

**Oracle® Database**  
2 Day Developer's Guide  
11g Release 1 (11.1)  
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Oracle Database 2 Day Developer's Guide, 11g Release 1 (11.1)

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# Preface

This guide explains basic concepts behind application development with Oracle Database. It provides instructions for using the basic features of Oracle Database through the Structured Query Language (SQL), and Oracle Corporation's proprietary server-based procedural extension to the SQL database language, Procedural Language/Structured Query Language (PL/SQL).

## Audience

This guide is intended for anyone who is interested in learning about Oracle Database application development, and is primarily an introduction to application development for developers who are new to Oracle.

Before using this guide, you should have a general understanding of relational database concepts and an understanding of the operating system environment that you will use to develop applications with Oracle Database.

As you become comfortable with technologies described in this guide, Oracle recommends that you consult other Oracle Database development guides, in particular the *Oracle Database 2 Day + Application Express Developer's Guide*, *Oracle Database 2 Day + Java Developer's Guide*, *Oracle Database 2 Day + .NET Developer's Guide*, and *Oracle Database 2 Day + PHP Developer's Guide*.

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## Related Documents

For more information, see the following documents in Oracle Database 11g Release 1 (11.1) library:

- Oracle Database Advanced Application Developer's Guide
- Oracle Database Concepts
- Oracle Database SQL Language Reference
- Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference

## Conventions

The following text conventions are used in this document:

Convention	Meaning
<b>boldface</b>	Boldface type indicates graphical user interface elements associated with an action, or terms defined in text or the glossary.
<i>italic</i>	Italic type indicates book titles, emphasis, or placeholder variables for which you supply particular values.
<code>monospace</code>	Monospace type indicates commands within a paragraph, URLs, code in examples, text that appears on the screen, or text that you enter.

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# Overview of Oracle Database and Development

This chapter introduces you to application development with Oracle Database.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- [Roadmap](#) on page 1-1
- [Overview of Oracle Database Schemas](#) on page 1-2
- [Overview of Application Development with Oracle Database](#) on page 1-3
- [Overview of Other Development Environments](#) on page 1-10

## Roadmap

You are an Oracle Database developer, someone who has the responsibility of creating or maintaining the database components of an application that uses the Oracle technology stack. The discussion in this and following sections assumes that you, or someone else in your organization, must know how to architect multiuser applications (two tier or multitier) and understands the advantages of using a relational database for the data persistence tier.

As a database developer, you need to know how to implement the data model that the application requires, how to implement the rules for data integrity, and how to implement the specified functions for accessing and manipulating the application data.

You know already that you can access an Oracle Database only through a client program, and that the SQL language is that client program's interface to the Oracle Database. You will learn how to access the Oracle Database by using two clients that are packaged with the Oracle Database and designed for developers: SQL Developer and SQL\*Plus. Both allow you to issue the SQL statements you need in order to create and test your application's database component without doing any client programming. Programming such clients is outside the scope of this discussion.

To briefly review widely accepted best practices in software engineering, you must define APIs that model business functions, and hide the implementation. Oracle Database supports this practice by letting you specify the APIs as PL/SQL subprograms. The implementation is tables, indexes, constraints, triggers, and the various SQL statements that modify and fetch table rows. By embedding these SQL statements in PL/SQL subprograms, and by using Oracle's schema and privilege mechanisms, you can securely hide the implementation from the client programs. Many of Oracle's major customers follow this practice strictly: client programs are allowed to access the database only by calling PL/SQL subprograms. Some customers

relax this rule by allowing the client to issue *raw* SQL `SELECT` statements, but requiring it to call PL/SQL subprograms for all business functions that make changes to the database.

This general discussion sets the charter for your job as an Oracle Database developer:

- You need to know about the various types of objects that you can create in the database, as described in ["Exploring Database Objects"](#) on page 2-1.
- You need to know the SQL that is used to manage these objects: `CREATE`, `ALTER`, `TRUNCATE`, and `DROP`. This is known as **data definition language (DDL)**, and is described in ["Creating and Using Database Objects"](#) on page 3-1.
- You need to know the SQL language that is used to maintain application data: `INSERT`, `UPDATE`, `DELETE`, and `MERGE`. This is known as **data manipulation language (DML)**, and is described in ["Querying and Manipulating Data"](#) on page 2-1.
- You need to know the SQL language for **querying** data: `SELECT` statement and its various clauses, as described in ["Retrieving Data with Queries"](#) on page 2-6.
- You need to know about transactions, and the SQL language for controlling them: `COMMIT`, `SAVEPOINT`, and `ROLLBACK`, as described in ["Controlling Transactions"](#) on page 2-30.
- You need to know how to write PL/SQL subprograms and procedural code that use DDL, DML, transaction control, and queries, as described in ["Developing and Using Stored Procedures"](#) on page 4-1 and ["Using Triggers"](#) on page 5-1.
- You need to know how to manage your deliverables and how to instantiate your application in several different databases for the purposes of development itself, unit testing, integration testing, end-user acceptance testing, education, and ultimately for deploying your application in a production environment. This information is in ["Deploying a Database Application"](#) on page 7-1.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Concepts* for information about application architecture

## Overview of Oracle Database Schemas

This section introduces Oracle Database schemas.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Concepts*

## Introducing Schema Objects

Oracle Database groups related types of information into logical structures that are called **schemas**. When you connect to the database by providing your **user name** and **password**, you name the schema and indicate that you are its owner. Schemas contain **tables**, which are the basic units of data storage in the database. Using a table, you can query for information, update it, insert additional data, and delete. Each table contains **rows** that represent the individual data **records**. The table rows are composed of **columns** that represent the various **fields** of the record.

In addition to tables, schemas contain many other objects. **Indexes** are optional structures that can improve the performance of data retrieval from tables. Indexes are

created on one or more columns of a table, and are automatically maintained in Oracle Database. See ["Creating and Using Tables"](#) on page 3-2.

Depending on your business needs, you can create a **view** that combines information from several different tables into a single presentation. Such views can rely on information from other views as well as tables. See ["Using Views"](#) on page 3-21.

In an application where all records of the table must be distinct, a **sequence** can generate a serial list of unique integer numbers for a numeric column that represents the ID of each record. See ["Using Sequences"](#) on page 3-25.

A **synonym** is an alias for any table, view, sequence, procedure, and so on. Synonyms are often used for security and convenience, such as masking the ownership of an object or simplifying SQL statements. See ["Using Synonyms"](#) on page 3-28.

Schema-level **procedures** and **functions**, and also **packages**, are collectively known as **stored procedures**. Stored procedures are blocks of code that are actually stored in the database. They are callable from client applications that access a relational database system. See ["Developing and Using Stored Procedures"](#) on page 4-1.

**Triggers** are procedural code that is automatically executed by the database when specified events occur in a particular table or view. Triggers can restrict access to specific data, perform logging, or audit data. See ["Using Triggers"](#) on page 5-1.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Concepts* for a comprehensive introduction to all schema objects

## Introducing the HR Schema

The `hr` schema is one of the sample schemas that can be installed as part of Oracle Database. The `hr` sample schema contains information about employees, their departments and locations, their work histories, and other related information. Like all schemas, the `hr` schema has tables, views, indexes, procedures, functions, and all other possible attributes of an Oracle Database schema.

You will be using and extending the `hr` schema to learn how to develop applications with Oracle Database.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Sample Schemas* for an in-depth description of the `hr` sample schema

## Overview of Application Development with Oracle Database

In this section, you will learn about two programming languages for direct data access (SQL and PL/SQL), two development tools (SQL Developer and SQL\*Plus), a sample data set (`hr` schema), and how to connect to an instance of Oracle Database.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Advanced Application Developer's Guide*

## Introducing SQL and PL/SQL Development Languages

There are two broad families of computer languages: declarative languages that describe *what* should be done, and imperative languages that describe *how* things should be done. You are probably already familiar with the **Structured Query**

**Language**, or **SQL**, the database-independent language for defining database objects and operations. SQL is a set-based, high-level **declarative computer language**; it describes a problem by stating criteria for the desired data. Using SQL statements, you can query tables to display data, create and modify objects, and perform a large variety of administrative tasks. When you issue a SQL command, the SQL language compiler automatically generates a procedure to access the database and perform the desired task.

In contrast, **imperative computer languages**, such as C, C++, and Java, describe how to solve the problem by finding the necessary data; they describe computation as statements that change a program state and can therefore solve a much broader set of problems.

**Procedural Language SQL**, or **PL/SQL**, is a native Oracle language extension to SQL. It bridges the gap between declarative and imperative program control by adding procedural elements, such as conditional control and iterative flow constructs. Like SQL, PL/SQL has a built-in treatment of the relational database domain. PL/SQL enables you to declare constants and variables, define procedures and functions, use collections and object types, trap runtime errors, and create functions, packages, procedures and triggers that can be stored on the database for reuse by applications that are authored in any of the Oracle programmatic interfaces.

For more information about PL/SQL, see the PL/SQL Oracle Technology Network site at

[http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/pl\\_sql/](http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/pl_sql/)

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference*
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference*
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Packages and Types Reference*
- ["Overview of Other Development Environments"](#) on page 1-10

## Introducing SQL Developer

**SQL Developer** is a graphical user interface for accessing your instance of Oracle Database. SQL Developer supports development in both the SQL and PL/SQL languages. It is available in the default installation of Oracle Database. You will use SQL Developer, both through its navigation hierarchy and through the SQL worksheet.

Before you run SQL Developer, ensure that you have Java 1.5.0 installed. At a command prompt, enter the following command:

```
java -version
```

Output similar to the following should appear:

```
java version "1.5.0_06"  
Java(TM) 2 Runtime Environment, Standard Edition (build 1.5.0_06-b05)  
Java HotSpot(TM) Client VM (build 1.5.0_06-b05, mixed mode, sharing)
```

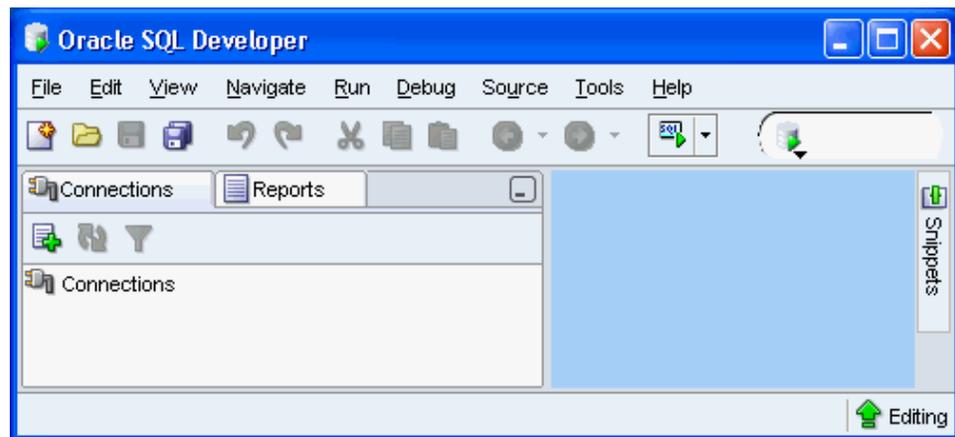
**To start SQL Developer:**

1. *In Linux:*
  - Click the **Application** menu (on Gnome) or the **K** menu (on KDE).

- Select **Oracle - ORACLE\_HOME**, then **Application Development**, and then **SQL Developer**.

*In Windows:*

- From the **Start** menu, select **All Programs**.
  - Select **Oracle - ORACLE\_HOME**, then **Application Development**, and then **SQL Developer**.
2. When prompted, enter the full path to the Java executable.  
For example: C:\jdk1.5.0\bin\java.exe  
You only need to specify this path the first time you start SQL Developer.  
After the splash screen appears, SQL Developer starts.



For more information about SQL Developer, see the SQL Developer Oracle Technology Network site at

[http://www.oracle.com/technology/products/database/sql\\_developer/index.html](http://www.oracle.com/technology/products/database/sql_developer/index.html)

**See Also:** ■

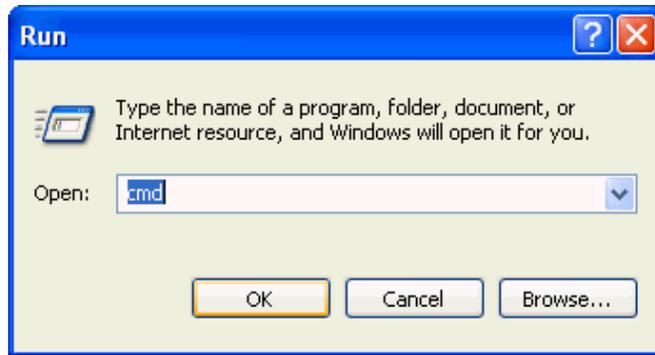
- *Oracle Database SQL Developer User's Guide*

## Introducing SQL\*Plus

SQL\*Plus is installed together with Oracle Database. SQL\*Plus has a command-line interface for accessing Oracle Database. You can also access SQL\*Plus within SQL Developer.

**To use SQL\*Plus on Windows systems:**

1. Click the **Start** icon at the bottom left corner of your screen, and select **Run**.
2. In the Run window, in the text prompt, enter `cmd`. Click **OK**.



3. In the `cmd.exe` window, at the `c:>\` prompt, enter `sqlplus` and press the Enter button of your keyboard.

SQL\*Plus starts and prompts you to authenticate your connection to the database.

Your screen looks something like this:

```
C:\>sqlplus
SQL*Plus: Release 11.1.0.1.0 - Production on Tue April 3 10:10:11 2007
Copyright (c) 1982, 2007, Oracle. All rights reserved.
Enter user-name:
```

4. Enter your user name and press Enter.

Your screen looks something like this:

```
Enter password:
```

5. Enter your password and press Enter. Note that entering your user name and password in this manner is secure because your password is not visible on the screen.

The system connects you to a database instance, and shows a SQL prompt.

Your screen looks something like this:

```
Connected to:
Oracle Database 11g Enterprise Edition Release 11.1.0.1.0 - Production
With the Partitioning, OLAP and Data Mining options
```

You can now start using the SQL command prompt.

6. To close the SQL\*Plus session, at the SQL prompt enter the `exit` command. Note that you are not shutting down the Oracle Database instance.

```
SQL> exit
```

Your screen looks something like this:

```
Disconnected from Oracle Database 11g Enterprise Edition Release 11.1.0.1.0
With the Partitioning, OLAP and Data Mining options
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database 2 Day + Security Guide*
- *SQL\*Plus User's Guide and Reference*

## Connecting to the Database

Remember that in Oracle Database, the user and the name of the schema to which the user connects are the same. This section shows how to create a connection to the `hr` schema, one of the sample schemas that ship with Oracle Database. To begin, you must unlock the `hr` account.

This section contains the following topics:

- [Unlocking a User Account](#)
- [Connecting to Oracle Database from SQL\\*Plus](#)
- [Connecting to Oracle Database from SQL Developer](#)

### Unlocking a User Account

By default, when the `hr` schema is installed, it is locked and its password is expired. Before you can connect to Oracle Database using the `hr` schema, a user with administrator privileges needs to unlock the `hr` account and reset its password.

The following steps show how to unlock the `hr` account and change its password.

#### To unlock the `hr` account and change its password:

1. Start a new SQL\* Plus session, and login as a user with administrative privileges, such as user `SYSTEM`. See ["Introducing SQL\\*Plus"](#) on page 1-5.
2. At the SQL prompt, enter the following statement:

Remember to choose a password that is secure. See *Oracle Database Security Guide* for guidelines on choosing passwords.

```
SQL> ALTER USER hr ACCOUNT UNLOCK IDENTIFIED BY password;
```

The system confirms that the `hr` account is unlocked and its password changed:

```
User altered
```

### Connecting to Oracle Database from SQL\*Plus

When the `hr` account is unlocked, you can create a new `hr` connection using the new password that you set in ["Unlocking a User Account"](#) on page 1-7.

#### To create an HR Connection in SQL\*Plus:

1. Close the current connection to Oracle database. See step 6 of ["Introducing SQL\\*Plus"](#) on page 1-5.
2. Start SQL\*Plus. In the `cmd.exe` window, at the `c:>\` prompt, enter `sqlplus` and press the Enter button of your keyboard.
3. At the SQL prompt, enter `hr`, and then the password.

The system connects you to a database instance through the `hr` schema.

You can close both the connection and the command window.

#### See Also:

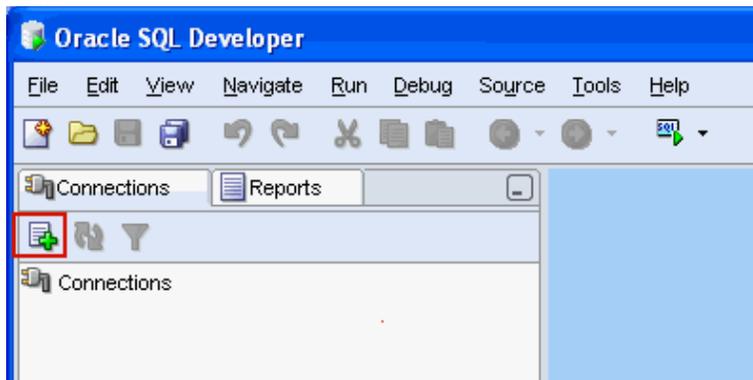
- *SQL\*Plus User's Guide and Reference*

### Connecting to Oracle Database from SQL Developer

When the `hr` account is unlocked, you can use it to access the `hr` schema inside the Oracle Database. In this section, you will be working with Oracle SQL Developer.

**To create an HR connection in SQL Developer:**

1. Start SQL Developer.
2. In the Connections pane, click the **New Connection** icon.

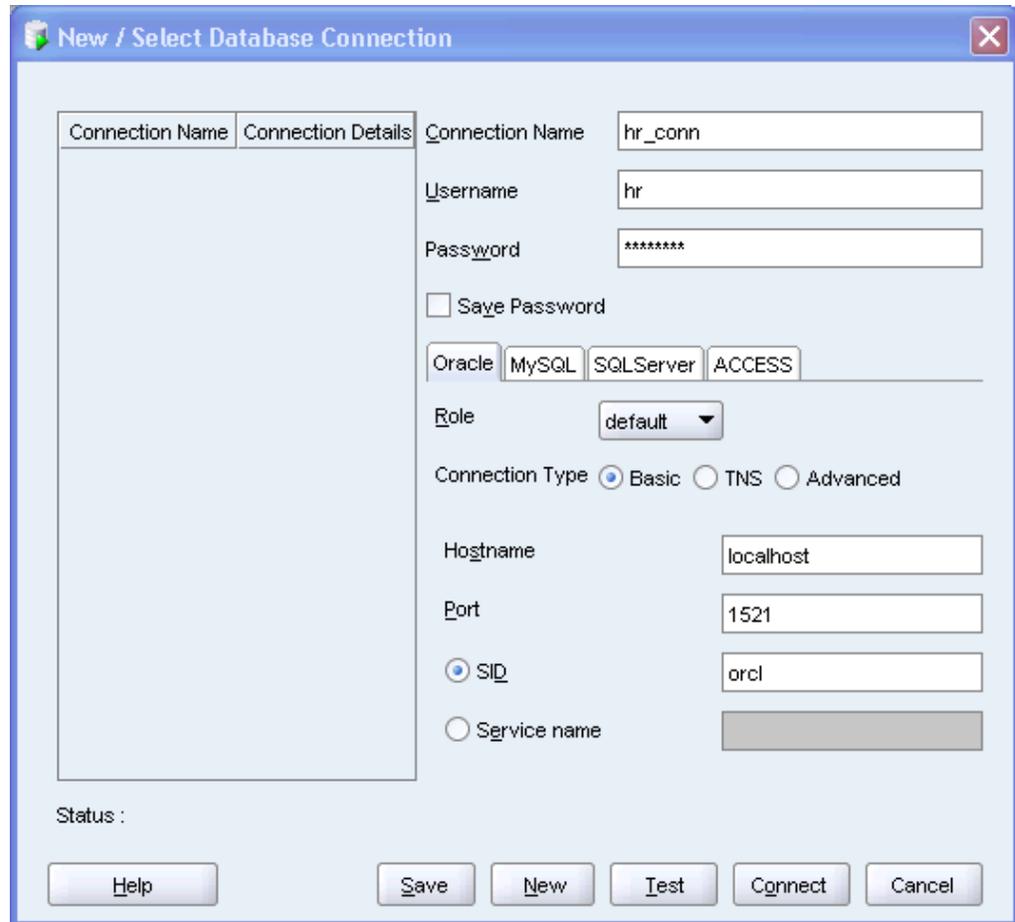


3. In the upper part of the New/Select Database Connection window, enter this information:
  - For **Connection Name**, enter `hr_conn`.
  - For **Username**, enter `hr`.
  - For **Password**, enter the password that the system administrator created after unlocking the `hr` account. Note that the password text is masked.
  - Leave the **Save Password** option unchecked.

Under the Oracle tab of the New/Select Database Connection window, enter this information:

- For **Role**, select Default.
- For **Connection Type**, select Basic.
- For **Hostname**, enter `localhost`.
- For **Port**, enter `1521`.
- For **SID**, enter `orcl`.

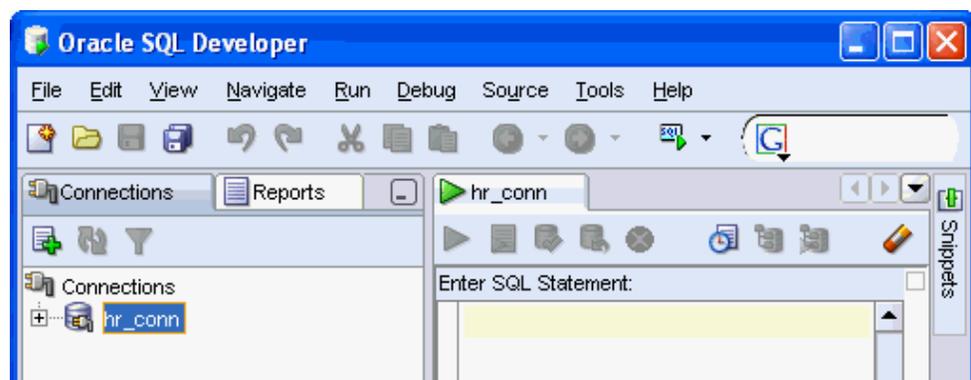
At the bottom of the New/Select Database Connection window, click **Test**.



4. The connection is tested. At the bottom of the New/Select Database Connection window, Status is changed to Success.



5. At the bottom of the New/Select Database Connection window, click **Connect**. The Oracle SQL Developer window appears, with a new hr\_conn connection.



You have successfully established a connection to the hr schema.

## Overview of Other Development Environments

This section introduces other development environments and languages that you may choose for developing your own applications.

### **Oracle Data Provider for .NET, Oracle Database Extensions for .NET and Oracle Developer Tools for Visual Studio .NET**

Oracle Data Provider for .NET (ODP.NET), is a .NET data provider that uses and extends the Microsoft .NET Framework Class Library. ODP.NET uses the .NET Framework to expose provider-specific features and data types, so its use of native Oracle Database APIs bring the features of Oracle Database to .NET applications.

Oracle Database Extensions for .NET provide a Microsoft Common Language Runtime (CLR) host for Oracle Database, data access through ODP.NET classes, and the Oracle Deployment Wizard for Visual Studio .NET. Because CLR runs as an external process on Oracle Database server, this integration enables you to run .NET stored procedures and functions on Oracle Database in Microsoft Windows XP, 2000, and 2003. These stored procedures and functions can be authored in any .NET language, such as C# and VB.NET, and then deployed in Oracle Database using the Oracle Deployment Wizard for .NET, just like PL/SQL or Java stored procedures.

Oracle Developer Tools provide a graphical user interface to access Oracle Database functionality through Visual Studio .NET. Oracle Developer Tools include Oracle Explorer for browsing the database schema, wizards and designers for creating and altering schema objects, the ability to automatically generate code by dragging schema objects onto the .NET design form, and a PL/SQL editor with integrated context-sensitive help. Additionally, the Oracle Data Window enables you to perform routine database tasks and test stored procedures in the Visual Studio environment, while the SQL Query Window executes SQL statements and scripts.

For an introduction to .NET application development with Oracle Database, see *Oracle Database 2 Day + .NET Developer's Guide*.

Further Oracle Database .NET documentation includes *Oracle Data Provider for .NET Developer's Guide* and *Oracle Database Extensions for .NET Developer's Guide*.

For complete information about Oracle Database .NET APIs, ODP.NET, Oracle Developer Tools, downloads, tutorials, and related information, see the .NET Oracle Technology Network site at

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/dotnet/>

### **PHP**

The Hypertext Preprocessor, PHP, is a powerful interpreted server-side scripting language for quick Web application development. PHP is an open source language that is distributed under a BSD-style license. PHP is designed for embedding Oracle Database access requests directly into HTML pages.

For an introduction to PHP application development with Oracle Database, see the *Oracle Database 2 Day + PHP Developer's Guide*.

For complete information about Oracle Database PHP APIs and related information, see the PHP Oracle Technology Network site at

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/php/>

### **Oracle Application Express**

Oracle Application Express, APEX, is an application development and deployment tool that enables you to quickly create secure and scalable Web applications even if you have limited previous programming experience. The embedded Application Builder tool assembles an HTML interface or a complete application that uses database objects, such as tables or stored procedures, into a collection of pages that are linked together through tabs, buttons, or hypertext links. See *Oracle Database 2 Day + Application Express Developer's Guide* for complete information on APEX.

For complete information about APEX and related information, see the APEX Oracle Technology Network site at

[http://www.oracle.com/technology/products/database/application\\_express/](http://www.oracle.com/technology/products/database/application_express/)

### **Oracle Call Interface and Oracle C++ Call Interface**

Oracle Call Interface (OCI) is the native C language API for accessing Oracle Database directly from C applications. See *Oracle Call Interface Programmer's Guide* for complete information on OCI.

Oracle C++ Call Interface (OCCI) is the native C++ language API for accessing Oracle Database directly from C++ applications. Very similar to the OCI, OCCI supports both relational and object-oriented programming paradigms. See *Oracle C++ Call Interface Programmer's Guide* for complete information on OCCI.

The OCI and OCCI Software Development Kits are also installed as part of the Oracle Instant Client, which enables you to run applications without installing the standard Oracle client or having an ORACLE\_HOME. Your applications will work without modification, while using significantly less disk space. Oracle Instant Client is available from the Instant Client Oracle Technology Network site at

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/oci/instantclient/>

For complete information about Oracle Database OCI and related information, see the OCI Oracle Technology Network site at

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/oci/>

For complete information about Oracle Database OCCI and related information, see the OCCI Oracle Technology Network site at

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/oci/occi/>

### **Oracle Java Database Connectivity**

Oracle Java Database Connectivity (JDBC) is an API that enables Java to send SQL statements to an object-relational database, such as Oracle Database. Oracle Database JDBC provides complete support for the JDBC 3.0 and JDBC RowSet (JSR-114) standards, advanced connection caching for both XA and non-XA connections, exposure of SQL and PL/SQL data types to Java, and fast SQL data access.

Like OCI and OCCI, JDBC is part of the Oracle Instant Client installation, which is available from the Instant Client Oracle Technology Network site at

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/oci/instantclient/>

For more information about JDBC APIs, see the Sun Developer Network site at

<http://java.sun.com/javase/technologies/database/>

For complete information about Oracle Database JDBC APIs, drivers, support and de-support notices, and similar information, see the Oracle Technology Network site at

[http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/java/sqlj\\_jdbc/](http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/java/sqlj_jdbc/)

For an introduction on how to use Java to access and modify data in Oracle Database, see *Oracle Database 2 Day + Java Developer's Guide*.

### **Open Database Connectivity**

Open Database Connectivity (ODBC) is a set of database access APIs that connect to the database, prepare, and then run SQL statements on Oracle Database. An application that uses an ODBC driver can access non-uniform data sources, such as spreadsheets and comma-delimited files.

The Oracle ODBC driver conforms to ODBC 3.51 specifications. It supports all core APIs and a subset of Level1 and Level 2 functions. Microsoft supplies the Driver manager component for the Windows platform. The Oracle Database driver for UNIX platforms is available on the ODBC Oracle Technology Network site at

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/windows/odbc/>

For information about unixODBC standards and the latest Driver manager, see the unixODBC site at

<http://www.unixodbc.org/>

For information about using the Oracle ODBC driver with Windows, see *Oracle Services for Microsoft Transaction Server Developer's Guide*.

For information about how to use the Oracle ODBC driver on Linux, see *Oracle Database Administrator's Reference for Linux and UNIX*.

Like OCI, OCCI, and JDBC, ODBC is part of the Oracle Instant Client installation, which is available from the Instant Client Oracle Technology Network site at

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/tech/oci/instantclient/>

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## Querying and Manipulating Data

This section shows how to explore the database, retrieve information from it, change the information in existing tables, and control transaction processing.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- [Exploring Database Objects](#) on page 2-1
- [Retrieving Data with Queries](#) on page 2-6
- [Adding, Changing, and Deleting Data](#) on page 2-27
- [Controlling Transactions](#) on page 2-30

### Exploring Database Objects

In addition to tables, Oracle Database has many other database objects types. While some objects have many extensive management options, most of them have similar properties. For example, every object in a database belongs to only one schema, and has a unique name with that schema. For that reason, Oracle recommends that your object naming conventions and practices support clear identification of new objects and object types with appropriate schemas. All objects that you will use here belong to the same `hr` schema. Generally, applications work with objects in the same schema.

When you create your own objects, remember that object names cannot exceed 30 characters, and must start with a letter.

- [Looking at Schema Object Types](#) on page 2-1
- [Exploring Tables and Viewing Data](#) on page 2-3

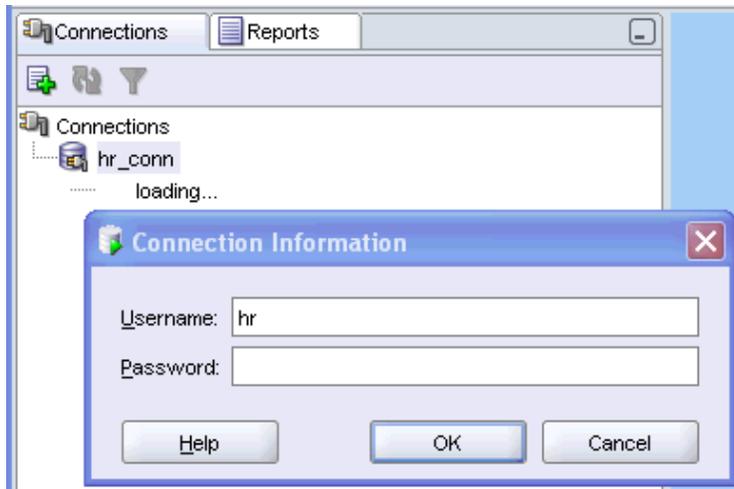
### Looking at Schema Object Types

In this section, you will further familiarize yourself with the `hr` sample schema and its attributes, or database objects. You will learn how you can view these objects by browsing with the Oracle SQL Developer.

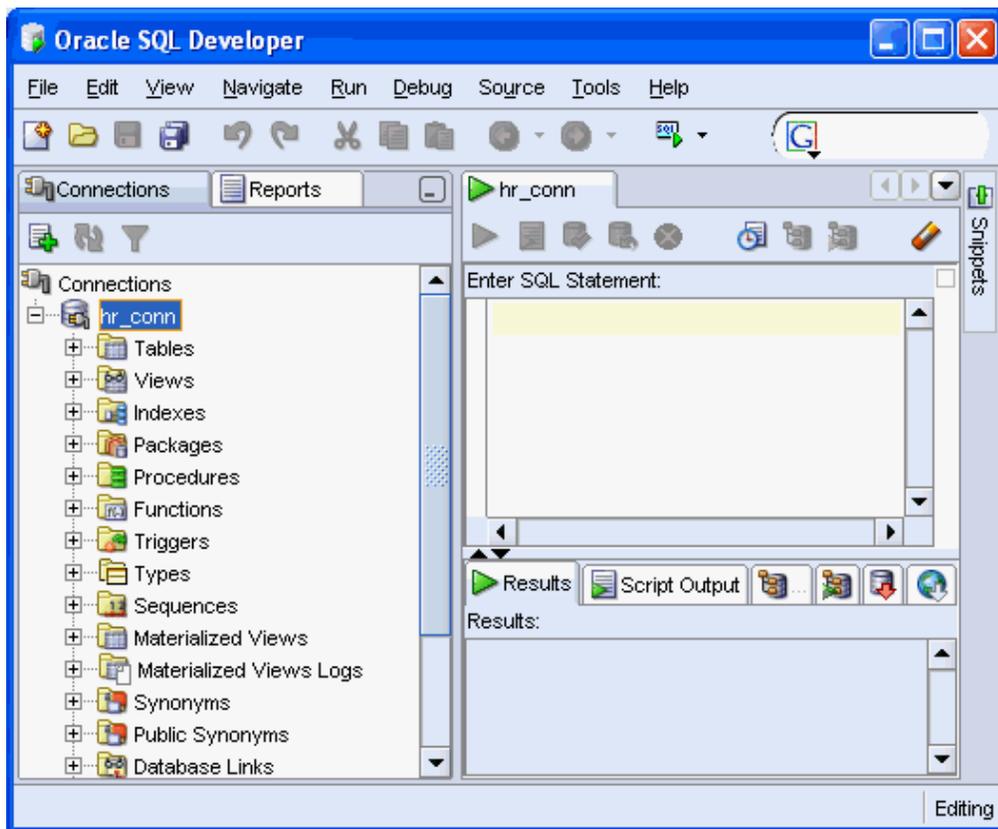
Start by examining some of the types of objects that each schema has.

#### To browse the HR schema:

1. Start Oracle SQL Developer.
2. In the SQL Developer navigation hierarchy, under the Connections tab, click the 'plus' sign next to `hr_conn`.
3. In the Connection Information dialog, authenticate the connection to the `hr` schema by providing the password. Click **OK**.



4. In Connections navigation hierarchy, click the 'plus' sign next to `hr_conn` to expand the view on the `hr` schema database objects.



The schema contains many objects, including tables, views, indexes, packages, procedures, functions, triggers, types, sequences, and so on. Briefly, here is a definition of each type of database object that you are likely to use:

- Tables are basic units of data storage in an Oracle Database, and hold all user-accessible data.
- Views are customized presentations of data from one or more tables, or even other views.

- Indexes are optional structures that are created to increase the performance of data retrieval on a table.
- Functions are PL/SQL programming objects that can be stored and executed in the database. Functions return a value.
- Procedures are PL/SQL programming objects that can be stored and executed in the database. Procedures do not return a value.
- Packages contains procedures or functions that can be stored and executed in the database.
- Triggers are stored procedures or functions that are associated with a table, view, or event. Triggers can be called before or after an event for follow-up action, to prevent erroneous operations, to modify new data so that it conforms to explicit business rules, or to log a record of an operation or an event.
- Types associate a fixed set of properties with the values that can be used in a column of a table, or in an argument of a procedure or function. Oracle Database treats values of one data type differently from values of another data type.
- Sequences are used to generate unique integers; you can use them to automatically generate primary key values.

## Exploring Tables and Viewing Data

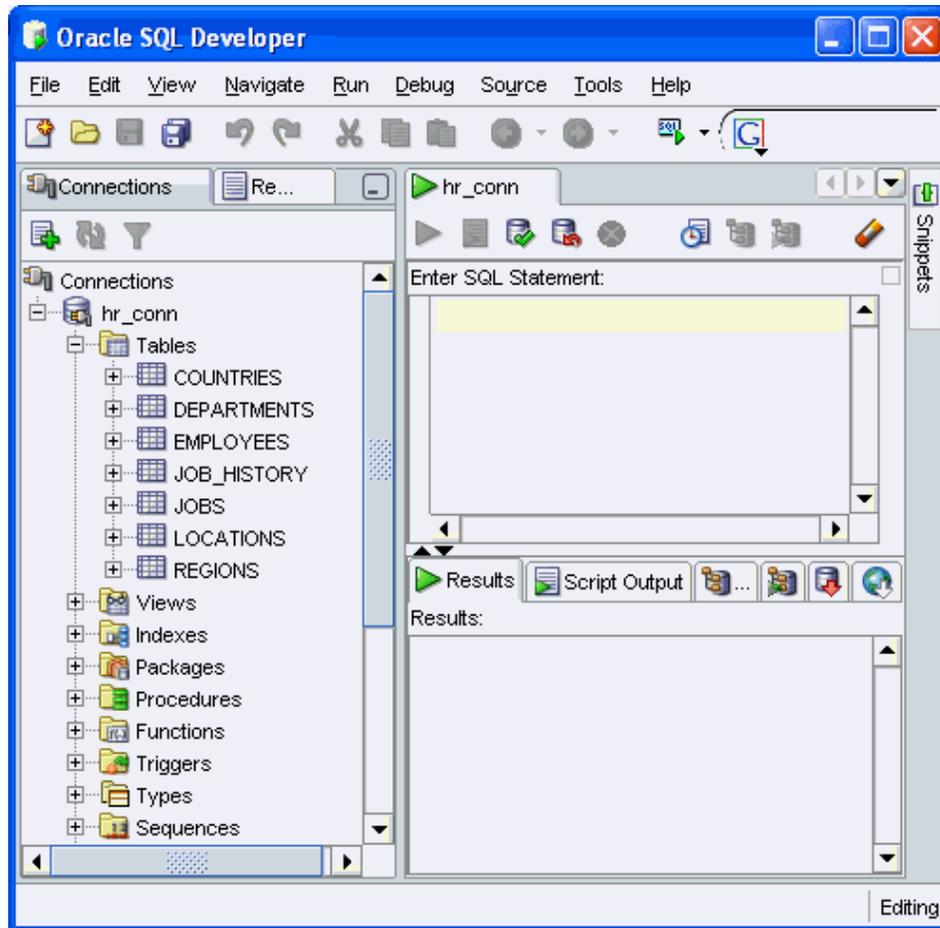
In this section, you will learn how to find out about the properties of database tables, and how to view the data these tables contain.

An Oracle Database table is its basic data container. All data that a user can access is inside one of the tables of the database schema. Each table is two-dimensional object that has rows, which are individual records, and columns, which represent the various fields of each record.

### To view a table:

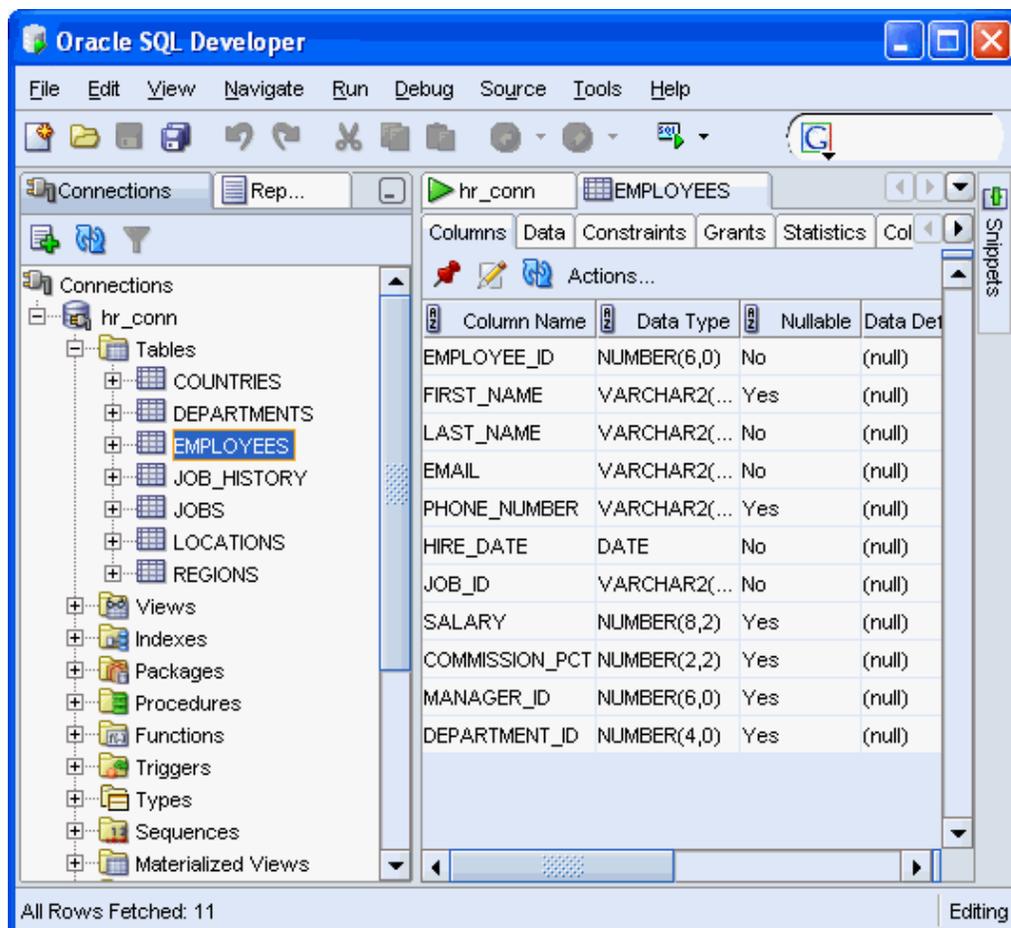
1. In Connections navigation hierarchy, click the 'plus' sign next to Tables to expand the list of tables in the `hr` schema.

The expanded list of tables includes the tables `countries`, `departments`, `employees`, `job_history`, `jobs`, `locations`, and `regions`.



2. Click the employees table.

On the right-hand side of the Oracle SQL Developer window, under the Columns tab, a listing of all columns of this table appears: `EMPLOYEE_ID`, `FIRST_NAME`, `LAST_NAME`, `EMAIL`, `PHONE_NUMBER`, `HIRE_DATE`, `JOB_ID`, `SALARY`, `COMMISSION_PCT`, `MANAGER_ID`, and `DEPARTMENT_ID`. Each column of a table has an associated data type that defines it as character data, an integer, a floating-point number, a date, or time information. To see all properties of the column, move the horizontal scroll bar to the right.



3. Click the **Constraints** tab.

You will see all the constraints that are used on this table including the type of constraint, the constraint's referenced table, whether the constraint is enabled, and other properties.

The screenshot shows the 'Constraints' tab for the 'EMPLOYEES' table. It displays a list of constraints with their names, types, search conditions, reference owners, and referenced tables.

Constraint Name	Constraint Type	Search Condition	Reference Owner	Ref
EMP_DEPT_FK	Foreign_Key	(null)	HR	DEPART
EMP_EMAIL_NN	Check	"EMAIL" IS NOT ...	(null)	(null)
EMP_EMAIL_UK	Unique	(null)	(null)	(null)
EMP_EMP_ID_PK	Primary_Key	(null)	(null)	(null)
EMP_HIRE_DATE_NN	Check	"HIRE_DATE" IS...	(null)	(null)
EMP_JOB_FK	Foreign_Key	(null)	HR	JOBS
EMP_JOB_NN	Check	"JOB_ID" IS NO...	(null)	(null)
EMP_LAST_NAME_...	Check	"LAST_NAME" I...	(null)	(null)

4. Similarly, you can explore the various table properties by clicking on the appropriate tabs:

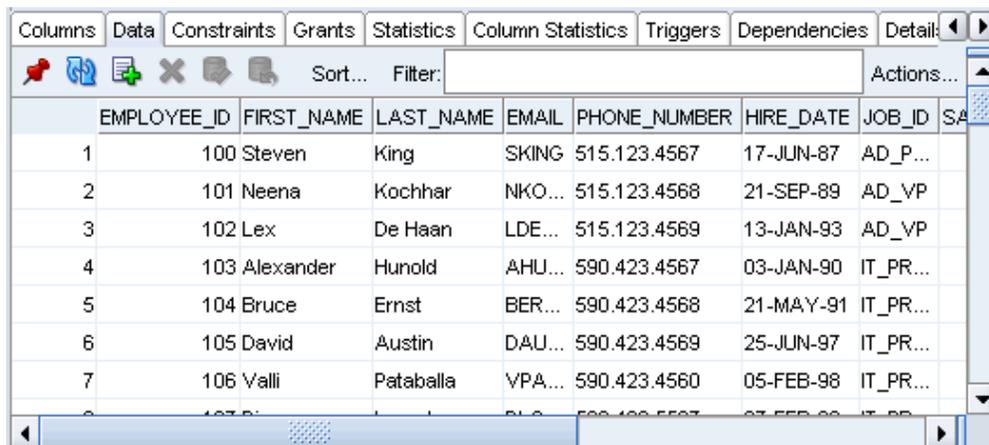
- Grants** describes the privileges for the table

- **Statistics** describes the properties of the data in the table, such as number of records, the number of blocks in memory used by the table, average row length, and so on.
- **Column Statistics** lists the number of distinct entries for each column, the low and high values, and so on.
- **Triggers** lists the triggers associated with the table together with the type of trigger, the triggering event, and so on.
- **Dependencies** lists all the objects that are dependent on this table, such as triggers and views.
- **Details** lists other details of the table, such as creation date, owner (hr), name, partitioning information, and so on.
- **Indexes** lists the indexes that are defined on the table columns, together with their status, type, and so on.
- **SQL** summarizes the preceding information in the definition of the table `employees`; it includes column definition, indexes, and so on.

#### To view data in a table:

On the right-hand side of the Oracle SQL Developer window, click the **Data** tab.

You will see a listing of all records of this table. Each column of a table has an associated data type that defines it as character data, an integer, a floating-point number, a date, or time information. To see all properties of the column, move the horizontal scroll bar to the right.



	EMPLOYEE_ID	FIRST_NAME	LAST_NAME	EMAIL	PHONE_NUMBER	HIRE_DATE	JOB_ID	SA
1	100	Steven	King	SKING	515.123.4567	17-JUN-87	AD_P...	
2	101	Neena	Kochhar	NKO...	515.123.4568	21-SEP-89	AD_VP	
3	102	Lex	De Haan	LDE...	515.123.4569	13-JAN-93	AD_VP	
4	103	Alexander	Hunold	AHU...	590.423.4567	03-JAN-90	IT_PR...	
5	104	Bruce	Ernst	BER...	590.423.4568	21-MAY-91	IT_PR...	
6	105	David	Austin	DAU...	590.423.4569	25-JUN-97	IT_PR...	
7	106	Valli	Pataballa	VPA...	590.423.4560	05-FEB-98	IT_PR...	

## Retrieving Data with Queries

A **query** is an operation that retrieves data from one or more tables or views. A top-level `SELECT` statement returns results of a query, and a query nested within another SQL statement is called a **subquery**.

This section introduces some types of queries and subqueries.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference*

## Selecting Data from a Table

A simple query form looks like this:

