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SQL Interview Questions for Data Analysts



INTRODUCTION

SQL is a must-have skill in data analytics. If you're gearing up for an interview, mastering these top 5 SQL questions can significantly boost your confidence and chances of success.





1. How do you write a query to retrieve unique values from a table?

Discuss the use of the DISTINCT keyword in SQL. Explain how it can be used in SELECT statements to return unique values from a column.

Consider providing a simple example, like retrieving unique customer names from a sales table.



2. What is the difference between JOIN and UNION in SQL?

Clarify that JOIN combines rows from two or more tables based on a related column between them, while UNION combines results of two SELECT statements.


Highlight key differences, like how UNION removes duplicate records. Offer examples to illustrate their uses in data analysis.



3. Explain GROUP BY and HAVING clauses.

Describe how GROUP BY is used to aggregate data, like summing sales by region. Contrast this with the WHERE clause, and then explain how HAVING is used to filter groups.

Provide a scenario where GROUP BY and HAVING might be used together, such as finding regions with sales above a certain threshold.



4. Can you explain what a subquery is and provide an example of its use?

Define a subquery as a query nested inside another query and discuss its use in conditions. Mention its types (correlated and non-correlated) and the importance of understanding the scope of data it returns.

Illustrate with an example, like selecting all employees who earn more than the average salary.



5. How do you optimize an SQL query?

Talk about the importance of query optimization for performance. Discuss strategies like indexing, avoiding unnecessary columns in SELECT, understanding the data structure, and using JOINS appropriately.

Mention tools like EXPLAIN PLAN and the importance of regularly updating statistics on data distributions.



Conclusion

SQL is the language of data, and mastering it is crucial for any aspiring data analyst.

Use these insights to not only answer the questions but to demonstrate your analytical thinking and problem-solving approach.



Your Experience

What SQL challenges have you faced, and how did you overcome them?

Share your experiences and tips for acing SQL questions in interviews!





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