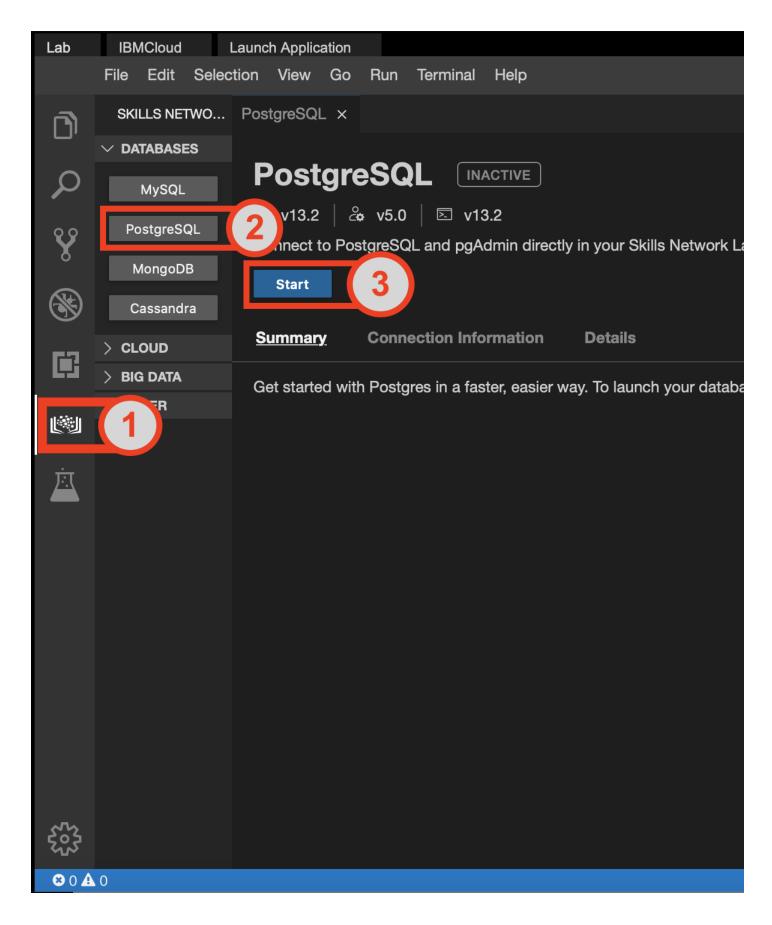


## Exercise 1: Set Up Your Database in PostgreSQL

## Task A: Launch PostgreSQL in Cloud IDE

To get started with this lab, launch PostgreSQL using the Cloud IDE. You can do this by following these steps:

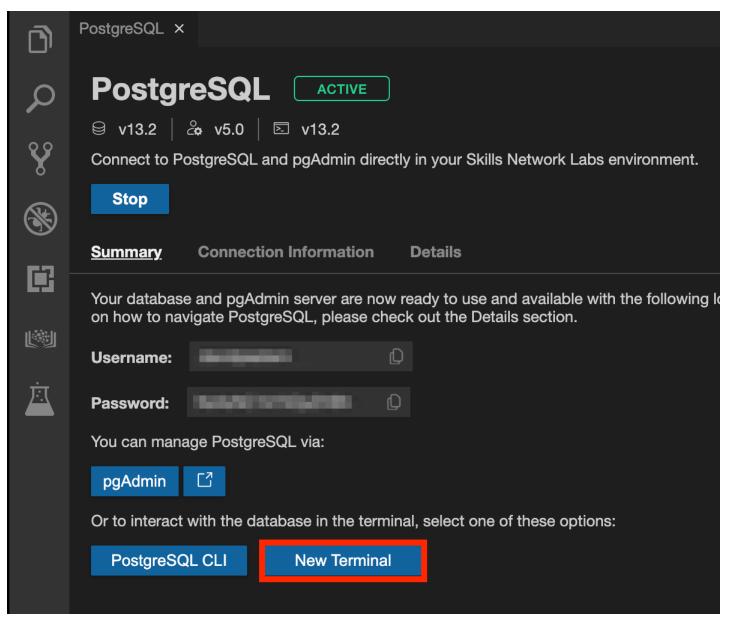
- 1. Select the Skills Network extension button in the left pane.
- 2. Open the "DATABASES" dropdown menu and select "PostgreSQL."
- $3. \, Select \, the \, "Start" \, button. \, PostgreSQL \, may \, take \, a \, few \, moments \, to \, start.$



Task B: Download and Create the Database

First, you will need to download the database.