```
SELECT select_list FROM source_list
```

Here, *select\_list* specifies the columns from which the data is retrieved, and the *source\_list* specifies the tables or views where these columns are found. The number of columns, as well as the data type and length of each column, is determined by the elements of the select list. Note also that the select list can use SQL functions.

To see all columns in a table, use *\** for *select\_list*.

[Example 2-1](#) uses the `SELECT` statement to return the information you previously saw by viewing the `employees` table in the Data window.

### Example 2-1 Selecting All Columns in a Table

1. In the SQL Worksheet pane, enter:

```
SELECT * FROM employees;
```

2. Above the SQL Worksheet pane, click the **Run Script** icon. Alternatively, you can use the F5 shortcut key.



3. Click the **Script Output** tab, below the SQL Worksheet pane, to see the results of the query.

EMPLOYEE_ID	FIRST_NAME	LAST_NAME	...
-----	-----	-----	...
100	Steven	King	...
101	Neena	Kochhar	...
102	Lex	De Haan	...
...			...
107 rows selected			

Between running different queries, you can clear both the SQL Worksheet and Script Output panes by clicking the Eraser icon in the toolbar.

[Example 2-2](#) shows how to use the `SELECT` statement to return only the columns you requested in your query, namely `first_name`, `last_name`, and `hire_date`.

### Example 2-2 Selecting Specific Columns from a Table

```
SELECT first_name, last_name, hire_date FROM employees;
```

These are the results of the query.

FIRST_NAME	LAST_NAME	HIRE_DATE
-----	-----	-----
Steven	King	17-JUN-87
Neena	Kochhar	21-SEP-89
Lex	De Haan	13-JAN-93
...		
107 rows selected		

## Using Column Aliases

To display a column with a new heading, you can rename a column within your report by using an alias immediately after the correct name of the column. This alias effectively renames the item for the duration of the query.

In [Example 2-3](#), the `SELECT` statement returns the columns you request in your query, but with the column headings that you specified as aliases: `name1`, `name2`, and `hired`.

### Example 2-3 Using a Simple Column Alias

```
SELECT first_name name1, last_name name2, hire_date hired FROM employees;
```

The results of the query follow:

NAME1	NAME2	HIRED
-----	-----	-----
Steven	King	17-JUN-87
Neena	Kochhar	21-SEP-89
Lex	De Haan	13-JAN-93
...		
107 rows selected		

If the alias that you want to use contains uppercase and lowercase characters or spaces, or a combination, you must use double quotation marks (").

[Example 2-4](#) uses a `SELECT` statement to return the columns with column heading aliases that you specify: `First`, `Last`, and `Date Started`.

### Example 2-4 Using Quoted Alias Columns

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last", hire_date "Date Started"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query follow.

First	Last	Date Started
-----	-----	-----
Steven	King	17-JUN-87
Neena	Kochhar	21-SEP-89
Lex	De Haan	13-JAN-93
...		
107 rows selected		

## Restricting Data to Match Specific Conditions

In addition to the `SELECT` and `FROM` keywords, other common clauses are used in queries. The `WHERE` clause uses comparison operators to select the rows that should be retrieved, instead of returning all the rows in the tables.

This table lists the comparison operators that can be used in the `WHERE` clause.

Comparison Operator	Definition
=	Tests for equality
!=, <>	Tests for inequality
>	Tests for greater than
>=	Tests for greater than or equal

Comparison Operator	Definition
<	Tests for less than
<=	Tests for less than or equal
BETWEEN <i>a</i> AND <i>b</i>	Tests for a fit in the range between two values, inclusive
LIKE	Tests for a match in a string, using the wildcard symbols (%) for zero or multiple characters, or underscore (_) for a single character
IN()	Tests for a match in a specified list of values
NOT IN()	Tests that there is no match in a specified list of values
IS NULL	Tests that the value is null
IS NOT NULL	Tests that the value is not null

The WHERE clause can test a single condition at a time, or combine multiple tests using the AND clause.

[Example 2-5](#) shows how to use the WHERE clause to return the column values that are restricted to a single department, which has 90 for its department\_id.

#### **Example 2-5 Testing for a Single Condition**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last"
FROM employees
WHERE department_id=90;
```

The results of the query appear.

```
First          Last
-----
Steven         King
Neena          Kochhar
Lex            De Haan
```

3 rows selected

[Example 2-6](#) shows how to use the WHERE . . . AND clause to return the rows that are restricted to two separate condition, to match a salary that is greater or equal to 11,000, and an assigned (not null) commission rate.

#### **Example 2-6 Testing Multiple Conditions**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last",
SALARY "Salary", COMMISSION_PCT "%"
FROM employees
WHERE salary >=11000 AND commission_pct IS NOT NULL;
```

The results of the query appear.

```
First          Last          Salary          %
-----
John           Russell       14000           0.4
Karen          Partners      13500           0.3
Alberto        Errazuriz    12000           0.3
...
```

6 rows selected

[Example 2-7](#) uses the `WHERE` clause to return the six rows where the last name starts with `Ma`: Mallin, Markle, Marlow, Marvins, Matos, and Mavris. If you use a matching expression `'%ma%'` instead (the text `ma` could appear anywhere in the column), your results would contain only three rows, for Kumar, Urman, and Vollman.

**Example 2-7 Testing for a Matching String**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last"
FROM employees
WHERE last_name LIKE 'Ma%';
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last
-----	-----
Jason	Mallin
Steven	Markle
James	Marlow
...	
6 rows selected	

[Example 2-8](#) shows you how to use the `WHERE . . . IN` clause to find employees who work in several different departments, matching the `DEPARTMENT_ID` to a list of values 100, 110, 120. The result will contain eight rows, with four rows matching the first value in the list, and the other two rows matching the second value in the list; there are no matches for 120.

**Example 2-8 Testing for a Match in a List of Values**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last", department_id "Department"
FROM employees
WHERE department_id IN (100, 110, 120);
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last	Department
-----	-----	-----
John	Chen	100
Daniel	Faviet	100
William	Gietz	110
...		
8 rows selected		

If you want to find employees who work in a particular department, but do not know the corresponding `department_id` value, you must look in both the `employees` and `departments` tables. Looking at an intersection of two tables is a `JOIN` operation.

Fully qualified column names, such as `employees.employee_id`, are optional. However, when queries use two or more tables that have the same column name, you must identify these columns with the table. For example, the `employees.department_id` and `departments.department_id` could be used together to determine the name of a department in which an employee works.

Note that when using fully qualified column names, the query is more readable if you use an alias for the name of the table, such as `d` for `departments`. The column `departments.department_id` then becomes `d.department_id`, and `employees.department_id` becomes `e.department_id`. You must create these table aliases in the `FROM` clause of the query.

[Example 2-9](#) shows the result set containing columns from two separate tables. Because the column names in the report are unique, they did not need to be qualified

by the table name. However, because the `WHERE` clause uses the same column name from two different tables, you must qualify it.

**Example 2–9 Testing for a Value in Another Table**

```
SELECT e.first_name "First", e.last_name "Last", d.department_name "Department"
FROM employees e, departments d
WHERE e.department_id = d.department_id;
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last	Department
Jennifer	Whalen	Administration
Michael	Hartstein	Marketing
Pat	Fay	Marketing
...		

106 rows selected

## Searching for Patterns in Data

**Regular expressions** allow you to use standard syntax conventions to search for complex patterns in character sequences. A regular expression defines the search pattern by using **metacharacters** that specify search algorithms, and **literals** that specify the characters.

Regular expression functions include `REGEXP_INSTR`, `REGEXP_LIKE`, `REGEXP_REPLACE`, and `REGEXP_SUBSTR`.

[Example 2–10](#) shows how to find all managers. The metacharacter `|` indicates an `OR` condition, which you must use because the manager position is specified either as `'%_MGR'` or `'%_MAN'`, depending on department. The option `i` specifies that the match should be case insensitive.

**Example 2–10 Finding a Matching Data Pattern**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last", job_id "Job"
FROM employees
WHERE REGEXP_LIKE (job_id, '(_m[an|gr])', 'i');
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last	Job
Nancy	Greenberg	FI_MGR
Den	Raphaely	PU_MAN
Matthew	Weiss	ST_MAN
...		

14 rows selected

[Example 2–11](#) shows how the `REGEXP_LIKE` expression selects rows where the `last_name` has a double vowel (two adjacent occurrences of either `a`, `e`, `i`, `o`, or `u`). See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `REGEXP_LIKE` condition.

**Example 2–11 Finding a Matching Data Pattern (Adjacent Characters)**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last"
FROM employees
WHERE REGEXP_LIKE (last_name, '([aeiou])\1', 'i');
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last
Harrison	Bloom
Lex	De Haan
Kevin	Feeney
...	

8 rows selected

To find a data pattern and replace it with another one, use the `REGEXP_REPLACE`. [Example 2-12](#) replaces the phone numbers of the format 'nnn.nnn.nnnn' with the format '(nnn) nnn-nnnn'. Note that digits are matched with the metacharacter `[[:digit:]]`, while the metacharacter `{n}` indicates the number of occurrences. The metacharacter `.` typically indicates any character in an expression, so the metacharacter `\` is used as an escape character and makes the following character in the pattern a literal. This result set shows the telephone numbers in the new format. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `REGEXP_REPLACE` condition.

#### **Example 2-12 Replacing a Data Pattern**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last",
       phone_number "Old Number",
       REGEXP_REPLACE(phone_number,
                      '([[:digit:]]{3})\.[[:digit:]]{3})\.[[:digit:]]{4})',
                      '(\1) \2-\3') "New Number"
FROM employees
WHERE department_id = 90;
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last	Old Number	New Number
Steven	King	515.123.4567	(515) 123-4567
Neena	Kochhar	515.123.4568	(515) 123-4568
Lex	De Haan	515.123.4569	(515) 123-4569

3 rows selected

[Example 2-13](#) shows how you can use the `REGEXP_SUBSTR` function to find the first substring that matches a pattern. Note that the metacharacter `+` indicates multiple occurrences of the pattern. This result set extracts numerals and dashes from the `street_address` column. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `REGEXP_SUBSTR` expression.

#### **Example 2-13 Returning a Substring**

```
SELECT street_address, REGEXP_SUBSTR(street_address,
                                     '([[:digit:]]-)+', 1, 1) "Street Numbers"
FROM locations;
```

The results of the query appear.

STREET_ADDRESS	Street Numbers
1297 Via Cola di Rie	1297
93091 Calle della Testa	93091
2017 Shinjuku-ku	2017
...	

23 rows selected

The `REGEXP_INSTR` function enables you to find the position of the first substring that matches a pattern. In [Example 2-14](#), you use `REGEXP_INSTR` to find a space character, ' '. Note that the metacharacter '+' indicates multiple occurrences of the pattern. This result set shows the position of the first space in each address. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `REGEXP_INSTR` expression.

**Example 2-14 Returning a Location of a Substring**

```
SELECT street_address, REGEXP_INSTR(street_address, '[ ]+', 1, 1) "Position"
FROM locations;
```

The results of the query appear.

STREET_ADDRESS	Position
-----	-----
1297 Via Cola di Rie	5
93091 Calle della Testa	6
2017 Shinjuku-ku	5
...	

23 rows selected

The function `REGEXP_COUNT` determines the number of times the specified character pattern repeats in a string. In [Example 2-15](#), `REGEXP_COUNT` returns the number of times the space character occurs in the `street_address` column of the table `locations`. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `REGEXP_COUNT` expression.

**Example 2-15 Returning the Number of Occurrences of a Substring**

```
SELECT street_address, REGEXP_COUNT(street_address, ' ', 1) "Number of Spaces"
FROM locations;
```

The results of the query appear.

STREET_ADDRESS	Number of Spaces
-----	-----
1297 Via Cola di Rie	4
93091 Calle della Testa	3
2017 Shinjuku-ku	1
...	

23 rows selected

This result set shows the number of spaces in each address.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for syntax of regular expressions

## Sorting Data

In SQL, the **ORDER BY** clause is used to identify which columns are used to sort the resulting data. The sort criteria does not have to be included in the result set, and can include expressions, column names, arithmetic operations, user-defined functions, and so on.

[Example 2-16](#) shows an `ORDER BY` clause that returns the result set sorted in order of `last_name`, in ascending order.

**Example 2–16 Use Quoted Alias Columns**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last", hire_date "Date Started"
FROM employees
ORDER BY last_name;
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last	Date Started
Ellen	Abel	11-MAY-96
Sundar	Ande	24-MAR-00
Mozhe	Atkinson	30-OCT-97
...		

107 rows selected

**Using Built-In and Aggregate Functions**

SQL arithmetic operators and other built-in functions allow you to perform calculations directly on data stored in the tables.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on all available SQL functions

**Using Arithmetic Operators**

Oracle Database SQL supports the basic arithmetic operators, such as the plus sign (+) for addition, the minus sign (-) for subtraction, the asterisk (\*) for multiplication, and the forward slash (/) for division. These are evaluated according to standard arithmetic rules of evaluation order.

In [Example 2–17](#), the result set show the salary earned by employees who are eligible for commission earnings, in order of the hire date.

**Example 2–17 Evaluating an Arithmetic Expression**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last", salary * 12 "Annual Compensation"
FROM employees
WHERE commission_pct IS NOT NULL
ORDER BY hire_date;
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last	Annual Compensation
Janette	King	120000
Patrick	Sully	114000
Ellen	Abel	132000
...		

35 rows selected

**Using Numeric Functions**

Oracle Database has many numeric functions for manipulating numeric values, such as ROUND for rounding to a specified decimal or TRUNC for truncating to a specified decimal. These functions all return a single value for each row that is evaluated.

[Example 2–18](#) shows how to determine daily pay, rounded off to the nearest cent.

**Example 2–18 Rounding off Numeric Data**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last",
ROUND(salary/30, 2) "Daily Compensation"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last	Daily Compensation
Steven	King	800
Neena	Kochhar	566.67
Lex	De Haan	566.67
...		

107 rows selected

[Example 2–19](#) shows how to determine daily pay that is truncated at the nearest dollar. Note that the TRUNC function does not round-up the value.

**Example 2–19 Truncating Numeric Data**

```
SELECT first_name "First", last_name "Last",
TRUNC(salary/30, 0) "Daily Compensation"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

First	Last	Daily Compensation
Steven	King	800
Neena	Kochhar	566
Lex	De Haan	566
...		

107 rows selected

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on numeric SQL functions

**Using Character Functions**

Oracle Database includes an extensive list of character functions for customizing character values.

These functions can change the case of a character expression to UPPER or LOWER, remove blanks, concatenate strings, and extract or remove substrings.

[Example 2–20](#) demonstrates how to change the character case of your expression. The result set shows the results of UPPER, LOWER, and INITCAP functions.

**Example 2–20 Changing the Case of Character Data**

```
SELECT UPPER(first_name) "First upper",
LOWER(last_name) "Last lower",
INITCAP(email) "E-Mail"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

First upper	Last lower	E-Mail
STEVEN	king	Sking

NEENA	kochhar	Nkochhar
LEX	de haan	Ldehaan

To produce information from two separate columns or expressions in the same column of the report, you can concatenate the separate results by using the concatenation operator, `||`. Note also that in [Example 2-21](#), you are performing a 4-way join operation. This result set shows that the simple concatenation function in column `Name` listed the `last_name` value immediately after the `first_name` value, while the nested concatenation function in column `Location` separated the `city` and `country_name` values.

### Example 2-21 Concatenating Character Data

```
SELECT e.first_name || ' ' || e.last_name "Name",
       l.city || ', ' || c.country_name "Location"
FROM employees e, departments d, locations l, countries c
WHERE e.department_id=d.department_id AND
      d.location_id=l.location_id AND
      l.country_id=c.country_id
ORDER BY last_name;
```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Location
Ellen Abel	Oxford, United Kingdom
Sundar Ande	Oxford, United Kingdom
Mozhe Atkinson	South San Francisco, United States of America
...	

106 rows selected

You can use `RTRIM` and `LTRIM` functions to remove characters (by default, spaces) from the beginning or the end of character data, respectively. The `TRIM` function removes both leading and following characters. In [Example 2-22](#), you use a type conversion function, `TO_CHAR`. This result set shows that all employees without a leading `M` in their `last_name` values, the `MAN` missing from the end of the `job_id` values, and the leading `0` is missing from the `date_hired` values.

### Example 2-22 Trimming Character Data

```
SELECT LTRIM(last_name, 'M') "Last Name",
       RTRIM(job_id, 'MAN') "Job",
       TO_CHAR(TRIM(LEADING 0 FROM hire_date)) "Hired"
FROM employees
WHERE department_id=50;
```

The results of the query appear.

Last Name	Job	Hired
Weiss	ST_	18-JUL-96
Fripp	ST_	10-APR-97
Kaufling	ST_	1-MAY-95
Vollman	ST_	10-OCT-97
ourgos	ST_	16-NOV-99
...		
ikkilineni	ST_CLERK	28-SEP-98
Landry	ST_CLERK	14-JAN-99
arkle	ST_CLERK	8-MAR-00
...		

```

arlow                ST_CLERK    16-FEB-97
...
allin                ST_CLERK    14-JUN-96
...
Philtanker           ST_CLERK    6-FEB-00
...
Patel                ST_CLERK    6-APR-98
...
atos                 ST_CLERK    15-MAR-98
Vargas               ST_CLERK    9-JUL-98
Taylor               SH_CLERK    24-JAN-98
...
Geoni                SH_CLERK    3-FEB-00
...
Cabrio               SH_CLERK    7-FEB-99
...
Bell                 SH_CLERK    4-FEB-96
Everett              SH_CLERK    3-MAR-97
cCain                SH_CLERK    1-JUL-98
...
45 rows selected

```

You can use RPAD to add characters (by default, spaces) to the end of character data. The LPAD function adds characters to the beginning of character data.

In [Example 2-23](#), the result set shows a simple histogram of relative salary values.

#### **Example 2-23 Padding Character Data**

```

SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       RPAD(' ', salary/1000, '$') "Salary"
FROM employees;

```

The results of the query appear.

```

Name                               Salary
-----
Steven King                         $$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Neena Kochhar                        $$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
Lex De Haan                          $$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$$
...
107 rows selected

```

You can use SUBSTR to extract only a substring of data, specified by the starting character position and the total number of characters.

In [Example 2-24](#), you use SUBSTR to abbreviate the first\_name value to an initial, and strip the area code from the phone\_number value.

#### **Example 2-24 Extracting a Substring of Character Data**

```

SELECT SUBSTR(first_name, 1, 1) || '. ' || last_name "Name",
       SUBSTR(phone_number, 5, 8) "Phone"
FROM employees;

```

The results of the query appear.

```

Name                               Phone
-----
S. King                            123.4567
N. Kochhar                          123.4568
L. De Haan                          123.4569

```

```
...
107 rows selected
```

This result set shows the `first_name` values abbreviated to an initial, and the `phone_number` values without the leading area code component.

You can use `REPLACE`, in combination with `SUBSTR`, to replace a specific substring if you know its relative location in the character data.

In [Example 2–25](#), you use `SUBSTR` in the `WHERE` clause to replace the abbreviation for a job code.

#### **Example 2–25 Replacing Substring of Character Data**

```
SELECT SUBSTR(first_name, 1, 1) || '. ' || last_name "Name",
REPLACE(job_id, 'SH', 'SHIPPING') "Job"
FROM employees
WHERE SUBSTR(job_id, 1, 2) = 'SH';
```

The results of the query appear.

```
Name                               Job
-----
W. Taylor                           SHIPPING CLERK
J. Fleaur                            SHIPPING_CLERK
M. Sullivan                          SHIPPING_CLERK
...
20 rows selected
```

This result set shows the `first_name` values abbreviated to an initial, and the `job_id` values were replaced.

#### **See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on character SQL functions

## **Using Datetime Functions**

Oracle Database has data functions for manipulating and calculating date and time data, including interval functions.

In [Example 2–26](#), you will determine the duration of employment in a particular job for those employees who have switched to a different position. Note that the names are not unique because employees may hold more than two different positions over time. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `MONTHS_BETWEEN` function.

#### **Example 2–26 Determining the Number of Months Between Dates**

```
SELECT e.first_name || ' ' || e.last_name "Name",
TRUNC(MONTHS_BETWEEN(j.end_date, j.start_date)) "Months Worked"
FROM employees e, job_history j
WHERE e.employee_id = j.employee_id
ORDER BY "Months Worked";
```

The results of the query appear.

```
Name                               Months Worked
-----
Jonathon Taylor                       9
Payam Kaufling                          11
```

```

Jonathon Taylor
...
10 rows selected

```

You will notice that this result shows that of the employees who left the company, the shortest and the longest stays were 9 and 69 months, respectively.

In [Example 2–27](#), you will use the `EXTRACT` function to determine if employees are in their sixth calendar year of continuous employment. The `EXTRACT` function can also be used in combination with `MONTH`, `DATE`, and so on.

Note that the `SYSDATE` function gives the current date of the system clock. See Oracle Database SQL Language Reference for information about the `SYSDATE` function.

### **Example 2–27 Determining the Years Between Dates**

```

SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       (EXTRACT(YEAR from SYSDATE) - EXTRACT(YEAR FROM hire_date)) "Years Employed"
FROM employees;

```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Years Employed
-----	-----
Steven King	20
Neena Kochhar	18
Lex De Haan	14
...	
107 rows selected	

You will notice that this result shows that employee 'Steven King' has worked for the company the longest, 20 years.

In [Example 2–28](#), you will use the `last_day` function to determine the last day of the month in which an employee was hired.

### **Example 2–28 Getting the Last Day of the Month for a Specified date**

```

SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name", hire_date "Date Started",
       LAST_DAY(hire_date) "End of Month"
FROM employees;

```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Date Started	End of Month
-----	-----	-----
Steven King	17-JUN-87	30-JUN-87
Neena Kochhar	21-SEP-89	30-SEP-89
Lex De Haan	13-JAN-93	31-JAN-93
...		
107 rows selected		

You will notice that this result shows the correct end of the month for each `hire_date` value.

In [Example 2–29](#), you will use the `ADD_MONTHS` function to add 6 months to the date on which an employee was hired. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `ADD_MONTHS` function.

### **Example 2–29 Adding Months to a Date**

```

SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name", hire_date "Date Started",

```

```
ADD_MONTHS(hire_date, 6) "New Date"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Date Started	New Date
Steven King	17-JUN-87	17-DEC-87
Neena Kochhar	21-SEP-89	21-MAR-90
Lex De Haan	13-JAN-93	13-JUL-93
...		

107 rows selected

In [Example 2–30](#), you will use the `SYSTIMESTAMP` function determine the current system time and date. `SYSTIMESTAMP` is similar to `SYSDATE`, but also contains time of day information, including the time zone and fractional seconds. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `SYSTIMESTAMP` function.

Note that instead of an `hr` schema table, you are using the table `DUAL`, a small table in the data dictionary that you can reference to guarantee a known result. See *Oracle Database Concepts* for information about the `DUAL` table and *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about selecting from the `DUAL` table.

### Example 2–30 Getting the System Date and Time

```
SELECT EXTRACT(HOUR FROM SYSTIMESTAMP) || ':' ||
EXTRACT(MINUTE FROM SYSTIMESTAMP) || ':' ||
ROUND(EXTRACT(SECOND FROM SYSTIMESTAMP), 0) || ', ' ||
EXTRACT(MONTH FROM SYSTIMESTAMP) || '/' ||
EXTRACT(DAY FROM SYSTIMESTAMP) || '/' ||
EXTRACT(YEAR FROM SYSTIMESTAMP) "System Time and Date"
FROM DUAL;
```

The results of the query appear.

```
System Time and Date
-----
18:25:56, 4/5/2007
```

Your result would change, depending on the current `SYSTIMESTAMP` value.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for datetime functions

## Using Data Type Conversion Functions

Oracle Database has data functions for converting between different data types. This is particularly useful when you need to display data of different data types in the same column.

There are three general types of conversion functions: for characters (`TO_CHAR`), for numbers (`TO_NUMBER`), for dates (`TO_DATE`) and for timestamps (`TO_TIMESTAMP`).

You will use the `TO_CHAR` function to convert a date into a desired format.

[Example 2–31](#) converts the `HIRE_DATE` values to a 'FMMonth DD YYYY' format; note that the FM option removes all leading or trailing blanks from the month name. Other options you could use include 'DD-MON-YYYY AD', 'MM-DD-YYYY HH24:MI:SS', and so on.

**Example 2–31 Using TO\_CHAR to Convert a Date Using a Format Template**

```
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       TO_CHAR(hire_date, 'FMMonth DD YYYY') "Date Started"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Date Started
-----	-----
Steven King	June 17 1987
Neena Kochhar	September 21 1989
Lex De Haan	January 13 1993
...	
107 rows selected	

Your result set lists all the `hire_date` values in the new format.

[Example 2–32](#) shows how you can use two standard format tags, Short Date (DS) and Long Date (DL), to format your date.

**Example 2–32 Using TO\_CHAR to Convert a Date Using a Standard Format**

```
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       TO_CHAR(hire_date, 'DS') "Short Date",
       TO_CHAR(hire_date, 'DL') "Long Date"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Short Date	Long Date
-----	-----	-----
Steven King	6/17/1987	Wednesday, June 17, 1987
Neera Kochhar	9/21/19889	Thursday, September 21, 1989
Lex De Haen	1/13/1993	Wednesday, January 13, 1993
...		
107 rows selected		

You can use the `TO_CHAR` function to convert a number to a desired currency format.

[Example 2–33](#) will convert the `salary` values to a '\$99,999.99' format. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for `TO_CHAR`.

**Example 2–33 Using TO\_CHAR to Convert a Number to a Currency Template**

```
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       TO_CHAR(salary, '$99,999.99') "Salary"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Salary
-----	-----
Steven King	\$24,000.00
Neena Kochhar	\$17,000.00
Lex De Haan	\$17,000.00
...	
107 rows selected	

[Example 2–34](#) shows how you can use the `TO_NUMBER` function to convert a character into a number that you can subsequently use in calculations. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for `TO_NUMBER`.

**Example 2–34 Using TO\_NUMBER to Convert a Character to a Number**

```
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       TO_NUMBER('300') + salary "Proposed Salary"
FROM employees
WHERE SUBSTR(job_id, 4, 5) = 'CLERK';
```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Proposed Salary
-----	-----
Alexander Khoo	3400
Shelli Baida	3200
Sigal Tobias	3100
...	
45 rows selected	

Your result set lists all the proposed salary values for the selected subset of employees.

You can use the TO\_DATE function to convert a character data with a specified format mode into a date. In [Example 2–35](#), you will use the format model 'Month dd, YYYY, HH:MI A.M.'; other formats include 'DD-MON-RR', 'FF-Mon-YY HH24:MI:SI', and so on.

**Example 2–35 Using TO\_DATE to Convert a Character Data to a Date**

```
SELECT TO_DATE('January 5, 2007, 8:43 A.M.',
              'Month dd, YYYY, HH:MI A.M.') "Date"
FROM DUAL;
```

The results of the query appear.

```
Date
-----
05-JAN-07
```

Your result converts the character data, interpreted by the specified format string, into a DATE type.

[Example 2–36](#) shows how you can use the TO\_TIMESTAMP method with format models such as 'DD-Mon-RR HH24:MI:SS.FF'. See *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for TO\_DATE.

**Example 2–36 Using TO\_TIMESTAMP to Convert Character Data to a Timestamp**

```
SELECT TO_TIMESTAMP('May 5, 2007, 8:43 A.M.',
                   'Month dd, YYYY, HH:MI A.M.') "Timestamp"
FROM DUAL;
```

The results of the query appear.

```
Timestamp
-----
05-MAY-07 08.43.00.000000000 AM
```

Your result converts the character data, interpreted by the specified format string, into a TIMESTAMP type.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for data type conversion functions

**Using Aggregate Functions**

Aggregate functions operate on groups of rows, or an entire table or view. By their nature, these functions provide statistical results for sets, and include average (AVG), count (COUNT), maximum (MAX), minimum (MIN), standard deviation (STDEV), sum (SUM), and so on.

Aggregate functions are especially powerful when used in combination with the **GROUP BY** clause, where a query returns a list that is grouped by one or more columns, with a distinct result for each of the groupings.

You can also use the **HAVING** clause, which specifies that a query should only return rows where aggregate values meet the specified conditions.

[Example 2–37](#) shows how you can use the COUNT function and the GROUP BY clause to determine how many people report to each manager. Note that the wildcard, \*, is used to denote the counting of an entire record.

**Example 2–37 Counting the Number of Rows That Satisfy an Expression**

```
SELECT manager_id "Manager",
       COUNT(*) "Number of Reports"
FROM employees
GROUP BY manager_id;
```

The results of the query appear.

```
Manager Number of Reports
-----
                1
          100          14
          123           8
...
19 rows selected
```

Your result shows how many people report to each manager. Note that one person does not report to anyone; if you examine the data, you will see that Steven King does not have a supervisor.

[Example 2–38](#) shows how you can also use the COUNT function with a DISTINCT option to determine how many distinct values and are in a data set. Here, you will count the number of departments that have employees.

**Example 2–38 Counting a Number of Distinct Values in a Set**

```
SELECT COUNT(DISTINCT department_id) "Number of Departments"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

```
Number of Departments
-----
11
```

Your result shows that 11 departments have employees. If you look at the departments table, you will note that it lists 27 departments.

You can use basic statistical functions, such as `MIN`, `MAX`, `MEDIAN`, `AVG`, and so on, to determine the range of salaries across the set. In [Example 2–39](#), you will examine salaries grouped by `job_id`, but a similar query could be used to examine salaries across departments, locations, and so on.

**Example 2–39 Determining Statistical Information**

```
SELECT job_id "Job", COUNT(*) "#", MIN(salary) "Minimum",
       ROUND(AVG(salary), 0) "Average",
       MEDIAN(salary) "Median", MAX(salary) "Maximum",
       ROUND(STDDEV(salary)) "Std Dev"
FROM employees
GROUP BY job_id
ORDER BY job_id;
```

The results of the query appear.

Job	#	Minimum	Average	Median	Maximum	Std Dev
AC_ACCOUNT	1	8300	8300	8300	8300	0
AC_MGR	1	12000	12000	12000	12000	0
AD_ASST	1	4400	4400	4400	4400	0
AD PRES	1	24000	24000	24000	24000	0
AD_VP	2	17000	17000	17000	17000	0
FI_ACCOUNT	5	6900	7920	7800	9000	766
FI_MGR	1	12000	12000	12000	12000	0
HR_REP	1	6500	6500	6500	6500	0
IT_PROG	5	4200	5760	4800	9000	1926
MK_MAN	1	13000	13000	13000	13000	0
MK_REP	1	6000	6000	6000	6000	0
...						

19 rows selected

Your result shows the statistics for 19 different jobs.

If you use the `HAVING` clause, you can limit your result set to only the kind of values that interest you. In [Example 2–40](#), you see the salary budget for departments where the sum of salaries exceeds \$1,000,000 annually.

**Example 2–40 Limiting the Results Using the HAVING Clause**

```
SELECT Department_id "Department", SUM(salary*12) "All Salaries"
FROM employees
HAVING SUM(salary * 12) >= 1000000
GROUP BY department_id;
```

The results of the query appear.

Department	All Salaries
50	1876800
80	3654000

Your result shows that only two departments have salary budgets in excess of \$1,000,000.

You can use the `RANK` function to determine the relative ordered rank of a number, and use the `PERCENT_RANK` function to determine the percentile position. In [Example 2–41](#), you determine these values for a salary of \$3,000 over the subset of all employees who have a 'CLERK' designation in the `job_id`.

You can also examine groups using the **WITHIN GROUP** function.

**Example 2–41 Determining RANK and PERCENT\_RANK**

```
SELECT RANK(3000) WITHIN GROUP (ORDER BY salary DESC) "Rank",
       ROUND(100 * (PERCENT_RANK(3000)
                WITHIN GROUP (ORDER BY salary DESC)), 0) "Percentile"
FROM employees
WHERE job_id LIKE '%CLERK';
```

The results of the query appear.

```
Rank Percentile
-----
      20         42
```

Your result shows that a salary of \$3,000 is the 20<sup>th</sup> highest, and that it is in the 42<sup>nd</sup> percentile among all employees who have a 'CLERK' designation.

The DENSE\_RANK function works much like the RANK function, but the identical values receive the same rank, and there are no gaps in the ranking. In [Example 2–42](#), you will determine the DENSE\_RANK of \$3,000 over the subset of all employees who have a 'CLERK' designation in the job\_id.

**Example 2–42 Determining DENSE\_RANK:**

```
SELECT DENSE_RANK(3000) WITHIN GROUP (ORDER BY salary DESC) "Rank"
FROM employees
WHERE job_id LIKE '%CLERK';
```

The results of the query appear.

