

Introduction to SQL

Standards

- Connect to a SQL database via command line (i.e. Postgres).
- Connect to a database from within a Python program.
- State function of basic SQL commands.
- Write simple queries on a single table including SELECT, FROM, WHERE, CASE clauses and aggregates.
- Write complex queries including JOINS and subqueries.
- Explain how indexing works in Postgres.
- Create and dump tables.
- Format a query to follow a standard style.
- Move data from SQL database to text file.

Simplified objective:

By the end of today, you will be able to connect to a Postgres database, answer questions using data and/or download data for further investigation.

What is a Relational Database Management System? (RDBMS)

- *Persistent* data storage system
 - ▶ survives after the process in which it was created has ended
 - ▶ is written to non-volatile storage
 - ▶ is infrequently accessed and unlikely to be changed
- RDMBS was the *de facto* standard for storing data
 - ▶ Examples: Oracle, MySQL, SQLServer, Postgres
 - ▶ With “Big Data”, this is beginning to change

Why RDBMS?

An RDBMS provides the ability to:

- model relations in data
- query data and their relations efficiently
- maintain data consistency and integrity

RDBMS Data Model

- **Schema** defines the structure of the data
- The database is composed of a number of user-defined **tables**
- Each **table** will have **columns (aka fields)** and **rows (aka records)**
- A **column** is of a certain **data type** such as integer, string, or date
- A **row** is an entry in a table with data for each column of that table

With a new data source, your first task is typically to understand the schema (not trivial)

Postgres Basics

- Set up Postgres
- Connecting to Postgres and creating a DB
 - ▶ psql

- At psql prompt:

```
CREATE DATABASE <db_name>;
```

```
\q
```

- psql -d
- Some useful psql commands at the prompt:

```
\l - list all the tables in the database
```

```
\d - describe the table schema
```

```
\d db_name - describe table for a specific db
```

```
\h - HELP
```

```
\?, help
```

```
\connect <db_name>
```

Database Table Example

```
CREATE TABLE customers {  
    id INTEGER PRIMARY KEY,  
    name VARCHAR(255),  
    age INTEGER,  
    city VARCHAR(255),  
    state VARCHAR(2)  
}
```

The data types available vary from system to system. The above is an example for PostgreSQL where VARCHAR is a string data type.

Primary Key

A primary key is a special column of a table that uniquely identifies that entry.

- EXAMPLE from the *customers* table

A primary key is not always an integer - it could be a combination of columns, hash, timestamp..etc.,

Foreign Keys

Foreign Keys are columns that reference some other entry in the database.

Example:

```
CREATE TABLE visits {  
    id INTEGER PRIMARY KEY,  
    created_at TIMESTAMP,  
    customer_id INTEGER REFERENCES customers(id)  
}
```

Schema Normalization

Minimizes Redundancy. For example:

- Details about a customer (address, age) are only stored once (in a *customers* table)
- Any other table (eg. *purchases*) where this data might be relevant, only references the `customer_id`
- Choose Normalized or Denormalized Schemas based on the use case:
 - ▶ Heavy reporting (Data Warehouse)
 - ▶ Transactional Systems (Ordering System)

SQL

Structured Query Language (SQL)

- As a data scientist, your main interaction with RDBMS will be to *extract* information that already exists in a database
- SQL is the language used to query relational databases
- All RDBMS use SQL and the syntax and keywords are the same for the most part, across systems
- SQL is used to interact with RDBMS, allowing you to create tables, alter tables, insert records, update records, delete records, and query records within and across tables.
- Even non-relational databases like Hadoop usually have a SQL-like interface available

SQL syntax

All SQL queries have three main ingredients:

```
SELECT  *What* data do you want?  
FROM    *Where* do you want to get the data from?  
WHERE   *Under what* conditions?
```

SQL is *Declarative* rather than *Imperative*. That is, you tell the machine what you want and it (database optimizer) decides how to do it

Advanced: You can use Explain-plan to look at the *how*

SQL Queries

Select the columns *name*, *age* from the table *customers*.

```
SELECT name, age  
FROM customers
```

- SQL always returns a table, so the output of the query above is a sub-table of *customers* with 2 columns.

Select *name* and *age* for every customer in *customers* who live in CA.

```
SELECT name, age  
FROM customers  
WHERE state = 'CA'
```

SQL Examples

More SQL

- Joins
- Subqueries
- Order of Operations

- **JOIN** clause used to query across multiple tables using *foreign keys*
- Every **JOIN** has two segments:
 - ▶ Specifying the *tables* to JOIN
 - ▶ Specifying the *columns* to match

JOIN types

There are different JOIN types to deal with different situations:

- **INNER JOIN** discards any entries that do not have a match between the tables based on the keys specified.
- **LEFT OUTER JOIN** keeps all entries in the left table regardless of whether a match is found in the right table
- **RIGHT OUTER JOIN** keeps all the entries in the right table instead of the left regardless of the match.
- **FULL OUTER JOIN** will keep the rows of both tables no matter what

