SQL*Plus®

Getting Started

Release 8.0.6 for Windows NT and Windows 95/98

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SQL*Plus Getting Started, Release 8.0.6 for Windows NT and Windows 95/98

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Preface

This guide provides introductory information for SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98.

Specific topics discussed in this preface are:

- Prerequisites
- Intended Audience
- How This Guide Is Organized
- Conventions

Prerequisites

This guide assumes that you are familiar with:

- Commands for deleting and copying files and the concepts of the search path, subdirectories, and path names.
- Fundamentals of the Microsoft Windows NT or Windows 95/98 operating system.

Intended Audience

This guide is for all users who want to use SQL*Plus in the Windows NT or Windows 95/98 environment.

How This Guide Is Organized

This guide is organized as follows:

Chapter 1, "Introducing SQL*Plus"

Provides introductory information to help you get started with SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98.

Chapter 2, "Using SQL*Plus"

Explains how to start and use SQL*Plus from the command line interface and the graphical user interface, and describes the menu options.

Chapter 3, "Operating System-Specific References"

Provides the operating system-specific information that is cross-referenced in the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference*.

Appendix A, "Customizing Operating System Parameters"

Describes how to customize your SQL*Plus configuration by changing parameters in the registry.

Conventions

The following conventions are used in this guide.

Convention	Example	Meaning
All uppercase plain	ALTER DATABASE	Indicates command names, SQL reserved words, and keywords. All uppercase plain is also used for directory names and file names.
Italic	Italic used to indicate a variable: *ORACLE_HOME**filename* Italic used for emphasis: The WHERE clause may be used to *join* rows in different tables.	Indicates a value that you must provide. For example, if a command asks you to type *filename*, you must type the actual name of the file. Italic is also used for emphasis in the text and to indicate the titles of other guides.
Oracle database		The database component of Oracle8.
C:\>	C:\>ORANT\DATABASE	Represents the Windows NT command prompt of the current hard disk drive. Your prompt can differ and can, at times, reflect the subdirectory in which you are working. Referred to as the MS-DOS command prompt in this guide.
Backslash (\) before a directory name	\DATABASE	Indicates that the directory is a subdirectory of the root directory.
Oracle home	Go to the *ORACLE_HOME*\DATABASE directory.	Oracle home is represented as the hard drive letter and the top level directory where your Oracle software is installed. In this guide, the convention *ORACLE_HOME* is used to indicate your Oracle home directory, which may be: ■ C:\ORANT for Windows NT ■ C:\ORAWIN95 for Windows 95 ■ C:\ORAWIN98 for Windows 98 or whatever you may have called your Oracle home.

Convention	Example	Meaning
HOME_NAME	Oracle*HOME_NAME*TNSListener	Represents the Oracle home name if you use multiple Oracle homes. This convention is not applicable for a single Oracle home. The home name can be up to sixteen alphanumeric characters. The only special character allowed in the home name is the underscore.
Symbols	period . comma , hyphen - semicolon ; colon : equal sign = backslash \ single quote ‘ double quote “ parentheses ()	Symbols other than brackets and vertical bars must be entered in commands exactly as shown.

1

Introducing SQL*Plus

This chapter provides introductory information to help you get started with SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98.

Specific topics discussed are:

- Overview
- Basic Concepts
- Who Can Use SQL*Plus?
- Installing SQL*Plus

Overview

You can use the SQL*Plus program in conjunction with the SQL database language and its procedural language extension, PL/SQL. The SQL database language allows you to store and retrieve data in Oracle databases. PL/SQL allows you to link several SQL commands through procedural logic.

SQL*Plus enables you to manipulate SQL commands and PL/SQL blocks, and to perform many additional tasks as well. Through SQL*Plus, you can:

- enter, edit, store, retrieve, and run SQL commands and PL/SQL blocks
- format, perform calculations on, store, and print query results in the form of reports
- list column definitions for any table
- access and copy data between SQL databases
- send messages to and accept responses from an end user

SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98 provides both a command line interface and a graphical user interface (GUI).