```
Rank
-----
    12
```

Your result shows that a salary of \$3,000 is the 12<sup>th</sup> highest using the DENSE\_RANK function. Contrast it with the 20<sup>th</sup> rank obtained in the previous example that used the RANK function.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for aggregate functions

## Using NULL Value Functions

To work with NULL values, Oracle Database supplies two functions. NVL substitutes a specified value if a NULL is encountered, and NVL2 specifies two possible expressions that could be evaluated (one if none of its component variables is NULL, and another one if at least one variable is NULL).

In [Example 2–43](#), you will use the NVL and NVL2 functions to determine what the whole annual compensation would be for each employee, if they were involved in a \$300,000 sale. Note that the commission rate is a multiplier on sales volume, not on base salary. Note also that the WHERE clause limits the result set to managers.

**Example 2–43 Using the NVL and NVL2 Functions**

```
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       NVL((commission_pct * 100), 0) "Comm Rate",
       NVL2(commission_pct,
```

```

        ROUND(salary * 12 + commission_pct * 300000, 2),
        salary * 12) "With $300K Sales"
FROM employees
WHERE job_id LIKE '%_M%' AND department_id = 80;

```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Comm Rate	With \$300K Sales
John Russell	40	288000
Karen Partners	30	252000
Alberto Errazuriz	30	234000
Gerald Cambrault	30	222000
Eleni Zlotkey	20	186000

5 rows selected

Your result shows that in the `Comm Rate` column, the `NVL` function replaces a `NULL` value by 0. In the `With $300K Sales` column, the `NVL2` function generates values from two different expressions, depending on the value of the `COMMISSION_PCT` value.

## Using Conditional Functions

Oracle Database provides two functions that can return values based on multiple condition values.

The `CASE` function is equivalent to nested `IF ... THEN ... ELSE` statements, as it compares a value, an expression, or a search condition, and returns a result when it finds a match.

In [Example 2-44](#), you will use the `CASE` structure to view prospective salary increases that would be awarded based on the length of service with the company.

### Example 2-44 Using the CASE Function

```

SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       hire_date "Date Started", salary "Current Pay",
       CASE
         WHEN hire_date < TO_DATE('01-Jan-90') THEN TRUNC(salary*1.15, 0)
         WHEN hire_date < TO_DATE('01-Jan-95') THEN TRUNC(salary*1.10, 0)
         WHEN hire_date < TO_DATE('01-Jan-00') THEN TRUNC(salary*1.05, 0)
         ELSE salary END "Proposed Salary"
FROM employees;

```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Date Started	Current Pay	Proposed Salary
Steven King	17-JUN-87	24000	27600
Neena Kochhar	21-SEP-89	17000	19550
Lex De Haen	13-JAN-93	17000	18700
...			

107 rows selected

Your result shows that the values in the `Proposed Salary` column have been adjusted based on the values of `Date Started`.

The `DECODE` function compares a value or expression to search values, and returns a result when it finds a match. If a match is not found, then `DECODE` returns the default value, or `NULL` (if a default value is not specified).

In [Example 2–45](#), you will use the `DECODE` function to assign possible salary increases based on the `job_id` value.

**Example 2–45 Using the `DECODE` Function**

```
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       job_id "Job", salary "Current Pay",
       DECODE(job_id,
              'PU_CLERK', salary * 1.10,
              'SH_CLERK', salary * 1.15,
              'ST_CLERK', salary * 1.20,
              salary) "Proposed Salary"
FROM employees;
```

The results of the query appear.

Name	Job	Current Pay	Proposed Salary
...			
Alexander Khoo	PU-CLERK	3100	3410
...			
Julia Nayer	ST_CLERK	3200	3840
...			
Winston Taylor	SH_CLERK	3200	3680
...			
107 rows selected			

Your result shows that the values in the 'Proposed Salary' column have been adjusted based on the `job_id` value.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `CASE` function
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `DECODE` function

## Adding, Changing, and Deleting Data

Adding, changing and deleting operations in the database are commonly called Data Manipulation Language (DML) statements:

- An `INSERT` statement adds new rows to an existing table.
- An `UPDATE` statement modifies the values of a set of existing table rows.
- A `DELETE` statement removes existing rows from a table.

Because these statements change the data in your table, Oracle recommends that you use transaction management to group all dependent DML statements together.

### Inserting Information

When you use the `INSERT` statement to add a row of data to a table, the data inserted must be valid for the data type and size of each column of the table.

The general syntax of the `INSERT` command looks like the following. Note that the list of values has to be in the same order as the columns of the table.

```
INSERT INTO table_name VALUES
(list_of_values_for_new_row);
```

In [Example 2–46](#), you will use the `INSERT` function to add a new row to the `employees` table.

**Example 2–46 Using the `INSERT` Statement When All Information Is Available**

```
INSERT INTO employees VALUES
(10, 'George', 'Gordon', 'GGORDON', '650.506.2222',
'01-JAN-07', 'SA_REP', 9000, .1, 148, 80);
```

The results of the query appear.

```
1 row created.
```

Your result shows that the new row has been successfully added to the `employees` table.

When all of the information is not available at the time a new record is added to the database, [Example 2–47](#) shows how you can insert values only into the specified known columns of the table and then set the remaining columns to `NULL`.

Note that if the columns that are set to `NULL` are specified with a `NOT NULL` constraint, this would generate an error.

**Example 2–47 Using the `INSERT` Statement When Some Information Is Not Available**

```
INSERT INTO employees VALUES
(20, 'John', 'Keats', 'JKEATS', '650.506.3333',
'01-JAN-07', 'SA_REP', NULL, .1, 148, 80);
```

The results of the query appear.

```
1 row created.
```

Your result shows that the new row has been successfully added to the `employees` table.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about `INSERT`

## Updating Information

When you use the `UPDATE` statement to update data in a row of a table, the new data must be valid for the data type and size of each column of the table.

The general syntax of the `UPDATE` command looks like the following. Note that the columns that are altered must be identified, and the matching conditions must be met.

```
UPDATE table_name
SET column_name = value;
WHERE condition;
```

To update information in a row that is missing data, the missing data column should be specified. In [Example 2–48](#), you will update the `salary` column for a previously inserted record.

**Example 2–48 Using the `UPDATE` Statement to Add Missing Data**

```
UPDATE employees
SET salary = 8500
```

```
WHERE last_name = 'Keats';
```

The results of the query appear.

```
1 row updated.
```

Your result shows that the matching row has been updated.

[Example 2–49](#) shows how you can use the UPDATE statement to update multiple rows.

**Example 2–49 Using the UPDATE Statement to Change Data**

```
UPDATE employees
SET commission_pct=commission_pct + 0.05
WHERE department_id = 80;
```

The results of the query appear.

```
36 rows updated.
```

Your result shows that the specified rows are updated.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about UPDATE

## Deleting Information

Using the DELETE statement, you can delete specific rows in a table. If you want to delete all the rows in the table, the empty table still exists. If you want to remove the entire table from the database, use the DROP TABLE statement.

Note that if you accidentally delete rows, you can restore the rows with the ROLLBACK statement.

[Example 2–50](#) shows how you can use the DELETE statement to remove the data you added previously.

Note the use of the WHERE clause; without it, all the rows are deleted.

**Example 2–50 Using the DELETE Statement**

```
DELETE FROM employees
WHERE hire_date = '1-Jan-2007';
```

The results of the query appear.

```
2 rows deleted.
```

Your result shows that the specified rows are deleted.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about DELETE statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about DROP TABLE
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about ROLLBACK statement

## Controlling Transactions

Many applications model business processes that require that several different operations be performed together, or not at all. For example, if a manager left the company, a row would be inserted into the `job_history` table to show when that person left, and all the employees that report to that manager must be re-assigned within the `employees` table. This sequence of operations must be treated as a single unit, or a **transaction**.

The following transaction control statements manage the changes made by DML statements and group them into transactions.

- The **COMMIT** statement ends the current transaction and makes all changes performed in the transaction permanent. `COMMIT` also erases all savepoints in the transaction, and releases transaction locks.
- The **ROLLBACK** statement reverses the work done in the current transaction; it causes all data changes since the last `COMMIT` or `ROLLBACK` to be discarded. The state of the data is then "rolled back" to the state it had prior to the requested changes.
- The **SAVEPOINT** statement identifies a point in a transaction to which you can later roll back.

Oracle recommends that you explicitly end transactions using either a `COMMIT` or a `ROLLBACK` statement. If you do not explicitly commit the transaction and the program terminates abnormally, then Oracle Database automatically rolls back the last uncommitted transaction.

## Committing Transaction Changes

An explicit `COMMIT` statement ends your transaction, and makes all the changes in the database permanent. Until you commit a transaction, you can see all of the changes made by you to the database, but these changes are not final or visible to other users of the database instance. Once you commit a transaction, all changes become visible to other users and their statements that execute after your transaction.

You can undo any changes made prior to an explicit `COMMIT` by a `ROLLBACK` statement.

[Example 2–51](#) shows how to use the `COMMIT` statement after adding a new row to the `regions` table.

### **Example 2–51 Using the COMMIT Statement**

```
INSERT INTO regions VALUES (5, 'Africa');  
COMMIT;
```

The results of the query and `COMMIT` statement appear.

```
Commit complete.
```

If you manually check the contents of the `regions` table, you will see that it now has the new row.

Columns	Data	Constraints	Grants	Statistic
				
REGION_ID	REGION_NAME			
1	1 Europe			
2	2 Americas			
3	3 Asia			
4	4 Middle East and Africa			
5	5 Africa			

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference*

## Rolling Back Transaction Changes

The `ROLLBACK` statement rolls back all of the transactions you have made since the last `COMMIT` statement. If you do not have a preceding `COMMIT` statement in your program, it rolls back all operations.

[Example 2-52](#) and [Example 2-53](#) show how to use the `ROLLBACK` statement to undo changes to the `regions` table.

### **Example 2-52** Changing the `REGIONS` Table

```
UPDATE regions
SET region_name = 'Just Middle East'
WHERE region_name = 'Middle East and Africa';
```

The results of the query appear.

1 row updated.

Manually check the contents of the `regions` table.

You will see that it now has the updated `region_name` value.

Constraints	Grants	Statistics	Column Statis
			
REGION_ID	REGION_NAME		
1	1 Europe		
2	2 Americas		
3	3 Asia		
4	4 Just Middle East		
5	5 Africa		

### **Example 2-53** Performing a `ROLLBACK` on the Change to the `REGIONS` Table

```
ROLLBACK;
```

Manually check the contents of the `regions` table by clicking the **Refresh** icon. You will see that the `region_name` value is changed back to the original value.

Columns	Data	Constraints	Grants	Statistic
	REGION_ID	REGION_NAME		
	1	1 Europe		
	2	2 Americas		
	3	3 Asia		
	4	4 Middle East and Africa		
	5	5 Africa		

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference*

## Setting Savepoints

You can use the `SAVEPOINT` statement to identify a point in a transaction to which you can later roll back. Because you can use as many savepoints as your application requires, you can implement greater transaction control in your application.

In [Example 2-54](#), you will use the `ROLLBACK` statement after adding a new row to the `regions` table.

### **Example 2-54 Using the `SAVEPOINT` Statement**

```
UPDATE regions
  SET region_name = 'Middle East'
  WHERE region_name = 'Middle East and Africa';
SAVEPOINT reg_rename;
```

```
UPDATE countries
  SET region_id = 5
  WHERE country_id = 'ZM';
SAVEPOINT zambia;
```

```
UPDATE countries
  SET region_id = 5
  WHERE country_id = 'NG';
SAVEPOINT nigeria;
```

```
UPDATE countries
  SET region_id = 5
  WHERE country_id = 'ZW';
SAVEPOINT zimbabwe;
```

```
UPDATE countries
  SET region_id = 5
  WHERE country_id = 'EG';
SAVEPOINT egypt;
```

```
ROLLBACK TO SAVEPOINT nigeria;
```

```
COMMIT;
```

The results for each `UPDATE` and `SAVEPOINT` statement follow.

```
1 row updated.
```



Columns	Data	Constraints	Grants	Statistics	Colun
	COUNTRY_ID	COUNTRY_NAME	REGION_ID		
20	KW	Kuwait	4		
21	ZW	Zimbabwe	4		
22	EG	Egypt	4		
23	IL	Israel	4		
24	ZM	Zambia	5		
25	NG	Nigeria	5		

You can see that the change in data was reversed by the ROLLBACK to the savepoint `nigeria`.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference*

---

## Creating and Using Database Objects

In this chapter, you will create and use the types of database objects that were discussed in "Querying and Manipulating Data".

Note that the statements `CREATE TABLE`, `ALTER TABLE`, `DROP TABLE`, and so on, use an implicit commit, and cannot be rolled back.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- [Using Data Types](#) on page 3-1
- [Creating and Using Tables](#) on page 3-2
- [Using Views](#) on page 3-21
- [Using Sequences](#) on page 3-25
- [Using Synonyms](#) on page 3-28

### Using Data Types

Data types associate a set of properties with values so you can use these values in the database. Depending on the data type, Oracle Database can perform different kinds of operations on the information in the database. For example, it is possible to calculate a sum of numeric values but not characters.

Oracle Database supports many kinds of data types, including the most common `VARCHAR2(length)`, `NUMBER(precision, scale)`, `DATE`, and also `CHAR(length)`, `CLOB`, `TIMESTAMP`, and others. As you create a table, you must specify data types for each of its columns and (optionally) indicate the longest value that can be placed in the column.

Some of the data types and their properties you will use here include the following:

- The `VARCHAR2` stores variable-length character literals, and is the most efficient option for storing character data. When creating a `VARCHAR2` column in a table, you must specify the maximum number of characters in a column, which is a length between 1 and 4,000. In the `employees` table, the `first_name` column has a `VARCHAR(20)` data type and the `LAST_NAME` column has a `VARCHAR2(25)` data type.
- An option to the `VARCHAR2` data type, `NVARCHAR2` stores Unicode variable-length character literals.
- The `CHAR` data type stores fixed-length character literals; it uses blanks to pad the value to the specified string length, which is between 1 and 2,000.

An option to the `CHAR2` data type, `NCHAR` stores Unicode fixed-length character literals.

- The CLOB data type is a character large object data type that contains single-byte or multibyte characters. The maximum size of a CLOB is  $(4 \text{ gigabytes} - 1) \times$  (database block size).
- The NUMBER data type stores zero, and integers and real numbers as positive and negative fixed numbers with absolute values between  $1.0 \times 10^{-130}$  and  $1.0 \times 10^{126}$  using a fixed-point or floating-point format, with decimal-point precision. Oracle guarantees that NUMBER data types are portable between different operating systems, and recommends it for most cases where you need to store numeric data.

You can use the precision option to set the maximum number of digits in the number, and the scale option to define how many of the digits are to the right of the decimal separator. In the `employees` table, the `salary` column is defined as `NUMBER(8, 2)`, providing 6 digits for the primary unit of currency (dollars, pounds, marks, and so on) and 2 digits for the secondary unit of currency (cents, pennies, pfennigs, and so on).

- For floating-point numbers, Oracle Database provides the numeric `BINARY_FLOAT` and `BINARY_DOUBLE` data types as enhancements to the basic NUMBER data type. `BINARY_FLOAT` (32-bit IEEE 754 format) ranges in absolute value between  $1.17549 \times e^{-38F}$  and  $3.40282 \times e^{38F}$  and `BINARY_DOUBLE` (64-bit IEEE 754 format) ranges in absolute value between  $2.22507485850720 \times e^{-308}$  and  $1.79769313486231 \times e^{308}$ . Both use binary precision that enables faster arithmetic calculations and often reduces storage requirements.
- The DATE data type stores point-in-time values, dates and times; this includes the century, year, month, day, hours, minutes, and seconds. The valid date range is from January 1, 4712 BC to December 31, 9999 AD. Oracle Database supports many different formats for displaying date and time values. In the `employees` table, the `hire_date` column is defined as a DATE.
- The TIMESTAMP data type stores values that are precise to fractional seconds, and is therefore useful in applications that must track event order.
- The `TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE` data type stores time zone information, and can therefore record date information that must be coordinated across several geographic regions.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference*

## Creating and Using Tables

Tables are the basic unit of data storage in an Oracle database, and hold all user-accessible data. Tables are two-dimensional objects made up of vertical columns that represent the fields of the table and horizontal rows that represent the values for each record in the table.

In this section, you will create all the necessary tables and other schema objects to implement an employee performance evaluation process for the existing `hr` schema.

**See Also:**

- ["Exploring Tables and Viewing Data"](#) on page 2-3

## Creating a Table

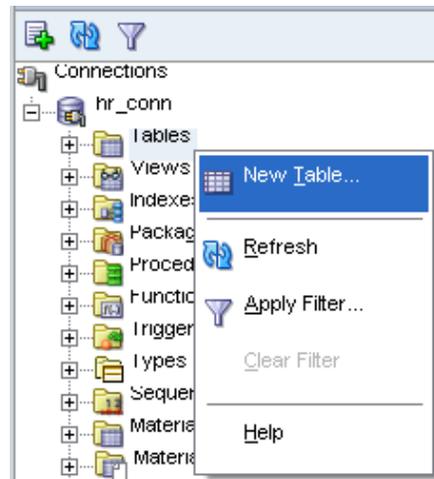
To implement the employee evaluation process, you will need to establish three tables, `performance_parts`, `evaluations`, and `scores`.

- The `performance_parts` table lists the categories of performance measurements, and the relative weight for each item.
- The `evaluations` table will contain the employee's information, evaluation date, and the job, manager and department at the time of evaluation. You must preserve this information in this table because at any point in the future, the employee may change job designation, manager, or department.
- The `scores` table contains the scores assigned to each performance category for each evaluation.

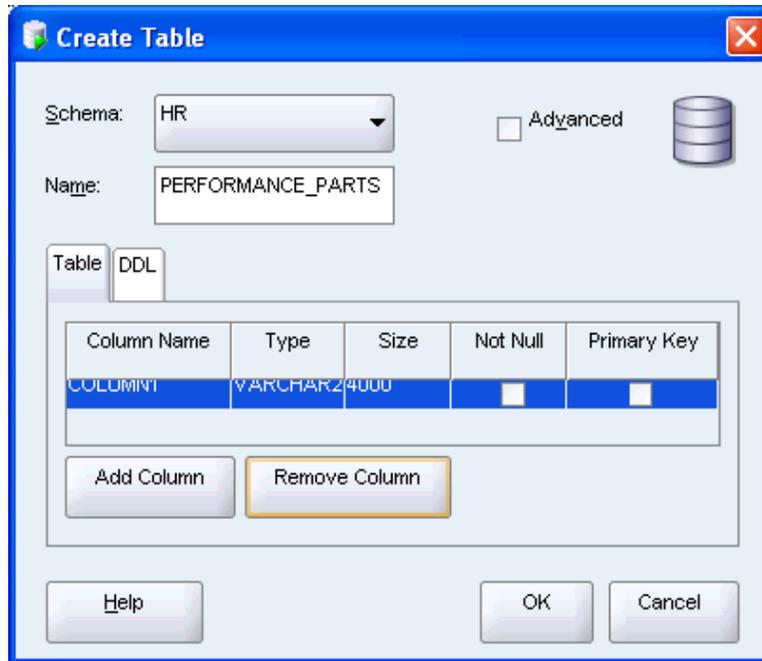
### To create a table using SQL Developer interface:

You will create the `performance_parts` table using the SQL Developer graphical interface.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, click the plus sign (+) next to `hr_conn` to expand the list of schema objects.
2. Right-click **Tables**.
3. Select **New Table**.

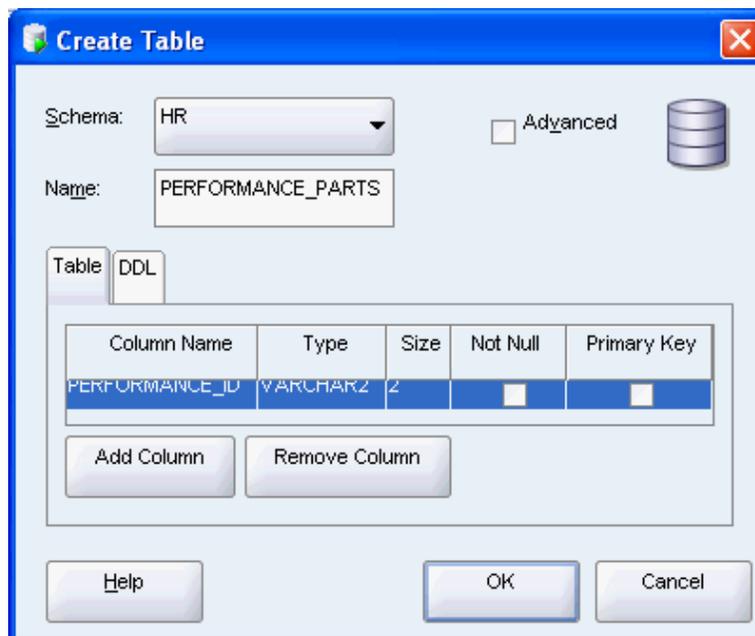


4. In the Create Table window, enter the following information:
  - For **Schema**, select HR.
  - For **Name**, enter `PERFORMANCE_PARTS`.



5. Click the default column that was created with the table.
6. Enter the information for the first column in the table as follows:
  - For **Column Name**, enter PERFORMANCE\_ID.
  - For **Type**, enter VARCHAR2.
  - For **Size**, enter 2.

Leave the value of **Not Null** and **Primary Key** properties. You will come back to this later, in "Ensuring Data Integrity".



7. Enter information for the second column as follows:

Click **Add Column**.

- For **Column Name**, enter NAME.
- For **Type**, enter VARCHAR2.
- For **Size**, enter 80.

8. Enter information for the third column as follows:

Click **Add Column**.

- For **Column Name**, enter WEIGHT.
- For **Type**, enter NUMBER.

9. Click **OK**.

SQL Developer generates the new table, `performance_parts`.

10. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, click the plus sign (+) next to **Tables** to expand the list of tables.

`performance_parts` is a new table in the `hr` schema, listed between `locations` and `regions`.

You just created a new table, `performance_parts`. If you click the table, the table will appear on the right side of the SQL Developer window, showing its new columns. If you click the SQL tab, you will see the script that created this table.

In [Example 3-1](#), you will create the `evaluations` table by entering the information directly in the SQL Worksheet pane.

### **Example 3-1 Creating a Table in SQL Script**

```
CREATE TABLE evaluations (
  evaluation_id  NUMBER(8,0),
  employee_id   NUMBER(6,0),
  evaluation_date DATE,
  job_id        VARCHAR2(10),
  manager_id    NUMBER(6,0),
  department_id NUMBER(4,0),
  total_score   NUMBER(3,0)
)
```

The results of the script follow.

```
CREATE TABLE succeeded.
```

You created a new table, `evaluations`. If you click the table, the table will appear on the right side of the SQL Developer window, showing its new columns. If you click the SQL tab, you will see the script that created this table. You may need to click the Refresh icon.

In [Example 3-2](#), you will create another table, `scores`, by entering the information in the SQL Worksheet pane.

### **Example 3-2 Creating the SCORES Table**

```
CREATE TABLE scores (
  evaluation_id  NUMBER(8,0),
  performance_id VARCHAR2(2),
  score         NUMBER(1,0)
);
```

The results of the statement follow.

```
CREATE TABLE succeed.
```

You created a new table, `scores`. If you click the table, the table will appear on the right side of the SQL Developer window, showing its new columns. If you click the SQL tab, you will see the script that created this table. You may need to click the Refresh icon.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `CREATE TABLE` statement

## Ensuring Data Integrity

The data in the table must satisfy the business rules that are modeled in the application. Many of these rules can be implemented through **integrity constraints** that use the SQL language to explicitly state what type of data values are valid for each column.

When an integrity constraint applies to a table, all data in the table must conform to the corresponding rule, so when your application includes a SQL statement that inserts or modifies data in the table, Oracle Database automatically ensures that the constraint is satisfied. If you attempt to insert, update, or remove a row that violates a constraint, the system generates an error, and the statement is rolled back. If you attempt to apply a new constraint to a populated table, the system may generate an error if any existing row violates the new constraint.

Because Oracle Database checks that all the data in a table obeys an integrity constraint much faster than an application can, you can enforce the business rules defined by integrity constraints more reliably than by including this type of checking in your application logic.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about integrity constraints

## Understanding Types of Data Integrity Constraints

There are five basic types of integrity constraints:

- A **NOT NULL** constraint ensures that the column contains data (it is not null).
- A **unique** constraint ensures that multiple rows do not have the same value in the same column. This type of constraint can also be used on combination of columns, as a **composite unique** constraint. This constraint ignores null values.
- A **primary key** constraint combines `NOT NULL` and `UNIQUE` constraints in a single declaration; it prevents multiple rows from having the same value in the same column or combination of columns, and prevents null values.
- A **foreign key** constraint requires that for each value in the column on which the constraint is defined, there must be a matching value in a specified other table and column.
- A **check** constraint ensures that a value satisfies a specified condition. Use check constraints when you need to enforce integrity rules based on logical expressions, such as comparisons. Oracle recommends that you never use check constraints when other types of constraints can provide the necessary checking.

## Adding Integrity Constraints

You will now add different types of constraints to the tables you created in "Creating a Table" on page 3-3.

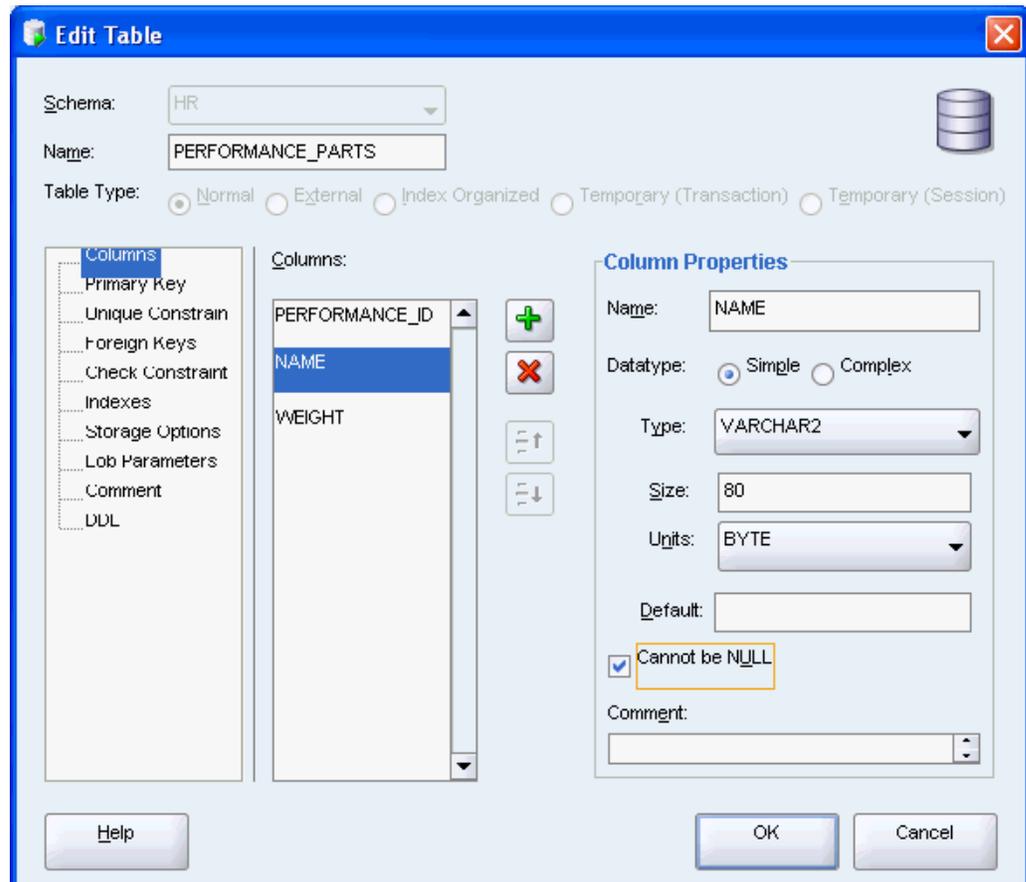
### To Add a NOT NULL Constraint Using the SQL Developer Interface:

You will add a NOT NULL constraint to the table using the SQL Developer graphical interface.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, click the plus sign (+) next to Tables to expand the list of tables.
2. Right-click the performance\_parts table.
3. Select **Edit**.



4. In the Edit Table window, follow these steps:
  - In the Edit Table window, click **Columns**.
  - In the Columns list, select **NAME**.
  - In the Column Properties section, check **Cannot be NULL**.
 Click **OK**.



- In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You have now created a NOT NULL constraint for the name column of the performance\_parts table.

The definition of the name column in the performance\_parts table is changed to the following; note that the constraint is automatically enabled.

```
"NAME" VARCHAR2(80) NOT NULL ENABLE
```

[Example 3-3](#) shows how you can add another NOT NULL constraint to the performance\_parts table by entering the required information directly in the SQL Statement window.

**Example 3-3 Adding a NOT NULL Constraint in SQL Script**

```
ALTER TABLE performance_parts
MODIFY weight NOT NULL;
```

The results of the script follow.

```
ALTER TABLE performance_parts succeeded.
```

You just created a NOT NULL constraint for column weight of the performance\_parts table. If you click the SQL tab, you will see that the definition of the weight column changed. You may need to click the Refresh icon.

```
"WEIGHT" NUMBER NOT NULL ENABLE
```

**To add a unique constraint using the SQL Developer interface:**

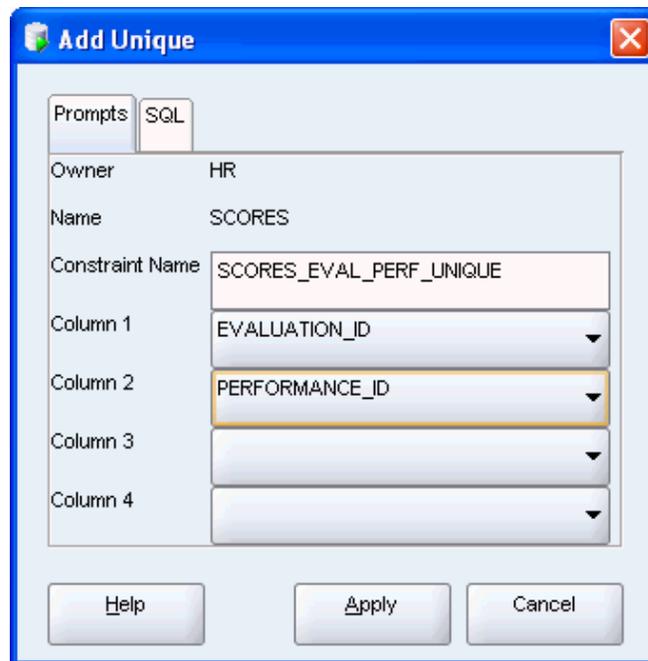
You will add a unique constraint to the scores table using the SQL Developer graphical interface. You could also use the Edit Table window, as in the NOT NULL constraint, to accomplish this task.

- In the Connections navigation hierarchy, click the plus sign (+) next to Tables to expand the list of tables.
- Right-click the scores table.
- Select **Constraint**, and then select **Add Unique**.



- In the Add Unique window, enter the following information:
  - Set the constraint name to SCORES\_EVAL\_PERF\_UNIQUE.
  - Set Column 1 to EVALUATION\_ID.
  - Set Column 2 to PERFORMANCE \_ID.

Click **Apply**.



5. In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You have now created a unique constraint for the `scores` table.

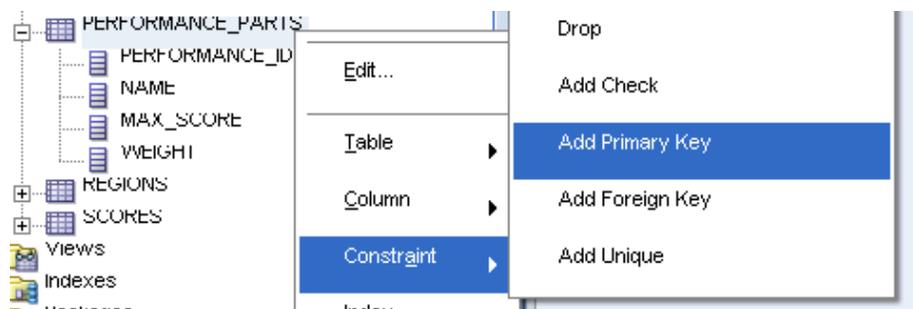
The following SQL statement was added to your table definition:

```
CONSTRAINT "SCORES_EVAL_PERF_UNIQUE" UNIQUE ("EVALUATION_ID", "PERFORMANCE_ID")
```

#### To add a primary key constraint using the SQL Developer interface:

You will add a primary key constraint to the `performance_parts` table using the SQL Developer graphical interface. You could also use the Edit Table window, as in the NOT NULL constraint, to accomplish this task.

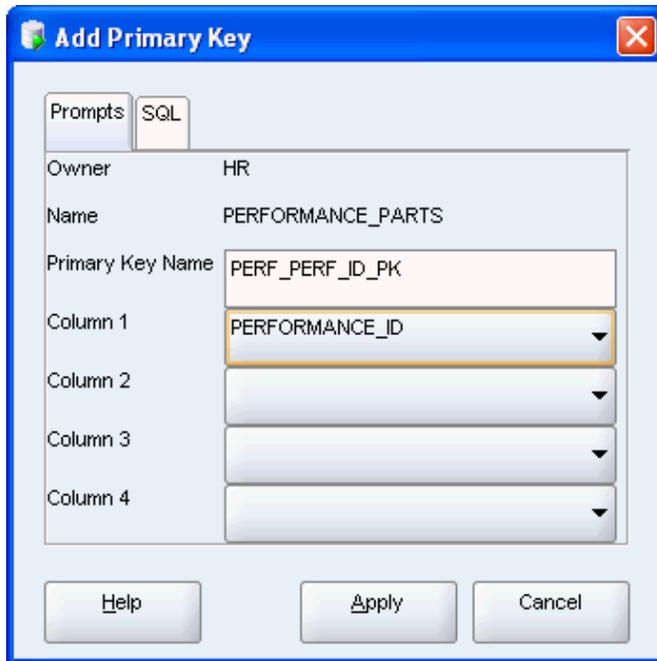
1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, click the plus sign (+) next to Tables to expand the list of tables.
2. Right-click the `performance_parts` table.
3. Select **Constraint**, and then select **Add Primary Key**.



4. In the Add Primary Key window, enter the following information:

- Set the primary key name to `PERF_PERF_ID_PK`.
- Set Column 1 to `PERFORMANCE_ID`.

Click **Apply**.



5. In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You have now created a primary key constraint for the `performance_parts` table.

The following SQL statement was added to your table definition:

```
CONSTRAINT "PERF_PERF_ID_PK" PRIMARY KEY ("PERFORMANCE_ID")
```

In [Example 3-4](#), you will create a primary key constraint on the `evaluations` table by entering the required information directly in the SQL Statement window.

**Example 3-4 Adding a Primary Key Constraint in SQL Script**

```
ALTER TABLE evaluations
ADD CONSTRAINT eval_eval_id_pk PRIMARY KEY (evaluation_id);
```

The results of the script follow.

```
ALTER TABLE evaluations succeeded.
```

You just created a primary key `eval_eval_id_pk` on the `evaluations` table. If you click the SQL tab, you will see the following SQL statement was added to your table definition. You may need to click the Refresh icon.

```
CONSTRAINT "EVAL_EVAL_ID_PK" PRIMARY KEY ("EVALUATION_ID")
```

**To add a foreign key constraint using the SQL Developer interface:**

You will add two foreign key constraints to the `scores` table using the SQL Developer graphical interface. You could also use the Edit Table window, as in the NOT NULL constraint, to accomplish this task.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, the plus sign (+) next to Tables to expand the list of tables.
2. Right-click the `scores` table.
3. Select **Constraint**, and then select **Add Foreign Key**.



4. In the Add Foreign Key window, enter the following information:

- Set the foreign key name to SCORES\_EVAL\_FK.
- Set Column Name to EVALUATION\_ID.
- Set Reference Table Name to EVALUATIONS.
- Set Referencing Column to EVALUATION\_ID.

Click **Apply**.



5. In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You have now created a foreign key constraint on the `evaluation_id` column from the `evaluations` table.

6. Add another foreign key constraint by repeating steps 2 through 5, with the following parameters:

- Set the foreign key name to SCORES\_PERF\_FK.
- Set Column Name to PERFORMANCE\_ID.
- Set Reference Table Name to PERFORMANCE\_PARTS.
- Set Referencing Column to PERFORMANCE\_ID.

Click **Apply**.

The following SQL statements were added to your table definition:

```
CONSTRAINT "SCORES_EVAL_FK" FOREIGN KEY ("EVALUATION_ID")
REFERENCES "HR"."EVALUATIONS" ("EVALUATION_ID") ENABLE
CONSTRAINT "SCORES_PERF_FK" FOREIGN KEY ("PERFORMANCE_ID")
```

```
REFERENCES "HR"."PERFORMANCE_PARTS" ("PERFORMANCE_ID") ENABLE
```

In [Example 3-5](#), you will create a foreign key constraint on the `evaluations` table by entering the required information directly in the SQL Statement window.

**Example 3-5 Adding a Foreign Key Constraint in SQL Script**

```
ALTER TABLE evaluations
  ADD CONSTRAINT eval_emp_id_fk FOREIGN KEY (employee_id)
  REFERENCES employees (employee_id);
```

The results of the script follow.

```
ALTER TABLE evaluations succeeded
```

You have now created a foreign key constraint on the `employee_id` column from the `employees` table. If you click the SQL tab, you will see the following SQL statement was added to your table definition. You may need to click the Refresh icon.