1. Open a new terminal by selecting the "New Terminal" button near the bottom of the interface.

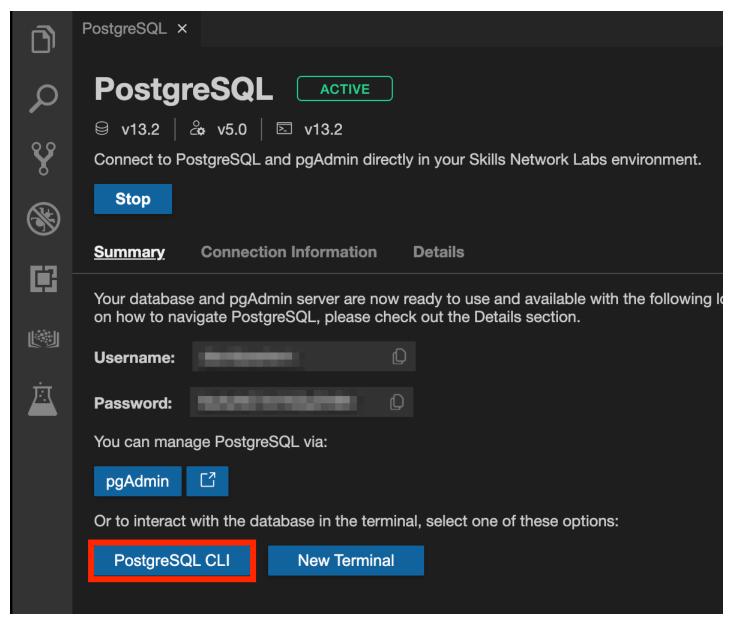


2. Run the following command in the terminal:

1. 1
1. wget https://cf-courses-data.s3.us.cloud-object-storage.appdomain.cloud/example-guided-project/flights\_RUSSIA\_small.sql
Copied|

The file that you downloaded is a full database backup of a month of flight data in Russia. Now, you can perform a full restoration of the data set by first opening the PostgreSQL CLI.

3. Near the bottom of the window, select the "PostgreSQL CLI" button to launch the command line interface (CLI).



- $4. \ In \ the \ PostgreSQL \ CLI, enter \ the \ command \ to \ restore \ the \ data \ you \ downloaded \ into \ a \ new \ database \ called \ \textbf{demo}.$ 
  - ▼ Hint (click here)

In the PostgreSQL CLI, enter the command \i <file\_name>. In your case, the file name will be the name of the file you downloaded, flights\_RUSSIA\_small.sql. This will restore the data into a new database called demo.

▼ Solution (click here)

```
1. 1
1. \i flights_RUSSIA_small.sql
Copied!
```

The restorations may take a few moments to complete.

5. Verify that the database was properly created by entering the following command:

```
1. 1
1. \dt
Copied!
```

You should see the following output showing all the tables that are part of the bookings schema in the demo database.

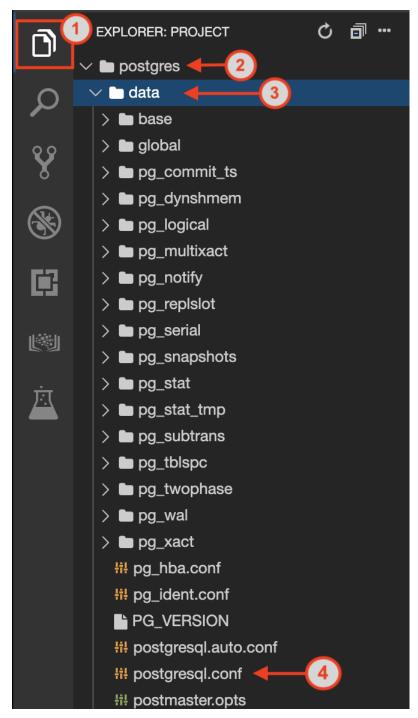
:heia@theiadoc	ker-davidpastern: /hom	ne/project	theia@th	neiadocker-davidpastern: /home/project
demo=# \dt Schema	List of relat:   Name	ions   Type	0wner	
bookings bookings bookings bookings bookings bookings bookings bookings	aircrafts_data airports_data boarding_passes bookings flights seats ticket_flights	table   table   table   table   table   table   table   table	postgres postgres postgres postgres postgres postgres postgres postgres	
demo=# [				

**Exercise 2: Enable Error Logging and Observe Logs** 

# Task A: Enable Server Logging

First, to enable error logging on your PostgreSQL server instance, you will need to configure your server to support it. You can do so by using the Cloud IDE file explorer to open postgresql.conf, which stores the configuration parameters that are read upon server startup. Let's go ahead and do it.

1. You can open the file by first opening the file explorer on Cloud IDE then selecting postgres > data > postgresql.conf.

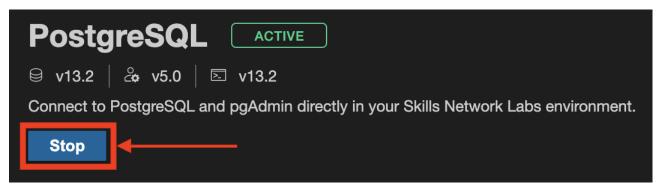


<sup>2.</sup> With the configuration file open, scroll down to line 431. Replace logging\_collector = off with logging\_collector = on and uncomment the parameter by removing the # before the line.