Basic Concepts

The following definitions explain concepts central to SQL*Plus:

Concept	Definition
command	An instruction you give SQL*Plus or Oracle.
SQL command	A command to execute SQL statements.
SQL*Plus command	A command to execute SQL*Plus statements.
block	A group of SQL and PL/SQL commands related to one another through procedural logic.
table	The basic unit of storage in Oracle.
query	A SQL command (specifically, a SQL SELECT command) that retrieves information from one or more tables.
query results	The data retrieved by a query.
report	Query results formatted by you through SQL*Plus commands.
SQL buffer	A buffer to store the last SQL statement that has been executed in SQL*Plus.

Concept	Definition
screen buffer	A buffer to store the data in the SQL*Plus application window.

For definitions of other concepts that are relevant to SQL*Plus, see the glossary in *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference*.

Who Can Use SQL*Plus?

The SQL*Plus, SQL, and PL/SQL command languages are powerful enough to serve the needs of users with some database experience, yet straightforward enough for new users who are just learning to work with Oracle.

The design of the SQL*Plus command language makes it easy to use. For example, to give a column labelled ENAME in the database the clearer heading "Employee", you might enter the following command:

```
COLUMN ENAME HEADING EMPLOYEE
```

Similarly, to list the column definitions for a table called EMP, you might enter this command:

```
DESCRIBE EMP
```

Installing SQL*Plus

The CD-ROM insert that accompanies your product CD-ROM contains the following information:

- System requirements for SQL*Plus
- Instructions on how to install SQL*Plus

Installation of SQL*Plus release 8.0 does not overwrite previous versions of SQL*Plus that are installed. Therefore, more than one version of SQL*Plus can exist on the same computer. However, you may want to remove any previous versions.

2

Using SQL*Plus

This chapter explains how to start and use SQL*Plus from the command line interface and the graphical user interface, and describes the menu options.

Specific topics discussed are:

- Using the Command Line Interface
- Using the Graphical User Interface
- Using SQLPLUS.EXE

Using the Command Line Interface

The command line interface is a standard feature of SQL*Plus for all platforms.

To start the command line interface:

1. If you are connecting to a remote Oracle database, make sure your Net8/networking software is installed and working properly.
2. Start an MS-DOS command prompt window.
3. At the command prompt, enter:

   ```
   SQLPLUS [username/password][@net_service_name]
   ```

For Windows NT and Windows 95/98, the rules for interpreting arguments are:

- Arguments are delimited by white space.
- A string surrounded by double quotation marks (for example, "string") is interpreted as a single argument.
- A double quotation mark preceded by a backslash is interpreted as a literal double quotation mark.

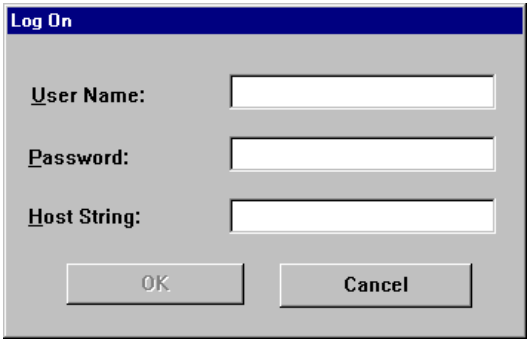
Using the Graphical User Interface

The graphical user interface is a feature of SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98.

To start the graphical user interface:

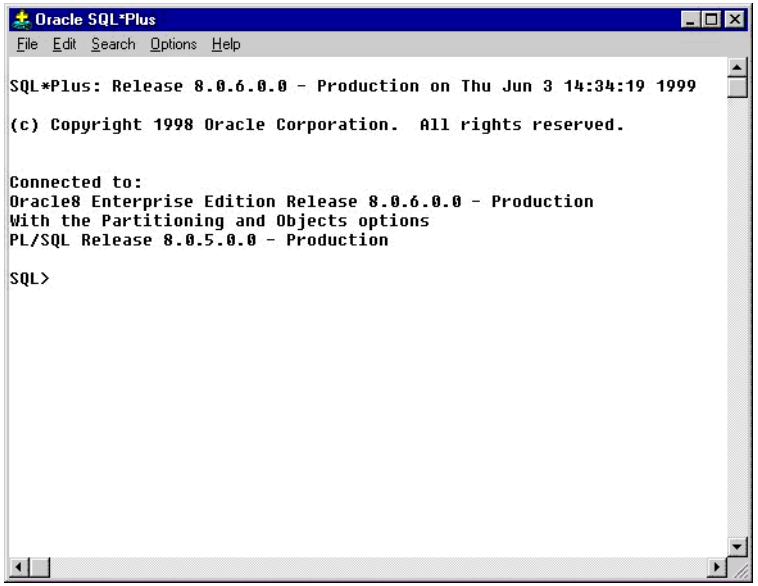
1. If you are connecting to a remote Oracle database, make sure your Net8/networking software is installed and working properly.
2. Choose Start > Programs > Oracle for Windows NT [*HOME_NAME*] (or Oracle for Windows 95/98 [*HOME_NAME*]) > SQL Plus 8.0.