```
CONSTRAINT "EVAL_EMP_ID_FK" FOREIGN KEY ("EMPLOYEE_ID")
  REFERENCES "HR"."EMPLOYEES" ("EMPLOYEE_ID") ENABLE
```

**To add a check constraint using the SQL Developer interface:**

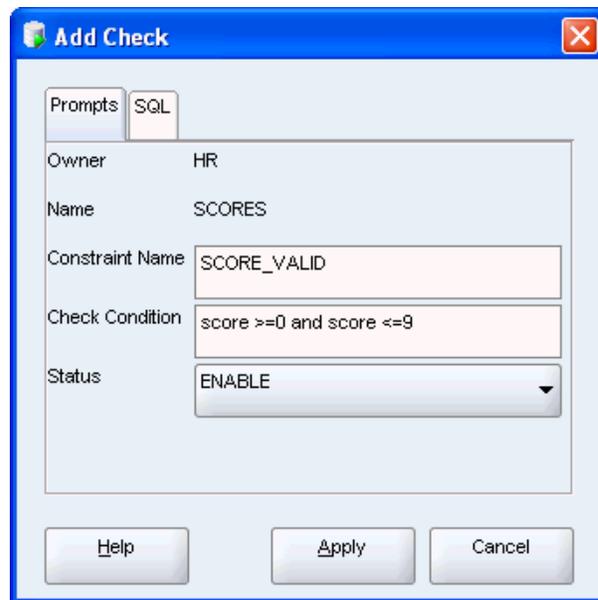
You will add a check constraint to the `scores` table using the SQL Developer graphical interface. You could also use the Edit Table window, as in the `NOT NULL` constraint, to accomplish this task.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, the plus sign (+) next to Tables to expand the list of tables.
2. Right-click the `scores` table.
3. Select **Constraint**, and then select **Add Check**.



4. In the Add Check window, enter the following information:
  - Set the Constraint Name to `SCORE_VALID`.
  - Set Check Condition to `score >=0 and score <=9`.
  - Set Status to `ENABLE`.

Click **Apply**.



5. In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You have now created a check constraint on the `score` column of the `scores` table.

The following SQL statement was added to your table definition:

```
CONSTRAINT "SCORE_VALID" CHECK (score >=0 and score <=9) ENABLE
```

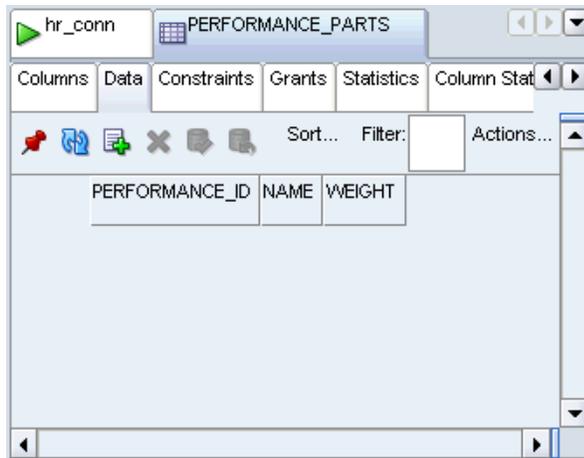
## Adding Data to a Table, Modifying, and Deleting

You can use SQL Developer to enter data into tables, to edit, and to delete existing data. The following tasks will show these processes for the `performance_parts` table.

### To add data to a table using the SQL Developer interface:

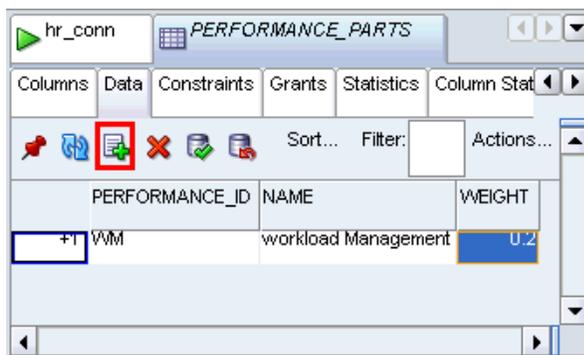
Follow these steps to add rows of data to the `performance_parts` table

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, double-click the `performance_parts` table.
2. Click the Data tab in the `performance_parts` table display.
3. In the Data pane, click the **New Record** icon.



4. In the new row, add the following information; you can click directly into the column, or tab between columns:
  - Set PERFORMANCE\_ID to 'WM'
  - Set NAME to 'Workload Management'
  - Set WEIGHT to 0.2

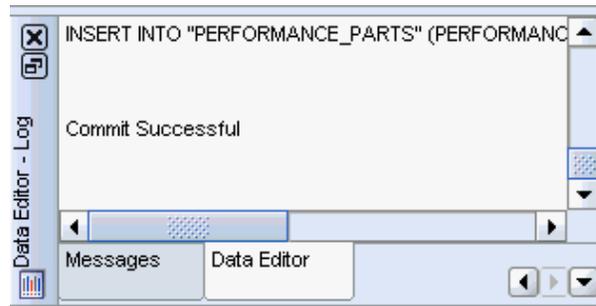
Press the Enter key.



5. Add a second row with the following information: set PERFORMANCE\_ID to 'BR', set NAME to 'Building Relationships', and set WEIGHT to 0.2.  
Press the Enter key.
6. Add a third row with the following information: set PERFORMANCE\_ID to 'CF', set NAME to 'Customer Focus', and set WEIGHT to 0.2.  
Press the Enter key.
7. Add a fourth row with the following information: set PERFORMANCE\_ID to 'CM', set NAME to 'Communication', and set WEIGHT to 0.2.  
Press the Enter key.
8. Add a fifth row with the following information: set PERFORMANCE\_ID to 'TW', set NAME to 'Teamwork', and set WEIGHT to 0.2.  
Press the Enter key.
9. Add a sixth row with the following information: set PERFORMANCE\_ID to 'RD', set NAME to 'Results Orientation', and set WEIGHT to 0.2.

Press the Enter key.

10. Click the **Commit Changes** icon.
11. Review and close the **Data Editor Log** window.



12. Review the new data in the table `performance_parts`.

The screenshot shows the 'Data' tab of the SQL Developer interface for the `performance_parts` table. The table has three columns: `PERFORMANCE_ID`, `NAME`, and `WEIGHT`. There are six rows of data.

PERFORMANCE_ID	NAME	WEIGHT	
1	WM	workload Management	0.2
2	BR	Building Relationships	0.2
3	CF	Customer Focus	0.2
4	CM	Communication	0.2
5	TV	Teamwork	0.2
6	RO	Results Orientation	0.2

You have added 6 rows to the `performance_parts` table.

### To modify table data using the SQL Developer interface:

Follow these steps to change data to the `performance_parts` table.

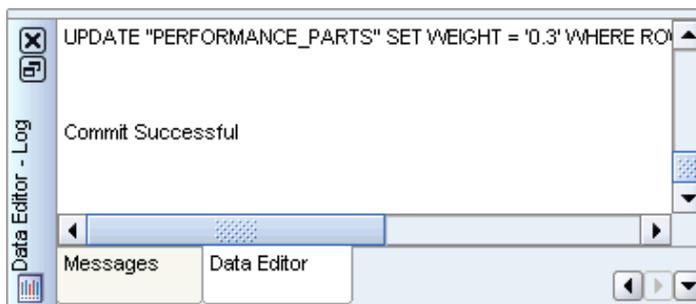
1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, double-click the `performance_parts` table.
2. Click the **Data** tab in the `performance_parts` table display.
3. In the Data pane, in the 'Workload Management' row, click the weight value, and enter a new value for '0.3'.

In the 'Building Relationships' row, click the weight value, and enter a new value for '0.15'.

In the 'Customer Focus' row, click the weight value, and enter a new value for '0.15'.

	PERFORMANCE_ID	NAME	WEIGHT
1	WMM	workload Management	.3
2	BR	Building Relationships	.15
3	CF	Customer Focus	.15
4	CM	Communication	0.2
5	TW	Teamwork	0.2
6	RO	Results Orientation	0.2

4. Press the Enter key.
5. Click the **Commit Changes** icon.
6. Review and close the **Data Editor Log** window.



You have now changed values in three rows of the `performance_parts` table.

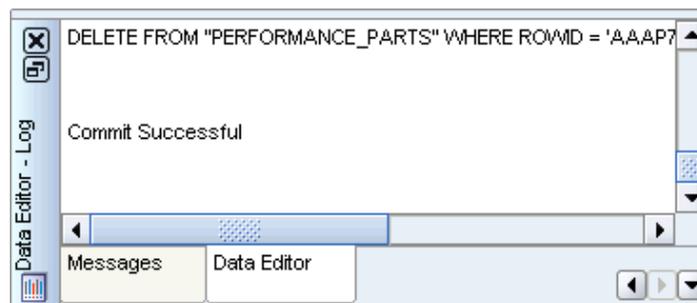
**To delete table data using the SQL Developer interface:**

Imagine that in the company modeled by the `hr` schema, management decided that the categories Workload Management and Results Orientation had too much overlap. You will now remove the row 'Results Orientation' from the `performance_parts` table.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, double-click the `performance_parts` table.
2. Click the Data tab in the `performance_parts` table display.
3. In the Data pane, click the 'Results Orientation' row.
4. Click the **Delete Selected Row(s)** icon.

PERFORMANCE_ID	NAME	WEIGHT	
1	WM	workload Management	0.3
2	BR	Building Relationships	0.15
3	CF	Customer Focus	0.15
4	CM	Communication	0.2
5	TW	Teamwork	0.2
6	RO	Results Orientation	0.2

5. Click the **Commit Changes** icon.
6. Review and close the **Data Editor Log** window.



You have now removed a row from the performance\_parts table.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Developer User's Guide*

## Indexing Tables

When you define a primary key on a table, Oracle Database implicitly creates an index on the column that contains the primary key. For example, you can confirm that an index was created for the evaluations table on its primary key, by looking at its **Indexes** pane.

Index Owner	Index Name	Columns	Uniqueness	Status
HR	EVAL_EVAL_ID_PK	EVALUATION_ID	UNIQUE	VALID

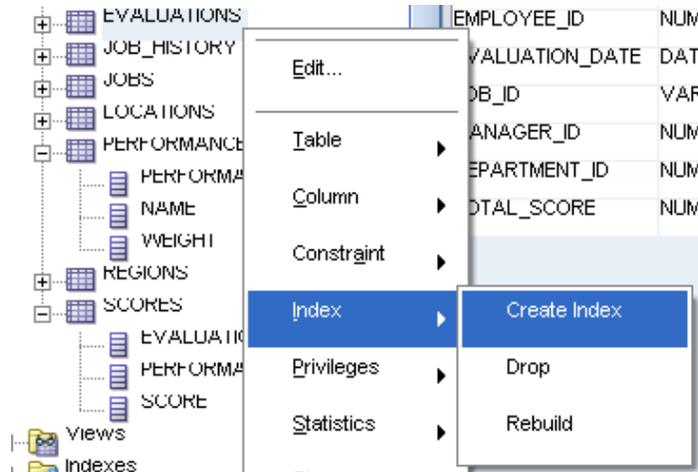
In this section, you will learn how to add different types of indexes to the tables you created earlier.

**To create an index using the SQL Developer interface:**

Follow these steps to create a new index for the evaluations table.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click the evaluations table.
2. Select **Index** and then select **Create Index**.

Alternatively, in the Connections navigation hierarchy, you can right-click **Indexes** and select **New Index**.



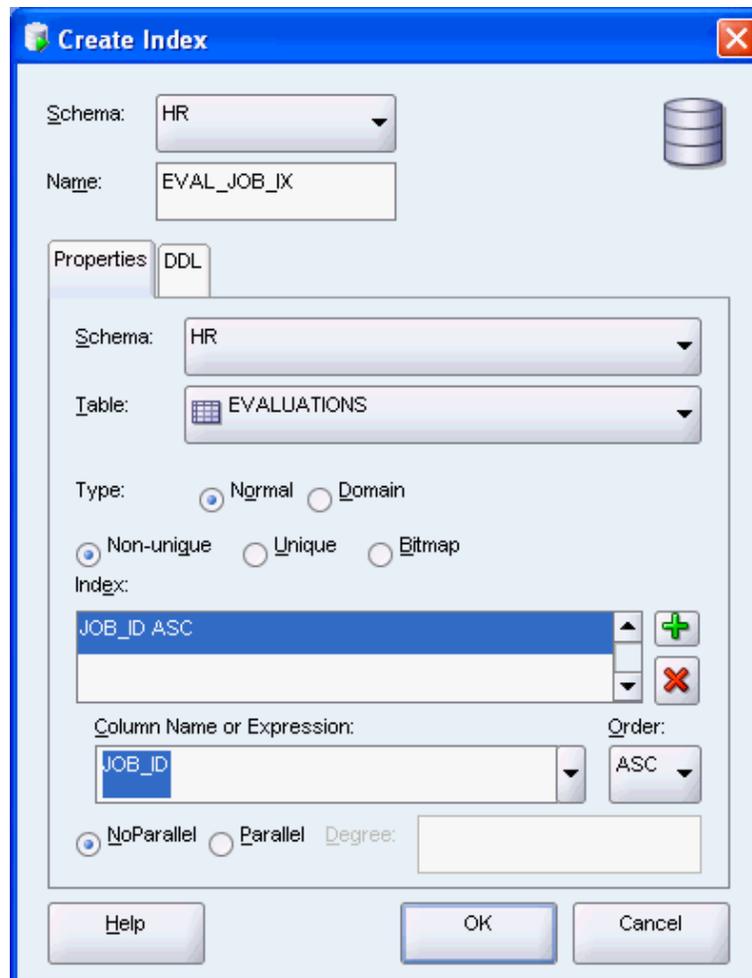
3. In the Create Index window, enter the following parameters:

- Ensure that the **Schema** is set to HR.
- Set the **Name** to EVAL\_JOB\_IX.

Click the Add Column Expression icon, which looks like a 'plus' sign.

- Set the **Column Name or Expression** to JOB\_ID.
- Set the **Order** to ASC.

Click **OK**.



You have now created a new index `EVAL_JOB_IX` on the column `JOB_ID` in the `evaluations` table. You can see this index by finding it in the list of Indexes in the Connections navigation hierarchy, or by opening the `evaluations` table and browsing to the **Indexes** tab. The following script is the equivalent SQL statement for creating this index.

```
CREATE INDEX eval_job_ix ON evaluations (job_id ASC) NOPARALLEL;
```

### To modify an index using SQL Developer interface:

Follow these steps to reverse the sort order of the `EVAL_JOB_IX` index.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, the plus sign (+) to expand Indexes.
2. Right-click `EVAL_JOB_IX`, and select **Edit**.



3. In the Edit Index window, change **Order** to `DESC`.  
Click **OK**.

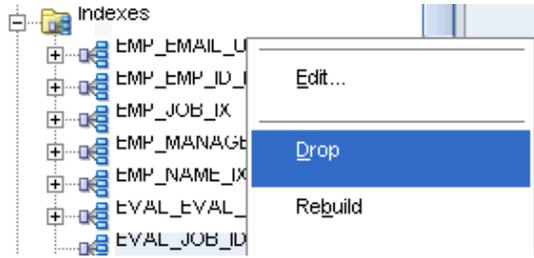
You changed the index. The following script is the equivalent SQL statement for creating this index:

```
DROP INDEX eval_job_id;
CREATE INDEX eval_job_ix ON evaluations (job_id DESC) NOPARALLEL;
```

**To delete an index using SQL Developer interface:**

Following steps to delete the EVAL\_JOB\_IX index.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, the plus sign (+) to expand Indexes.
2. Right-click EVAL\_JOB\_IX, and select **Drop**.



3. In the Drop window, click **Apply**.
4. In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You deleted the index EVAL\_JOB\_IX. The following script is the equivalent SQL statement for dropping this index.

```
DROP INDEX "HR"."EVAL_JOB_ID";
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the CREATE INDEX statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the ALTER INDEX statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the DROP INDEX statement

## Dropping Tables

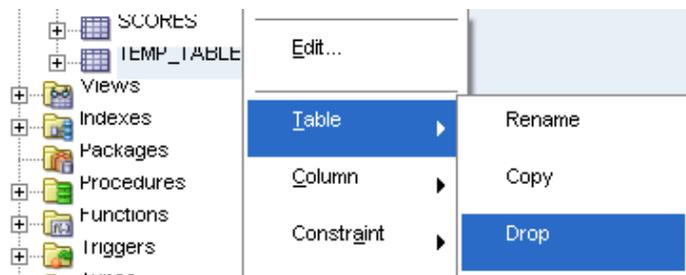
Sometimes it becomes necessary to delete a table and all its contents from your schema. To accomplish this, you must use the SQL statement DROP TABLE. You will use the tables that you already created to learn other concepts, so create a simple table that you can subsequently delete by running the following script in the SQL Statement window:

```
CREATE TABLE temp_table(
  id NUMBER(1,0),
  name VARCHAR2(10)
);
```

**To delete a table using the SQL Developer interface:**

Follow these steps to delete TEMP\_TABLE from the hr schema.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click TEMP\_TABLE.
2. Select **Table**, and then select **Drop**.



3. In the Drop window, click **Apply**.
4. In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You deleted the table TEMP\_TABLE. The following script is the equivalent SQL statement for dropping this table.

```
DROP TABLE "HR"."TEMP_TABLE";
```

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the DROP TABLE statement

## Using Views

Views are logical tables based on one or more tables or views. Views are particularly useful if your business needs include frequent access to information that is stored in several different tables.

### Creating a View

The standard syntax for creating a view follows:

```
CREATE VIEW view_name AS query;
```

#### To create a view using the SQL Developer interface:

Follow these steps to delete create a new view from the hr schema.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click **Views**.
2. Select **New View**.

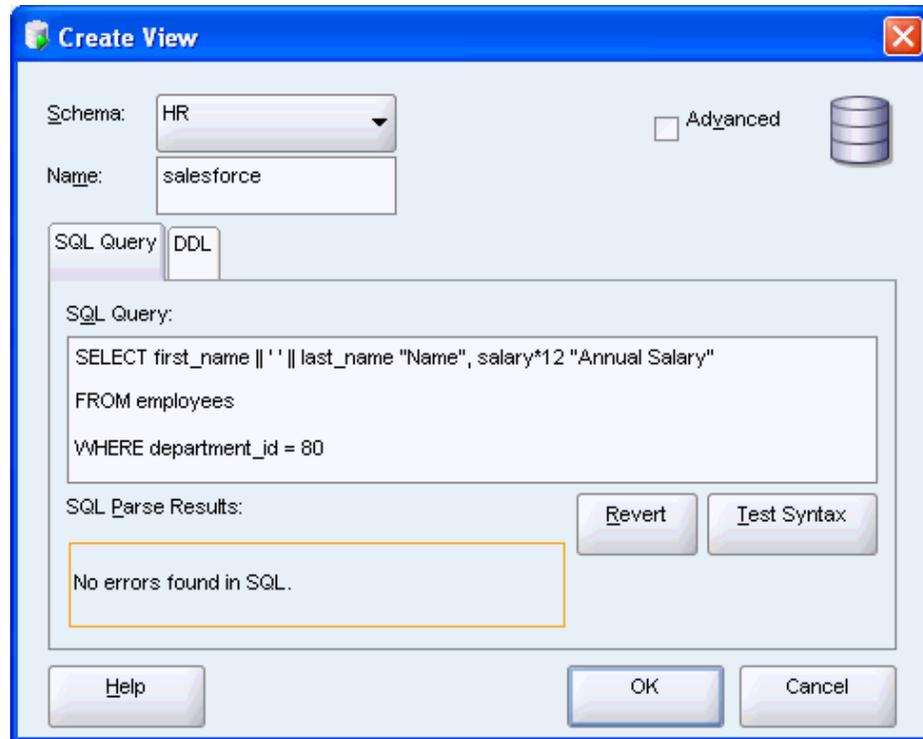


3. In the Create View window, enter the following parameters:

- Ensure that Schema is set to HR.
- Set Name to SALESFORCE.
- Set the SQL Query to the following:

```
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name", salary*12 "Annual Salary"
FROM employees
WHERE department_id = 80
```

4. In SQL Parse Results, click **Test Syntax**.



5. Click **OK**.

You created a new view. The equivalent SQL statement for creating this view follows:

```
CREATE VIEW salesforce AS
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name",
       salary*12 "Annual Salary"
FROM employees
WHERE department_id = 80;
```

In [Example 3-6](#), you will create a view of all employees in the company and their work location, similar to the query you used in ["Using Character Functions"](#).

**Example 3-6 Creating a View in SQL Script**

```
CREATE VIEW emp_locations AS
SELECT e.employee_id,
       e.last_name || ', ' || e.first_name name,
       d.department_name department,
       l.city city,
       c.country_name country
FROM employees e, departments d, locations l, countries c
WHERE e.department_id=d.department_id AND
      d.location_id=l.location_id AND
      l.country_id=c.country_id
ORDER BY last_name;
```

The results of the script follow.

```
CREATE VIEW succeeded.
```

You have now created new view that relies on information in 4 separate tables, or a 4-way **JOIN**. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, if you click the 'plus' sign next to Views, you will see emp\_locations.

## Updating a View

### To change the properties of a view in SQL Developer interface:

You will change the `salesforce` view by adding to it the employees in the Marketing department, and then rename the view to `sales_marketing`.

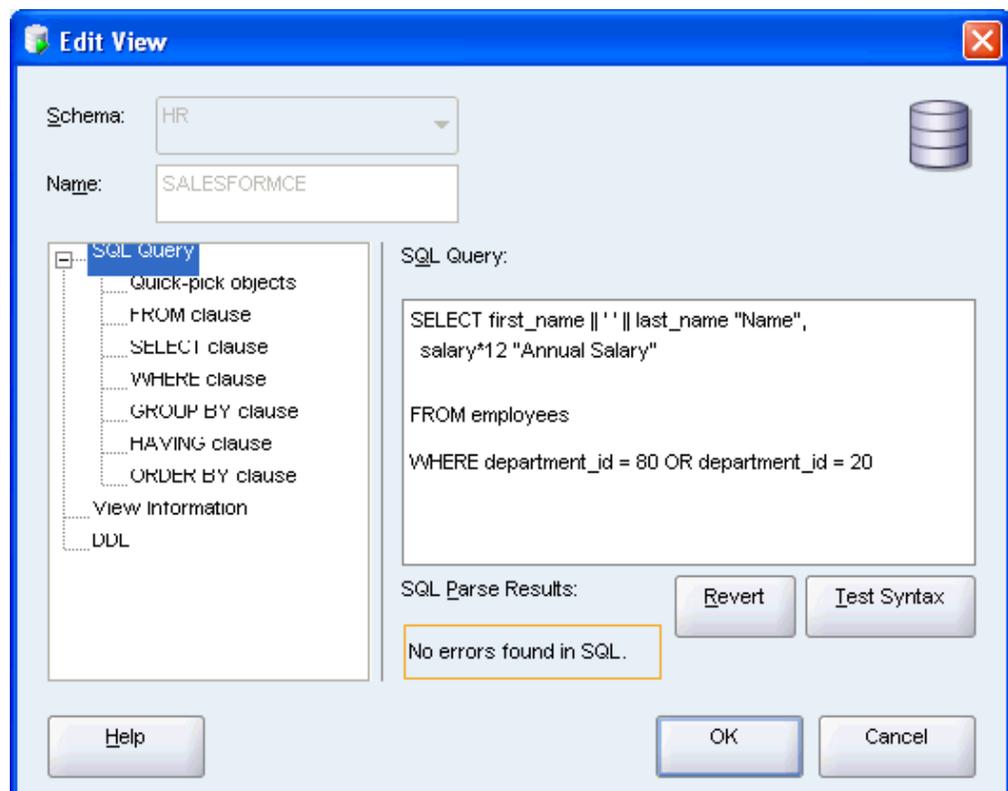
1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click the `salesforce` view.
2. Select **Edit**.



3. In the Edit View window, change the SQL Query by adding the following to the last line: `'OR department_id = 20'`.

Click **Test Syntax**.

Click **OK**.



4. To rename the view, right-click `salesforce` and select **Rename**.



- In the Rename window, set **New View Name** to `sales_marketing`.  
Click **Apply**.



- In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You changed the view. The equivalent SQL statements for changing and renaming the view are:

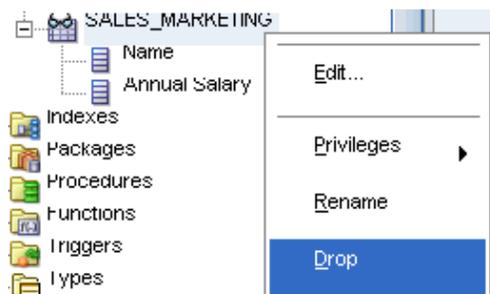
```
CREATE OR REPLACE VIEW salesforce AS query;
RENAME "SALESFORCE" to SALES_MARKETING;
```

## Dropping a View

### To drop a view using the SQL Developer interface:

You will use the `DROP VIEW` statement to delete the `sales_marketing` view.

- In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click the `sales_marketing` view.
- Select **Drop**.



- In the Drop window, click **Apply**.
- In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You deleted the view. The equivalent SQL statement for dropping the view is:

```
DROP VIEW sales_marketing;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `CREATE VIEW` statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `DROP VIEW` statement

## Using Sequences

Sequences are database objects that generate unique sequential values, which are very useful when you need unique primary keys. The `hr` schema already has three such sequences: `departments_seq`, `employees_seq`, and `locations_seq`.

The sequences are used through these pseudocolumns:

- The `CURRVAL` pseudocolumn returns the current value of a sequence. `CURRVAL` can only be used after an initial call to `NEXTVAL` initializes the sequence.
- The `NEXTVAL` pseudocolumn increments the sequence and returns the next value. The first time that `NEXTVAL` is used, it returns the initial value of the sequence. Subsequent references to `NEXTVAL` increment the sequence value by the defined increment, and return the new value.

Note that a sequence is not connected to any other object, except for conventions of use. When you plan to use a sequence to populate the primary key of a table, Oracle recommends that you use a naming convention to link the sequence to that table. Throughout this discussion, the naming convention for such sequences is `table_name_seq`.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference*

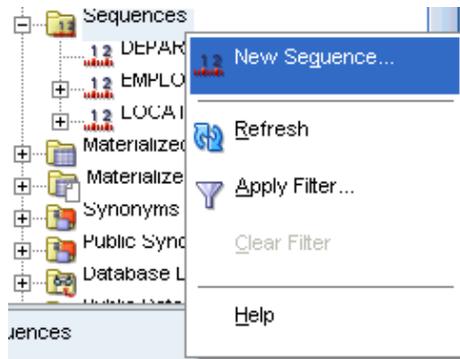
## Creating a Sequence

You can create a sequence in the SQL Developer Interface, or using the SQL Statement window.

**To create a sequence using the SQL Developer interface:**

The following steps will create a sequence, `evaluations_seq`, that you can use for the primary key of the `evaluations` table.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click **Sequences**.
2. Select **New Sequence**.



3. In the New Sequence window, enter the following parameters:

- Ensure that **Schema** is set to HR.
- Set **Name** to EVALUATIONS\_SEQ.

In the Properties tab:

- Set **Increment** to 1.
- Set **Start with** to 1.
- Check **Order**.

Click **OK**.



You have now created a sequence that can be used for the primary key of the evaluations table. If you click '+' to expand the Sequence tree, you can see new sequence. The equivalent SQL statement is:

```
CREATE SEQUENCE evaluations_seq INCREMENT BY 1 START WITH 1 ORDER;
```

In [Example 3-7](#), you will create another sequence by entering the required information directly in the SQL Statement window.

#### **Example 3-7 Creating a Sequence Using SQL Script**

```
CREATE SEQUENCE test_seq INCREMENT BY 5 START WITH 5 ORDER;
```

The results of the script follow.

```
CREATE SEQUENCE succeeded.
```

#### **See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `CREATE SEQUENCE` statement

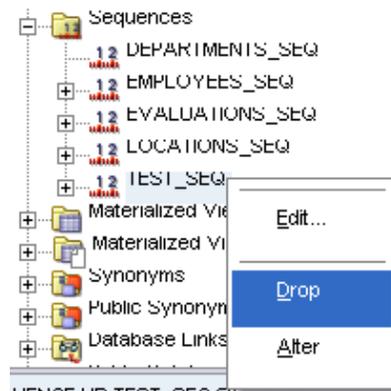
## Dropping a Sequence

To delete a sequence, you must use the SQL statement `DROP SEQUENCE`. To see how a sequence can be deleted in SQL Developer, you can use the `test_seq` sequence you created earlier. If the new sequence does not appear in the Connections hierarchy navigator, click the refresh icon.

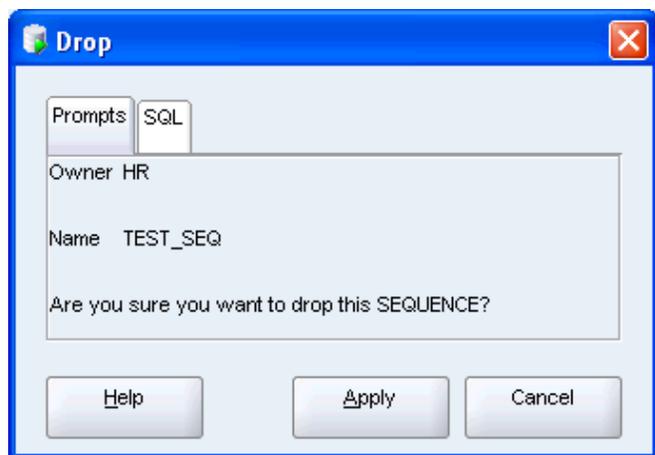
#### **To drop a sequence:**

Follow these steps to drop a sequence.

1. In the Connections navigator, right-click the `test_seq` sequence.



2. In the Drop window, click **Apply**.



3. In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You have now deleted the sequence `test_seq`. The equivalent SQL statement follows:

```
DROP SEQUENCE "HR"."TEST_SEQ";
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `DROP SEQUENCE` statement

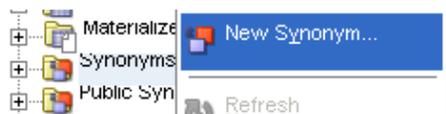
## Using Synonyms

A synonym is an alias for any schema object and can be used to simplify SQL statements or even obscure the names of actual database objects for security purposes. Additionally, if a table is renamed in the database (`departments` to `divisions`), you could create a `departments` synonym and continue using your application code as before.

**To create a synonym using the SQL Developer interface:**

The following steps will create a synonym, `positions`, that you can use in place of the `jobs` schema object.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click **Synonyms**.
2. Select **New Synonym**.



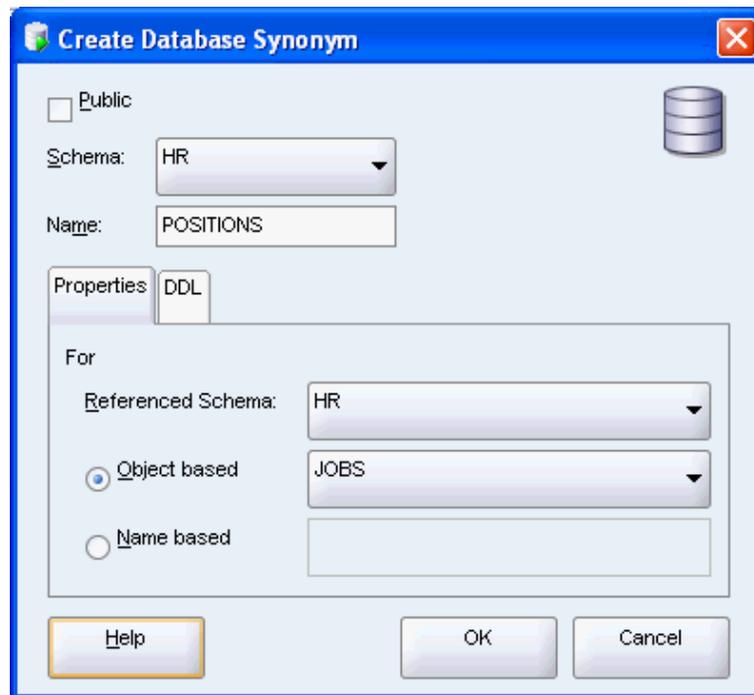
3. In the New Synonym window, set the following parameters:

- Ensure that **Schema** is set to `HR`.
- Set **Name** to `POSITIONS`.

In the Properties tab:

- Select **Object Based**. This means that the synonym refers to a specific schema object, such as a table, a view, a sequence, and so on.
- Set **Object Based** to `JOBS`.

Click **OK**.



You created a synonym `positions` for the `jobs` table. The equivalent SQL statement follows:

```
CREATE SYNONYM positions FOR jobs;
```

In [Example 3-8](#), you use the new `positions` synonym in place of the `jobs` table name.

### **Example 3-8 Using a Synonym**

```
SELECT first_name || ' ' || last_name "Name", p.job_title "Position"
FROM employees e, positions p
WHERE e.job_id = p.job_id
ORDER BY last_name;
```

The results of the query appear.

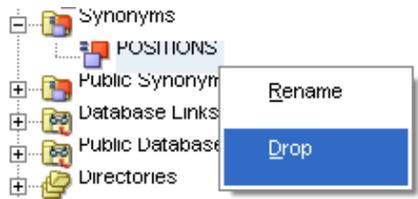
Name	Position
Ellen Abel	Sales Representative
Sundar Ande	Sales Representative
Mozhe Atkinson	Stock Clerk
David Austin	Programmer
...	

197 rows selected

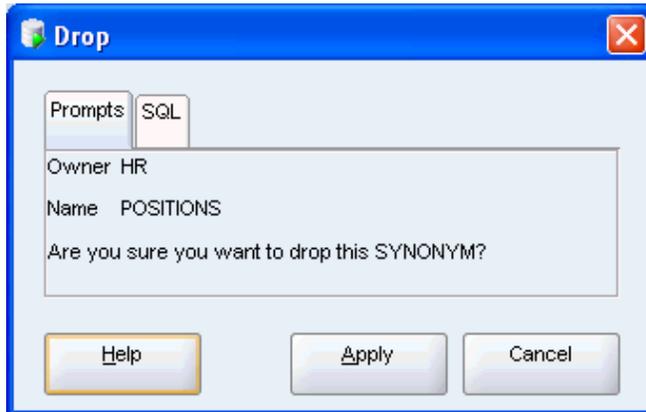
### **To drop a synonym:**

Follow these steps to drop the `positions` synonym.

1. In the Connections navigator, right-click the `positions` synonym.
2. Select **Drop**.



3. In the Drop window, click **Apply**.



4. In the Confirmation window, click **OK**.

You deleted synonym `positions`. The equivalent SQL statement follows:

```
DROP SYNONYM positions;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `CREATE SYNONYM` statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `DROP SYNONYM` statement

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## Developing and Using Stored Procedures

This chapter introduces the use of PL/SQL, the imperative language of Oracle Database.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- [Overview of Stored Procedures](#) on page 4-1
- [Creating and Using Standalone Procedures and Functions](#) on page 4-2
- [Creating and Using Packages](#) on page 4-9
- [Using Variables and Constants](#) on page 4-15
- [Controlling Program Flow](#) on page 4-22
- [Using Composite Data Structures; Records](#) on page 4-29
- [Retrieving Data from a Set Using Cursors and Cursor Variables](#) on page 4-32
- [Using Collections; Index-By Tables](#) on page 4-38
- [Handling Errors and Exceptions](#) on page 4-41

### Overview of Stored Procedures

You already know how to interact with the database using SQL, but it is not sufficient for building enterprise applications. PL/SQL is a third generation language that has the expected procedural and namespace constructs, and its tight integration with SQL makes it possible to build complex and powerful applications. Because PL/SQL is executed in the database, you can include SQL statements in your code without having to establish a separate connection.

The main types of program units you can create with PL/SQL and store in the database are standalone procedures and functions, and packages. Once stored in the database, these PL/SQL components, collectively known as **stored procedures**, can be used as building blocks for several different applications.

While standalone procedures and functions are invaluable for testing pieces of program logic, Oracle recommends that you place all your code inside a package. Packages are easier to port to another system, and have the additional benefit of qualifying the names of your program units with the package name. For example, if you developed a schema-level procedure called `continue` in a previous version of Oracle Database, your code would not compile when you port it to a newer Oracle Database installation. This is because Oracle recently introduced the statement `CONTINUE` that exits the current iteration of a loop and transfers control to the next iteration. If you developed your procedure inside a package, the procedure `package_name.continue` would have been protected from such name capture.

This next section of this chapter is "[Creating and Using Standalone Procedures and Functions](#)" on page 4-2, shows you how to create and use standalone procedures and functions. You may wish to skip it and move directly to "[Creating and Using Packages](#)" on page 4-9.

## Creating and Using Standalone Procedures and Functions

With Oracle Database, you can store programs in the database, so commonly used code can be written and tested once and then accessed by any application that requires it. Program units that reside in the database also ensure that when the code is invoked the data is processed consistently, which leads to ease and consistency of the application development process.

Schema-level, or standalone subprograms such as functions (which return a value) and procedures (which do not return a value) are compiled and stored in an Oracle Database. Once compiled, they become **stored procedure** or **stored function** schema objects, and can be referenced or called by any applications connected to Oracle Database. At invocation, both stored procedures and functions can accept parameters.

Procedures and functions follow the basic PL/SQL block structure, which consists of the following elements:

- A declarative part, sometimes starting with the keyword `DECLARE`, identifies variables and constants used in the application logic. This part is optional.
- An executable part, starting with `BEGIN` and ending with `END`, contains the application logic. This part is mandatory.
- An exception-handling part, starting with `EXCEPTION`, handles error conditions that may be raised in the executable part of the block. This part is optional.

The general form of a PL/SQL block follows. Note also that each stored program unit has a header that names the unit and identifies it as either a function, procedure, or a package.

```
Header AS
[declaration statements
 ...]
BEGIN
 ...
[EXCEPTION
 ...]
END;
```

### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on the syntax for declaring procedures

## Creating Procedures and Functions

The SQL statements for creating procedures and functions are `CREATE PROCEDURE` and `CREATE FUNCTION`, respectively. In practice, it is best to use a `CREATE OR REPLACE` statement. The general form of these statements follows.

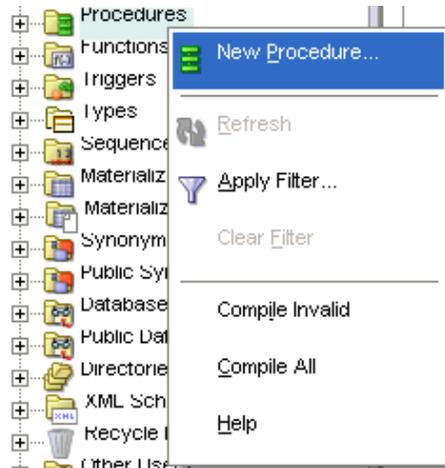
```
CREATE OR REPLACE procedure_name(arg1 data_type, ...) AS
BEGIN
 ....
END procedure_name;
```

```
CREATE OR REPLACE procedure_name(arg1 data_type, ...) AS
BEGIN
    ....
END procedure_name;
```

**To create a procedure:**

You will create a procedure `add_evaluation` that creates a new row in the `evaluations` table.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click **Procedures**.
2. Select **New Procedure**.



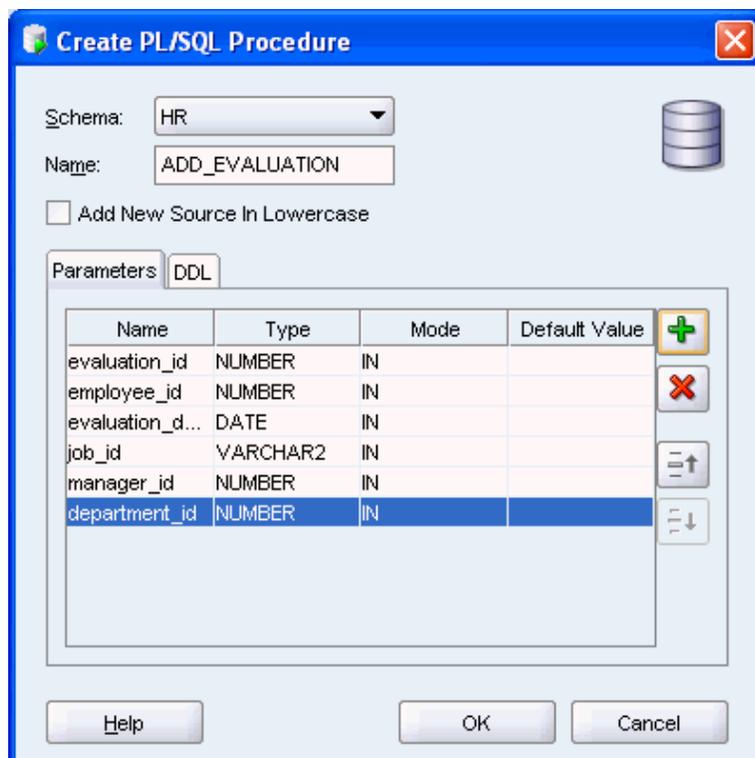
3. In the New Procedure window, set the following parameters:
  - Ensure that **Schema** is set to HR.
  - Set **Name** to `ADD_EVALUATION`.

In the Parameters tab, click the **Add Column** icon ('plus' sign) and specify the first parameter of the procedure. Set **Name** to `eval_id`, set **Type** to `NUMBER`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty.

Similarly, add the following parameters, in this order:

- `employee_id`: set **Type** to `NUMBER`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty.
- `evaluation_date`: set **Type** to `DATE`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty.
- `job_id`: set **Type** to `VARCHAR2`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty.
- `manager_id`: set **Type** to `NUMBER`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty.
- `department_id`: set **Type** to `NUMBER`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty.

Click **OK**.



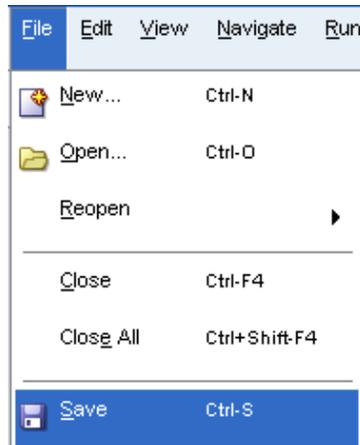
- The ADD\_EVALUATION pane opens with the following code.

Note that the tile of the pane is in italic font, which indicates that the procedure is not saved in the database.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE
PROCEDURE ADD_EVALUATION
( evaluation_id IN NUMBER
, employee_id IN NUMBER
, evaluation_date IN DATE
, job_id IN VARCHAR2
, manager_id IN NUMBER
, department_id IN NUMBER
) AS
BEGIN
    NULL;
END ADD_EVALUATION;
```

- From the **File** menu, select **Save** to save the new procedures. Alternatively, use the **CTRL + S** key combination.

Note that Oracle Database automatically compiles procedures prior to saving them.

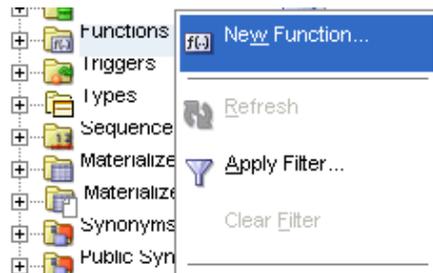


Note that the tile of the `add_evaluation` pane is in regular font, not italic; this indicates that the procedure is saved to the database

**To create a function:**

You will create a new function `calculate_score`, which calculates the weighted score based on the performance in a particular category.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click **Functions**.
2. Select **New Function**.



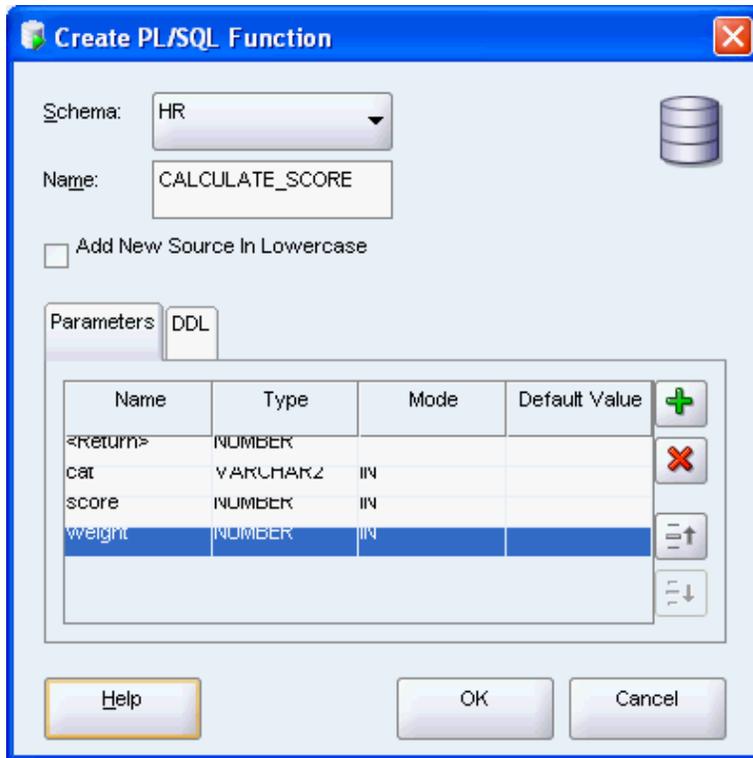
3. In the New Function window, set the following parameters:
  - Ensure that **Schema** is set to HR.
  - Set **Name** to `CALCULATE_SCORE`.