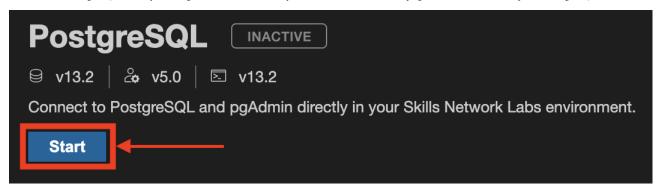
<u>a</u>	EXPLORER: PR 🖒 🗐 🚥	Postgres	SQL postgresql.conf	
L	✓ ■ postgres	419	#	
	✓ ■ data	420	# REPORTING AND LOGGING	
	> <b>b</b> base	421	#	
	> <b>l</b> global	422		
¥	> <b>pg_commit_ts</b>	423	# - Where to Log -	
0		424 425	<pre>#log_destination = 'stderr' # Valion</pre>	
<b>%</b>	> <b>pg_dynshmem</b>	426	# tog_destination = stderr # vation = stderr, csvlog, s	
	> <b>b</b> pg_logical	427	# depending on pla	
	> <b>pg_multixact</b>	428	# requires logging	
	> <b>n</b> pg_notify	429		
	> <b>b</b> pg_replslot	430	# This is used when logging to stderr:	
at 82m ta	> <b>b</b> pg_serial	431	logging_collector = on # Enable ca	
	> pg_snapshots	432	# into log files. F	
	> <b>b</b> pg_stat	433	# csvlogs.	
茁	> <b>n</b> pg_stat_tmp	434 435	# (change requires	
	> <b>p</b> g_subtrans	436	<pre># These are only used if logging_colleg</pre>	
	> pg_tblspc	437	#log_directory = 'log'  # directory	
		438	# can be absolute of	
	> pg_twophase	439	#log_filename = 'postgresql-%Y-%m-%d_%	
	> <b>b</b> pg_wal	440	# can include strf	
	> <b>b</b> pg_xact	441	#log_file_mode = 0600	
	## pg_hba.conf	442	#log truncate on matation — off — # '	
	## pg_ident.conf	443 444	<pre>#log_truncate_on_rotation = off # 1  </pre>	
	■ PG_VERSION	445	# truncated rather	
	## postgresql.auto.conf	446	# But such truncat:	
	## postgresql.conf	447	# time-driven rota <sup>-</sup>	
	## postmaster.opts	448	# or size-driven re	
202	postmaster.pid	449	# off, meaning appo	
	passwd	450	# in all cases.	
<b>②</b> 0 <b>△</b>		451	<pre>#log_rotation_age = 1d  # Autor</pre>	
			222222	

- 3. Save the changes to postgresql.conf by either navigating to File > Save at the top toolbar or by pressing Ctrl + S (Mac:  $\Re + S$ ).
- 4. Changing this parameter requires a server restart in order to take effect. Select the PostgreSQL tab in Cloud IDE.

5. Stop the PostgreSQL server by selecting the "Stop" button and close all CLI and terminal tabs.



6. Now restart the PostgreSQL server by selecting the "Start" button. It may take a few moments to start up again. When it does so, reopen the PostgreSQL CLI.



- 7. Confirm that the configuration parameter was successfully changed and loaded into the PostgreSQL instance by entering the following command into the CLI:
  - 1. 1
    1. SHOW logging\_collector;
    Copied!

You should see that the command returns on.

```
postgres=# SHOW logging_collector;
  logging_collector
-----on
(1 row)
```

#### Task B: View the Server Logs

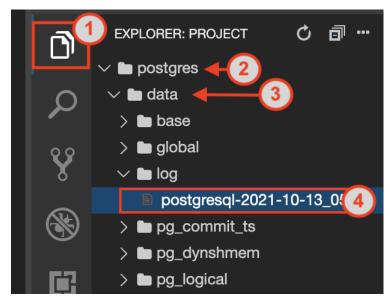
In this task, you will navigate the Cloud IDE file explorer to open up and inspect the server logs created after you enabled the logging in the previous task. The logs can be a valuable tool when troubleshooting issues as a database administrator. For now, let's look at the logs created during normal operation, with nothing broken yet.

1. To find where the system logs are stored, enter the following command into the CLI:

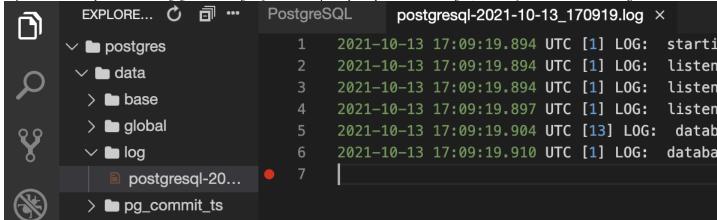
```
1. 1
1. SHOW log_directory;
Copied!
```

```
postgres=# SHOW log_directory;
  log_directory
-----
log
(1 row)
```

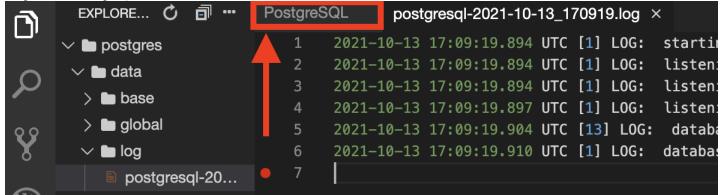
- 2. Open up the file explorer on Cloud IDE and navigate through postgres > data > log.
- 3. You will see a file with a name of the form postgresql-YYYY-MM-DD-<numbers>.log. Go ahead and open it.



4. Inspect and familiarize yourself with the logs given for a PostgreSQL server startup. Every time you start the server again, a new .log file will be created in the log folder.



5. Navigate back to the PostgreSQL tab.

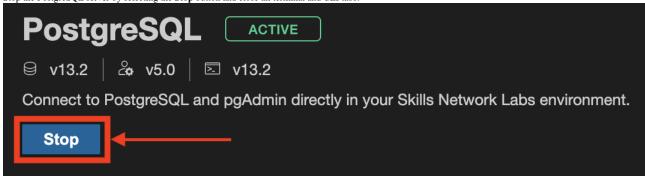


- 6. Try it yourself: Stop the PostgreSQL server and close all terminal tabs.
  - ▼ Hint (click here)

Recall how you stopped the PostgreSQL server in the previous task.