   The *Log On* dialog appears.



3. Enter your user name and password. If you are connecting to a remote Oracle database, enter the Net8 service name.
4. Click OK.

   The SQL*Plus application window appears.



Using the SQL*Plus Application Window

SQL*Plus displays the SQL prompt in the application window.

To enter SQL and SQL*Plus commands, type them at the SQL prompt and press Enter.

Using the Mouse Buttons to Copy SQL Commands in the Application Window

You can use the mouse buttons to copy previously entered SQL commands to the current SQL prompt.

To copy a command, highlight it with the left mouse button. While still holding down the left mouse button, click the right mouse button. SQL*Plus copies the text to the SQL prompt.

Using the Command Keys

The following command keys have special functions in SQL*Plus:

Key	Function
Home	Top of screen buffer
End	Bottom of screen buffer
Page Up	Previous screen page
Page Down	Next screen page
Ctrl+Page Up	Show page on left of current screen page
Ctrl+Page Down	Show page on right of current screen page
Alt+F3	Find
F3	Find next
Ctrl+C	Copy text
Ctrl+V	Paste text
Shift+Del	Clear the screen and the screen buffer

Using the SQL*Plus Menus

This section describes the five menus in SQL*Plus.

File Menu

The File menu contains the following commands:

File Menu Command	Description	Command Line Equivalent
Open	The Open command retrieves a previously stored command file. By default, SQL*Plus looks for a command file with the .SQL extension.	not applicable
Save	The Save command contains three subcommands: **Save Create**, **Save Replace**, and **Save Append**.	SAVE
	■ **Save Create** saves the contents of the SQL*Plus buffer in a command file. By default, SQL*Plus assigns the .SQL extension to command files. You can specify a different extension in the File name text box.	SAVE *filename* CREATE
	■ **Save Replace** replaces the contents of an existing file with the contents of the SQL*Plus buffer. If the file does not exist, SQL*Plus creates the file.	SAVE *filename* REPLACE
	■ **Save Append** adds the contents of the SQL*Plus buffer to the end of the file you specify.	SAVE *filename* APPEND
	After you save a command file, you can do the following: ■ retrieve the file with the Open command from the File menu ■ edit the file with the Editor command from the Edit menu ■ start or run the file with the START or RUN commands from the SQL*Plus command prompt	
Save As	The Save As command saves the contents of the SQL*Plus buffer in a command file. By default, SQL*Plus assigns the .SQL extension to command files. You can specify a different extension in the File name text box.	SAVE *filename*
Spool	The Spool command contains two subcommands: **Spool File** and **Spool Off**.	
	■ **Spool File** stores query results in a file. By default, SQL*Plus assigns the .LST extension to spool files. You can specify a different extension in the File name text box. You can edit the results with the Editor command from the Edit menu, and print the file from a Windows NT or Windows 95/98 text editor.	SPOOL *filename*

File Menu Command	Description	Command Line Equivalent
	■ **Spool Off** turns off spooling.	SPOOL OFF
Run	The Run command lists and executes the SQL command or PL/SQL block currently stored in the SQL buffer.	RUN
Cancel	The Cancel command cancels an in-progress operation. Ctrl+C is the keyboard shortcut for the Cancel command.	not applicable
Exit	The Exit command commits all pending database changes and closes the SQL*Plus application window.	EXIT