In the Parameters pane, set the **<return> Type** to `NUMBER`.

Similarly, add the following parameters, in this order:

- `cat`: set **Type** to `VARCHAR2`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty.
- `score`: set **Type** to `NUMBER`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty
- `weight`: set **Type** to `NUMBER`, set **Mode** to `IN`, and leave **Default Value** empty

Click **OK**.



- The `calculate_score` pane opens with the following code.

Note that the tile of the pane is in italic font, which indicates that the procedure is not saved in the database.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE
FUNCTION calculate_score
( cat IN VARCHAR2
, score IN NUMBER
, weight IN NUMBER
) RETURN NUMBER AS
BEGIN
    RETURN NULL;
END calculate_score;
```

- From the **File** menu, select **Save** to save the new function. Alternatively, use the **CTRL + S** key combination.

Note that Oracle Database automatically compiles functions prior to saving them.

Note that the tile of the `calculate_score` pane is in regular font, not italic; this indicates that the procedure is saved to the database

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `CREATE PROCEDURE` statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `CREATE FUNCTION` statement

## Modifying Procedures and Functions

You already created a new procedure and a new function. However, they both consist of only the subprogram signature. In this section, you will edit a subprogram body.

### To modify a function:

You will edit the function `calculate_score` to determine the weighted value of an evaluation for a particular category.

1. In the `calculate_score` pane, replace the body of the function with the following code. The new code is in bold font.

```
BEGIN
  RETURN score * weight;
END calculate_score;
```

2. Compile and save the function; you may use the **CTRL + S** key combination.

### See Also:

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `ALTER PROCEDURE` statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `ALTER FUNCTION` statement

## Testing Procedures and Functions

Next, you will test the function that you just modified.

### To test a function:

You will test the function `calculate_score`.

1. In the Connections navigator hierarchy, right-click the `calculate_score` function. Select **Run**.



2. In the Run PL/SQL window, click inside the PL/SQL Block pane, and edit the assignments for the `score` and `weight` variables. The new code is in bold font.

```
v_Return := CALCULATE_SCORE(
  CAT => CAT,
  SCORE => 8,
  WEIGHT => 0.2
);
```

Click **OK**.

3. In the Running - Log pane, note the following results:

```
Connecting to the database hr_conn.
v_Return = 1.6
Process exited.
```

Disconnecting from the database hr\_conn.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the system privileges users need to run procedures and functions
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on how to use the EXECUTE IMMEDIATE statement for dynamic SQL

## Dropping Procedures and Functions

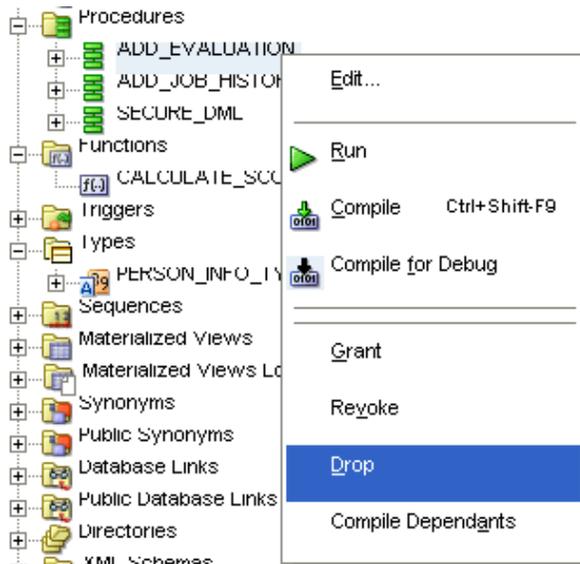
You can delete a procedure or function from the database using either the Connection Navigator, or the SQL DROP statement.

**To drop a procedure:**

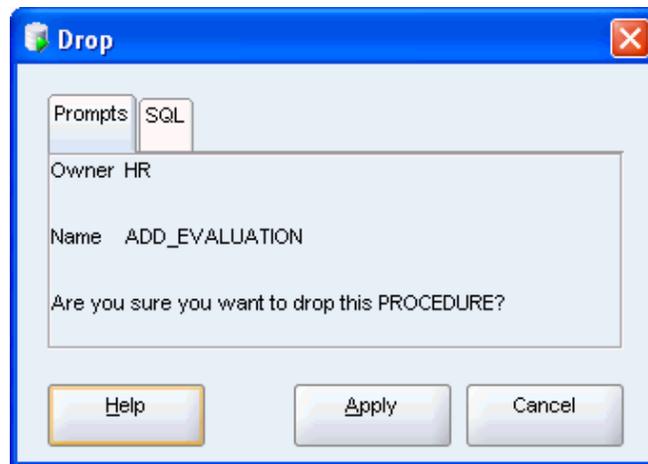
You will drop the procedure ADD\_EVALUATION.

1. In the Connections navigator hierarchy, right-click the ADD\_EVALUATION function.

Select **Drop**.



2. In the Drop window, click **Apply**.



3. In the Confirmation dialog box, click **OK**.

You dropped the ADD\_EVALUATION procedure from the database.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the DROP PROCEDURE statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the DROP FUNCTION statement

## Creating and Using Packages

In the preceding section, you created and tested procedures and functions that were schema objects. This approach can be useful for testing subsets or small features of your application.

Enterprise level applications have much greater complexity: some of the interfaces and types are directly available to user, while others are used only by other functions and procedures and are never called by the user. PL/SQL enables you to formally state the relationship between these subprograms by placing them in the same **package**, which is a schema object that groups and name-qualifies logically related elements such as PL/SQL types, variables, functions and procedures. Encapsulating these elements inside a package also prevents, over the life time of the applications, unintended consequences such as name capture that is discussed in "[Overview of Stored Procedures](#)" on page 4-1.

Procedures and functions that are defined within a package are known as **packaged subprograms**. Procedures and functions that are nested within other subprograms or within a PL/SQL block are called **local subprograms**; they exist only inside the enclosing block and cannot be referenced externally.

Another reason that standalone procedures and functions, like the ones in "[Creating and Using Standalone Procedures and Functions](#)" on page 4-2, are limited to large-scale development is that they can only send and receive scalar parameters (NUMBER, VARCHAR2, and DATE), but cannot use a composite structure, RECORD, unless it is defined in a package specification.

Packages usually have two parts: a specification and a body.

The package is defined by the **package specification**, which declares the types, variables, constants, exceptions, cursors, functions and procedures that can be

referenced from outside of the package. The specification is the interface to the package. Applications that call the subprograms in a package only need to know the names and parameters from the package specification.

The standard package specification has this form:

```
CREATE OR REPLACE PACKAGE package_name AS
  type definitions for records, index-by tables
  constants
  exceptions
  global variable declarations
  procedure procedure_1(arg1, ...);
  ...
  function function_1(arg1,...) return data_type;
  ...
END package_name;
```

The **package body** contains the code that implements these subprograms, the code for all private subprograms that can only be invoked from within the package, and the queries for the cursors. You can change the implementation details inside the package body without invalidating the calling applications.

The package body has this form:

```
CREATE OR REPLACE PACKAGE BODY package_name AS
  PROCEDURE procedure_1(arg1,...) IS
    BEGIN
      ...
    EXCEPTION
      ...
    END procedure_1;
  ...
  FUNCTION function_1(arg1,...) RETURN data_type IS result_variable data_type
    BEGIN
      ...
      RETURN result_variable;
    EXCEPTION
      ...
    END function_1;
  ...
END package_name;
```

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on the syntax for creating a package

## Guidelines for Packages

You should become familiar with the packages supplied with Oracle Database and avoid writing code that duplicates existing features.

You should design and define the package specification before writing the implementation in the package body. In the specification, include only those parts that must be publicly visible to calling programs, and hide private declarations within the package body. This prevents unsafe dependencies of other programs on your implementation details.

Because PL/SQL has a single-pass compiler, you may find that the dependencies between correct and valid subprograms within the package body prevent you from

successfully compiling your package. You then need to declare these unknown subprograms near the top of the package body, and specify them later. For this reason, Oracle recommends that you add new elements at the end of the package specification or body to minimize possible invalidation of dependents.

**See Also:**

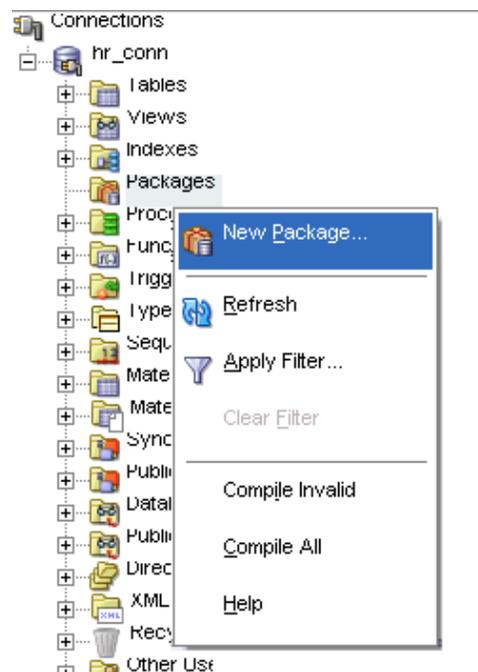
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for detailed information on using PL/SQL packages
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Packages and Types Reference* for default packages available with Oracle Database

## Creating a Package

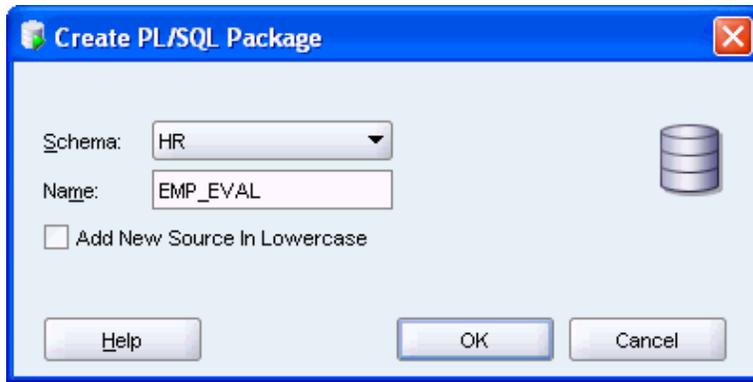
You will create a package that encapsulates all the functionality necessary to perform employee evaluations. After you create the package, "[Modifying a Package](#)" on page 4-12 explains how you modify the package and to create the package body.

**To create a package in SQL Developer navigation hierarchy:**

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click **Packages**.
2. Select **New Package**.



3. In the Create PL/SQL Package dialog, set the following parameters:
  - Ensure that **Schema** is set to HR.
  - Set **Name** to EMP\_EVAL.
 Click **OK**.



- The emp\_eval pane opens with the following code:

```
CREATE OR REPLACE PACKAGE emp_eval AS

    /* TODO enter package declarations (types, exceptions, methods etc) here */

END emp_eval;
```

Note that the title of the pane is in italic font, which indicates that the package is not saved to the database.

- From the **File** menu, select **Save** to compile and save the new package. Alternatively, use the **CTRL + S** key combination.

In the Messages - Log pane, the system confirms that the package was created:

```
EMP_EVAL Compiled.
```

Note that the title of the emp\_eval pane is in regular font, not italic; this indicates that the procedure is saved to the database.

[Example 4-1](#) shows how to create a package directly in the SQL Worksheet.

**Example 4-1 Creating a PL/SQL Package**

```
CREATE OR REPLACE PACKAGE eval AS
    /* package */
END eval;
```

The results of the script follow.

```
PACKAGE eval Compiled.
```

**See Also:**

- Oracle Database SQL Language Reference for information on the CREATE PACKAGE statement (for the package specification)

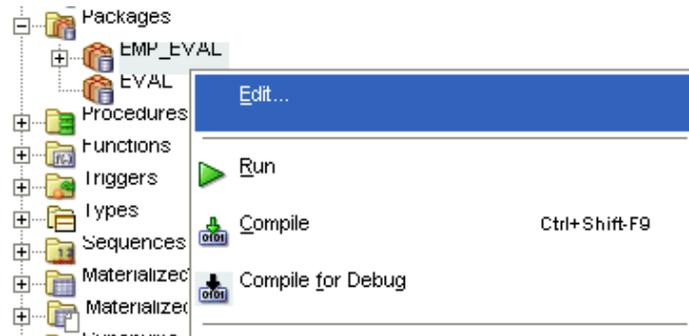
**Modifying a Package**

In this section, you will modify package emp\_eval.

**To change the package specification:**

You will change the package specification of emp\_eval by specifying some functions and procedures.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, select Packages, and then right-click emp\_eval.
2. Select Edit.



3. In the EMP\_EVAL pane, edit the package. The new code is in bold font.

```
create or replace
PACKAGE emp_eval AS
    PROCEDURE eval_department(department_id IN NUMBER);
    FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN NUMBER
        , performance_id IN NUMBER)
        RETURN NUMBER;
END emp_eval;
```

4. Compile the package specification.

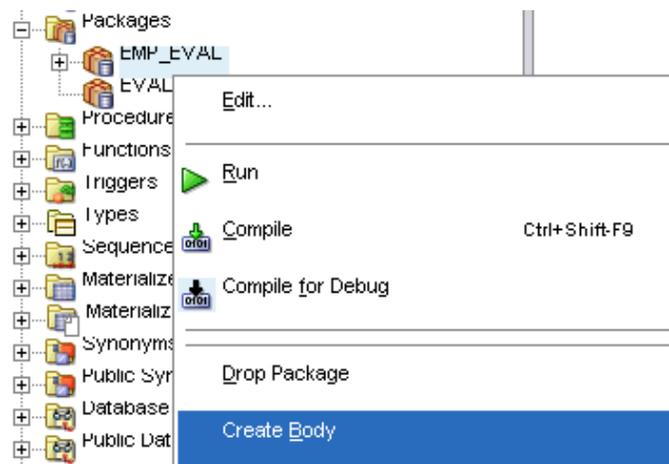
You will see the following message that confirms that the package compiled correctly.

```
EMP_EVAL Compiled.
```

**To create a package body:**

You will create a package body for emp\_eval by specifying some functions and procedures.

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click emp\_eval.
2. Select Create Body.



3. In the emp\_eval Body pane, you can see the automatically generated code for the package body.

```

CREATE OR REPLACE
PACKAGE BODY emp_eval AS

    PROCEDURE eval_department(department_id IN NUMBER) AS
    BEGIN
        /* TODO implementation required */
        NULL;
    END eval_department;

    FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN NUMBER
        , performance_id IN NUMBER)
        RETURN NUMBER AS

    BEGIN
        /* TODO implementation required */
        RETURN NULL;
    END calculate_score;

END emp_eval;
    
```

4. Compile and save the package body.

You will see the following message that confirms that the package body compiled correctly.

EMP\_EVAL Body Compiled.

**See Also:**

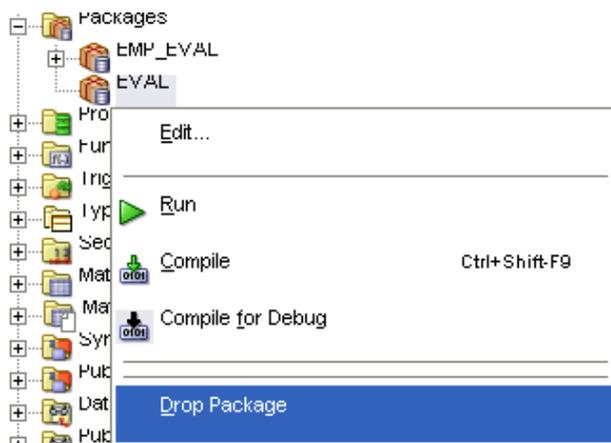
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the CREATE PACKAGE BODY statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the ALTER PACKAGE statement

## Dropping a Package

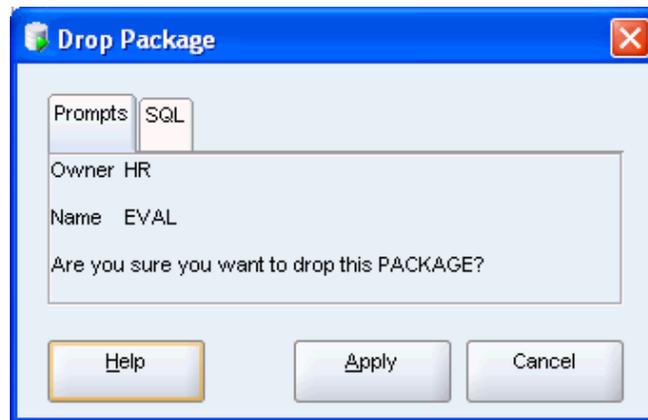
You can delete a package from the database either by using the Connections navigator hierarchy or the SQL DROP statement. When you drop a package, you remove from the database both the package specification and its package body.

**To drop a package:**

1. In the Connections navigator hierarchy, select Packages, and then right-click the EVAL package.
2. Select **Drop Package**.



3. In the Drop Package dialog, click **Apply**.



4. In the Confirmation dialog, click **OK**.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information on the `DROP PACKAGE` statement

## Using Variables and Constants

One of the significant advantages that PL/SQL offers over SQL is its ability to use variables and constants in programming constructs.

A **variable** is defined by the user to hold a specified value of a particular data type. This value is mutable; it can change at runtime.

A **constant** holds a value that cannot be changed; the compiler ensures that this value is immutable and does not compile any code that could change it. You should use constants in your code instead of direct values because they will make it simpler to maintenance of your code base over time. When you declare all values that do not change as constants, this optimizes your compiled code.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Concepts* for information about variables and constants

## PL/SQL Data Types

In addition to the SQL data types such as `VARCHAR2`, `DATE`, `NUMBER`, and so on, Oracle Database supports data types that you can use only through PL/SQL. These data types include `BOOLEAN`, composite data types such as `RECORD`, reference types such as `REF CURSOR` and `INDEX BY TABLE`, and numerous specialized types that represent numbers, characters, and date elements. One numeric type, `PLS_INTEGER`, is especially useful because it performs binary integer arithmetic and has significant performance benefits. Note that these PL/SQL types cannot be used at the level of the schema (and therefore, in tables), but only for types and processes that are defined within a package.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for general information on PL/SQL data types
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information about the `PLS_INTEGER`

## Using Variables and Constants

Variables and constants can have any SQL or PL/SQL data type, and are declared in the declaration block of a subprogram. By default, any variable that is declared has a value of `NULL`. When defining a constant, you must use the `CONSTANT` clause, and assign a value immediately.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference*

## Using Comments

In PL/SQL, in-line comments start with a double hyphen, `--`, and extend to the end of the line. Multi-line comments must start with a slash and asterisk, `/*`, and terminate with an asterisk and a slash, `*/`.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference*

## Using Identifiers

Identifiers name PL/SQL program units such as constants, variables, and subprograms. All identifiers must have at most 30 characters, and must start with a letter that is followed by any combination of letters, numerals, and the signs `'$'`, `'_'`, and `'#'`. Other characters cannot be used in identifiers.

Note that because PL/SQL is not case-sensitive except in managing string and character literals, you can use uppercase and lowercase letters interchangeably. This means that an identifier `last_name` is equivalent to `LAST_NAME`. Declaring the second identifier generates an error.

You should use meaningful names for your variables and constants, and use a good naming convention. For example, you could start each constant name with `'cons_'`. Also, remember not to use reserved words as identifiers.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on the scope and visibility of identifiers
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information how to collect data on identifiers
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on how PL/SQL resolves identifier names

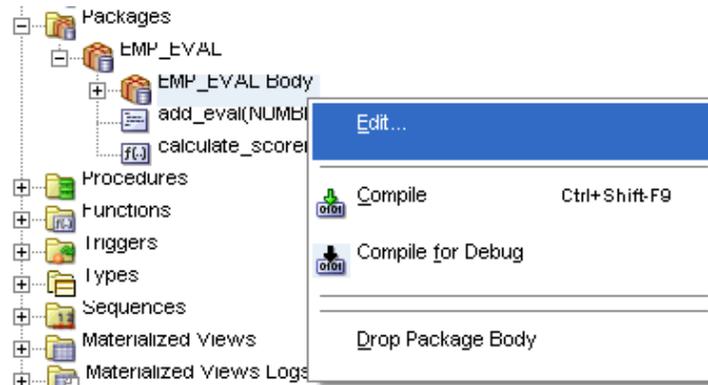
## Declaring Variables and Constants

You will update the new function of the `emp_eval` package, `calculate_score`, which calculates the final score for the employee evaluation by combing all weighted scores in different categories.

**To declare variables and constants:**

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, click the plus sign (+) beside Packages to expand the group.
2. Click the 'plus' beside emp\_eval to expand the package.
3. Right-click **EMP\_EVAL Body**.
4. Select **Edit**.

emp\_eval Body pane appears.



5. In the emp\_eval Body pane, modify function calculate\_score by adding variables and constants, as shown by the following code. New code is bold font.

```

FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN NUMBER
                        , performance_id IN NUMBER)
RETURN NUMBER AS

  n_score          NUMBER(1,0);          -- a variable
  n_weight        NUMBER;              -- a variable
  max_score       CONSTANT NUMBER(1,0) := 9; -- a constant limit check
  max_weight     CONSTANT NUMBER(8,8) := 1; -- a constant limit check
BEGIN
  RETURN NULL;
END calculate_score;

```

6. Use the key combination 'CTRL'+ 'S' to save the updated package body.

The following message appears in the Messages-Log pane:

```
EMP_EVAL Body Compiled
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on assigning values to variables

**Declaring Variables with Structure Identical to Database Columns**

In "[Declaring Variables and Constants](#)", you modified function calculate\_score by adding two variables, n\_score and n\_weight. These variables will represent values from tables in the database: n\_score is stored in the scores table, and n\_weight is stored in the performance\_parts table. The data types you used for these variables match the column data type definitions in the tables.

Over time, applications evolve and the column definitions may change; this may invalidate the calculate\_score function. For easier code maintenance, you should use special qualifiers that declare variables with data types that match the definitions of the appropriate columns and rows. These qualifiers are %TYPE and %ROWTYPE.

- The %TYPE attribute supplies the data type of a table column or another variable. This has the advantages of guaranteeing the correct data type assignment, and the correct implementation of the function at runtime if the data type of the table column changes.
- The %ROWTYPE attribute supplies the definition of a row in a table to a RECORD variable. Columns in a table row and the corresponding fields in a RECORD have the same names and data types. The advantages of using %ROWTYPE are the same as for %TYPE. See "Using Composite Data Structures; Records" on page 4-29 for a demonstration.

The following task shows how to use the %TYPE attribute in a function. You will edit the function `calculate_score` to assign to variables `n_score` and `n_weight` the data types that match the columns of the source tables. Note that the constants `max_score` and `max_weight` will be used to check equivalence to table values, so they too must match the table types.

#### To use the %TYPE attribute:

1. In the `emp_eval` Body pane, modify function `calculate_score` by changing the definition of the variables, as shown by the following code. New code is bold font.

```
FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN scores.evaluation_id%TYPE
                        , performance_id IN scores.performance_id%TYPE)
RETURN NUMBER AS

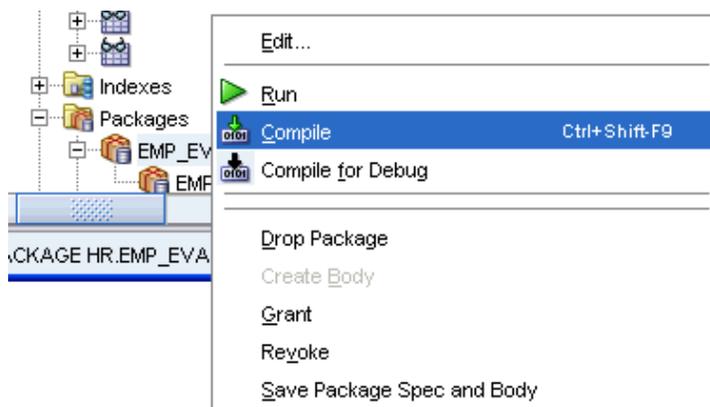
  n_score      scores.score%TYPE;           -- from SCORES
  n_weight     performance_parts.weight%TYPE; -- from PERFORMANCE_PARTS
  max_score    CONSTANT scores.score%TYPE := 9; -- a constant limit check
  max_weight   CONSTANT performance_parts.weight%TYPE := 1;
                                                    -- a constant limit check

BEGIN
  RETURN NULL;
END calculate_score;
```

2. In the `emp_eval` package specification, change the declaration of the function `calculate_score`.

```
FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN scores.evaluation_id%TYPE
                        , performance_id IN scores.performance_id%TYPE)
RETURN NUMBER;
```

3. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click the `emp_eval` package, and select **Compile**. Alternatively, use the **Ctrl+Shift+F9** keyboard shortcut.



The following message appears in the Messages-Log pane:

EMP\_EVAL Body Compiled

### To use the %ROWTYPE attribute:

Look at the code used in the eval\_department procedure in "Using Explicit Cursors" on page 4-33.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference*

## Assigning Values to Variables

You can assign values to a variable in three general ways: through the assignment operator, by selecting a value into the variable, or by binding a variable. This section covers the first two methods. Variable binding is described in 2 Day + guides for Application Express, Java, .NET, and PHP.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference*
- *Oracle Database 2 Day + .NET Developer's Guide*
- *Oracle Database 2 Day + PHP Developer's Guide*
- *Oracle Database 2 Day + Java Developer's Guide.*
- *Oracle Database 2 Day + Application Express Developer's Guide*

### Assigning Values with the Assignment Operator

You can assign values to a variable both in the declaration and the body of a subprogram.

The following code shows the standard declaration of variables and constants. In procedures and functions, the declaration block does not use the DECLARE keyword; instead, it follows the AS keyword of the subprogram definition.

#### Example 4-2 Assigning variable values in a declaration

In the emp\_eval Body pane, modify function calculate\_score by adding a new variable running\_total. The value of running\_total is also the new return value of the function. You will set the initial value of the return variable to 0. Note that running\_total is declared as a general NUMBER because it will hold a product of two NUMBERS with different precision and scale. New code is bold font.

```

FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN scores.evaluation_id%TYPE
                        , performance_id IN scores.performance_id%TYPE)
    RETURN NUMBER AS
    n_score      scores.score%TYPE;           -- from SCORES
    n_weight     performance_parts.weight%TYPE; -- from PERFORMANCE_PARTS
    running_total NUMBER                       := 0;   -- used in calculations
    max_score    CONSTANT scores.score%TYPE := 9; -- a constant limit check
    max_weight   CONSTANT performance_parts.weight%TYPE:= 1;
                                                    -- a constant limit check

BEGIN
    RETURN running_total;
END calculate_score;

```

Compile the emp\_eval Body.

You can also assign values to variables within the body of a subprogram. You will edit the function `calculate_score` by using the `running_total` variable inside the body of the function to hold a value of an expression.

### **Example 4-3 Assigning variable values in the body of a function**

In the `emp_eval` Body pane, modify function `calculate_score` by assigning to the `running_total` variable the value of an expression, as shown by the following code. New code is bold font.

```
FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN scores.evaluation_id%TYPE
                        , performance_id IN scores.performance_id%TYPE)
RETURN NUMBER AS

    n_score      scores.score%TYPE;           -- from SCORES
    n_weight     performance_parts.weight%TYPE; -- from PERFORMANCE_PARTS
    running_total NUMBER := 0;                -- used in calculations
    max_score    CONSTANT scores.score%TYPE := 9; -- a constant limit check
    max_weight   CONSTANT performance_parts.weight%TYPE := 1;
                                                    -- a constant limit check

BEGIN
    running_total := max_score * max_weight;
    RETURN running_total;
END calculate_score;
```

Compile and save `emp_eval` Body.

#### **See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on assigning values to variables

### **Assigning Values from the Database**

The simplest possible assignment of a value is to use the assignment operator (`:=`) as you did for the variable `running_total` in "[Assigning Values with the Assignment Operator](#)" on page 4-19.

However, the purpose of function `calculate_score` is to perform a calculation based on values stored in database tables. To use existing database values in a procedure, function, or package, you must assign these values to a variable by using a `SELECT INTO` statement. You can then use the variable in subsequent computations.

### **Example 4-4 Assigning to a variable a values from the database**

In the `emp_eval` Body pane, modify function `calculate_score` by assigning the table values to the variables `n_score` and `n_weight`, and then assigning their product to the `running_total` variable, as shown by the following code. New code is bold font.

```
FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN scores.evaluation_id%TYPE
                        , performance_id IN scores.performance_id%TYPE)
RETURN NUMBER AS

    n_score      scores.score%TYPE;           -- from SCORES
    n_weight     performance_parts.weight%TYPE; -- from PERFORMANCE_PARTS
    running_total NUMBER := 0;                -- used in calculations
    max_score    CONSTANT scores.score%TYPE := 9; -- a constant limit check
    max_weight   CONSTANT performance_parts.weight%TYPE := 1;
                                                    -- a constant limit check

BEGIN
    SELECT scores.score INTO n_score;
    SELECT performance_parts.weight INTO n_weight;
    running_total := n_score * n_weight;
    RETURN running_total;
END calculate_score;
```

```

SELECT s.score INTO n_score FROM scores s
  WHERE evaluation_id = s.evaluation_id
        AND performance_id = s.performance_id;
SELECT p.weight INTO n_weight FROM performance_parts p
  WHERE performance_id = p.performance_id;
  running_total := n_score * n_weight;
RETURN running_total;
END calculate_score;

```

Compile and save emp\_eval Body.

Similarly, add a new add\_eval procedure for inserting new records into the evaluations table, based on the content of the corresponding row in the employees table. Note that add\_eval is using the sequence evaluations\_seq.

#### **Example 4-5 Creating a new table row with values from another table**

In the emp\_eval Body pane, above the line END emp\_eval, add procedure add\_eval, which uses some columns from the employees table to insert rows into the evaluations table. Note also that you will create the local function add\_eval in the body of the emp\_eval package, but not declare it in the package specification. This means that add\_eval may be invoked only within the emp\_eval package, by another subprogram.

```

PROCEDURE add_eval(employee_id IN employees.employee_id%TYPE, today IN DATE) AS
  -- placeholders for variables
  job_id          employees.job_id%TYPE;
  manager_id      employees.manager_id%TYPE;
  department_id   employees.department_id%TYPE;
BEGIN

  -- extracting values from employees for later insertion into evaluations
  SELECT e.job_id INTO job_id FROM employees e
    WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
  SELECT e.manager_id INTO manager_id FROM employees e
    WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
  SELECT e.department_id INTO department_id FROM employees e
    WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;

  -- inserting a new row of values into evaluations table
  INSERT INTO evaluations VALUES (
    evaluations_seq.NEXTVAL, -- evaluation_id
    employee_id,             -- employee_id
    today,                   -- evaluation_date
    job_id,                  -- job_id
    manager_id,              -- manager_id
    department_id,          -- department_id
    0);                       -- total_score

END add_eval;

```

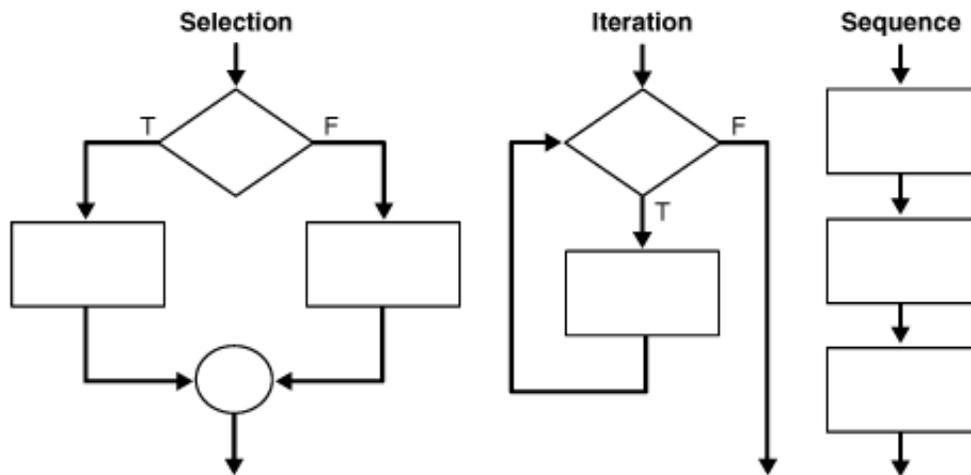
Compile and save emp\_eval Body.

#### **See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on assigning values to variables

## Controlling Program Flow

Control structures are the most powerful feature of the PL/SQL extension to SQL. They let you manipulate data and process it using conditional selection, iterative control, and sequential statements. Conditional selection is a situation where you may have different types of data values, and may need to perform different processing steps. Iterative control is a situation where you need to perform repetitive process steps on similar data. In general, all the lines of code in your programs run sequentially; sequential control means that you are choosing to execute an alternate labeled programming branch (GOTO statement).



This section will only cover conditional selection and iterative program flow structures, such as `IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE`, `CASE`, `FOR . . . LOOP`, `WHILE . . . LOOP`, and `LOOP . . . EXIT WHEN`.

### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for an overview of PL/SQL control structures

## Using Conditional Selection Control

Conditional selection structures test an expression that evaluates to a `BOOLEAN` value `TRUE` or `FALSE`. Depending on the value, control structures execute the assigned sequence of statements. There are two general selection control mechanisms: `IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE` and its variations, and the `CASE` statement.

### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on `IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE` selection control
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on `CASE . . . WHEN` selection control

## Using IF...THEN...ELSE Selection Control

The `IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE` statement runs a sequence of statements conditionally. If the test condition evaluates to `TRUE`, the program runs statements in the `THEN` clause. If the condition evaluates to `FALSE`, the program runs the statements in the `ELSE` clause. You can also use this structure for testing multiple conditions if you include the `ELSIF`

keyword. The general form of the `IF . . . THEN . . . [ELSIF] . . . ELSE` statement follows:

```
IF condition_1 THEN
  ...;
ELSIF condition_2 THEN -- optional
  ...;
ELSE -- optional
  ...;
END IF;
```

For example, the sample company could have a rule that an employee evaluation should be done twice a year (December 31 and June 30) in the first ten years of employment, but only once a year (December 31) subsequently. You could implement this rule in an `eval_frequency` function that determines how many times in each year an evaluation should be performed by using the `IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE` clause on the value of the `hire_date` column.

The function `eval_frequency` uses the `employees.hire_date` value to determine if evaluations should be performed once each year (over 10 years employment) or twice each year.

Note also that you will create the function `eval_frequency` in the body of the `emp_eval` package, but not declare it in the package specification. This means that `eval_frequency` may be invoked only within the `emp_eval` package, by another subprogram.

#### **Example 4-6 Using the IF.. THEN...ELSE Selection Control**

In the `emp_eval` Body pane, add `eval_frequency` function immediately before the `END emp_eval;` statement, as shown by the following code. The control structures are in bold font.

```
FUNCTION eval_frequency (employee_id IN employees.employee_id%TYPE)
  RETURN PLS_INTEGER AS
  hire_date employees.hire_date%TYPE; -- start of employment
  today     employees.hire_date%TYPE; -- today's date
  eval_freq PLS_INTEGER; -- frequency of evaluations
BEGIN
  SELECT SYSDATE INTO today FROM DUAL; -- set today's date
  SELECT e.hire_date INTO hire_date -- determine when employee started
    FROM employees e
   WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;

  IF((hire_date + (INTERVAL '120' MONTH)) < today) THEN
    eval_freq := 1;
  ELSE
    eval_freq := 2;
  END IF;

  RETURN eval_freq;
END eval_frequency;
```

Compile and save `emp_eval` Body.

#### **See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on `IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE` selection control

## Using CASE...WHEN Selection Control

The CASE . . . WHEN construct is a good alternative to nested IF . . . THEN statements if the variable that determines the course of action has several possible values. The CASE evaluates a condition, and performs a different action for each possible value.

Whenever possible, use the CASE . . . WHEN statement instead of IF . . . THEN, both for readability and efficiency. The general form of the CASE . . . WHEN construct follows:

```
CASE condition
  WHEN value_1 THEN expression_1;
  WHEN value_2 THEN expression_2;
  ...
  ELSE expression_default;
END CASE;
```

Suppose that in the `make_evaluation` function from "Using IF...THEN...ELSE Selection Control" on page 4-22, you wanted to notify the `hr` user if a long-time employee who holds one of a select positions should be considered for a salary raise. Depending on the value of `employees.job_id`, the program logic should notify the user of the suggested salary raise.

Note that you will use the `DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE` procedure, described in *Oracle Database PL/SQL Packages and Types Reference*.

### Example 4-7 Using CASE...WHEN Conditional Control

In the `emp_eval` Body pane, edit `eval_frequency` function to add a `job_id` variable and a CASE statement that is based on the value of the `job_id`, as shown by the following code. New code is in bold font.

```
FUNCTION eval_frequency (employee_id IN employees.employee_id%TYPE)
  RETURN PLS_INTEGER AS
  hire_date  employees.hire_date%TYPE;    -- start of employment
  today      employees.hire_date%TYPE;    -- today's date
  eval_freq  PLS_INTEGER;                 -- frequency of evaluations
  job_id     employees.job_id%TYPE;        -- category of the job

BEGIN
  SELECT SYSDATE INTO today FROM DUAL;    -- set today's date
  SELECT e.hire_date INTO hire_date      -- determine when employee started
    FROM employees e
   WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;

  IF ((hire_date + (INTERVAL '120' MONTH)) < today) THEN
    eval_freq := 1;

    /* Suggesting salary increase based on position */
    SELECT e.job_id INTO job_id FROM employees e
     WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
    CASE job_id
     WHEN 'PU_CLERK' THEN DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
     'Consider 8% salary increase for employee number ' || employee_id);
     WHEN 'SH_CLERK' THEN DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
     'Consider 7% salary increase for employee number ' || employee_id);
     WHEN 'ST_CLERK' THEN DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
     'Consider 6% salary increase for employee number ' || employee_id);
     WHEN 'HR_REP' THEN DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
     'Consider 5% salary increase for employee number ' || employee_id);
     WHEN 'PR_REP' THEN DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
     'Consider 5% salary increase for employee number ' || employee_id);
     WHEN 'MK_REP' THEN DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
```

```

        'Consider 4% salary increase for employee number ' || employee_id);
    ELSE DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
        'Nothing to do for employee #' || employee_id);
    END CASE;

ELSE
    eval_freq := 2;
END IF;

RETURN eval_freq;
END eval_frequency;

```

Compile and save emp\_eval Body.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on CASE . . . WHEN selection control

## Using Iterative Control

Iteration structures, or loops, execute a sequence of statements repeatedly. There are three basic types of loops, the FOR . . . LOOP, the WHILE . . . LOOP, and the LOOP . . . EXIT WHEN.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on controlling LOOP iterations

### Using the FOR...LOOP

The FOR . . . LOOP repeats a sequence of steps a defined number of times and uses a counter variable that must be in the defined range of integers to run the loop. The loop counter is implicitly declared in the FOR . . . LOOP statement, and implicitly incremented every time the loop runs. Note that the value of the loop counter can be used within the body of the loop, but it cannot be changed programmatically. The FOR . . . LOOP statement has the following form:

```

FOR counter IN integer_1..integer_2 LOOP
    ...
END LOOP;

```

Suppose that in addition to recommending that some employees receive a raise, as described in "[Using CASE...WHEN Selection Control](#)" on page 4-24, function eval\_frequency prints how the salary for the employee would change over a set number of years if this increase in salary continued.

Note that you will use the DBMS\_OUTPUT.PUT procedure, described in *Oracle Database PL/SQL Packages and Types Reference*.