▼ Solution (click here)

Stop the PostgreSQL server by selecting the Stop button and close all terminal and CLI tabs.



# **Exercise 3: Test the Performance of the PostgreSQL Server**

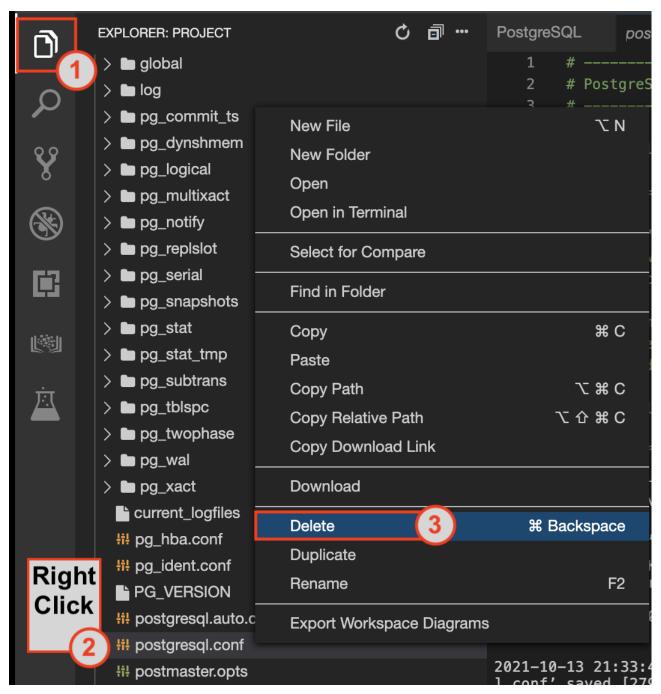
The most common problems encountered with databases are caused by poor performance, improper configuration, or poor connectivity. Server configuration issues, such as inadequate hardware resources or misconfigured settings, can significantly impact performance. In this exercise, you will gain some hands-on experience in studying the performance of the PostgreSQL server and inspecting the logs to identify and resolve slow performance and connection disruptions.

#### Task A: Preparation for the Exercise

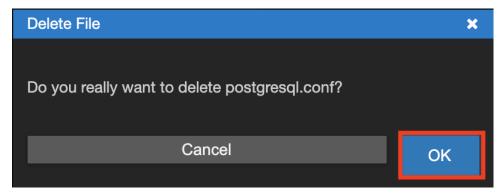
Before you get started, you'll have to set up a few things so that you can begin troubleshooting. In this task, you will first delete the **postgresql.conf** file and replace it with a new configuration file that has some parameters changed. This task is entirely setup and will allow you to complete the remainder of the tasks where you will test the performance of the server.

1. In Cloud IDE, open up a new terminal by navigating to the top menu bar and selecting Terminal > New terminal. Lab **IBMCloud** Launch Application Run **Terminal** Edit Selection Go View **New Terminal** PostgreSQL × Run Task... **PostgreSQL INACTIVE** Run Build Task... Run Test Task... 企業 K Run Last Task Connect to PostgreSQL and pgAdmin dire Show Running Tasks... Start Restart Running Task... Terminate Task... **Connection Information** Summary Attach Task... Get started with PostgreSQL in a faster, e tart Configure Tasks... |[義]|

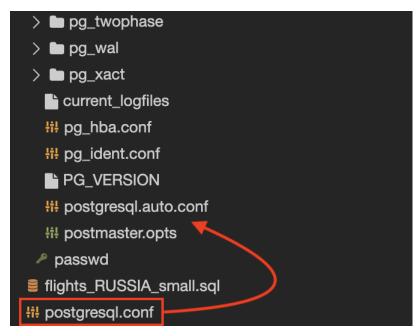
- 2. In the terminal, enter the following command to download a new postgresql.conf configuration file:
  - 1. 1
    1. wget https://cf-courses-data.s3.us.cloud-object-storage.appdomain.cloud/IBM-DB0231EN-SkillsNetwork/labs/PostgreSQL/Lab%20-%20Troubleshooting/postgreCopied!
- 3. Open up the file explorer on Cloud IDE and navigate to  $\boldsymbol{postgres > data}.$
- 4. Right-click postgresql.conf in this directory and select Delete.



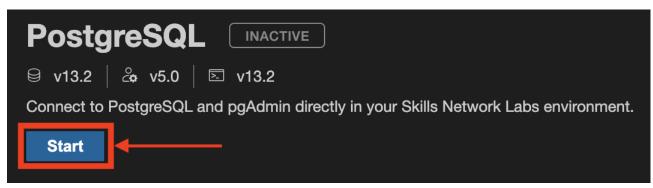
5. You will be prompted to confirm that you wish to delete this file. Select  $\mathbf{OK}$  to confirm.



6. In the file explorer, you will see the postgresql.conf file you downloaded in Step 1 sitting in the root directory. Drag it into the postgres > data directory, as shown below.



