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Lab 4

8. Check constraints are used to limit the data entered into a table within a database. The check is a condition so the data being entered into the table can either be true or false. If the data is found to be false, it is not entered into the table. They are good for managing the information being entered into a table. This can be especially good for reducing typos or unintended mistakes while entering data. For example, there are some values such as age, which will never be negative. Putting a check constraint on 'age' such as ≥ 0 , would eliminate someone accidentally entering '-20' instead of '20' as someone's age. Price is a similar value that will also never be a negative value. Putting a similar check constraint could also help reduce errors.

An example of a bad check constraint would be anything that's too restrictive. You want a table that will be able to store all the information you need it to, and you have to accommodate for unusual cases. For example, most undergraduate students begin college around 17 or 18 and graduate at about 21 or 22 years old. Some might be tempted to put a constraint on 'age' such as $\text{age} \geq 17 \text{ AND } \text{age} \leq 22$. While this is true for many, it is not universal and would severely limit the functionality of the table. If someone starts college a year early at 16, or takes a year off and graduates at 23, the check would recognize these values as false and would not enter them into the table.