#### **Example 4-8 Using FOR...LOOP iterative control**

In the emp\_eval Body pane, edit eval\_frequency function so that it uses the proposed salary increase (sal\_raise) that is assigned in the CASE block to print the proposed salary over a number of years, starting with the current salary, salary. The new code is in bold font.

```

FUNCTION eval_frequency (employee_id IN employees.employee_id%TYPE)
    RETURN PLS_INTEGER AS

```

```

hire_date  employees.hire_date%TYPE;    -- start of employment
today      employees.hire_date%TYPE;    -- today's date
eval_freq  PLS_INTEGER;                -- frequency of evaluations
job_id     employees.job_id%TYPE;      -- category of the job
salary    employees.salary%TYPE;     -- current salary
sal_raise NUMBER(3,3) := 0;         -- proposed % salary increase

BEGIN
SELECT SYSDATE INTO today FROM DUAL;    -- set today's date
SELECT e.hire_date INTO hire_date      -- determine when employee started
FROM employees e
WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;

IF((hire_date + (INTERVAL '120' MONTH)) < today) THEN
eval_freq := 1;

/* Suggesting salary increase based on position */
SELECT e.job_id INTO job_id FROM employees e
WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
SELECT e.salary INTO salary FROM employees e
WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
CASE job_id
WHEN 'PU_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.08;
WHEN 'SH_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.07;
WHEN 'ST_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.06;
WHEN 'HR_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.05;
WHEN 'PR_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.05;
WHEN 'MK_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.04;
ELSE NULL; -- job type does not match ones that should consider increases
END CASE;

/* If a salary raise is not zero, print the salary schedule */
IF (sal_raise != 0) THEN -- start code for salary schedule printout
BEGIN
DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('If the salary ' || salary || ' increases by ' ||
ROUND((sal_raise * 100),0) ||
'% each year over 5 years, it would be ');

FOR loop_c IN 1..5 LOOP
salary := salary * (1 + sal_raise);
DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT (ROUND(salary,2) ||', ');
END LOOP;

DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('in successive years.');

END;
END IF;

ELSE
eval_freq := 2;
END IF;

RETURN eval_freq;
END eval_frequency;

```

Compile the emp\_eval Body.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on the syntax of LOOP statements

**Using the WHILE...LOOP**

The WHILE...LOOP repeats as long as a condition holds TRUE. The condition evaluates at the top of each loop and if TRUE, the statements in the body of the loop run. If the condition is FALSE or NULL, the control passes to the next statement after the loop. The general form of the WHILE...LOOP control structure follows.

```
WHILE condition LOOP
    ...
END LOOP;
```

Note that the WHILE...LOOP may run indefinitely, so use it with care.

Suppose that the EVAL\_FREQUENCY function in "Using the FOR...LOOP" on page 4-25 uses the WHILE...LOOP instead of the FOR...LOOP, and terminates after the proposed salary reaches the upper salary limit for the job\_id.

**Example 4-9 Using WHILE...LOOP Iterative Control**

In the emp\_eval Body pane, edit eval\_frequency function so that it uses the proposed salary increase (sal\_raise) that is assigned in the CASE block to print the proposed salary over a number of years and stops when it reaches the maximum level possible for the job\_id. The new code is in bold font.

```
FUNCTION eval_frequency (employee_id IN employees.employee_id%TYPE)
RETURN PLS_INTEGER AS
    hire_date    employees.hire_date%TYPE;    -- start of employment
    today        employees.hire_date%TYPE;    -- today's date
    eval_freq    PLS_INTEGER;                -- frequency of evaluations
    job_id       employees.job_id%TYPE;       -- category of the job
    salary       employees.salary%TYPE;       -- current salary
    sal_raise    NUMBER(3,3) := 0;           -- proposed % salary increase
    sal_max      jobs.max_salary%TYPE;       -- maximum salary for a job
BEGIN
    SELECT SYSDATE INTO today FROM DUAL;      -- set today's date
    SELECT e.hire_date INTO hire_date         -- determine when employee started
    FROM employees e
    WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;

    IF((hire_date + (INTERVAL '120' MONTH)) < today) THEN
        eval_freq := 1;

        /* Suggesting salary increase based on position */
        SELECT e.job_id INTO job_id FROM employees e
        WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
        SELECT e.salary INTO salary FROM employees e
        WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
        SELECT j.max_salary INTO sal_max FROM jobs j
        WHERE job_id = j.job_id;
        CASE job_id
            WHEN 'PU_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.08;
            WHEN 'SH_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.07;
            WHEN 'ST_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.06;
            WHEN 'HR_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.05;
            WHEN 'PR_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.05;
```

```

        WHEN 'MK_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.04;
        ELSE NULL;
    END CASE;

    /* If a salary raise is not zero, print the salary schedule */
    IF (sal_raise != 0) THEN -- start code for salary schedule printout
    BEGIN
        DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('If the salary ' || salary || ' increases by ' ||
            ROUND((sal_raise * 100),0) ||
            '% each year, it would be ');

        WHILE salary <= sal_max LOOP
            salary := salary * (1 + sal_raise);
            DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT (ROUND(salary,2) ||', ');
        END LOOP;

        DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('in successive years.');
```

```

    END;
END IF;

ELSE
    eval_freq := 2;
END IF;

RETURN eval_freq;
END eval_frequency;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on WHILE . . . LOOP statements

**Using the LOOP..EXIT WHEN**

The LOOP . . . EXIT WHEN structure enables you to exit the loop if further processing is undesirable. If the EXIT WHEN condition evaluates to TRUE, the loop exits and control passes to the next statement.

The eval\_frequency function in ["Using the WHILE...LOOP"](#) on page 4-27 uses the WHILE . . . LOOP. Note that the last computed value may (and typically does) exceed the maximum possible value for a salary in the last iteration of the loop. If you use the LOOP\_EXIT WHEN construct instead of the WHILE . . . LOOP, you can have finer control for terminating the loop.

**Example 4–10 Using LOOP..EXIT WHEN Iterative Control**

In the emp\_eval Body pane, edit eval\_frequency function so that it uses the proposed salary increase (sal\_raise) that is assigned in the CASE block to print the proposed salary over a number of years and stops when it reaches the maximum level possible for the job\_id. The new code is in bold font.

```

FUNCTION eval_frequency (employee_id IN employees.employee_id%TYPE)
RETURN PLS_INTEGER AS
    hire_date  employees.hire_date%TYPE;      -- start of employment
    today      employees.hire_date%TYPE;      -- today's date
    eval_freq  PLS_INTEGER;                   -- frequency of evaluations
    job_id     employees.job_id%TYPE;         -- category of the job
    salary     employees.salary%TYPE;        -- current salary
    sal_raise  NUMBER(3,3) := 0;             -- proposed % salary increase
    sal_max    jobs.max_salary%TYPE;         -- maximum salary for a job
```

```

BEGIN
  SELECT SYSDATE INTO today FROM DUAL;      -- set today's date
  SELECT e.hire_date INTO hire_date        -- determine when employee started
    FROM employees e
   WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;

  IF((hire_date + (INTERVAL '120' MONTH)) < today) THEN
    eval_freq := 1;

    /* Suggesting salary increase based on position */
    SELECT e.job_id INTO job_id FROM employees e
     WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
    SELECT e.salary INTO salary FROM employees e
     WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
    SELECT j.max_salary INTO sal_max FROM jobs j
     WHERE job_id = j.job_id;
    CASE job_id
      WHEN 'PU_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.08;
      WHEN 'SH_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.07;
      WHEN 'ST_CLERK' THEN sal_raise := 0.06;
      WHEN 'HR_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.05;
      WHEN 'PR_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.05;
      WHEN 'MK_REP' THEN sal_raise := 0.04;
      ELSE NULL;
    END CASE;

    /* If a salary raise is not zero, print the salary schedule */
    IF (sal_raise != 0) THEN -- start code for salary schedule printout
      BEGIN
        DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('If the salary ' || salary || ' increases by ' ||
          ROUND((sal_raise * 100),0) ||
          '% each year, it would be ');

        LOOP
          salary := salary * (1 + sal_raise);
          EXIT WHEN salary > sal_max;
          DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT (ROUND(salary,2) ||', ');
        END LOOP;

        DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('in successive years.');
      END;
    END IF;

  ELSE
    eval_freq := 2;
  END IF;

  RETURN eval_freq;
END eval_frequency;

```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for more information on LOOP...EXIT WHEN statement

## Using Composite Data Structures; Records

A composite data structure, or a **record**, is a group of related data items stored in fields, each with its own name and data type. You can think of a record as a variable that can hold a table row, or some columns from a table row. The fields correspond to

table columns. The record structure is very efficient for passing related items to a subprogram as a single parameter, and for effectively using related fields from different tables during run time.

You must define a RECORD as a type, and access its fields through the point notation. The general form for defining and using a record follows:

```

TYPE record_name IS RECORD(
    field_1 data_type,
    ...
    field_n data_type);
...
variable_name record_name;
...
BEGIN
    ...
    ...variable_name.field1...;
    ...variable_name.fieldn...;
    ...
END...;

```

In the `eval_frequency` function from "Using the LOOP..EXIT WHEN" on page 4-28, you used several related parameters. You can use the RECORD construct to combine some of these items into a single parameter.

You will create a type that will contain the upper and lower limits for a job specification.

#### To create a RECORD type:

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, click the plus sign (+) beside Packages to expand the group.
2. Right-click **EMP\_EVAL**.
3. Select **Edit**.

The `emp_eval` pane appears. It shows the specification of the `emp_eval` package.

4. In the `emp_eval` package specification, immediately before the closing line of the package specification, `END emp_eval`, enter the definition of a record type `sal_info`, which contains the fields necessary for evaluating salary levels.

```

TYPE sal_info IS RECORD -- type for salary, limits, raises, and adjustments
( job_id jobs.job_id%type
, sal_min jobs.min_salary%type
, sal_max jobs.max_salary%type
, salary employees.salary%type
, sal_raise NUMBER(3,3) );

```

5. Compile and save `emp_eval`.

The following message appears in the Messages-Log pane:

```
EMP_EVAL Compiled
```

Once you declare a new RECORD type in the package specification, you can use it inside the package body to declare variables of that type. You will create a new procedure, `salary_schedule`, and invoke it from the `eval_frequency` function using a variable of type `sal_info`.

Note that PL/SQL compilation is a single path process; if a subprogram is declared after its client subprogram, PL/SQL compiler throws an error. To work around this

situation, you could declare all the subprograms that are not already declared in the package specification at the top of the package body. The definition of the subprogram can be anywhere within the package body. See step 2 in the following task on instructions for declaring function `eval_frequency` and procedures `salary_schedule` and `add_eval`.

### To use a RECORD type:

1. In the `emp_eval` Body pane, add the definition of the `salary_schedule` procedure immediately before the `END emp_eval` statement, as shown by the following code. Note that this code is similar to the content of the `BEGIN...END` block in `eval_frequency` that executes if the salary raise is nonzero.

```
PROCEDURE salary_schedule(emp IN sal_info) AS
    accumulating_sal NUMBER;          -- accumulator
BEGIN
    DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('If the salary of ' || emp.salary ||
        ' increases by ' || ROUND((emp.sal_raise * 100),0) ||
        '% each year, it would be ');
    accumulating_sal := emp.salary; -- assign value of sal to accumulator
    WHILE accumulating_sal <= emp.sal_max LOOP
        accumulating_sal := accumulating_sal * (1 + emp.sal_raise);
        DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT (ROUND( accumulating_sal,2) ||', ');
    END LOOP;
    DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('in successive years.');
```

2. In the `emp_eval` Body pane, near the top of the `emp_eval` body definition, enter declarations for `eval_frequency` and `salary_schedule`. New code is in bold font.

```
create or replace
PACKAGE BODY emp_eval AS

/* local subprogram declarations */
FUNCTION eval_frequency (employee_id employees.employee_id%TYPE) RETURN NUMBER;
PROCEDURE salary_schedule(emp IN sal_info);
PROCEDURE add_eval(employee_id IN NUMBER, today IN DATE);

/* subprogram definition */
PROCEDURE eval_department (dept_id IN NUMBER) AS
...

```

3. In the `emp_eval` Body pane, edit `eval_frequency` function so that it uses the new `sal_info` type as variable `emp_sal`, populates its fields, and invokes `salary_schedule`. Note that the code that was previously executed if the salary raise was nonzero is no longer part of this function; it has been incorporated into the `salary_schedule` procedure. Note also that the declarations at the top of the functions changed. New code is in bold font.

```
FUNCTION eval_frequency (employee_id employees.employee_id%TYPE)
RETURN PLS_INTEGER AS
    hire_date    employees.hire_date%TYPE;    -- start of employment
    today        employees.hire_date%TYPE;    -- today's date
    eval_freq    PLS_INTEGER;                -- frequency of evaluations
    emp_sal      SAL_INFO;                  -- record for fields associated
                                           -- with salary review
BEGIN
    SELECT SYSDATE INTO today FROM DUAL;      -- set today's date
    SELECT e.hire_date INTO hire_date        -- determine when employee started
```

```

        FROM employees e
        WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;

IF((hire_date + (INTERVAL '120' MONTH)) < today) THEN
    eval_freq := 1;

    /* populate emp_sal */
    SELECT e.job_id INTO emp_sal.job_id FROM employees e
        WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
    SELECT j.min_salary INTO emp_sal.sal_min FROM jobs j
        WHERE emp_sal.job_id = j.job_id;
    SELECT j.max_salary INTO emp_sal.sal_max FROM jobs j
        WHERE emp_sal.job_id = j.job_id;
    SELECT e.salary INTO emp_sal.salary FROM employees e
        WHERE employee_id = e.employee_id;
    emp_sal.sal_raise := 0; -- default

    CASE emp_sal.job_id
        WHEN 'PU_CLERK' THEN emp_sal.sal_raise := 0.08;
        WHEN 'SH_CLERK' THEN emp_sal.sal_raise := 0.07;
        WHEN 'ST_CLERK' THEN emp_sal.sal_raise := 0.06;
        WHEN 'HR_REP' THEN emp_sal.sal_raise := 0.05;
        WHEN 'PR_REP' THEN emp_sal.sal_raise := 0.05;
        WHEN 'MK_REP' THEN emp_sal.sal_raise := 0.04;
        ELSE NULL;
    END CASE;

    /* If a salary raise is not zero, print the salary schedule */
    IF (emp_sal.sal_raise != 0) THEN salary_schedule(emp_sal);
    END IF;

ELSE
    eval_freq := 2;
END IF;

RETURN eval_freq;
END eval_frequency;

```

#### 4. Compile and save emp\_eval Body.

The following message appears in the Messages - Log pane:

```
EMP_EVAL Body Compiled
```

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on collections and records

## Retrieving Data from a Set Using Cursors and Cursor Variables

A **cursor** is a type of pointer that is built into PL/SQL for querying the database, retrieving a set of records (a **result set**), and enabling the developer to access these records one row at a time. A cursor is a handle or a name for a private in-memory SQL area that holds a parsed statement and related information. Oracle Database implicitly manages cursors. However, there are a few interfaces that enable you to use cursors explicitly, as a named resource within a program to more effectively parse embedded SQL statements. The two main types of cursors are therefore defined as:

- **Implicit cursors** can be used in PL/SQL without explicit code to process the cursor itself. A result set that is returned by the cursors can be used programmatically, but there is no programmatic control over the cursor itself.
- **Explicit cursors** allow you to programmatically manage the cursor, and give you a detailed level of control over record access in the result set.

Each user session may have many open cursors, up to the limit set by the initialization parameter `OPEN_CURSORS`, which is 50 by default. You should ensure that your applications close cursors to conserve system memory. If a cursor cannot be opened because the `OPEN_CURSORS` limit is reached, contact the database administrator to alter the `OPEN_CURSORS` initialization parameter.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Concepts* for information about cursors

## Using Explicit Cursors

The implicit cursor, such as in a `FOR . . . LOOP`, are generally more efficient than an explicit cursor. However, explicit cursors may be more appropriate for your program, and they also allow you to manage specific in-memory areas as a named resource.

An explicit cursor has the attributes described in the following table:

Cursor Attribute	Description
<code>%NOTFOUND</code>	Returns <code>TRUE</code> or <code>FALSE</code> , based on the results of the last fetch.
<code>%FOUND</code>	Returns <code>TRUE</code> or <code>FALSE</code> , based on the results of the last fetch; negation of the <code>%NOTFOUND</code> results.
<code>%ROWCOUNT</code>	Returns the number of rows fetched. Can be called at any time after the first fetch. Also returns the number of rows affected from <code>UPDATE</code> and <code>DELETE</code> statements.
<code>%ISOPEN</code>	Returns <code>TRUE</code> if a cursor is still open.

An explicit cursor must be defined as a variable of the same type as the columns it fetches; the data type of the record is derived from the cursor definition. Explicit cursors must be opened and may then retrieve rows within a `LOOP . . . EXIT WHEN` structure and then closed. The general form for using cursors follows:

```
DECLARE
  CURSOR cursor_name type IS query_definition;
OPEN cursor_name
LOOP
  FETCH record;
  EXIT WHEN cursor_name%NOTFOUND;
  . . .           -- process fetched row
END LOOP;
CLOSE cursor_name;
```

This is what happens during the life time of a cursor:

- The `OPEN` statement parses the query identified by the cursor, binds the inputs, and ensures that you can successfully fetch records from the result set.
- The `FETCH` statement runs the query, and then finds and retrieves the matching rows. You will need to define and use local variables as buffers for the data returned by the cursor, and then process the specific record.

- The CLOSE statement completes cursor processing and closes the cursor. Note that once a cursor is closed you cannot retrieve additional records from the result set.

You can implement procedure `eval_department`, which you declared in ["Creating a Package"](#) on page 4-11, using a cursor for each employee record that matches the query.

**Example 4–11 Using a cursor to retrieve rows from a result set**

The cursor `emp_cursor` fetches individual rows from the result set. Depending on the value of the `eval_frequency` function for each row and the time of the year that the `eval_department` procedure runs, a new evaluation record is created for the employee by invoking the `add_eval` procedure. Note that the buffer variable, `emp_record`, is defined as a `%ROWTYPE`.

In the `emp_eval` package specification, edit the declaration of procedure `eval_department`:

```
PROCEDURE eval_department(department_id IN employees.department_id%TYPE);
```

In the `emp_eval` Body pane, edit `eval_department` procedure.

```
PROCEDURE eval_department(department_id IN employees.department_id%TYPE) AS
  -- declaring buffer variables for cursor data
  emp_record      employees%ROWTYPE;
  -- declaring variable to monitor if all employees need evaluations
  all_evals       BOOLEAN;
  -- today's date
  today           DATE;
  -- declaring the cursor
  CURSOR emp_cursor IS SELECT * FROM employees e
                        WHERE department_id = e.department_id;
BEGIN
  -- determine if all evaluations must be done or just for newer employees;
  -- this depends on time of the year
  today := SYSDATE;
  IF (EXTRACT(MONTH FROM today) < 6) THEN all_evals := FALSE;
  ELSE all_evals := TRUE;
  END IF;

  OPEN emp_cursor;

  -- start creating employee evaluations in a specific department
  DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('Determining evaluations necessary in department # ' ||
                      department_id);

  LOOP
    FETCH emp_cursor INTO emp_record;    -- getting specific record
    EXIT WHEN emp_cursor%NOTFOUND;      -- all records are been processed
    IF all_evals THEN
      add_eval(emp_record.employee_id, today); -- create evals for all
    ELSIF (eval_frequency(emp_record.employee_id) = 2) THEN
      add_eval(emp_record.employee_id, today); -- create evals; newer employees
    END IF;
  END LOOP;

  DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('Processed ' || emp_cursor%ROWCOUNT || ' records.');
```

```
  CLOSE emp_cursor;

END eval_department;
```

Compile the `emp_eval` package specification, and then the `emp_eval` Body.

The following message appears in the Messages-Log panes:

```
EMP_EVAL Body Compiled
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on declaring cursors

## Using Cursor Variables: REF Cursors

Cursors are static, as they are defined by the queries that create them. In some cases, the queries themselves are created at runtime. A cursor variable, known as a `REF CURSOR`, is more flexible than a cursor because it is independent of a specific query. It can be opened for a query, can process the result set, and can be re-used for a query that returns the same set of columns. This also makes `REF CURSORS` ideal for passing results of a query between subprograms.

`REF CURSORS` can be declared with a return type that specifies the form of the result set (strongly typed), or without a return type to retrieve any result set (weakly-typed). Oracle recommends that you declare a `REF CURSOR` with a return type as it is less prone to error because of its strong association with correctly formulated queries. If you need a more flexible cursor that may be associated with several interchangeable types, use the predefined type `SYS_REFCURSOR`.

The general form for using a `REF CURSORS` follows.

```
DECLARE
  TYPE cursor_type IS REF CURSOR RETURN return_type;
  cursor_variable cursor_type;
  single_record return_type;
OPEN cursor_variable FOR query_definition;
LOOP
  FETCH record;
  EXIT WHEN cursor_name%NOTFOUND;
  ...;           -- process fetched row
END LOOP;
CLOSE cursor_name;
```

This is what happens during the life time of a `REF CURSOR` and a cursor variable:

- The `REF CURSOR` type [with a return type] is declared.
- The cursor variable that matches the cursor type is declared.
- The variable for processing individual rows of the result set is declared; its type must be the same as the return type of the `REF CURSOR` type definition.
- The `OPEN` statement parses the query to the cursor variable.
- The `FETCH` statement inside the loop runs the query, and retrieves the matching rows into the local variable of the same type as the return type of the `REF CURSOR` for further processing.
- The `CLOSE` statement completes cursor processing and closes the `REF CURSOR`.

In "[Using Explicit Cursors](#)" on page 4-33, the procedure `eval_department` retrieves a result set, processes it using a cursor, closes the cursor, and ends. If you declare the cursor as a `REF CURSOR` type, you could modify it to process more departments (for example, three consecutive departments) by re-using the cursor.

Note that the fetching loop is part of the new `eval_fetch_control` procedure, that uses the cursor variable as input. This has an additional benefit of separating the processing of the result set from the definition of the query. You could write a procedure (`eval_everyone`) that initiates evaluations for all employees in the company, not just on a department basis.

Note also that `eval_department` uses a single field of a record to call procedure `add_eval`, which runs three separate queries on the same record. This is very inefficient; you will re-write the `add_eval` to use the entire record buffer of the REF CURSOR.

### To use a REF CURSOR:

1. In the `emp_eval` specification, add the REF CURSOR type definition, `emp_refcursor_type`. The type is defined at package level for visibility for all subprograms. Also add a declaration for procedure `eval_everyone`. The new code is in bold font.

```
create or replace
PACKAGE emp_eval AS
  PROCEDURE eval_department (department_id IN employees.department_id%TYPE);
  PROCEDURE eval_everyone;
  FUNCTION calculate_score(eval_id IN scores.evaluation_id%TYPE
                          , perf_id IN scores.performance_id%TYPE)
                          RETURN NUMBER;
  TYPE SAL_INFO IS RECORD -- type for salary, limits, raises, and adjustments
    ( job_id jobs.job_id%type
      , sal_min jobs.min_salary%type
      , sal_max jobs.max_salary%type
      , salary employees.salary%type
      , sal_raise NUMBER(3,3));

  TYPE emp_refcursor_type IS REF CURSOR RETURN employees%ROWTYPE;
  -- the REF CURSOR type for result set fetches
END emp_eval;
```

2. In the `emp_eval` Body pane, add a forward declaration for procedure `eval_loop_control` and edit the declaration of procedure `add_eval`. New code is in bold font.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE PACKAGE BODY emp_eval AS
  /* local subprogram declarations */
  FUNCTION eval_frequency (employee_id IN employees.employee_id%TYPE)
  RETURN NUMBER;
  PROCEDURE salary_schedule(emp IN sal_info);
  PROCEDURE add_eval(emp_record IN employees%ROWTYPE, today IN DATE);
  PROCEDURE eval_loop_control(emp_cursor IN emp_refcursor_type);
  ...
```

3. In the `emp_eval` Body pane, edit `eval_department` procedure to retrieve three separate result sets based on the department, and to call the `eval_loop_control` procedure.

```
PROCEDURE eval_department(department_id IN employees.department_id%TYPE) AS
  -- declaring the REF CURSOR
  emp_cursor      emp_refcursor_type;
  department_curr departments.department_id%TYPE;

BEGIN
  department_curr := department_id;  -- starting with the first department
  FOR loop_c IN 1..3 LOOP
    OPEN emp_cursor FOR
```

```

SELECT *
FROM employees e
WHERE department_curr = e.department_id;
-- create employee evaluations is specific departments
DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('Determining necessary evaluations in department #' ||
    department_curr);
eval_loop_control(emp_cursor); -- call to process the result set
DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('Processed ' || emp_cursor%ROWCOUNT || ' records.');
```

**CLOSE emp\_cursor;**  
**department\_curr := department\_curr + 10;**  
**END LOOP;**  
END eval\_department;

4. In the emp\_eval Body pane, edit add\_eval procedure to use the entire retrieved record of employee%ROWTYPE, instead of an employee\_id. Note that you no longer need any declarations at the beginning of the procedure.

```

PROCEDURE add_eval(emp_record IN employees%ROWTYPE, today IN DATE) AS
BEGIN
-- inserting a new row of values into evaluations table
INSERT INTO evaluations VALUES (
    evaluations_seq.NEXTVAL, -- evaluation_id
    emp_record.employee_id, -- employee_id
    today, -- evaluation_date
    emp_record.job_id, -- job_id
    emp_record.manager_id, -- manager_id
    emp_record.department_id, -- department_id
    0); -- total_score

END add_eval;
```

5. Towards the end of code in the emp\_eval Body pane, add eval\_loop\_control procedure to fetch the individual records from the result set and to process them. Note that much of this code is from an earlier definition of the eval\_department procedure in "Using Explicit Cursors" on page 4-33. New structures are in bold font.

```

PROCEDURE eval_loop_control(emp_cursor IN emp_refcursor_type) AS
-- declaring buffer variable for cursor data
emp_record employees%ROWTYPE;
-- declaring variable to monitor if all employees need evaluations
all_evals BOOLEAN;
-- today's date
today DATE;
BEGIN
-- determine if all evaluations must be done or just for newer employees;
-- this depends on time of the year
today := SYSDATE;

IF (EXTRACT(MONTH FROM today) < 6) THEN
    all_evals := FALSE;
ELSE all_evals := TRUE;
END IF;
LOOP
    FETCH emp_cursor INTO emp_record; -- getting specific record
    EXIT WHEN emp_cursor%NOTFOUND; -- all records are been processed
    IF all_evals THEN
        add_eval(emp_record, today); -- create evaluations for all
    ELSIF (eval_frequency(emp_record.employee_id) = 2) THEN
        add_eval(emp_record, today); -- create evaluations for newer employees
    END IF;
END LOOP;
```

```

        END IF;
    END LOOP;
END eval_loop_control;

```

6. In the emp\_eval Body pane, add eval\_everyone procedure, which retrieves a result set that contains all employees in the company. Note that its code is similar to that of procedure eval\_department in Step 3.

```

PROCEDURE eval_everyone AS
    -- declaring the REF CURSOR type
    emp_cursor emp_refcursor_type;
BEGIN
    OPEN emp_cursor FOR SELECT * FROM employees;
    -- start creating employee evaluations in a specific department
    DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('Determining the number of necessary evaluations');
    eval_loop_control(emp_cursor); -- call to process the result set
    DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('Processed ' || emp_cursor%ROWCOUNT || ' records. ');
    CLOSE emp_cursor;
END eval_everyone;

```

7. In the emp\_eval pane, compile and save emp\_eval specification.

The following message appears in the Messages-Log pane:

```
EMP_EVAL Compiled
```

8. In the emp\_eval body pane, compile and save emp\_eval body.

The following message appears in the Messages-Log pane:

```
EMP_EVAL Body Compiled
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on the syntax of cursor variables
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on the syntax of cursor attributes

## Using Collections; Index-By Tables

Another group of user-defined datatypes available in PL/SQL is a **collection**, which is Oracle's version of one-dimensional arrays. A collection is a data structure that can hold a number of rows of data in a single variable. In contrast to a record, which holds only one row of data of different types, the data in a collection must be of the same type. In other programming languages, the types of structures represented by collections are called **arrays**.

Collections are used to maintain lists of information and can significantly improve your application's performance because they allow direct access to their elements. There are three types of collection structures: index-by tables, nested tables, and variable arrays.

- An **index-by table** is the most flexible and generally best-performing collection type for use inside PL/SQL programs.
- A **nested table** is appropriate for large collections that an application stores and retrieves in portions.
- A **VARRAY** is appropriate for small collections that the application stores and retrieves in their entirety.

In this discussion, we will limit ourselves to index-by tables.

Index-by tables are also known as associative arrays, or sets of key-value pairs where each key is unique and is used to locate a corresponding value in the array. This key, or index, can be either an integer or a string.

Associative arrays represent data sets of arbitrary size that allow access to individual elements without knowledge of its relative position within the array, and without having to loop through all array elements.

For simple temporary storage of lookup data, associative arrays allow you to store data in memory, without using the disk space and network operations required for SQL tables. Because associative arrays are intended for temporary rather than persistent data storage, you cannot use them with SQL statements such as `INSERT` and `SELECT INTO`. You can, however, make them persistent for the life of a database session by declaring the type in a package and assigning the values in a package body.

Assigning a value using a key for the first time adds that key to the associative array. Subsequent assignments using the same key update the same entry. It is important to choose a key that is unique, such as a primary key of a database table, a result of a good numeric hash function, or a concatenation of strings that forms a unique string value.

Before declaring an index-by table, you must define its type. In the rest of this section, we will show you how to use an index-by table as part of our application.

We will show an efficient implementation of two types of associative arrays (indexed by `PLS_INTEGER` and `VARCHAR2`) using the following steps:

- Defining a cursor.
- Defining the structure of an index-by table using the cursor's `ROWTYPE` or `TYPE`.
- Fetching cursor data into the index-by table using `BULK COLLECT`.
- Iterating through index-by table and looking up values using the index of a particular element.

## Creating Cursors for Index-by Tables

It is very convenient to define a cursor that would fetch the data into the index-by table, and then use its element type to create the index-by table. [Example 4-12](#) shows how to create two cursors, `employees_jobs_cursor` for fetching data from the `hr.employees` table, and `jobs_cursor` for fetching data from the `hr.jobs` table. Notice that we are not using an `ORDER BY` clause for the second cursor.

### **Example 4-12** Declaring cursors for index-by tables

```
CURSOR employees_jobs_cursor IS
  SELECT e.first_name, e.last_name, e.job_id
  FROM hr.employees e
  ORDER BY e.job_id, e.last_name, e.first_name;

CURSOR jobs_cursor IS
  SELECT j.job_id, j.job_title
  FROM hr.jobs j;
```

## Defining Index-by Tables

Now that you have declared your cursors, you can use the %ROWTYPE attribute to create the index-by PLS\_INTEGER tables `employees_jobs` and `jobs`, as shown in [Example 4-13](#):

### **Example 4-13** Creating index-by PLS\_INTEGER tables based on the cursor structure

```
TYPE employees_jobs_type IS TABLE OF employees_jobs_cursor%ROWTYPE
    INDEX BY PLS_INTEGER;
employees_jobs employees_jobs_type;

TYPE jobs_type IS TABLE OF jobs_cursor%ROWTYPE
    INDEX BY PLS_INTEGER;
jobs jobs_type;
```

To create a table that is indexed by a VARCHAR2, such as the `job_titles` index-by table of `job_id`, use the definition of these types from the original table, `hr.jobs`, as shown in [Example 4-14](#):

### **Example 4-14** Creating index-by VARCHAR2 tables

```
TYPE job_titles_type IS TABLE OF hr.jobs.job_title%TYPE
    INDEX BY hr.jobs.job_id%TYPE;
job_titles job_titles_type;
```

## Populating Index-by PLS\_INTEGER Tables; BULK COLLECT

If your work requires referencing a large quantity of data as local PL/SQL variables, the `BULK COLLECT` clause is much more efficient than looping through a result set one row at a time. When you query only some columns, you can store all the results for each column in a separate collection variable. When you query all the columns of a table, you can store the entire result set in a collection of records.

With the index-by PLS\_INTEGER `employees_jobs` and `jobs` tables, you can now open the cursor and use `BULK COLLECT` to retrieve data, as shown in [Example 4-15](#):

### **Example 4-15** Populating index-by PLS\_INTEGER tables through BULK COLLECT

```
OPEN employees_jobs_cursor;
FETCH employees_jobs_cursor BULK COLLECT INTO employees_jobs;
CLOSE employees_jobs_cursor;

OPEN jobs_cursor;
FETCH jobs_cursor BULK COLLECT INTO jobs;
CLOSE jobs_cursor;
```

## Populating Index-by VARCHAR2 Tables

Once the `jobs` table contains data, use the `FOR ... LOOP`, as shown in [Example 4-16](#), to build the index-by VARCHAR2 table, `job_titles`:

### **Example 4-16** Populating index-by VARCHAR2 tables

```
FOR i IN 1..jobs.COUNT() LOOP
    job_titles(jobs(i).job_id) := jobs(i).job_title;
END LOOP;
```

## Iterating Through an Index-by Table

The structure `employees_jobs` is a *dense* index-by table, because it is indexed by a `PLS_INTEGER`. You can iterate through it simply by placing your operations within a `FOR ... LOOP` that counts from 1 through the `COUNT()` value of the table, as demonstrated in [Example 4-17](#). Note that the line in bold represents a direct look-up of a value in the `job_titles` table.

### **Example 4-17 Iterating through an index-by PLS\_INTEGER table**

```
FOR i IN 1..employees_jobs.count() LOOP
  DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
    RPAD(employees_jobs(i).employee_id, 10)||
    RPAD(employees_jobs(i).first_name, 15)||
    RPAD(employees_jobs(i).last_name, 15)||
    job_titles(employees(i).job_id));
  END LOOP;
```

The structure `job_titles` is a *sparse* index-by table, indexed by a `VARCHAR2`. As [Example 4-18](#) demonstrates, you can iterate through it within a `WHILE ... END LOOP` using a pre-defined counter that is equal to the first key value, and the `NEXT()` value of the table. You will notice that the elements are naturally sorted in lexical order of the index.

### **Example 4-18 Iterating through an index-by VARCHAR2 table**

```
DECLARE i hr.jobs.job_id%TYPE := job_titles.FIRST();
WHILE i IS NOT NULL LOOP
  DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
    RPAD(job_titles(i).job_id, 10)||
    job_titles(i).job_title);
  i := job_titles.NEXT(i);
END LOOP;
```

## Handling Errors and Exceptions

Error conditions, known as exceptions, are easy to detect and process within your PL/SQL code. When an error occurs, it raises an exception by stopping normal processing and transferring control to exception-handling code. This code is located at the end of the PL/SQL block. In PL/SQL, the checks and calls to error routines are performed automatically, with each exception having its own exception handler.

Predefined exceptions are raised automatically for certain common error conditions that involve variables or database operations. You can also declare custom exceptions for conditions that are errors with respect to your program, or as wrappers to existing Oracle messages.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Concepts* for information about exceptions
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information about handling PL/SQL errors
- *Oracle Database Error Messages* for a list of standard Oracle messages
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for guidelines on handling errors and exceptions
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for advantages of PL/SQL exceptions

**Existing PL/SQL and SQL Exceptions**

Oracle Database will automatically raise an exception if a PL/SQL program violates a known database rule, such as the predefined exception `NO_DATA_FOUND` if a `SELECT INTO` statement returns no rows. The following table shows some of the common exceptions.

Exception	Description
<code>ACCESS_INTO_NULL</code>	A program attempts to assign values to the attributes of an uninitialized object
<code>CASE_NOT_FOUND</code>	None of the choices in the <code>WHEN</code> clauses of a <code>CASE</code> statement is selected, and there is no <code>ELSE</code> clause.
<code>COLLECTION_IS_NULL</code>	A program attempts to apply collection methods other than <code>EXISTS</code> to an uninitialized nested table or varray, or the program attempts to assign values to the elements of an uninitialized nested table or varray.
<code>CURSOR_ALREADY_OPEN</code>	A program attempts to open a cursor that is already open. A cursor must be closed before it can be reopened. A cursor <code>FOR</code> loop automatically opens the cursor to which it refers, so your program cannot open that cursor inside the loop.
<code>DUP_VAL_ON_INDEX</code>	A program attempts to store duplicate values in a column that is constrained by a unique index.
<code>INVALID_CURSOR</code>	A program attempts a cursor operation that is not allowed, such as closing an unopened cursor.
<code>INVALID_NUMBER</code>	In a SQL statement, the conversion of a character string into a number fails because the string does not represent a valid number. (In procedural statements, <code>VALUE_ERROR</code> is raised.) This exception is also raised when the <code>LIMIT</code> clause expression in a bulk <code>FETCH</code> statement does not evaluate to a positive number.
<code>LOGIN_DENIED</code>	A program attempts to logon to Oracle database with a user name or password that is not valid.
<code>NO_DATA_FOUND</code>	A <code>SELECT INTO</code> statement returns no rows, or your program references a deleted element in a nested table or an uninitialized element in an index-by table.  Because this exception is used internally by some SQL functions to signal completion, do not rely on this exception being propagated if you raise it within a function that is called as part of a query.
<code>NOT_LOGGED_ON</code>	A program issues a database call without being connected to Oracle database.

Exception	Description
ROWTYPE_MISMATCH	The host cursor variable and PL/SQL cursor variable involved in an assignment have incompatible return types. When an open host cursor variable is passed to a stored subprogram, the return types of the actual and formal parameters must be compatible.
SUBSCRIPT_ BEYOND_COUNT	A program references a nested table or varray element using an index number larger than the number of elements in the collection.
SUBSCRIPT_ OUTSIDE_LIMIT	A program references a nested table or varray element using an index number (-1 for example) that is outside the legal range.
TOO_MANY_ROWS	A SELECT INTO statement returns more than one row.
VALUE_ERROR	An arithmetic, conversion, truncation, or size-constraint error occurs. For example, when your program selects a column value into a character variable, if the value is longer than the declared length of the variable, PL/SQL cancels the assignment and raises VALUE_ERROR. In procedural statements, VALUE_ERROR is raised if the conversion of a character string into a number fails. (In SQL statements, INVALID_NUMBER is raised.)
ZERO_DIVIDE	A program attempts to divide a number by zero.

#### Example 4–19 Handling exceptions

In the emp\_eval Body pane, edit eval\_department procedure to handle cases where the query does not return a result set. New code is in bold font.

```

PROCEDURE eval_department(department_id IN employees.department_id%TYPE) AS
-- declaring the REF CURSOR
emp_cursor      emp_refcursor_type;
department_curr departments.department_id%TYPE;

BEGIN
  department_curr := department_id;  -- starting with the first department
  FOR loop_c IN 1..3 LOOP
    OPEN emp_cursor FOR
      SELECT *
        FROM employees e
       WHERE department_curr = e.department_id;
    -- create employee evaluations is specific departments
    DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('Determining necessary evaluations in department #'
||
    department_curr);
    eval_loop_control(emp_cursor); -- call to process the result set
    DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('Processed ' || emp_cursor%ROWCOUNT || ' records.');
```

```

  CLOSE emp_cursor;
  department_curr := department_curr + 10;
END LOOP;
EXCEPTION
WHEN NO_DATA_FOUND THEN
  DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE ('The query did not return a result set');
END eval_department;
```

Compile and save emp\_eval Body.

## Custom Exceptions

A package may contain custom exceptions for handling errors. Exceptions are declared in the program, in any declarative region, depending on how it is used: a subprogram, a package body, or a package specification.

An exception declaration has the following form:

```
exception_name EXCEPTION;
```

To raise custom exceptions programmatically, based on incorrect values, you need to use the following form:

```
IF condition THEN
    RAISE exception_name;
```

To trap unexpected Oracle errors, you must include the exception handling instructions in your code, typically as the last block within the body of your subprogram or package. You should name the specific exceptions you are handling (both standard and custom), and use the OTHERS handler to trap unexpected errors. An exception body has the following form:

```
EXCEPTION
    WHEN exception_name_1 THEN
        ...;
        DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(message_1);
        ...
    WHEN OTHERS THEN
        ...
        DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(message_others);
```

Alternatively, you may design your program to continue running after an exception is raised. You must then enclose the code that may generate an exception in a BEGIN . . . END block with its own exception handler. For example, code that traps the exception within a loop structure can handle the exception for an element that raises an error, and then continue with the next iteration of the loop.

In the following task, you will redesign the function `calculate_score` to declare, raise and trap two possible exceptions, `weight_wrong` and `score_wrong`.