Edit Menu

The Edit menu contains the following commands:

Edit Menu Command	Description	Command Line Equivalent
Copy	The Copy command copies the selected text to the Clipboard. After you copy text to the Clipboard, you can paste the text into other Windows applications, such as Microsoft Excel and Microsoft Word. Ctrl+C is the keyboard shortcut for the Copy command.	not applicable
Paste	The Paste command pastes the contents of the Clipboard onto the SQL*Plus command line. Ctrl+V is the keyboard shortcut for the Paste command. **Note:** A maximum of 3625 characters can be pasted from the Clipboard onto the SQL*Plus command line during a single paste operation.	not applicable
Clear	The Clear command clears the screen of the SQL*Plus application window and the screen buffer. Shift+Del is the keyboard shortcut for the Clear command.	CLEAR SCREEN
Editor	The Editor command contains two subcommands: **Invoke Editor** and **Define Editor**.	
	■ **Invoke Editor** loads the contents of the SQL*Plus buffer into an editor. By default, SQL*Plus saves the file to AFIEDT.BUF. You can specify a different file name in the editor.	EDIT
	■ **Define Editor** defines the editor that is invoked.	not applicable

Search Menu

The Search menu contains the following commands:

Search Menu Command	Description	Command Line Equivalent
Find	The Find command searches for a character, a word, or a group of characters or words in the SQL*Plus application window. When you choose the Find command, SQL*Plus begins the search at the top of the displayed screen. **Note:** When SQL*Plus reaches the end of the displayed screen, it will not automatically continue searching from the top of the SQL*Plus screen buffer. ALT+F3 is the keyboard shortcut for the Clear command.	not applicable
Find Next	The Find Next command finds the next occurrence of the search text. F3 is the keyboard shortcut for the Clear command.	not applicable

Options Menu

The Options menu contains the following command:

Options Menu Command	Description	Command Line Equivalent
Environment	The Environment command allows you to set system variables to alter the SQL*Plus environment for your current session. The *Environment* dialog contains two areas: **Set Options** and **Screen Buffer**. **Set Options** This area contains a list of variables you can choose in order to establish aspects of the SQL*Plus environment for your current session, such as the following: ■ setting the display width for NUMBER data ■ setting the display width for LONG data ■ enabling or disabling the printing of column headings ■ setting the number of lines per page You can make multiple changes to options before clicking OK to commit the changes.	SET *variable value*

Options Menu Command	Description	Command Line Equivalent
	To establish an aspect of the SQL*Plus environment: 1. In the *Environment* dialog, select a variable from the Set Options box. 2. Select the appropriate option buttons and, if required, enter text in the text box. 3. Click OK. **Screen Buffer** When you change the Screen Buffer option, SQL*Plus displays a dialog to alert you that if you shorten the size of your screen buffer, some data may not be displayed on your screen. Click OK if you want to proceed. The Screen Buffer area consists of two text boxes: **Buffer Width** and **Buffer Length**. ■ In the **Buffer Width** text box, you can set the number of characters that SQL*Plus displays on one line. If you enter a number smaller than the length of output data, SQL*Plus truncates the data to match the buffer width you specified. The default value of the Buffer Width parameter is 100 characters. You can specify from 80 to 1000 characters on one line. ■ In the **Buffer Length** text box, you can set the number of lines that SQL*Plus displays on the screen. If SQL*Plus displays more lines of data than you specify, the remaining lines of data will "wrap around" to the top of the screen buffer. The default value of the Buffer Length parameter is 1000 lines. You can specify from 100 to 2000 lines on one screen.	

Help Menu

The SQL*Plus application does not contain online help. However, the CD-ROM contains the following documentation in both HTML and PDF format:

- *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference*
- *SQL*Plus Quick Reference*
- *SQL*Plus Getting Started for Windows NT and Windows 95/98* (this guide)

The Help menu contains one command:

Help Menu Command	Description	Command Line Equivalent
About SQL*Plus	Displays the version number and copyright information.	not applicable

Using SQLPLUS.EXE

SQLPLUS.EXE is used to spawn any SQL*Plus executable that is defined in the PLUS_DFLT parameter located in the registry.