7. Now go ahead and start up the PostgreSQL server again by selecting the **Start** button.

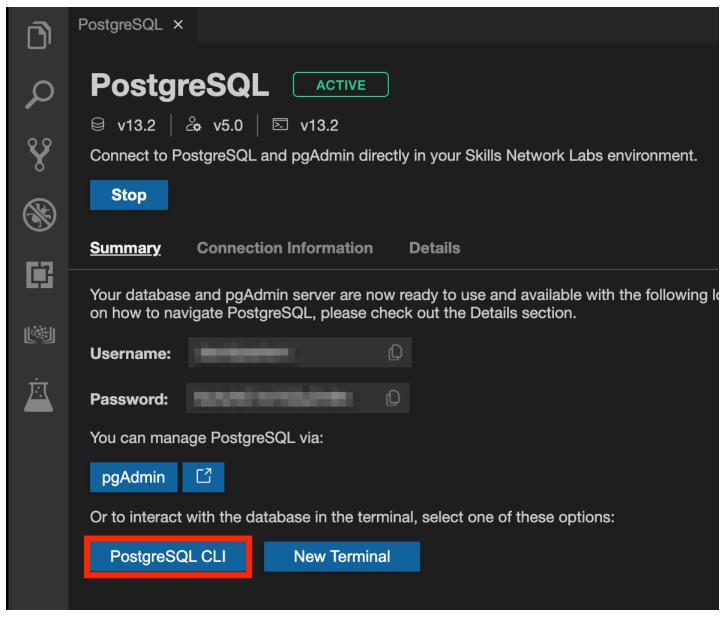


Task B: Test the Performance of the Server

In this part of the exercise, you will run a few SQL commands and analyze the server's performance, inspect the error logs, then finally, identify and resolve issues that could be hindering the performance of the database

Let's try running some queries on the database and analyze its performance.

 $1.\,First, open\,up\,the\,PostgreSQL\,command\,line\,interface\,(CLI)\,by\,selecting\,the\,\textbf{PostgreSQL}\,CLI\,button.$ 



2. Try it yourself: Use the CLI to connect to the  ${\bf demo}$  database.

▼ Solution (click here)

Connect to the \*\*demo\*\* database by entering the following command into the CLI:

1. 1

1. 1
1. \connect demo
Copied!

3. To inspect how long each query or command takes, enable the timer with the following command in the CLI:

```
1. 1
1. \timing
Copied!
```

This will tell you how long each query takes (in milliseconds).

4. Let's start off with a very simple query on the aircrafts\_data table. Enter the following into the CLI:

```
1. 1
1. SELECT * FROM aircrafts_data;
Copied!
```

```
demo=# SELECT * FROM aircrafts_data;
 aircraft_code |
                                  model
                                                         range
                     "en": "Boeing 777-300"}
"en": "Boeing 767-300"}
                     "en":
 773
                                                         11100
 763
                                                           7900
                            "Sukhoi Superjet-100"}
 SU<sub>9</sub>
                                                          3000
                            "Airbus A320-200"}
 320
                                                          5700
                     "en": "Airbus A321-200"}
                                                          5600
 321
                            "Airbus A319-100"}
 319
                                                          6700
                     "en": "Boeing 737-300"}
 733
                                                          4200
                      en": "Cessna 208 Caravan"}
 CN1
                                                          1200
                            "Bombardier CRJ-200"}
 CR2
                                                          2700
(9 rows)
Time: 1.048 ms
demo=#
```

As you can see, this query was on a small table and was quick--only about 1 millisecond. No problems here.

5. Let's try something a little more computationally heavy and see how the server handles it. The following command goes through each element in the **boarding\_passes** table and reassigns each value to itself. In other words, it does not change the table but allows you to see how the server handles this task. Enter the following into the CLI:

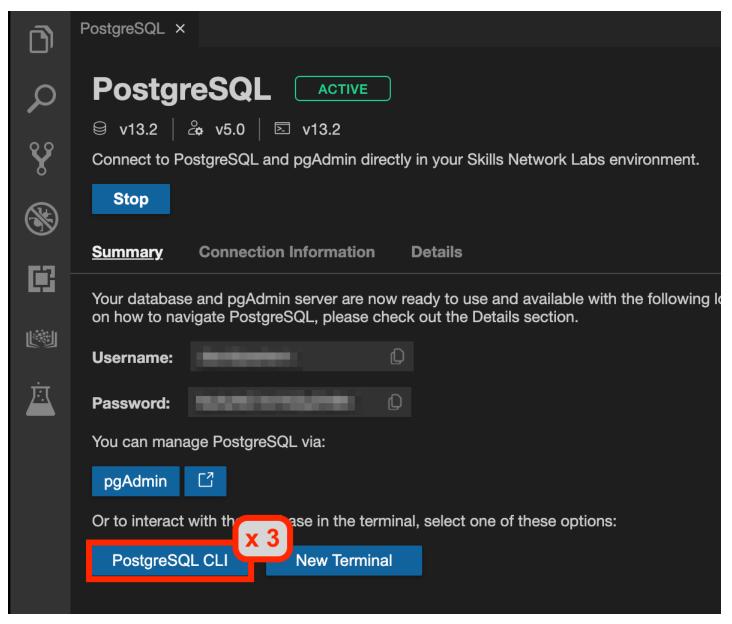
```
1. II DPDATE boarding_passes SET ticket_no = ticket_no, flight_id = flight_id, boarding_no = boarding_no, seat_no = seat_no;

Copied!
```

```
demo=# UPDATE boarding_passes SET ticket_no = ticket_no, flight_id = flight_id
  boarding_no = boarding_no, seat_no = seat_no;
UPDATE 579686
Time: 57946.030 ms (00:57.946)
demo=# []
```

This heavier command took almost a minute to execute—a fairly long time, but the server was nonetheless able to complete the command. Still, you may want to improve this performance.