#### **Example 4–20 Handling custom exceptions**

In the `emp_eval` Body pane, edit `calculate_score` function. New code is in bold font.

```
FUNCTION calculate_score(evaluation_id IN scores.evaluation_id%TYPE
                        , performance_id IN scores.performance_id%TYPE)
    RETURN NUMBER AS
    weight_wrong    EXCEPTION;
    score_wrong    EXCEPTION;
    n_score         scores.score%TYPE;           -- from SCORES
    n_weight        performance_parts.weight%TYPE; -- from PERFORMANCE_PARTS
    running_total   NUMBER                       := 0; -- used in calculations
    max_score       CONSTANT scores.score%TYPE := 9; -- a constant limit check
    max_weight      CONSTANT performance_parts.weight%TYPE:= 1;
                                                         -- a constant limit check
BEGIN
    SELECT s.score INTO n_score FROM scores s
        WHERE evaluation_id = s.evaluation_id
          AND performance_id = s.performance_id;
    SELECT p.weight INTO n_weight FROM performance_parts p
        WHERE performance_id = p.performance_id;
    BEGIN -- check that weight is valid
        IF n_weight > max_weight OR n_weight < 0 THEN
            RAISE weight_wrong;
        END IF;
    END;
```

```
BEGIN                                -- check that score is valid
  IF n_score > max_score OR n_score < 0 THEN
    RAISE score_wrong;
  END IF;
END;
-- calculate the score
running_total := n_score * n_weight;
RETURN running_total;
EXCEPTION
  WHEN weight_wrong THEN
    DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
      'The weight of a score must be between 0 and ' || max_weight);
    RETURN -1;
  WHEN score_wrong THEN
    DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE(
      'The score must be between 0 and ' || max_score);
    RETURN -1;
END calculate_score;
```

Compile and save emp\_eval Body

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for information on the syntax of exception declarations



---

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## Using Triggers

This chapter describes database triggers, which are stored procedural code that is associated with a database table, view, or event.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- ["Designing Triggers"](#) on page 5-1
- ["Creating and Using Triggers"](#) on page 5-4

### Designing Triggers

Triggers are stored procedural code that is fired automatically when specified events happen in the database. Triggers are associated with tables, views, or events. Unlike procedures and functions, triggers cannot be invoked directly. Instead, Oracle Database implicitly fires triggers when a triggering event occurs, regardless of the user or application. You may never be aware that a trigger is operating unless its operation causes an error that is not handled properly, when the event that fired the trigger fails.

The correct use of triggers enables you to build and deploy applications that are more robust, secure, and that use the database more effectively. These gains are possible because triggers can deliver the following features:

- Data integrity checking and enforcement
- Auditing and logging
- Complex business logic modeling
- Transaction validity checking and enforcement
- Derived column generation
- Table modification enabling and restriction

You can use triggers to enforce low-level business rules that are inherent to the database, and are therefore common for all client applications. For example, you may have several client applications that access the `employees` table in the `hr` schema. If a trigger on that table ensures the proper format of all data added to the table, this business logic does not have to be reproduced and maintained in every client application. Because the trigger cannot be circumvented by the client application, the business logic stored in the trigger is used automatically.

Each trigger has the following general form:

```
TRIGGER trigger_name
  triggering_statement
  [trigger_restriction]
BEGIN
```

```
triggered_action;  
END;
```

A trigger has four main parts:

- A **trigger name**, which must be unique with respect to other triggers in the same schema. Trigger names do not need to be unique with respect to other schema objects (tables, views, and procedures); however, Oracle recommends that you adopt a consistent naming convention to avoid confusion.
- A **triggering statement** is the event that initiates the firing of the trigger. These events include DML statements (`INSERT`, `UPDATE`, and `DELETE`) on tables and views, DDL statements (`CREATE`, `ALTER`, and `DROP`) on schema objects, system errors, startup and shutdown of the database, and miscellaneous system actions. Triggering statements are subject to trigger restrictions.
- A **trigger restriction** is the limitation that is placed on the trigger. This means that the database performs the triggered action only if the restriction evaluates to `TRUE`.
- A **triggered action** is the body of the trigger, or the sequence of steps that are executed when both the appropriate statement fires the trigger and the restriction (if any) evaluates to `TRUE`.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for general information about triggers

## Types of Triggers

There are five different types of Oracle Database triggers.

- **Statement triggers** are associated with a DML statement, such as `DELETE`, `INSERT`, or `UPDATE`, on a specified table or view.

Note that statement triggers fire once for each DML statement. For example, an `UPDATE` statement trigger will execute only once, regardless of the number of affected rows in the table.

You can have several different triggers associated with a specific DML statement; starting with Oracle Database Release 11g R1, you can specify the order in which they are executed by using the `FOLLOWS` and `PRECEDES` clauses of the `CREATE TRIGGER` statement.

- **Row triggers** are fired for each row that is affected by an `INSERT`, `UPDATE`, or `DELETE` statement on a table.

Row triggers work in the same manner as statement triggers, but with two additional specifications. Row triggers use a `FOR EACH ROW` clause in the triggering statement. They also allow you to reference the values of the rows, and event set them in the body of the trigger. This is particularly useful for inserting default values, or for overriding invalid values.

- **INSTEAD OF** triggers on views run instead of the issuing statement. If an `INSERT` statement is used on a view, an `INSTEAD OF` trigger enables you to exercise fine control of what actually happens: insertion of data into the base table or another table, logging an insertion request without inserting data, and so on.

Also, Oracle Database may not be able to process an insert issued against a view, as in the case of derived columns; you can create a trigger that determines the

values correctly. For example, if view used a column definition `last_name || ', ' || first_name`, then you may write an `INSTEAD OF` trigger that updates the characters before the comma character into the `last_name` column, and the characters after the comma character into the `first_name` column.

- **User event triggers** may be used on DDL statements such as `CREATE`, `ALTER`, or `DROP`, on user `LOGON` and `LOGOFF`, and on specific DML actions (analysis and statistics, auditing, granting and revoking privilege, and so on). `LOGON` triggers, which fire when a user connects to the database, are commonly used to set the environment for the user, and to execute functions that are associated with secure application roles.
- **System event triggers** apply to database startup, database shutdown, or server error events. These events are not associated with specific tables, views, or rows.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for details of the `CREATE TRIGGER` statement
- ["Creating a Statement Trigger"](#) on page 5-4
- ["Creating a Row Trigger"](#) on page 5-5
- ["Creating an INSTEAD OF Trigger"](#) on page 5-7
- ["Creating LOGON and LOGOFF Triggers"](#) on page 5-7

## Timing Triggers

Triggers can use `BEFORE` or `AFTER` clauses in the triggering statement. `BEFORE` and `AFTER` specify that the trigger should execute either before or after the event that fires the trigger. For statement and row triggers, a `BEFORE` trigger can enhance security and enable business rules prior to making changes to the database, while the `AFTER` trigger is ideal for logging actions.

`INSTEAD OF` triggers do not use `BEFORE` or `AFTER` options. By default, they use the same semantics as `AFTER` row-level triggers.

System and user event triggers can use `BEFORE` and `AFTER` clauses, with obvious exceptions: only `AFTER` is valid for `STARTUP`, `SUSPEND`, and `LOGON`, and only `BEFORE` is valid for `SHUTDOWN` and `LOGOFF`.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference*

## Guidelines and Restrictions for Trigger Design

You should consider the following guidelines and restrictions when planning triggers for your application:

- Although triggers are useful for customizing a database, use them only when necessary. Excessive use of triggers can result in complex interdependencies, which can be difficult to maintain in a large application.
- Ensure that when an action is performed, all related and dependent actions are performed.
- Avoid recursive triggers because they can quickly exhaust system memory.
- Be aware of cascading triggers, as they may have unintended effects and performance implications.

- Avoid triggers that duplicate existing Oracle Database offerings; for example, do not design triggers that reject bad data that can be eliminated through declarative integrity constraints.
- Ensure that you use the `BEFORE` and `AFTER` clauses correctly to efficiently implement business rules. A `BEFORE EACH ROW` trigger can change the `:NEW` values.
- Limit the size of triggers, as they cannot exceed 32Kb. If a trigger requires many lines of code, consider moving the business logic to a stored procedure that is invoked from the trigger.
- Ensure that the triggers you create apply to the database and the business logic that is correct for the entire enterprise, regardless of specific users or client applications. If special rules apply only to some users and client applications and not to others, encapsulate that business logic within the application.
- You cannot use `COMMIT`, `ROLLBACK`, or `SAVEPOINT` inside a trigger. Because DDL statements have an implicit `COMMIT`, they are also not allowed in triggers, with the exception of `CREATE`, `ALTER`, `DROP TABLE`, and `ALTER . . . COMPILE` for system triggers.
- Only committed system triggers are fired.

## Creating and Using Triggers

This sections shows how to create and use various types of triggers.

This section has the following topics:

- [Creating a Statement Trigger](#)
- [Creating a Row Trigger](#)
- [Creating an INSTEAD OF Trigger](#)
- [Creating LOGON and LOGOFF Triggers](#)
- [Modifying Triggers](#)
- [Disabling and Enabling Triggers](#)
- [Compiling Triggers](#)
- [Dropping Triggers](#)

### See Also:

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about creating triggers

## Creating a Statement Trigger

Statement triggers relate to a particular statement, such as `INSERT`, `UPDATE`, or `DELETE`. You can use a statement trigger for logging such operations as they are performed on a particular table.

[Example 5–1](#) shows how to create a log table.

### **Example 5–1** *Creating a Log Table for the EVALUATIONS Table*

The table `evaluations_log` stores entries with each `INSERT`, `UPDATE` or `DELETE` on the `evaluations` table.

```
CREATE TABLE evaluations_log (log_date DATE
                             , action VARCHAR2(50));
```

[Example 5-2](#), you will create a trigger that writes to the `evaluations_log` every time the `evaluations` table changes.

### **Example 5-2 Logging Operations with a Statement Trigger and Predicates**

The trigger `eval_change_trigger` tracks all changes made to the `evaluations` table, and tracks them in the `evaluations_log` table by adding to it a new row AFTER these changes are made. Note that in this example, the body of the trigger uses a **conditional predicate** `INSERTING`, `UPDATING`, or `DELETING`, to determine which of the three possible statements fired the trigger.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE TRIGGER eval_modification_trigger
  AFTER INSERT OR UPDATE OR DELETE
  ON evaluations
DECLARE log_action evaluations_log.action%TYPE;
BEGIN
  IF INSERTING THEN log_action := 'Insert';
  ELSIF UPDATING THEN log_action := 'Update';
  ELSIF DELETING THEN log_action := 'Delete';
  ELSE DBMS_OUTPUT.PUT_LINE('This code is not reachable.');
```

```
END IF;
  INSERT INTO evaluations_log (log_date, action)
    VALUES (SYSDATE, log_action);
END;
```

## Creating a Row Trigger

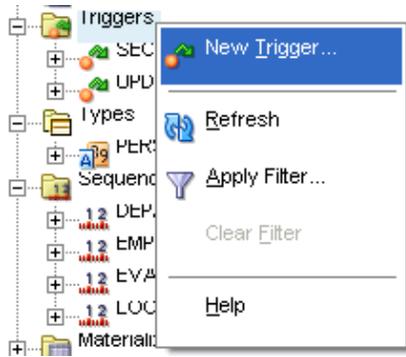
Row triggers are executed for each affected row.

In "[Using Sequences](#)" on page 3-25, you created the `evaluations_seq` sequence as a primary key number generator for the `evaluations` table. Oracle Database does not populate the primary key automatically, as part of the `CREATE TABLE` statement. Instead, you must design a trigger that generates the unique number for the primary key with every `INSERT` statement.

In the following task, you will use the SQL Developer Connection navigation hierarchy to create a trigger `new_evaluation`, which checks if a new row should be added to the `evaluations` table, based on whether a row for the same employee exists for the identical time period.

### **Example 5-3 Generating Primary Keys FOR EACH ROW Triggers; BEFORE Option**

1. In the Connections navigation hierarchy, right-click Triggers.
2. From the drop-down, select **New Trigger**.

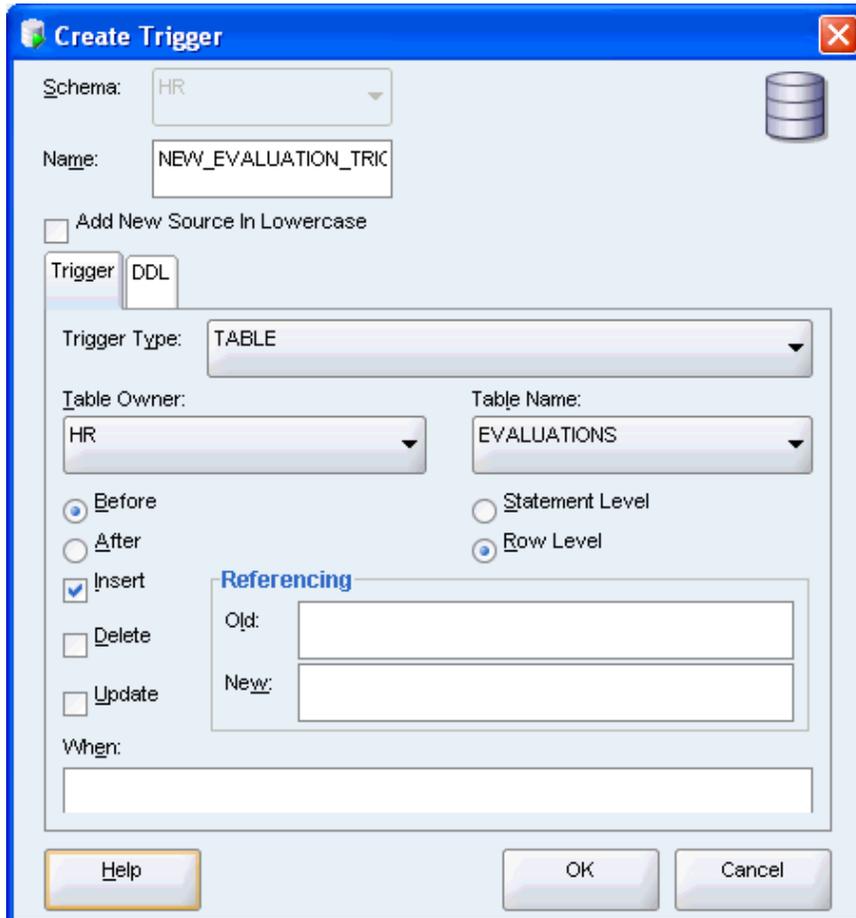


3. In the Create Trigger window, set the following parameters:

- Set **Name** to `new_evaluation_trigger`.

In the Trigger pane: set **Trigger Type** to `TABLE`, set **Table Owner** to `HR`, set **Table Name** to `evaluations`, select **Before**, select **Insert**, and select **Row Level**.

Click **OK**.



4. The `new_evaluation` pane opens with the following code.

Note that the tile of the pane is in italic font, which indicates that the trigger is not saved in the database.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE
TRIGGER new_evaluation
```

```

    BEFORE INSERT ON evaluations
    FOR EACH ROW
BEGIN
    NULL;
END;

```

- From the **File** menu, select **Save** to save the new trigger. Alternatively, use the **CTRL + S** key combination.

Note that Oracle Database automatically compiles triggers prior to saving them.

## Creating an INSTEAD OF Trigger

INSTEAD OF triggers enable you to implement changes to the underlying tables of a view. Such a trigger may be used on the emp\_locations view that you created in ["Creating a View"](#). Remember the definition of emp\_locations:

```

CREATE VIEW emp_locations AS
SELECT e.employee_id,
       e.last_name || ', ' || e.first_name name,
       d.department_name department,
       l.city city,
       c.country_name country
FROM employees e, departments d, locations l, countries c
WHERE e.department_id = d.department_id AND
      d.location_id = l.location_id AND
      l.country_id = c.country_id
ORDER BY last_name;

```

[Example 5-4](#) implements an INSTEAD OF trigger update\_name\_view\_trigger to update the name of the employee.

### **Example 5-4** Updating Values from a View with an INSTEAD OF Trigger

```

CREATE OR REPLACE TRIGGER update_name_view_trigger
INSTEAD OF UPDATE ON emp_locations
BEGIN
-- allow only the following update(s)
UPDATE employees SET
    first_name = substr( :NEW.name, instr( :new.name, ',' )+2),
    last_name = substr( :NEW.name, 1, instr( :new.name, ',' )-1)
WHERE employee_id = :OLD.employee_id;
END;

```

## Creating LOGON and LOGOFF Triggers

LOGON and LOGOFF triggers monitor who uses the database by writing to a log table.

In [Example 5-5](#), you will create a table hr\_users\_log for keeping track of LOGON and LOGOFF events. You will then create triggers note\_hr\_logon\_trigger (in [Example 5-6](#)) and note\_hr\_logoff\_trigger (in [Example 5-7](#)) for writing these events to the log table.

### **Example 5-5** Creating an access log table, hr\_users\_log

This table is the log of all logon and logoff events in the hr schema.

```

CREATE TABLE hr_users_log (user_name VARCHAR2(30), activity VARCHAR2(20),
                           event_date DATE);

```

**Example 5–6 Creating a LOGON trigger**

This trigger inserts a LOGON event record into the `hr_users_log` table whenever someone connects to the `hr` schema. Note that this is an AFTER trigger.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE TRIGGER note_hr_logon_trigger
  AFTER LOGON
  ON HR.SCHEMA
BEGIN
  INSERT INTO hr_users_log VALUES (USER, 'LOGON', SYSDATE);
END;
```

**Example 5–7 Creating a LOGOFF trigger**

This trigger inserts a LOGOFF event record into the `hr_users_log` table whenever someone disconnects from the `hr` schema. Note that this is a BEFORE trigger.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE TRIGGER note_hr_logoff_trigger
  BEFORE LOGOFF
  ON HR.SCHEMA
BEGIN
  INSERT INTO hr_users_log VALUES (USER, 'LOGOFF', SYSDATE);
END;
```

## Modifying Triggers

The `new_evaluation_trigger` has an empty body.

[Example 5–8](#) demonstrates how to modify the trigger to assign to the `evaluation_id` the next available value from the `evaluations_seq` sequence.

**Example 5–8 Modifying a Trigger**

Replace the `new_evaluation_trigger` with the following code. New code is in bold font.

```
CREATE OR REPLACE TRIGGER new_evaluation_trigger
  BEFORE INSERT ON evaluations FOR EACH ROW
BEGIN
  :NEW.evaluation_id := evaluations_seq.NEXTVAL;
END;
```

## Disabling and Enabling Triggers

On occasion, you may need to temporarily disable a trigger if an object it references is unavailable, or if you need to perform a large data upload (such as in recovery operations) without the delay that triggers cause.

To disable a trigger, you must use the `ALTER TRIGGER ... DISABLE` statement. To re-enable the trigger, use the `ALTER TRIGGER ... ENABLE` statement.

[Example 5–9](#) shows how to temporarily disable a trigger.

**Example 5–9 Disabling a Trigger**

```
ALTER TRIGGER eval_change_trigger DISABLE;
```

[Example 5–10](#) shows how to re-enable a trigger.

**Example 5–10 Enabling a Trigger**

```
ALTER TRIGGER eval_change_trigger ENABLE;
```

When you need to disable all triggers on a particular table, you must use the statement `ALTER TABLE ... DISABLE ALL TRIGGERS`. To re-enable all the triggers for the table, use the statement `ALTER TABLE ... ENABLE ALL TRIGGERS`.

[Example 5–11](#) shows how to temporarily disable all triggers that are defined on a particular table.

**Example 5–11 Disabling All Triggers on a Table**

```
ALTER TABLE evaluations DISABLE ALL TRIGGERS;
```

[Example 5–12](#) shows how to re-enable all triggers that are defined on a particular table.

**Example 5–12 Enable All Triggers on a Table**

```
ALTER TABLE evaluations ENABLE ALL TRIGGERS;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for details about enabling triggers
- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for details about disabling triggers

## Compiling Triggers

A trigger is fully compiled when the `CREATE TRIGGER` statement is executed. If a trigger compilation produces an error, the DML statement fails. To see the relevant compilation errors, use the `USER_ERRORS` view.

[Example 5–13](#) shows how to determine which trigger errors exist in the database.

**Example 5–13 Displaying Trigger Compilation Errors**

```
SELECT * FROM USER_ERRORS WHERE TYPE = 'TRIGGER';
```

Once a trigger is compiled, it creates dependencies on the underlying database objects, and becomes invalid if these objects are either removed or modified so that there is a mismatch between the trigger and the object. The invalidated triggers are recompiled during their next invocation.

[Example 5–14](#) shows how to determine the dependencies triggers have on other objects in the database.

**Example 5–14 Displaying Trigger Dependencies**

```
SELECT * FROM ALL_DEPENDENCIES WHERE TYPE = 'TRIGGER';
```

To re-compile a trigger manually, you must use the `ALTER TRIGGER ... COMPILE` statement, as shown in [Example 5–15](#).

**Example 5–15 Displaying Trigger Compilation Errors**

```
ALTER TRIGGER update_name_view_trigger COMPILE;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database PL/SQL Language Reference* for details about compiling triggers

## Dropping Triggers

When you need to delete a trigger, use the `DROP TRIGGER` statement, as shown in [Example 5–16](#).

**Example 5–16 Dropping a Trigger**

```
DROP TRIGGER eval_change_trigger;
```

After you drop a trigger, you can drop the dependent object that are no longer needed by the application.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about the `DROP TRIGGER` statement

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## Working in a Global Environment

This chapter discusses how to develop applications in a globalization support environment, and shows the use of Unicode programming using both SQL and PL/SQL. Unicode programming enables you to write SQL and PL/SQL code that is compatible with multiple languages.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- [Overview of Globalization](#) on page 6-1
- [Using NLS Parameter Values in the SQL Developer Environment](#) on page 6-4
- [Establishing a Globalization Support Environment](#) on page 6-7
- [Developing Globalized Applications](#) on page 6-27
- [Using Locale-Dependent Functions with NLS Parameters](#) on page 6-30

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of globalization support with Oracle Database, including setting up the globalization support environment
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about date and time formats

### Overview of Globalization

Oracle Database globalization support enables you to store, process, and retrieve data in native languages. It ensures that database utilities, error messages, and sort order, plus date, time, monetary, numeric, and calendar conventions, automatically adapt to any native language and locale.

Globalization support includes National Language Support (NLS) features. National Language Support is the ability to choose a national language and store data in a specific character set. Globalization support enables you to develop multilingual applications and software products that can be accessed and run simultaneously from anywhere in the world. An application can render content of the user interface and process data in the native language and locale preferences of the user.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of globalization support with Oracle Database, including setting up the globalization support environment

## Globalization Support Features

Oracle Database standard features include:

- **Language support:** This feature enables you to store, process, and retrieve data in native languages. Through the use of Unicode databases and data types, Oracle Database supports most contemporary languages. See "[Setting NLS Parameters](#)" on page 6-8.
- **Territory support:** This feature supports cultural conventions that are specific to geographical locations. The default local time format, date format, numeric conventions, and monetary conventions depend on the local territory setting. See "[Setting Language and Territory Parameters](#)" on page 6-9.
- **Date and time formats:** This feature supports local formats for displaying the hour, day, month, and year. Time zones and daylight saving support are also available. See "[Setting Date and Time Parameters](#)" on page 6-12.
- **Monetary and numeric formats:** This feature supports local formats for representing currency, credit, debit symbols, and numbers. See "[Using Monetary Parameters](#)" on page 6-19 and "[Using Numeric Formats](#)" on page 6-17.
- **Calendars feature:** This feature supports seven different calendar systems in use around the world: Gregorian, Japanese Imperial, ROC Official (Republic of China), Thai Buddha, Persian, English Hijrah, and Arabic Hijrah. See "[Setting Calendar Definitions](#)" on page 6-15.
- **Linguistic sorting:** This feature supports linguistic definitions for culturally accurate sorting and case conversion. See "[Using Linguistic Sort and Search](#)" on page 6-22.
- **Character set support:** This feature supports a large number of single-byte, multibyte, and fixed-width encoding schemes that are based on national, international, and vendor-specific standards. See *Oracle Database Installation Guide* for your platform for a listing of the character sets supported by Oracle Database.
- **Character semantics:** This feature supports character semantics. It is useful for defining the storage requirements for multibyte strings of varying widths in terms of characters instead of bytes. See "[Using Length Semantics](#)" on page 6-25.
- **Unicode support:** This feature supports Unicode, which is a universal encoded character set that enables you to store information in any language, using a single character set. You can use SQL and PL/SQL to insert and retrieve Unicode data. See "[Developing Globalized Applications](#)" on page 6-27.

### See Also:

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of globalization support with Oracle Database, including setting up the globalization support environment
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about date and time formats

## Viewing the Current NLS Parameter Values

In SQL Developer, the National Language Support Parameters report lists the values of parameters for globalization support.

The NLS parameter values in this report are used at the start of all sessions within SQL Developer, as explained in "[Using NLS Parameter Values in the SQL Developer Environment](#)" on page 6-4.

**To view the National Language Support Parameters report:**

1. In the SQL Developer window, click the **Reports** tab to display the Reports navigator.
2. Click the plus sign (+) next to the **Data Dictionary Reports** node to expand it.
3. Click the plus sign (+) next to the **About Your Database** node to expand it.
4. Click the **National Language Support Parameters** item.
5. In the Select Connection dialog box, set **Connection** to `hr_conn`.  
Click **OK**.



6. The report in the National Language Support Parameters pane shows the current value for NLS parameters for the database associated with the selected connection: `NLS_CALENDAR`, `NLS_CHARSET`, `NLS_COMP`, `NLS_CURRENCY`, `NLS_DATE_FORMAT`, and so on.

Parameter	Value
NLS_CALENDAR	GREGORIAN
NLS_CHARACTERSET	AL32UTF8
NLS_COMP	BINARY
NLS_CURRENCY	\$
NLS_DATE_FORMAT	DD-MON-RR
NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE	AMERICAN
NLS_DUAL_CURRENCY	\$
NLS_ISO_CURRENCY	AMERICA
NLS_LANGUAGE	AMERICAN
NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS	BYTE
NLS_NCHAR_CHARACTERSET	AL16UTF16
NLS_NCHAR_CONV_EXCP	FALSE
NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS	.,
NLS_SORT	BINARY
NLS_TERRITORY	AMERICA
NLS_TIMESTAMP_FORMAT	DD-MON-RR HH.MI.SSXFF AM
NLS_TIMESTAMP_TZ_FORMAT	DD-MON-RR HH.MI.SSXFF AM TZR
NLS_TIME_FORMAT	HH.MI.SSXFF AM
NLS_TIME_TZ_FORMAT	HH.MI.SSXFF AM TZR

**See Also:**

- [Using NLS Parameter Values in the SQL Developer Environment](#) on page 6-4
- *Oracle Database Reference* for information about the V\$NLS\_PARAMETERS view, which displays the NLS settings for the current database instance
- *Oracle Database SQL Developer User's Guide* for a discussion of SQL Developer preferences, including NLS parameters
- *Oracle Database SQL Developer User's Guide* for a discussion of SQL Developer reports
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of globalization support with Oracle Database, including setting up the globalization support environment
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about date and time formats

## Using NLS Parameter Values in the SQL Developer Environment

In an Oracle database, NLS parameter values are initially determined by database initialization parameters. The DBA can set values in the initialization file, and any changes to that file will take effect at the next database startup. Database users can change specific parameter values for the current session (the current connection to the database) by using a statement in the form:

```
ALTER SESSION SET parameter-name = "value";
```

When you are using SQL Developer, be aware that the parameter values from the database initialization file are not used. Instead, SQL Developer initially (after installation) uses parameter values that include the following:

```
NLS_LANG, "AMERICAN"
NLS_TERR, "AMERICA"
NLS_CHAR, "AL32UTF8"
NLS_SORT, "BINARY"
NLS_CAL, "GREGORIAN"
NLS_DATE_LANG, "AMERICAN"
NLS_DATE_FORM, "DD-MON-RR"
```

These and other NLS parameter values, which are used for all sessions in SQL Developer (such as SQL Worksheet windows and the National Language Support Parameters report, for all connections), are visible in the Database: NLS Parameters preferences pane.

To change the value of any NLS parameter, you have the following options:

- Change the value for use with all SQL Developer connections (current and future) by using the Database: NLS Parameters preferences pane, as explained in ["Changing NLS Parameter Values for All Sessions"](#) on page 6-6.
- Change the value for the current connection only by using the `ALTER SESSION` statement in the SQL Worksheet window.

Thus, you have great flexibility in testing different language settings during database application development. For example, you can use `ALTER SESSION` to see the output of subsequent PL/SQL statements with different language settings, and then revert to the SQL Developer default settings by disconnecting and reconnecting.

For example, assume that the `NLS_LANGUAGE` value in the preferences is set to `FRENCH`, and that today is March 1, 2007. If you enter `SELECT sysdate FROM dual;` in the SQL Worksheet and click the **Run Script** icon, the output is:

```
SYSDATE
-----
01-MARS -07
```

If you enter `ALTER SESSION SET NLS_LANGUAGE='AMERICAN';` and enter the preceding `SELECT` statement again, the output is:

```
SYSDATE
-----
01-MAR-07
```

Continuing with this example, if you disconnect from the current connection and reconnect to it, the session `NLS_LANGUAGE` value is `FRENCH` (as specified in the preferences), and the `SELECT` statement output is:

```
SYSDATE
-----
01-MARS -07
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database SQL Developer User's Guide* for a discussion of SQL Developer preferences, including NLS parameters
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of globalization support with Oracle Database, including setting up the globalization support environment
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about date and time formats

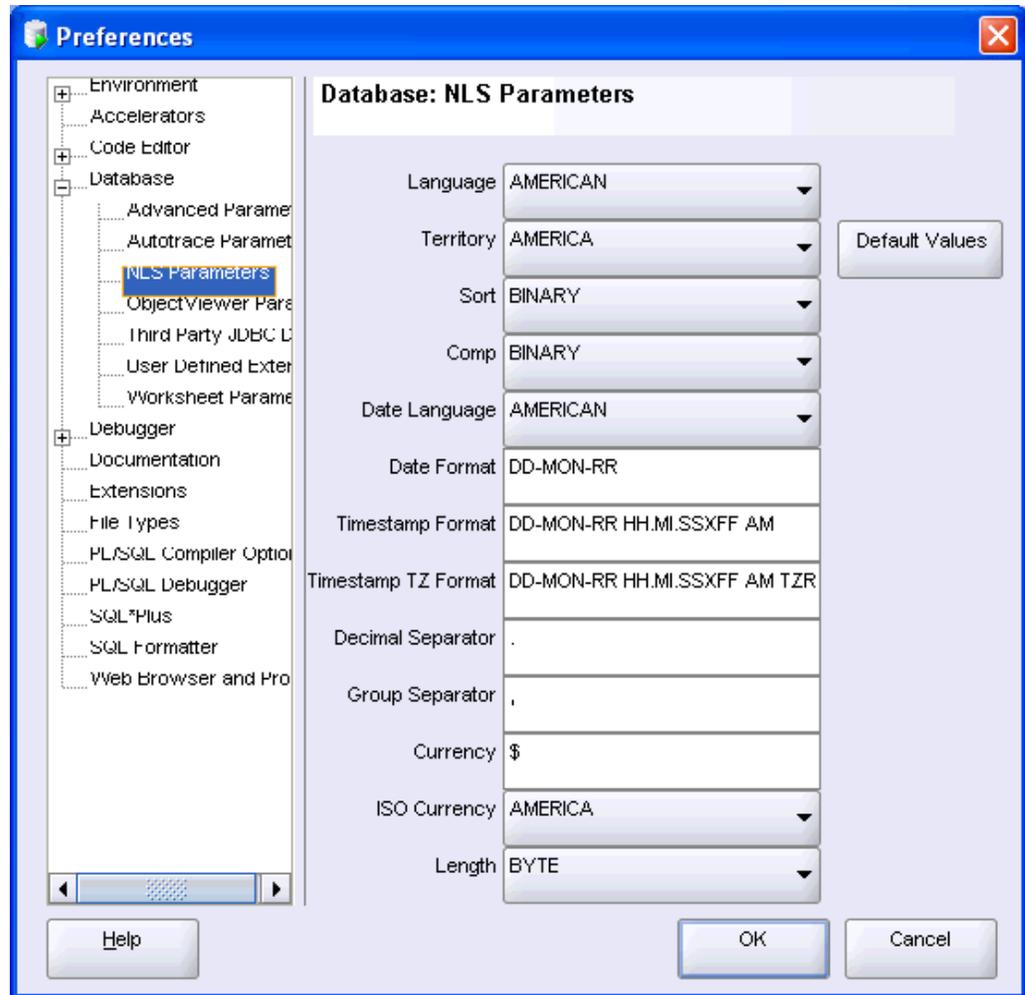
## Changing NLS Parameter Values for All Sessions

The SQL Developer user preferences for NLS Parameters establish values for use with all SQL Developer connections (current and future). You can view and change the parameter values in the Database: NLS Parameters preferences pane.

Note that these preferences are also displayed in the NLS Parameter Values report, as explained in "[Viewing the Current NLS Parameter Values](#)" on page 6-2.

**To change National Language Support Parameter values:**

1. In the SQL Developer window, click **Tools**, then **Preferences**.
2. In the Preferences dialog box, expand the **Database** node and select **NLS Parameters**.



Each text label is a descriptive term for a corresponding NLS\_XXX parameter.

3. Make any desired changes to the parameter values.

For example, to change the NLS\_LANGUAGE parameter value to reflect a Spanish language environment, for **Language** select SPANISH.

4. Click OK.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database SQL Developer User's Guide* for a discussion of SQL Developer preferences, including NLS parameters
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of globalization support with Oracle Database, including setting up the globalization support environment
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about date and time formats

## Establishing a Globalization Support Environment

This section describes how to set up a globalization support environment.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of globalization support with Oracle Database, including setting up the globalization support environment

## Choosing a Locale with the NLS\_LANG Parameter

A locale is a linguistic and cultural environment in which a system or program is running. Setting the NLS\_LANG parameter is the simplest way to specify locale behavior for Oracle software. It sets the language and territory used by the client application and the database. It also sets the client character set, which is the character set for data entered or displayed by a client program.

The NLS\_LANG parameter sets the language and territory environment used by both the server session (for example, SQL statement processing) and the client application (for example, display formatting in Oracle tools).

While the default NLS\_LANG behavior defined during installation is appropriate for most situations, you might want to modify the NLS environment dynamically during the session. To do so, you can use the ALTER SESSION statement to change NLS\_LANGUAGE, NLS\_TERRITORY, and other NLS parameters.

Note that you cannot modify the setting for the client character set with the ALTER SESSION statement. The ALTER SESSION statement modifies only the session environment. The local client NLS environment is not modified, unless the client explicitly retrieves the new settings and modifies its local environment.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of globalization support with Oracle Database, including setting up the globalization support environment

## Setting NLS Parameters

National Language Support (NLS) parameters determine the locale-specific behavior on both the client and the server. NLS parameters can be specified several ways. You can alter parameters for the user session and override the parameters in SQL functions.

You can alter the NLS parameters settings in the following two ways:

- Set NLS parameters in an ALTER SESSION statement to override the default values that are set for the session in the initialization parameter file, or that are set by the client with environment variables. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_SORT = french;
```

Note that the changes that you make with the ALTER SESSION statement apply only to the current user session and are not present the next time you log in.

- Use NLS parameters within a SQL function to override the default values that are set for the session in the initialization parameter file, set for the client with environment variables, or set for the session by the ALTER SESSION statement. For example:

```
TO_CHAR(hiredate, 'DD/MON/YYYY', 'nls_date_language = FRENCH')
```

Additional methods for setting the NLS parameters include the use of NLS environment variables on the client, which may be platform-dependent, to specify

locale-dependent behavior for the client and also to override the default values set for the session in the initialization parameter file. For example, on a Linux system:

```
% setenv NLS_SORT FRENCH
```

**See Also:**

- "Setting NLS Parameters" in *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for details on setting the NLS parameters
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for more information about the `ALTER SESSION` statement
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for more information about SQL functions, including the `TO_CHAR` function
- *Oracle Database Administrator's Guide* for information about the initialization parameter file
- *Oracle Database Reference* for information about initialization parameters used for globalization support

## Setting Language and Territory Parameters

Setting different NLS parameters for local territories allows the database session to use different cultural settings. For example, you can set the euro (EUR) as the primary currency and the Japanese yen (JPY) as the secondary currency for a given database session, even when the territory is defined as AMERICA.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for locale information, including supported languages and territories
- [Choosing a Locale with the NLS\\_LANG Parameter](#) on page 6-8

### Using the NLS\_LANGUAGE Parameter

The `NLS_LANGUAGE` parameter can be set to any valid language name. The default is derived from the `NLS_LANG` setting. `NLS_LANGUAGE` specifies the default conventions for the following session characteristics:

- Language for server messages
- Language for day and month names and their abbreviations (specified in the SQL functions `TO_CHAR` and `TO_DATE`)
- Symbols for equivalents of AM, PM, AD, and BC
- Default sorting sequence for character data when the `ORDER BY` clause is specified (the `GROUP BY` clause uses a binary sort order unless `ORDER BY` is specified.)

**To set the NLS\_LANGUAGE parameter:**

You can change the `NLS_LANGUAGE` parameter value and see the effect in the display of results from a query. The following examples show the effect of setting `NLS_LANGUAGE` first to Italian and then to German.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the current language in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog

box, select `hr_conn` from the list of connections. The current language is listed after `NLS_LANGUAGE`.

2. Set the language to Italian.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_LANGUAGE=ITALIAN;
```

3. Enter a `SELECT` statement to check the format of the output after the change to Italian.

```
SELECT last_name, hire_date, ROUND(salary/8,2) salary FROM employees
       WHERE employee_id IN (111, 112, 113);
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following. Note that the abbreviations for month names are in Italian.

LAST_NAME	HIRE_DATE	SALARY
-----	-----	-----
Sciarra	30-SET-97	962.5
Urman	07-MAR-98	975
Popp	07-DIC-99	862.5

4. Set the language to German.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_LANGUAGE=GERMAN;
```

5. Enter the same `SELECT` statement to check the format of the output after the change to German.

```
SELECT last_name, hire_date, ROUND(salary/8,2) salary FROM employees
       WHERE employee_id IN (111, 112, 113);
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following. Note that the abbreviations for month names are now in German.

LAST_NAME	HIRE_DATE	SALARY
-----	-----	-----
Sciarra	30-SEP-97	962.5
Urman	07-MRZ-98	975
Popp	07-DEZ-99	862.5

6. Set `NLS_LANGUAGE` back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_LANGUAGE=AMERICAN;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the `NLS_LANGUAGE` parameter
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for locale information, including supported languages and territories

### Using the `NLS_TERRITORY` Parameter

The `NLS_TERRITORY` parameter can be set to any valid territory name. The default is derived from the `NLS_LANG` setting. `NLS_TERRITORY` specifies the conventions for the following default date and numeric formatting characteristics:

- Date format
- Decimal character and group separator
- Local currency symbol

- ISO currency symbol
- Dual currency symbol

Modifying the `NLS_TERRITORY` parameter resets all derived NLS session parameters to default values for the new territory.

**To set the `NLS_TERRITORY` parameter:**

You can change the `NLS_LANGUAGE` parameter value and see the effect in the display of results from a query. The following examples show the effect of setting `NLS_TERRITORY` to Germany.

1. In SQL Developer, enter a `SELECT` statement to check the format of the output with the initial SQL Developer default settings.

```
SELECT TO_CHAR(salary, 'L99G999D99') salary FROM employees
WHERE employee_id IN (100, 101, 102);
```

For example, if `NLS_TERRITORY` is `AMERICA`, the output from the example is similar to the following.

```
SALARY
-----
          $24,000.00
          $17,000.00
          $17,000.00

3 rows selected
```

2. Make a note of the current territory in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under **Connections**, expand **Data Dictionary reports**, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the **Select Connection** dialog box, select `hr_conn` from the list of connections. The current territory is listed after `NLS_TERRITORY`.

3. Set `NLS_TERRITORY` to Germany.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_TERRITORY=GERMANY;
```

4. Enter the same `SELECT` statement to check the format of the output after the change.

```
SELECT TO_CHAR(salary, 'L99G999D99') salary FROM employees
WHERE employee_id IN (100, 101, 102);
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following. The thousands separator changed to a period (.) and the decimal character changed to a comma (,). The currency symbol changed from dollars (\$) to euros (€). However, the numbers have not changed because the underlying data is the same. (That is, currency exchange rates are not factored in.)

```
SALARY
-----
          €24.000,00
          €17.000,00
          €17.000,00

3 rows selected
```

5. Set `NLS_TERRITORY` back to its original setting listed in Step 2. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_TERRITORY=AMERICA;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_TERRITORY parameter
- [Using the NLS\\_LANGUAGE Parameter](#) on page 6-9
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for locale information, including supported languages and territories

## Setting Date and Time Parameters

You can control the display of the date and time, allowing different conventions for displaying the hour, day, month, and year based on the local formats. For example, in the United Kingdom, the date is displayed using the DD/MM/YYYY format, while China commonly uses the YYYY-MM-DD format.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for information about date/time data types and time zone support
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about date and time formats

## Using Date Formats

You can use several different date formats, as shown in the following table.