Inner Joins

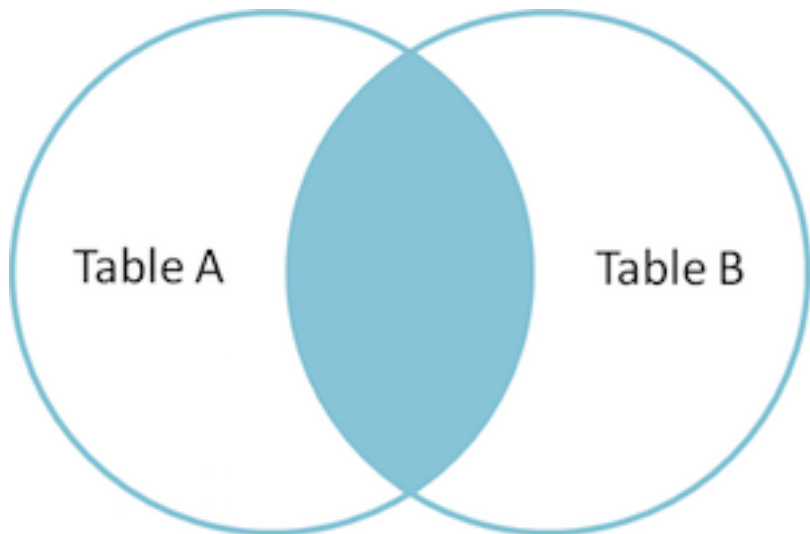


Figure 1: Inner Join

Left Join

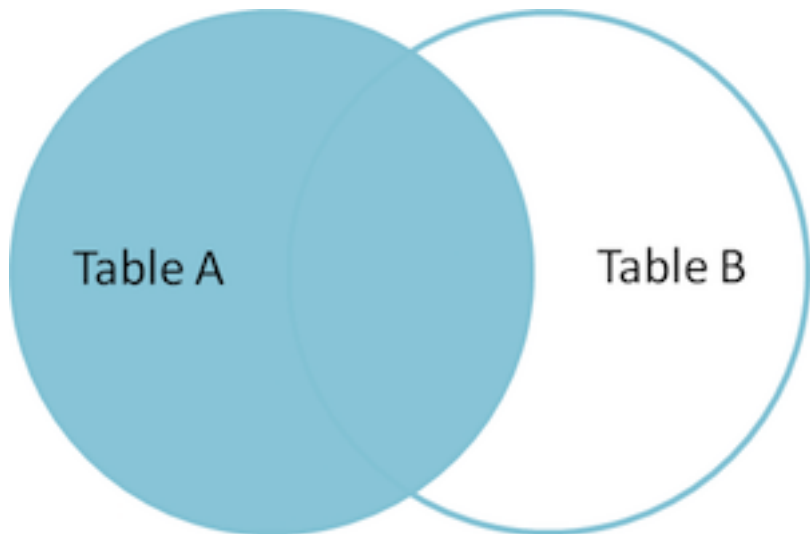


Figure 2:Left Join

Outer Join

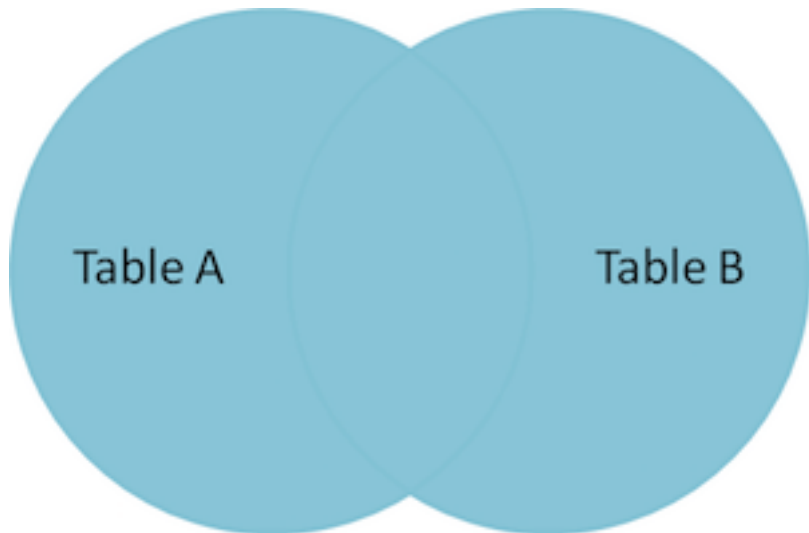


Figure 3:Outer Join

Subqueries

- In general, you can replace any table name with a SELECT statement.
 - ▶ SELECT FROM (SELECT)
- If a query returns a *single value*, you can treat it as such.
 - ▶ WHERE var1 = (SELECT ...)
- If a query returns a **single column**, you can treat it sort of like a list/vector
 - ▶ WHERE var1 IN (SELECT ...)

Order of Evaluation of a SQL SELECT Statement

- ➊ **FROM + JOIN**: first the product of all tables is formed
- ➋ **WHERE**: the where clause filters rows that do not meet the search condition
- ➌ **GROUP BY + (COUNT, SUM, etc)**: the rows are grouped using the columns in the group by clause and the aggregation functions are applied on the grouping
- ➍ **HAVING**: like the **WHERE** clause, but can be applied after aggregation
- ➎ **SELECT**: the targeted list of columns are evaluated and returned
- ➏ **DISTINCT**: duplicate rows are eliminated
- ➐ **ORDER BY**: the resulting rows are sorted

References

- [Introduction to SQL for Data Scientists](#)
- [Yhat Blog - SQL](#)
- [Visual Explanation of Joins](#)
- [SQLZoo](#)
- [Zipfian SQL Tutorial](#)

End of Morning Lecture

Summary:

- Connect to Postgres via the command line
- Explain the difference between different types of joins
- List the order of operations in SQL
- Write queries on a single table using SELECT, FROM, WHERE, GROUP BY
- Write queries on multiple tables using JOINS and Subqueries
- Explain primary and foreign keys
- Create and dump tables