6. Now, as the database administrator, you will likely not be the *only* one who needs to access the database you are working with. Other users will likely need to connect to the database for a wide variety of reasons, including retrieving and inputting data. Let's simulate additional users connecting to the database. You can do this by opening additional **PostgreSQL CLI** terminals in Cloud IDE, as each one establishes a new connection to the server. Click **PostgreSQL CLI** three times, opening three new CLI terminals:



After clicking the button the third time, you will be presented with the following message in the new terminal:

```
theia@theiadocker-davidpastern:/home/project theia@theiadocker-davidpastern:/home/project$ psql --username=postgres --host=psql: error: connection to server at "localhost" (::1), port 5432 failed: FATA too many clients already theia@theiadocker-davidpastern:/home/project$ ■
```

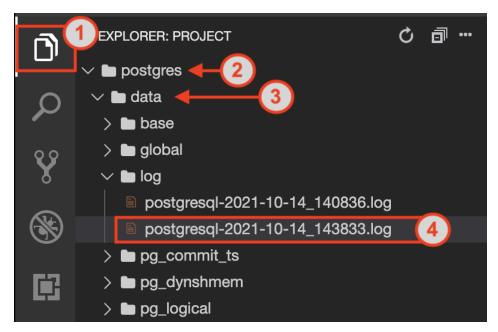
What happened here? Let's do some investigating and find out what the issue is, but first, go ahead and close all the terminals you opened up.

### **Exercise 4: Troubleshoot**

In the previous exercise, you encountered a problem and the server shut down. Now it's time to figure out what happened, why it happened, and how to fix it so that it does not happen again.

### Task A: Diagnose the Issue

- 1. First, let's check the server logs to see what happened. Open up the Cloud IDE file explorer and navigate to postgres > data > log.
- 2. Since you restarted the server in the previous exercise, a new log file will have been created for this new session. Open up the most recent one.



3. Inspect the most recent logs, as you encountered the problem in Exercise 3.

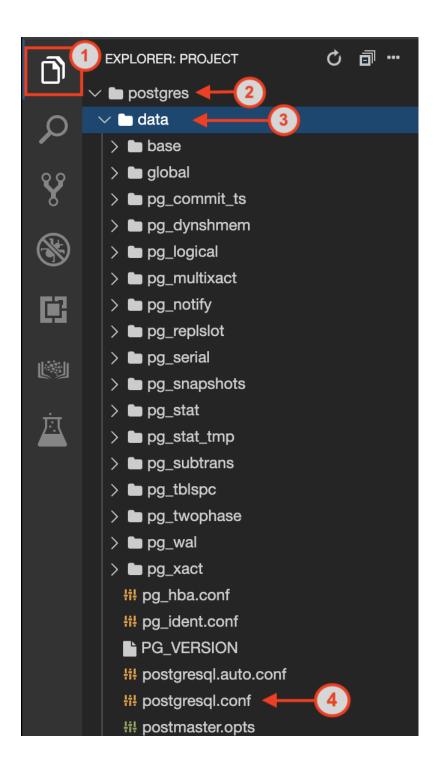
```
PostareSQL  
               postgresql-2021-10-14_180835.log ×
        2021-10-14 18:08:35.560 UTC [1] LOG:
                                               starting PostgreSQL 13.2 on x86 64-
                                               listening on IPv4 address "0.0.0.0"
        2021-10-14 18:08:35.560 UTC [1] LOG:
                                               listening on IPv6 address "::", por
        2021-10-14 18:08:35.560 UTC [1] LOG:
                                               listening on Unix socket "/var/run/
        2021-10-14 18:08:35.563 UTC [1] LOG:
        2021-10-14 18:08:35.568 UTC [13] LOG:
                                                database system was shut down at 2
   6
        2021-10-14 18:08:35.574 UTC [1] LOG:
                                              database system is ready to accept
        2021-10-14 18:10:55.107 UTC [199] FATAL: sorry, too many clients already
   8
        2021-10-14 18:10:55.262 UTC [200] FATAL:
                                                   sorry, too many clients already
        2021-10-14 18:11:00.255 UTC [206] FATAL:
                                                   sorry, too many clients already
```

As you can see, some error logs were created from opening that last CLI terminal, with the message FATAL: sorry, too many clients already. This message is repeated several times as the connection is repeatedly attempting to re-establish.

Some of the most common connectivity problems are not being able to connect to the database server, the database server or instance not running properly, and client login credentials being incorrect. You can likely rule out the last two, since the login credentials are automatically inputted for us on Cloud IDE and you know that the server instance is running properly, since you are already connected to it on 3 other terminals. This likely means you could be experiencing some problems connecting to the database server when you open the fourth connection. But why is this?

Server configuration issues, such as inadequate hardware resources or misconfigured settings, can significantly impact performance. Perhaps this could explain the connection problem as well as the slow performance you saw on the database query in Exercise 3. Let's take a look at the server configuration and see if you can spot anything.