SQLPLUS.EXE allows you to run any specified version and mode of SQL*Plus when it is started. You can modify the value of PLUS_DFLT, thereby having SQLPLUS.EXE spawn the desired version and mode of SQL*Plus.

By default, PLUS_DFLT is set to the last version of the command line interface of SQL*Plus installed.

3

Operating System-Specific References

This chapter provides the operating system-specific information that is referenced in the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference*.

Specific topics discussed are:

- Access to Sample Tables
- Automatic Login
- TIMING Command
- Interpreting Error Messages
- Setting Up Your SQL*Plus Environment
- Sending Results to a File
- Setting Up the Site Profile
- @, @@, and START Commands
- EXIT Command
- HOST Command
- SET NEWPAGE Command
- PRODUCT_USER_PROFILE Table

Access to Sample Tables

"Access to Sample Tables" in Chapter 1 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* discusses the sample data that you must load into your database in order to work through the exercises.

> **Note:** If you access a database installed on another computer, your database administrator should build these tables for you.

To load the data, start SQL*Plus with the user account for working through the examples. The *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* refers to the user name SCOTT with the password TIGER, but you can use any account that has the resource privilege.

Enter the following command at the SQL*Plus prompt:

```
SQL> @ORACLE_HOME\DBS\DEMOBLD.SQL
```

When you finish working through the examples, you can remove the sample data from the database by entering the following command:

```
SQL> @ORACLE_HOME\DBS\DEMODROP.SQL
```

Automatic Login

"Shortcuts to Starting SQL*Plus" in Chapter 2 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* refers you to this guide for information about automatically logging on to SQL*Plus when you log on to your operating system.

When connecting to an Oracle database on the same Windows NT or Windows 95/98 machine, you can set up SQL*Plus to do an automatic login by following these steps:

1. Create an account in the database <PREFIX>USERX for every Windows NT or Windows 95/98 user (USERX) who needs access to the database. <PREFIX> is the init*SID*.ora parameter OS_AUTHENT_PREFIX for the database (the default is OPS$).
2. After logging on to Windows NT or Windows 95/98 as USERX, you can log in as /.

TIMING Command

The section "Collecting Timing Statistics on Commands You Run" in Chapter 2 and the sections "SET" and "TIMING" in Chapter 7 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* discuss how to use the TIMING command and the SET TIMING command to record timing data for an elapsed period.

SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98 displays the accumulated time in milliseconds.

Interpreting Error Messages

"Interpreting Error Messages" in Chapter 2 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* refers you to the *Oracle8 Error Messages* manual and this guide to find error codes that begin with the letters ORA.

If you do not find the error code in the *Oracle8 Error Messages* manual, see the Getting Started guide provided with your Oracle database.

Setting Up Your SQL*Plus Environment

"Setting Up Your SQL*Plus Environment" in Chapter 3 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* describes the LOGIN.SQL and GLOGIN.SQL files.

When you install SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98, LOGIN.SQL is copied to the DBS subdirectory of your Oracle home directory.

When you install SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98, GLOGIN.SQL is copied to the PLUS80 subdirectory of your Oracle home directory.

If you modify LOGIN.SQL or GLOGIN.SQL, make sure you do not add any ANSI escape sequences.

Some Oracle products use a LOGIN file named LOGIN.NEW. If this file exists on your computer, make sure you do not use it with SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98.

Sending Results to a File

"Sending Results to a File" in Chapter 4 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* describes the SPOOL command.

This command is available in the File menu of SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98. See the section "File Menu" in Chapter 2 of this guide for more information.

When you use the SPOOL command from the graphical user interface or the command line interface, SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98 adds .LST to the file name if you do not specify an extension.

SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98 does not support the use of the SPOOL OUT clause at the command line.

Setting Up the Site Profile

"Setting Up the Site Profile" in Chapter 6 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* describes the Site Profile, a SQL*Plus command file created by the database administrator. This command file is not applicable to the Windows NT or Windows 95/98 environments.

@, @@, and START Commands

The sections "@ ("at" sign)," "@@(double "at" sign)," and "START" in Chapter 7 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* describe how SQL*Plus searches for a file when you use the @, @@, or START command.

SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98 searches the current default directory for the file name that you specify with the @, @@, or START command. If SQL*Plus cannot find this file, the program searches a path to find the file.

You can specify the path that SQL*Plus searches by modifying the SQLPATH parameter in your registry.

EXIT Command

"EXIT" in Chapter 7 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* describes how to use the EXIT command to run SQL*Plus command files in batch mode. SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98 does not support batch mode.

HOST Command

"HOST" in Chapter 7 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* describes how to use the HOST command to execute a host operating system command without leaving SQL*Plus.

In SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98, you can access the MS-DOS command prompt by entering the HOST command or a dollar sign ($) at the SQL*Plus prompt.

To return to SQL*Plus from the MS-DOS command prompt, enter the EXIT command.

SET NEWPAGE Command

"SET" in Chapter 7 of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* describes how to set the NEWPAGE system variable, as well as many other system variables.

The SET NEWPAGE 0 command does not clear the screen between pages. Instead, a black box appears. This occurs because the text printing APIs do not support the formfeed character "/f" on these platforms.

PRODUCT_USER_PROFILE Table

"PRODUCT_USER_PROFILE Table" in Appendix E of the *SQL*Plus User's Guide and Reference* describes the PRODUCT_USER_PROFILE table, which provides product-level security that supplements the user-level security provided by the SQL GRANT and REVOKE commands and user roles.

To create this table, you or your database administrator must run the PUPBLD.SQL file, which is located in the *ORACLE_HOME*\DBS directory.

If you are using SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98 with a remote database, you may want to install the PRODUCT_USER_PROFILE table on the remote database. To do this, run PUPBLD.SQL on the server directly. Or, you can set the LOCAL parameter in your registry to point to the remote database and then run PUPBLD.SQL.

A

Customizing Operating System Parameters

This chapter describes how to customize your SQL*Plus configuration by changing parameters in the registry.

Specific topics discussed are:

- Using the Registry
- Parameter Descriptions

> **Warning: Only advanced users should change the registry.**

Using the Registry

When you install Oracle products for Windows NT or Windows 95/98, Oracle Installer adds relevant parameters to the registry. You can examine these parameters by running one of the following programs:

- REGEDT32.EXE (under Windows NT)
- REGEDIT.EXE (under Windows 95/98)

The HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\ORACLE subkey contains the Oracle parameters.

See the registry's online help for instructions on how to edit the parameters.

If you change the value of an Oracle parameter or add a parameter to the registry, the change will take effect whenever SQL*Plus executes a procedure that uses the parameter.

Parameter Descriptions

This section describes the registry parameters that are relevant to SQL*Plus for Windows NT and Windows 95/98 (the parameters reside in HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\ORACLE\).

PLUS80

Default Value: ORACLE_HOME\PLUS80

Valid Values: any directory on any drive

This parameter specifies the location of the SQL*Plus files, including the GLOGIN.SQL file. In addition to searching the directory specified by PLUS80, SQL*Plus also searches the current directory for SQL*Plus files.

The first four characters of this parameter, PLUS, refer to SQL*Plus. The remaining characters correspond to the current version of SQL*Plus. Subsequent versions of SQL*Plus may use a different version number (for example, PLUS81) to enable you to keep multiple versions of SQL*Plus on your computer.

PLUS_DFLT

Default Value: PLUS80

Valid Values: any SQL*Plus executable, such as PLUS80 or PLUS80W

This parameter specifies the SQL*Plus executable to be spawned when SQLPLUS.EXE is started.

SQLPATH

Default Value: ORACLE_HOME\DBS

Valid Values: any directory on any drive

This parameter specifies the location of SQL scripts. In addition to searching the directory specified by the SQLPATH parameter, SQL*Plus also searches the current directory for SQL scripts.

> **Note:** SQL*Plus uses the PLUS80 parameter to specify the location of the GLOGIN.SQL script. Refer to "PLUS80" earlier in this appendix for more information.

When you set the SQLPATH parameter, directories can be concatenated with a semicolon (;). For example:

C:\ORANT\DATA;C:\ORANT\DBS

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