4. Using the Cloud IDE file explorer, navigate to **postgres > data** and open the **postgresql.conf** configuration file.



5. If you scroll down to line 64 of the file, you will find max\_connections = 4.

```
PostgreSQL
              postgresgl.conf ×
  53
  54
        # CONNECTIONS AND AUTHENTICATION
  55
  56
  57
        # - Connection Settings -
  58
        listen addresses = '*'
  59
  60
                            # comma-separated list of addresses;
                            # defaults to 'localhost'; use '*' for all
  61
  62
                            # (change requires restart)
  63
       #port = 5432
                                    # (change requires restart)
        max_connections = 4
                                    # (change requires restart)
  64
        #superuser_reserved_connections = 3 # (change requires restart)
  65
        #unix_socket_directories = '/var/run/postgresql' # comma-separated list
  66
                            # (change requires restart)
  67
        #unix_socket_group = ''
  68
                                 # (change requires restart)
  69
        #unix_socket_permissions = 0777
                                            # begin with 0 to use octal notation
                            # (change requires restart)
  70
  71
                                    # advertise server via Bonjour
        #bonjour = off
  72
                            # (change requires restart)
  73
        #bonjour name =
                                    # defaults to the computer name
                            # (change requires restart)
  74
```

Aha! That's where the issue was coming from. This parameter sets the maximum number of connections that can be made to the server at any given time. So when you tried to open that fourth CLI terminal, the max number of connections was reached, giving that FATAL error in the logs. Therefore, the problem you encountered comes from improper server configuration, since it's reasonable to expect more than four users to be connected to the database. Let's go ahead and fix the issue.

#### Task B: Resolve the Issue

In Task A, you discovered that the issues you encountered in Exercise 3 were caused by improper server configuration. Now let's modify the configuration parameters to resolve the issue.

1. With the **postgresql.conf** file open, change the **max\_connections** parameter from 4 to 100. A maximum connections of 100 is a standard value that will support more than enough connections for most applications.

```
PostgreSQL 

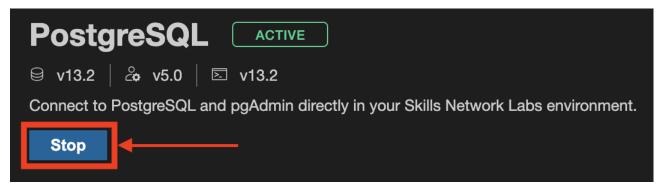
                postgresql.conf •
   53
   54
         # CONNECTIONS AND AUTHENTICATION
   55
   56
   57
         # - Connection Settings -
   58
         listen addresses = '*'
   59
   60
                               # comma-separated list of addresses;
   61
                               # defaults to 'localhost'; use '*' for all
                               # (change requires restart)
   62
                                       # (change requires restart)
   63
         #port = 5432
   64
         max_connections = 100
                                       # (change requires restart)
         #superuser_reserved_connections = 3 # (change requires restart)
   65
         #unix_socket_directories = '/var/run/postgresql' # comma-separated list
   66
   67
                               # (change requires restart)
         #unix socket group = ''
                                           # (change requires restart)
   68
         #unix_socket_permissions = 0777
   69
                                                # begin with 0 to use octal notation
   70
                               # (change requires restart)
   71
         #bonjour = off
                                       # advertise server via Bonjour
   72
                               # (change requires restart)
   73
         #bonjour_name =
                                       # defaults to the computer name
   74
                               # (change requires restart)
That should fix the issue you encountered when opening those additional CLI terminals.
```

2. Since the server can now support far more connections than before, it will also need more available memory to support these connections. The **shared\_buffers** configuration parameter sets the amount of memory the database server has at its disposal for shared memory buffers. Scroll down to line 121 to find the **shared\_buffers** parameter.

```
PostgreSQL
              postgresql.conf •
 115
 116
       # RESOURCE USAGE (except WAL)
 117
 118
 119
       # - Memory -
 120
 121
       shared_buffers = 128kB
                                   # min 128kB
 122
                           # (change requires restart)
 123
       #huge_pages = try
                                # on, off, or try
 124
                           # (change requires restart)
 125
       #temp_buffers = 8MB
                              # min 800kB
 126
       #max prepared transactions = 0
                                           # zero disables the feature
 127
                           # (change requires restart)
 128
       # Caution: it is not advisable to set max_prepared_transactions nonzero u
 129
       # you actively intend to use prepared transactions.
 130
       work mem = 64kB
                                   # min 64kB
 131
       #hash mem multiplier = 1.0 # 1-1000.0 multiplier on hash table work
       maintenance_work_mem = 1MB  # min 1MB
 132
 133
       \#autovacuum_work_mem = -1 \# min 1MB, or -1 to use maintenance_work_
 134
       #logical decoding work mem = 64MB # min 64kB
 135
       #max_stack_depth = 2MB
                                      # min 100kB
       #shared_memory_type = mmap  # the default is the first option
 136
 137
                           # supported by the operating system:
 138
                           #
                              mmap
 139
                           #
                               sysv
 140
                               windows
                           # (change requires restart)
 141
```

Notice that the parameter is set to 128kB, which is the minimum value.

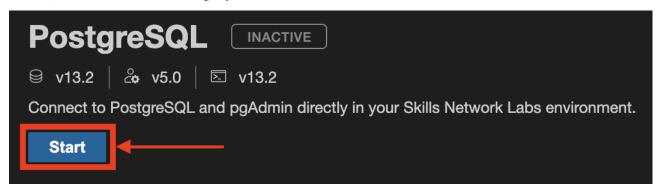
- 3. Increase the available memory by changing the  $shared\_buffers$  parameter from 128kB to 128MB.
- 4. While you're at it, you can also increase the server performance so that the slow query you executed in Exercise 3 will run more quickly. Increase the **work\_mem** parameter from the minimum **64kB** to **4MB**.
- 5. Change the  $maintenance\_work\_mem$  from the minimum 1MB to a more standard 64MB.
- 6. Save the changes to postgresql.conf by either navigating to File > Save at the top toolbar or by pressing Ctrl + S (Mac:  $\Re + S$ ).
- $7. \ Close \ all \ open \ terminal \ tabs \ and \ stop \ the \ PostgreSQL \ server \ by \ selecting \ the \ \textbf{Stop} \ button.$



The changes you made to the PostgreSQL server configuration parameters should fix the problems you encountered in Exercise 3. However, it's certainly good practice to test this out and confirm that your fix was successful. In this practice exercise, you will run through much of the same process you did in Exercise 3 to confirm that the issues you encountered are resolved and will not arise again.

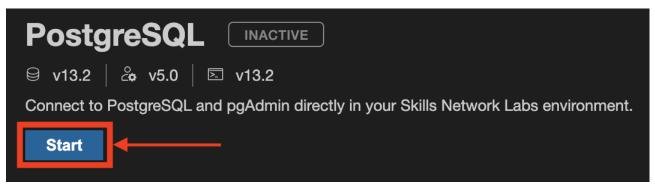
- 1. Try it yourself: Restart the PostgreSQL server.
  - ▼ Solution (Click Here)

As before, select the "Start" button to start the PostgreSQL server.



- 2. Try it yourself: Compare the performance of querying the aircrafts\_data table now compared to before changing the configuration parameters.
  - ▼ Hint (Click Here)

You'll first need to open up the PostgreSQL CLI, connect to the demo database, and enable timing.

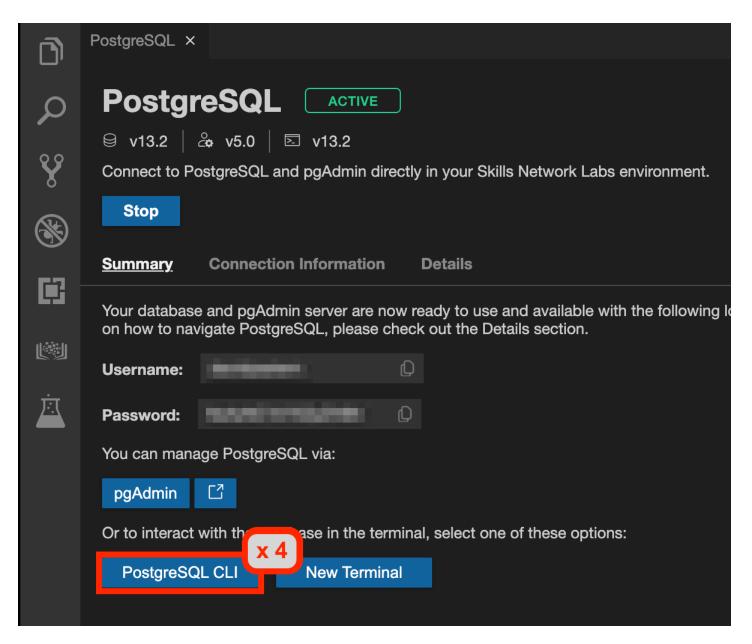


- ► Solution (Click Here)
- 3. Run the same command in the CLI that you did in Step 5 of Exercise 3 and compare the performance before and after changing the configuration parameters. To save you the scrolling and losing your place, the command you entered earlier is given below:

  - ► Results (Click Here)
- 4. **Try it yourself:** Finally, test to confirm that the server can now handle *at least* 5 connections.
  - ▼ Hint (Click Here)

Recall that opening additional PostgreSQL terminals constitute additional connections to the server.

- ▼ Solution (Click Here)
  - 1. Click the "PostgreSQL CLI" button four times.



- 2. Notice that no error was raised on the fifth terminal and the CLI is still open.
- 3. You could even enter a test command, such as \du to confirm the CLI is working.

```
1: /home/project theia@theiadocker-davidpastern: /home/project theia@theiadocker-davidpastern: /home/project$ psql --username=postgres --host=psql (14.0 (Ubuntu 14.0-1.pgdg18.04+1), server 13.2)
Type "help" for help.

postgres=# \du

List of roles
Role name | Attributes | Member |
postgres | Superuser, Create role, Create DB, Replication, Bypass RLS | {}

postgres=# \[
```

<sup>4.</sup> Furthermore, you could check the server logs to confirm that no error was raised and everything is running as intended.

Congratulations on completing this lab on troubleshooting a relational database management system. You now have some foundational knowledge on how to identify and resolve some common issues you may face in PostgreSQL as a database administrator.

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# Changelog

Date	Version	Changed by	Change Description
2021-10-12	0.1	David Pasternak	Initial version created
2022-07-12	0.2	Lakshmi Holla	Updated html tags
2023-05-08	0.3	Jaskomal Natt	Updated copyright date

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