Country	Description	Example
Estonia	dd.mm.yyyy	28.02.2005
Germany	dd.mm.rr	28.02.05
China	yyyy-mm-dd	2005-02-28
UK	dd/mm/yyyy	28/02/2005
U.S.	mm/dd/yyyy	02/28/2005

**To use the NLS\_DATE\_FORMAT parameter:**

The NLS\_DATE\_FORMAT parameter defines the default date format to use with the TO\_CHAR and TO\_DATE functions. The NLS\_TERRITORY parameter determines the default value of the NLS\_DATE\_FORMAT parameter. The value of NLS\_DATE\_FORMAT can be any valid date format model. For example:

```
NLS_DATE_FORMAT = "MM/DD/YYYY"
```

To add string literals to the date format, enclose the string literal with double quotation marks. Note that when double quotation marks are included in the date format, the entire value must be enclosed by single quotation marks. For example:

```
NLS_DATE_FORMAT = '"Date: "MM/DD/YYYY'
```

The Oracle default date format may not always correspond to the cultural-specific convention used in a given territory. You can use the short date and long date format in SQL, using the 'DS' and 'DL' format models, respectively, to obtain dates in localized formats. The following example shows the use of the short and long date formats.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the current territory and date format in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog box, select `hr_conn` from the list of connections. The current date format is listed after `NLS_DATE_FORMAT` and the current territory is listed after `NLS_TERRITORY`.

2. Set `NLS_TERRITORY` to America.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_TERRITORY = America;
```

3. Select the dates using the format models.

```
SELECT hire_date, TO_CHAR(hire_date, 'DS') "Short",
       TO_CHAR(hire_date, 'DL') "Long" FROM employees
WHERE employee_id IN (111, 112, 113);
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following.

HIRE_DATE	Short	Long
30-SEP-97	9/30/1997	Tuesday, September 30, 1997
07-MAR-98	3/7/1998	Saturday, March 07, 1998
07-DEC-99	12/7/1999	Tuesday, December 07, 1999

4. Set `NLS_TERRITORY` and `NLS_DATE_FORMAT` back to their original settings listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_TERRITORY=AMERICA;
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_DATE_FORMAT="MM/DD/YYYY";
```

#### To use the `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` parameter:

The `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` parameter specifies the language for the day and month produced by the `TO_CHAR` and `TO_DATE` functions. `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` overrides the language that is specified implicitly by `NLS_LANGUAGE`. The `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` parameter has the same syntax as the `NLS_LANGUAGE` parameter, and all supported languages are valid values.

The `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` parameter also determines the language used for:

- Month and day abbreviations returned by the `TO_CHAR` and `TO_DATE` functions
- Month and day abbreviations used by the default date format (`NLS_DATE_FORMAT`)

The default date format uses the month abbreviations determined by the `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` parameter. For example, if the default date format is `DD-MON-YYYY` and `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE = FRENCH`, then insert a date as follows:

```
INSERT INTO table_name VALUES ('12-Févr.-2007');
```

The following example shows the effect of setting `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` to French.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the current day and month language in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog box, select `hr_conn` from the list of connections. The current day and month language is listed after `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE`.

2. Set `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` to French.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE = FRENCH;
```

**3. Select the current system date.**

```
SELECT TO_CHAR(SYSDATE, 'Day:Dd Month yyyy') FROM DUAL
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following.

```
TO_CHAR(SYSDATE, 'DAY:DDMONTHYYYY')
-----
Lundi   :05 Mars      2007
```

**4. Set NLS\_DATE\_LANGUAGE back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:**

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE=AMERICAN;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_DATE\_FORMAT parameter
- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_DATE\_LANGUAGE parameter
- [Using Time Formats](#) on page 6-14
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about date format models
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for information about date/time data types and time zone support

**Using Time Formats**

This section shows how to use the NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_FORMAT and NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT parameters. Some of the time format examples are in the following table.

Country	Description	Example
Estonia	hh24:mi:ss	13:50:23
Germany	hh24:mi:ss	13:50:23
China	hh24:mi:ss	13:50:23
UK	hh24:mi:ss	13:50:23
U.S.	hh:mi:ssxff am	1:50:23.555 PM

The NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_FORMAT parameter defines the default date format for the TIMESTAMP and TIMESTAMP WITH LOCAL TIME ZONE data types. The NLS\_TERRITORY parameter determines the default value of NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_FORMAT. The value of NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_FORMAT can be any valid datetime format model.

The following example shows a value for NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_FORMAT:

```
NLS_TIMESTAMP_FORMAT = 'YYYY-MM-DD HH:MI:SS.FF'
```

The NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT parameter defines the default date format for the TIMESTAMP and TIMESTAMP WITH LOCAL TIME ZONE data types. It is used with the TO\_CHAR and TO\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ functions. The NLS\_TERRITORY parameter determines the default value of the NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT parameter. The value of NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT can be any valid datetime format model.

The format value must be surrounded by quotation marks. For example:

```
NLS_TIMESTAMP_TZ_FORMAT = 'YYYY-MM-DD HH:MI:SS.FF TZH:TZM'
```

### To set and use NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ:

The following example sets the NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT value. It also shows the format being set explicitly in a SELECT statement, using the TO\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ function.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the current time format in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog box, select hr\_conn from the list of connections. The current time format is listed after NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT.

2. Set NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_TIMESTAMP_TZ_FORMAT = 'YYYY-MM-DD HH:MI:SS.FF TZH:TZM';
```

3. Set NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_TIMESTAMP_TZ_FORMAT='DD-MON-RR HH.MI.SSXFF AM TZR';
```

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_TIMESTAMP\_TZ\_FORMAT parameter
- [Using Date Formats](#) on page 6-12
- *Oracle Database SQL Language Reference* for information about date format models
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for information about date/time data types and time zone support

## Setting Calendar Definitions

This section describes calendar definition.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for locale information, including supported calendars

### Overview of Calendar Formats

The following calendar information is stored for each territory:

- **First Day of the Week:** Some cultures consider Sunday to be the first day of the week; others consider Monday to be the first day of the week.

The first day of the week is determined by the NLS\_TERRITORY parameter.

- **First Calendar Week of the Year:** Some countries use week numbers for scheduling, planning, and bookkeeping. Oracle supports this convention. In the ISO standard, the week number can be different from the week number of the calendar year. For example, 1st Jan 2005 is in ISO week number 53 of 2004. An ISO week starts on Monday and ends on Sunday.

To support the ISO standard, Oracle provides the IW date format element. It returns the ISO week number.

The first calendar week of the year is determined by the `NLS_TERRITORY` parameter.

- **Number of Days and Months in a Year:** Oracle supports six calendar systems in addition to the Gregorian calendar, which is the default. These additional calendar systems are:
  - Japanese Imperial uses the same number of months and days as the Gregorian calendar, but the year starts with the beginning of each Imperial Era.
  - ROC Official uses the same number of months and days as the Gregorian calendar, but the year starts with the founding of the Republic of China.
  - Persian has 31 days for each of the first 6 months. The next 5 months have 30 days each. The last month has either 29 days or 30 days (leap year).
  - Thai Buddha uses a Buddhist calendar.
  - Arabic Hijrah has 12 months and 354 or 355 days.
  - English Hijrah has 12 months and 354 or 355 days.

The calendar system is specified by the `NLS_CALENDAR` parameter.

- **First Year of Era:** The Islamic calendar starts from the year of the Hegira. The Japanese Imperial calendar starts from the beginning of an Emperor's reign. For example, 1998 is the tenth year of the Heisei era.

**See Also:**

- [Using the NLS\\_CALENDAR Parameter](#) on page 6-16
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for locale information, including supported calendars

### Using the NLS\_CALENDAR Parameter

Many different calendar systems are in use throughout the world. The `NLS_CALENDAR` parameter specifies which calendar system Oracle Database uses. The default value is Gregorian. The value can be any valid calendar format name.

The `NLS_CALENDAR` parameter can have one of the following values:

- Arabic Hijrah
- English Hijrah
- Gregorian
- Japanese Imperial
- Persian
- ROC Official (Republic of China)
- Thai Buddha

#### To set the NLS\_CALENDAR parameter:

The following example sets the `NLS_CALENDAR` value to English Hijrah, and it displays the value for the first day of Ramadan in the year 1424 H. The other NLS parameters reflect the default SQL Developer settings.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the current calendar format in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog box, select `hr_conn` from the list of connections. The current date format is listed after `NLS_DATE_FORMAT` and the current territory is listed after `NLS_CALENDAR`.

2. Set `NLS_CALENDAR` to English Hijrah.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_CALENDAR='English Hijrah';
```

3. Display the start of Ramadan for the year 1424 H (in Gregorian calendar year 2007).

```
SELECT TO_DATE('01-Ramadan-1428') FROM DUAL;
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following.

```
TO_DATE('01-RAMADAN-1428')
-----
13 September 2007
```

4. Set `NLS_CALENDAR` back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_CALENDAR='GREGORIAN';
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the `NLS_CALENDAR` parameter
- [Overview of Calendar Formats](#) on page 6-15
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for locale information, including supported calendars

## Using Numeric Formats

The database must know the number-formatting convention used in each session to interpret numeric strings correctly. For example, the database needs to know whether numbers are entered with a period or a comma as the decimal character (234.00 or 234,00). Similarly, applications must be able to display numeric information in the format expected at the client site.

Examples of numeric formats are shown in the following table.

Country	Numeric Formats
Estonia	1 234 567,89
Germany	1.234.567,89
China	1,234,567.89
UK	1,234,567.89
U.S.	1,234,567.89

Numeric formats are derived from the `NLS_TERRITORY` parameter setting, but they can be overridden by the `NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS` parameter.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of setting up the globalization support environment

## Using the NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS Parameter

The NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS parameter specifies the group separator and decimal character. The group separator is the character that separates integer groups to show thousands and millions, for example. The group separator is the character returned by the G number format model. The decimal character separates the integer and decimal parts of a number. Setting the NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS parameter overrides the default values derived from the setting of NLS\_TERRITORY. The value can be any two valid numeric characters for the group separator and decimal character.

Any character can be the decimal character or group separator. The two characters specified must be single-byte, and the characters must be different from each other. The characters cannot be a numeric character or any of the following characters: plus sign (+), minus sign (-), less than sign (<), greater than sign (>). Either character can be a space.

To set the decimal character to a comma and the grouping separator to a period, specify the NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS parameter as follows:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS = ',.';
```

SQL statements can include numbers represented as numeric or text literals. Numeric literals are not enclosed in quotation marks. They are part of the SQL language syntax, and always use a period as the decimal character and never contain a group separator. Text literals are enclosed in single quotation marks. They are implicitly or explicitly converted to numbers, if required, according to the current NLS settings.

### To set the NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS parameter:

The following example formats 4000 with the group separator and decimal character specified in the ALTER SESSION statement.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the current numeric characters format in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog box, select hr\_conn from the list of connections. The current numeric characters format is listed after NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS.

2. Set NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS to the specified group separator and decimal character.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS = ',.';
```

Use double quotation marks.

3. Display 4000 using the format mask '9G999D99'.

```
SELECT TO_CHAR(4000, '9G999D99') FROM DUAL;
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following. The group separator is the period (.) and the decimal character is the comma (,).

```
TO_CHAR(4000, '9G999D99')
-----
4.000,00
```

4. Set NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS='.';
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_NUMERIC\_CHARACTERS parameter
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of setting up the globalization support environment

## Using Monetary Parameters

You can define radix symbols and thousands separators by locales. For example, in the U.S., the decimal point is a period (.), while it is a comma (,) in France. Because \$1,234 has different meanings in different countries, it is important to display the amount appropriately by locale.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of setting up the globalization support environment, including monetary parameters

## Overview of Currency Formats

Different currency formats are used throughout the world. Some typical formats are shown in the following table.

Country	Currency Format
Estonia	1 234,56 kr
Germany	1.234,56€
China	¥1,234.56
UK	£1,234.56
U.S.	\$1,234.56

**See Also:**

- [Using the NLS\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-19
- [Using the NLS\\_ISO\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-20
- [Using the NLS\\_DUAL\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-21
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of setting up the globalization support environment, including monetary parameters

## Using the NLS\_CURRENCY Parameter

The NLS\_CURRENCY parameter specifies the character string returned by the L number format model, the local currency symbol. Setting NLS\_CURRENCY overrides the default setting defined implicitly by NLS\_TERRITORY. The value can be any valid currency symbol string.

**To see the effect of changing the NLS\_CURRENCY value:**

The following example displays salary amounts using a format that includes the L number format model, which is replaced by the NLS\_CURRENCY value.

1. Display salaries with a value greater than eleven thousand.

```
SELECT TO_CHAR(salary, 'L099G999D99') "salary" FROM employees
WHERE salary > 11000
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following. The dollar sign (\$) is the L number format model in this case.

```
salary
-----
          $024,000.00
          $017,000.00
          $017,000.00
          $012,000.00
          $014,000.00
          $013,500.00
          $012,000.00
          $011,500.00
          $013,000.00
          $012,000.00
```

10 rows selected

#### See Also:

- [Oracle Database Reference](#) for more information on the NLS\_CURRENCY parameter.
- [Overview of Currency Formats](#) on page 6-19
- [Using the NLS\\_ISO\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-20
- [Using the NLS\\_DUAL\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-21
- [Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide](#) for a complete discussion of setting up the globalization support environment, including monetary parameters

### Using the NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY Parameter

The NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY parameter specifies the character string returned by the C number format model, the ISO currency symbol. Setting NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY overrides the default value defined implicitly by NLS\_TERRITORY. The value can be any valid string.

Local currency symbols can be ambiguous. For example, a dollar sign (\$) can refer to U.S. dollars or Australian dollars. ISO specifications define unique currency symbols for specific territories or countries. For example, the ISO currency symbol for the U.S. dollar is USD, and the ISO currency symbol for the Australian dollar is AUD.

The NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY parameter has the same syntax as the NLS\_TERRITORY parameter, and all supported territories are valid values.

#### To set the NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY parameter:

The following example sets the ISO currency symbol for France, and formats salaries using the appropriate format model.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the ISO currency format in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog box, select hr\_conn from the list of connections. The current ISO currency format is listed after NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY.

2. Set NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY to France.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_ISO_CURRENCY=FRANCE;
```

3. Display selected salaries using that format.

```
SELECT TO_CHAR(salary, 'C099G999D99') "Salary" FROM employees
WHERE department_id = 60;
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following.

```
Salary
-----
EUR009,000.00
EUR006,000.00
EUR004,800.00
EUR004,800.00
EUR004,200.00
```

5 rows selected

4. Set NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_ISO_CURRENCY=AMERICA;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_ISO\_CURRENCY parameter
- [Overview of Currency Formats](#) on page 6-19
- [Using the NLS\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-19
- [Using the NLS\\_DUAL\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-21
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of setting up the globalization support environment, including monetary parameters

### Using the NLS\_DUAL\_CURRENCY Parameter

Use the NLS\_DUAL\_CURRENCY parameter to override the default dual currency symbol defined implicitly by NLS\_TERRITORY. The value can be any valid symbol.

NLS\_DUAL\_CURRENCY was introduced to support the euro currency symbol during the euro transition period.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_DUAL\_CURRENCY parameter
- [Overview of Currency Formats](#) on page 6-19
- [Using the NLS\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-19
- [Using the NLS\\_ISO\\_CURRENCY Parameter](#) on page 6-20
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of setting up the globalization support environment, including monetary parameters

## Using Linguistic Sort and Search

Different languages have their own sorting rules. Some languages are collated according to the letter sequence in the alphabet, some according to the number of stroke counts in the letter, and some are ordered by the pronunciation of the words. Treatment of letter accents also differs among languages. For example, in Danish, Æ is sorted after Z, while Y and Ü are considered to be variants of the same letter.

You can define how to sort data by using linguistic sort parameters. The basic linguistic definition treats strings as sequences of independent characters.

### See Also:

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of linguistic sort and string searching

### Using the NLS\_SORT Parameter

The NLS\_SORT parameter specifies the collating (linguistic sort) sequence for ORDER BY queries. It overrides the default NLS\_SORT value that is derived from the NLS\_LANGUAGE parameter. The value of NLS\_SORT can be BINARY or any valid linguistic sort name:

```
NLS_SORT = BINARY | sort_name
```

If the value is BINARY, then the collating sequence is based on the numeric code of the characters in the underlying encoding scheme. Depending on the data type, this will either be in the binary sequence order of the database character set or the national character set. If the value is a named linguistic sort, sorting is based on the order of the defined sort. Most, but not all, languages supported by the NLS\_LANGUAGE parameter also support a linguistic sort with the same name.

### To set the NLS\_SORT parameter:

You can change the NLS\_SORT parameter value and see the effect in the display of results from a query. The following examples show the effect of setting NLS\_SORT first to Binary and then to Spanish (SPANISH\_M). Spain traditionally treats ch, ll, and ñ as letters of their own, ordered after c, l, and n, respectively.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the current collating format in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog box, select `hr_conn` from the list of connections. The current collating format is listed after NLS\_SORT.

2. Set NLS\_SORT to binary.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_SORT=BINARY;
```

3. Enter a SELECT statement with an ORDER BY clause, to check the output after the change.

```
SELECT last_name FROM employees
       WHERE last_name LIKE 'C%'
       ORDER BY last_name;
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following.

```
LAST_NAME
-----
```

```

Cabrio
Cambrault
Cambrault
Chen
Chung
Colmenares

6 rows selected

```

4. Set NLS\_SORT to SPANISH\_M.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_SORT=spanish_m;
```

5. Enter the same SELECT statement, to check the output after the change.

```

SELECT last_name FROM employees
WHERE last_name LIKE 'C%'
ORDER BY last_name;

```

The output from the example should be similar to the following. Note that Colmenares now comes before Chen.

```

LAST_NAME
-----
Cabrio
Cambrault
Cambrault
Colmenares
Chen
Chung

6 rows selected

```

6. Set NLS\_SORT back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_SORT=BINARY;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_SORT parameter
- [Using the NLS\\_COMP Parameter](#) on page 6-23
- [Using Case-Insensitive and Accent-Insensitive Search](#) on page 6-25
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of linguistic sort and string searching

### Using the NLS\_COMP Parameter

When using comparison operators, characters are compared according to their binary codes in the designated encoding scheme. A character is greater than another if it has a higher binary code. Because the binary sequence of characters may not match the linguistic sequence for a particular language, those comparisons might not be linguistically correct.

The value of the NLS\_COMP parameter affects the comparison behavior of SQL operations. The value can be BINARY (default) or LINGUISTIC. You can use the NLS\_COMP parameter to avoid the cumbersome process of using the NLSSORT function in SQL statements when you want to perform a linguistic comparison instead of a binary

comparison. When `NLS_COMP` is set to `LINGUISTIC`, SQL performs a linguistic comparison based on the value of the `NLS_SORT` parameter.

**To set the `NLS_COMP` parameter:**

You can change the `NLS_COMP` parameter value and see the effect in the display of results from a query. The following examples show the effect of performing a binary comparison followed by a Spanish linguistic sensitive comparison against the employee names.

1. In SQL Developer, make a note of the current comparison operators format in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under Connections, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the Select Connection dialog box, select `hr_conn` from the list of connections. The current comparison operators format is listed after `NLS_COMP`.

2. Set `NLS_SORT` to Spanish and `NLS_COMP` to `BINARY`.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_SORT=spanish_m NLS_COMP=binary;
```

3. Enter a `SELECT` statement to return employees whose last name starts with `C`.

```
SELECT last_name FROM employees
       WHERE last_name LIKE 'C%';
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following.

```
LAST_NAME
-----
Cabrio
Cambrault
Cambrault
Chen
Chung
Colmenares

6 rows selected
```

4. Set `NLS_COMP` to `LINGUISTIC`.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_COMP=linguistic;
```

5. Enter the same `SELECT` statement, to check the output after the change.

```
SELECT last_name FROM employees
       WHERE last_name LIKE 'C%';
```

The output from the example should be similar to the following. Note that two fewer rows are returned this time. `Chen` and `Chung` are not returned because in Spanish `ch` is treated as a separate character that follows `c`, so `ch` is excluded when a Spanish linguistic-sensitive comparison is performed.

```
LAST_NAME
-----
Cabrio
Cambrault
Cambrault
Colmenares

4 rows selected
```

6. Set NLS\_COMP back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_COMP=BINARY;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_COMP parameter.
- [Using the NLS\\_SORT Parameter](#) on page 6-22
- [Using Case-Insensitive and Accent-Insensitive Search](#) on page 6-25
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of linguistic sort and string searching

### Using Case-Insensitive and Accent-Insensitive Search

Operations inside a database are sensitive to the case and the accents of the characters. Sometimes, you might need to perform case-insensitive or accent-insensitive comparisons. Use the NLS\_SORT session parameter to specify a case-insensitive or accent-insensitive sort.

To specify a case-insensitive or accent-insensitive sort:

- Append `_CI` to an Oracle sort name for a case-insensitive sort. For example:
  - `BINARY_CI`: accent-sensitive and case-insensitive binary sort
  - `GENERIC_M_CI`: accent-sensitive and case-insensitive `GENERIC_M` sort
- Append `_AI` to an Oracle sort name for an accent-insensitive and case-insensitive sort. For example:
  - `BINARY_AI`: accent-insensitive and case-insensitive binary sort
  - `FRENCH_M_AI`: accent-insensitive and case-insensitive `FRENCH_M` sort

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_SORT parameter.
- [Using the NLS\\_SORT Parameter](#) on page 6-22
- [Using the NLS\\_COMP Parameter](#) on page 6-23
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of linguistic sort and string searching

## Using Length Semantics

In single-byte character sets, the number of bytes and the number of characters in a string are the same. In multibyte character sets, a character or code point consists of one or more bytes. Calculating the number of characters based on byte length can be difficult in a variable-width character set. Calculating column length in bytes is called byte semantics, while measuring column length in characters is called character semantics.

Character semantics is useful to define the storage requirements for multibyte strings of varying widths. For example, in a Unicode database (AL32UTF8), suppose that you need to define a `VARCHAR2` column that can store up to five Chinese characters together with five English characters. Using byte semantics, this column requires 15 bytes for the Chinese characters, which are 3 bytes long, and 5 bytes for the English

characters, which are 1 byte long, for a total of 20 bytes. Using character semantics, the column requires 10 characters.

The expressions in the following list use byte semantics. Note the `BYTE` qualifier in the `VARCHAR2` expression and the `B` suffix in the `SQL` function name.

- `VARCHAR2(20 BYTE)`
- `SUBSTRB(string, 1, 20)`

The expressions in the following list use character semantics. Note the `CHAR` qualifier in the `VARCHAR2` expression.

- `VARCHAR2(20 CHAR)`
- `SUBSTR(string, 1, 20)`

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of choosing or changing a character set, including length semantics

### Using the `NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS` Parameter

The `NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS` parameter specifies `BYTE` (default) or `CHAR` semantics. By default, the character data types `CHAR` and `VARCHAR2` are specified in bytes, not characters. Therefore, the specification `CHAR(20)` in a table definition allows 20 bytes for storing character data.

The `NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS` parameter enables you to create `CHAR`, `VARCHAR2`, and `LONG` columns using either byte-length or character-length semantics. `NCHAR`, `NVARCHAR2`, `CLOB`, and `NCLOB` columns are always character-based. Existing columns are not affected.

#### To set the `NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS` parameter:

1. In `SQL Developer`, make a note of the current semantics format in which Oracle Database was installed.

Under **Connections**, expand **Data Dictionary** reports, then **About Your Database**, and then **National Language Support Parameters**. In the **Select Connection** dialog box, select `hr_conn` from the list of connections. The current semantics format is listed after `NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS`.

2. Set `NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS` to `BYTE`.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS=BYTE;
```

3. Create the following table:

```
CREATE TABLE SEMANTICS_BYTE(SOME_DATA VARCHAR2(20));
```

4. Check the data types of table `SEMANTICS_BYTE`.

Select the **Connections** tab, and then expand the `hr_conn` connection to display all the tables under **Tables**. Select the `SEMANTICS_BYTE` table. The data type for its `SOME_DATA` column is listed as `VARCHAR2(20 BYTE)`.

5. Set `NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS` to `CHAR`.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS=CHAR;
```

6. Create the following table:

```
CREATE TABLE SEMANTICS_CHAR(SOME_DATA VARCHAR2(20));
```

7. Check the data types of table SEMANTICS\_CHAR.

Select the **Connections** tab, and then expand the hr\_conn connection to display all the tables under Tables. Select the SEMANTICS\_CHAR table. The data type for its SOME\_DATA column is listed as VARCHAR2(20 CHAR).

8. Drop the SEMANTICS\_BYTE and SEMANTICS\_CHAR tables.

In the Tables navigation hierarchy, right-click the name of each table, and from the menu, select **Table**, and then **Drop**. Click **Apply**, and then in the confirmation dialog box, click **OK**.

9. Set NLS\_LENGTH\_SEMANTICS back to its original setting listed in Step 1. For example:

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_LENGTH_SEMANTICS=BYTE;
```

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Reference* for more information on the NLS\_LENGTH\_SEMANTICS parameter.
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of choosing or changing a character set, including length semantics

## Developing Globalized Applications

This section describes Unicode-related features in SQL and PL/SQL that you can deploy for multiple language applications. You can insert and retrieve Unicode data. Data is transparently converted among the database and client programs, which ensures that client programs are independent of the database character set and national character set.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of programming with Unicode

## Overview of Unicode

Unicode is a universal encoded character set that enables you to store information in any language, using a single character set. Unicode provides a unique code value for every character, regardless of the platform, program, or language.

Unicode has the following advantages:

- It simplifies character set conversion and linguistic sort functions.
- It improves performance compared with native multibyte character sets.
- It supports the Unicode data type based on the Unicode standard.

You can store Unicode characters in an Oracle database in two ways:

- You can create a Unicode database that enables you to store UTF8 encoded characters as SQL CHAR data types.
- You can support multiple language data in specific columns by using Unicode data types. You can store Unicode characters into columns of the SQL NCHAR data

types regardless of how the database character set has been defined. The NCHAR data type is an exclusively Unicode data type.

**See Also:**

- [Using SQL Character Data Types](#) on page 6-28
- [Using Unicode String Literals](#) on page 6-29
- [NCHAR Literal Replacement](#) on page 6-30
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of programming with Unicode

## Using SQL Character Data Types

There are two SQL NCHAR data types: NCHAR and NVARCHAR2.

In SQL Developer, you can specify these data types in the dialog box for creating or editing a table, by selecting the appropriate value for **Type** for each column. You can also use the SQL Worksheet to enter a CREATE TABLE statement and specify each column name and data type.

**See Also:**

- [Overview of Unicode](#) on page 6-27
- [Using Unicode String Literals](#) on page 6-29
- [NCHAR Literal Replacement](#) on page 6-30
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of programming with Unicode

### Using the NCHAR Data Type

When you define a table column or a PL/SQL variable as the NCHAR data type, the length is specified as the number of characters. For example, the following statement creates a column with a maximum length of 30 characters:

```
CREATE TABLE table1 (column1 NCHAR(30));
```

The maximum number of bytes in a column is the product of the maximum number of characters and the maximum number of bytes for each character.

For example, if the national character set is UTF8, then the maximum byte length is 30 characters times 3 bytes for each character, or 90 bytes.

The national character set, which is used for all NCHAR data types, is defined when the database is created. The national character set can be either UTF8 or AL16UTF16. The default is AL16UTF16.

The maximum column size allowed is 2000 characters when the national character set is UTF8 and 1000 when it is AL16UTF16. The actual data is subject to the maximum byte limit of 2000. The two size constraints must be satisfied at the same time. In PL/SQL, the maximum length of the NCHAR data is 32,767 bytes. You can define an NCHAR variable of up to 32,767 characters, but the actual data cannot exceed 32,767 bytes. If you insert a value that is shorter than the column length, then Oracle pads the value with blanks to whichever length is smaller: maximum character length or maximum byte length.

**See Also:**

- [Using the NVARCHAR2 Data Type](#) on page 6-29
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of programming with Unicode

**Using the NVARCHAR2 Data Type**

The NVARCHAR2 data type specifies a variable-length character string that uses the national character set. When you create a table with an NVARCHAR2 column, you specify the maximum number of characters for the column. Lengths for NVARCHAR2 are in units of characters, just as for NCHAR. Oracle Database subsequently stores each value in the column exactly as you specify it, if the value does not exceed the maximum length of the column. It does not pad the string value to the maximum length.

The maximum column size allowed is 4000 characters when the national character set is UTF8, and it is 2000 when AL16UTF16. The maximum length of an NVARCHAR2 column in bytes is 4000. Both the byte limit and the character limit must be met, so the maximum number of characters that is allowed in an NVARCHAR2 column is the number of characters that can be written in 4000 bytes.

In PL/SQL, the maximum length for an NVARCHAR2 variable is 32,767 bytes. You can define NVARCHAR2 variables up to 32,767 characters, but the actual data cannot exceed 32,767 bytes.

The following statement creates a table with one NVARCHAR2 column whose maximum length in characters is 2000 and maximum length in bytes is 4000.

```
CREATE TABLE table2 (column2 NVARCHAR2(2000));
```

**See Also:**

- [Using the NCHAR Data Type](#) on page 6-28
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of programming with Unicode

**Using Unicode String Literals**

You can input Unicode string literals in SQL and PL/SQL as follows:

- Put the letter N before a string literal that is enclosed with single quotation marks. This explicitly indicates that the following string literal is an NCHAR string literal. For example, N' résumé ' is an NCHAR string literal. See "[NCHAR Literal Replacement](#)" on page 6-30 for limitations of this method.
- Use the NCHR(*n*) SQL function. The NCHR(*n*) SQL function returns a unit of character code in the national character set, which is AL16UTF16 or UTF8. The result of concatenating several NCHR(*n*) functions is NVARCHAR2 data. In this way, you can bypass the client and server character set conversions and create an NVARCHAR2 string directly. For example, NCHR(32) represents a blank character.

Because NCHR(*n*) is associated with the national character set, portability of the resulting value is limited to applications that use the same national character set. If this is a concern, then use the UNISTR function to remove portability limitations.

- Use the UNISTR('string') SQL function. The UNISTR('string') function converts a string to the national character set. To ensure portability and to preserve data, include only ASCII characters and Unicode encoding in the following form: \xxxx, where xxxx is the hexadecimal value of a character code value in UTF-16

encoding format. For example, `UNISTR('G\0061ry')` represents 'Gary'. The ASCII characters are converted to the database character set and then to the national character set. The Unicode encoding is converted directly to the national character set.

The last two methods can be used to encode any Unicode string literals.

**See Also:**

- [Overview of Unicode](#) on page 6-27
- [Using SQL Character Data Types](#) on page 6-28
- [NCHAR Literal Replacement](#) on page 6-30
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of programming with Unicode

## NCHAR Literal Replacement

As part of a SQL or PL/SQL statement, the text of any literal, with or without the prefix `N`, is encoded in the same character set as the rest of the statement. On the client side, the statement is in the client character set, determined by the character set defined in the `NLS_LANG` parameter. On the server side, the statement is in the database character set.

When the SQL or PL/SQL statement is transferred from client to the database, its character set is converted accordingly. If the database character set does not contain all characters used in the text literals, data is lost in this conversion. This affects `NCHAR` string literals more than the `CHAR` text literals, because the `N` literal is designed to be independent of the database character set, and it should be able to include any data that the client character set allows.

To avoid data loss during conversion to an incompatible database character set, you can use `NCHAR` literal replacement by setting the client environment variable `ORA_NCHAR_LITERAL_REPLACE` to `TRUE`. This causes `N` literals on the client side to be replaced by an internal format, which the database decodes to Unicode when the statement is executed. By default, `NCHAR` literal replacement is disabled, to maintain backward compatibility.

**See Also:**

- [Overview of Unicode](#) on page 6-27
- [Using SQL Character Data Types](#) on page 6-28
- [Using Unicode String Literals](#) on page 6-29
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of programming with Unicode

## Using Locale-Dependent Functions with NLS Parameters

All SQL functions whose behavior depends on globalization support conventions allow NLS parameters to be specified. These functions are `TO_CHAR`, `TO_DATE`, `TO_NUMBER`, `NLS_UPPER`, `NLS_LOWER`, `NLS_INITCAP`, and `NLSSORT`.

Specifying NLS parameters for these functions enables the functions to be evaluated independently of the session's NLS parameters. This feature can be important for SQL statements that contain numbers and dates as string literals.

For example, there are two ways to ensure that the following query is evaluated so that the language specified for dates is AMERICAN.

- Use `ALTER SESSION` to set the `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` and `NLS_CALENDAR` parameters.

```
ALTER SESSION SET NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE=American;
SELECT last_name FROM employees WHERE hire_date > '01-JAN-1999';
```

- Specify the `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` parameter in the `TO_DATE` function in the `WHERE` clause of the SQL statement.

```
SELECT last_name FROM employees
WHERE hire_date > TO_DATE('01-JAN-1999', 'DD-MON-YYYY',
'NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE = AMERICAN');
```

This way, SQL statements that are independent of the session language can be defined where necessary. These statements are necessary when string literals appear in SQL statements in views, `CHECK` constraints, or triggers.

Only SQL statements that must be independent of the session NLS parameter values should explicitly specify optional NLS parameters in locale-dependent SQL functions. Using session default values for NLS parameters in SQL functions usually results in better performance.

All character functions support both single-byte and multibyte characters. Except where explicitly stated, character functions operate character by character, rather than byte by byte.

When SQL functions evaluate views and triggers, default values from the current session are used for the NLS function parameters. When SQL functions evaluate `CHECK` constraints, they use the default values that were specified for the NLS parameters when the database was created.

#### See Also:

- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of locale-dependent SQL functions with optional NLS parameters

## Specifying NLS Parameters in SQL Functions

NLS parameters are specified in SQL functions as '*parameter = value*'. For example:

```
'NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE = AMERICAN'
```

You can specify the following NLS parameters in SQL functions:

```
NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE
NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS
NLS_CURRENCY
NLS_ISO_CURRENCY
NLS_DUAL_CURRENCY
NLS_CALENDAR
NLS_SORT
```

In some languages, some lowercase characters correspond to more than one uppercase character, or some uppercase characters correspond to more than one lowercase characters. As a result, the length of the output from the `NLS_UPPER`, `NLS_LOWER`, and `NLS_INITCAP` functions can differ from the length of the input. The following table shows which NLS parameters are valid for specific SQL functions.

SQL Function	Valid NLS Parameters
TO_DATE	NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE, NLS_CALENDAR
TO_NUMBER	NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS, NLS_CURRENCY, NLS_ISO_CURRENCY, NLS_DUAL_CURRENCY,
TO_CHAR	NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE, NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS, NLS_CURRENCY, NLS_ISO_CURRENCY, NLS_DUAL_CURRENCY, NLS_CALENDAR
TO_NCHAR	NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE, NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS, NLS_CURRENCY, NLS_ISO_CURRENCY, NLS_DUAL_CURRENCY, NLS_CALENDAR
NLS_UPPER	NLS_SORT
NLS_LOWER	NLS_SORT
NLS_INITCAP	NLS_SORT
NLSSORT	NLS_SORT

[Example 6–1](#) shows several SELECT statements that demonstrate how to use NLS parameters in SQL functions. After you perform these SELECT statements (which you can do as a group in SQL Workshop), examine the output of each statement in the Script Output pane. (The output for most of the statements is very long.)

#### **Example 6–1 Using NLS Parameters in SQL Functions**

```
SELECT TO_DATE('1-JAN-99', 'DD-MON-YY',
  'NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE = American') "01/01/99" FROM DUAL;

SELECT TO_CHAR(hire_date, 'DD/MON/YYYY',
  'NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE = French') "Hire Date" FROM employees;

SELECT TO_CHAR(SYSDATE, 'DD/MON/YYYY',
  'NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE = ''Traditional Chinese'' ') "System Date" FROM DUAL;

SELECT TO_CHAR(13000, '99G999D99',
  'NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS = ''.,''') "13K" FROM DUAL;

SELECT TO_CHAR(salary, '99G999D99L', 'NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS = ''.,''
  NLS_CURRENCY = 'EUR') salary FROM employees;

SELECT TO_CHAR(salary, '99G999D99C', 'NLS_NUMERIC_CHARACTERS = ''.,''
  NLS_ISO_CURRENCY = Japan') salary FROM employees;

SELECT NLS_UPPER(last_name, 'NLS_SORT = Swiss') "Last Name" FROM employees;

SELECT last_name FROM employees
  ORDER BY NLSSORT(last_name, 'NLS_SORT = German');
```

#### **See Also:**

- [Unacceptable NLS Parameters in SQL Functions](#) on page 6-33
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of locale-dependent SQL functions with optional NLS parameters

## Unacceptable NLS Parameters in SQL Functions

You cannot use the NLS parameters `NLS_LANGUAGE`, `NLS_TERRITORY`, and `NLS_DATE_FORMAT` in SQL functions except for `NLSSORT`.

The `NLS_LANGUAGE` parameter can interfere with the session value of `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE`. For example, if you specify `NLS_LANGUAGE` in the `TO_CHAR` function, Oracle Database will ignore its if it different from the `NLS_DATE_LANGUAGE` parameter value for the session.

The `NLS_DATE_FORMAT` and `NLS_TERRITORY_FORMAT` parameters are not accepted as parameters because they can interfere with the required format models. A date format must be specified if an NLS parameter is used in a `TO_CHAR` or `TO_DATE` function, so `NLS_DATE_FORMAT` and `NLS_TERRITORY_FORMAT` parameters are not valid for these conversion functions. Oracle Database will return an error if you specify `NLS_DATE_FORMAT` or `NLS_TERRITORY_FORMAT` in the `TO_CHAR` or `TO_DATE` functions.

### See Also:

- [Specifying NLS Parameters in SQL Functions](#) on page 6-31
- *Oracle Database Globalization Support Guide* for a complete discussion of locale-dependent SQL functions with optional NLS parameters



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## Deploying a Database Application

This chapter describes how to package and install the database objects that support an application. For examples, it uses objects that you created if you followed the instructions earlier in this guide. It takes you through the process of gathering object definitions and data to deploy on another system. In a real-world environment, the exercise would probably not be simple as laid out in this guide, but the steps and considerations discussed would be the same.

Oracle recommends that you use a consistent prefix for all object names. This makes the objects easy to identify. It groups them together in the SQL Developer Connections navigator display and when you are reviewing SQL Developer reports and performance queries against the Oracle Database data dictionary.

This chapter contains the following sections:

- [Overview of Deployment](#) on page 7-1
- [Deployment Environments](#) on page 7-1
- [Planning for Deployment](#) on page 7-2
- [Exporting the Database Objects](#) on page 7-3
- [Exporting the Data](#) on page 7-10
- [Performing the Installation](#) on page 7-11
- [Validating the Installation](#) on page 7-12
- [Archiving the Installation Scripts](#) on page 7-13

### Overview of Deployment

Deployment of an application is typically not complete unless the database objects that support the application are also deployed. You can deploy these objects by creating scripts that create both the database objects and any necessary data, such as seed data for lookup tables. The database objects include tables, views, functions, packages, and others that you created to implement the application logic.

### Deployment Environments

When you deploy an application for Oracle Database, you should create the following system environments:

### **Step 1: Create a Test Environment**

You should always have a test environment, for the initial deployment, for thorough testing of the application before it is deployed in any other environment, and perhaps also for training of application users.

Testing checks both the functionality of your application and whether you have packaged it correctly. If you have missed an object that your application depends upon, you can catch it during testing rather than after it is deployed to actual users in the production environment.

### **Step 2: Create a Quality Assurance (QA) Environment**

If the application is sufficiently complex and if you have the resources, create a QA environment in which changes to the system can be checked in a rigorous manner.

### **Step 3: Create an Education Environment**

An education environment enables you to provide training and practice, for internal or external users, without affecting any of the other environments. You can create the education environment before or after the production environment, and you can update it independently of updates to other environments.

### **Step 4: Create the Production Environment**

The production environment contains the actual data and database objects for the normal operation of your organization. Test any objects in the test environment before you move them into the production environment.

Regardless of how the number of environments to which you deploy, the deployment process is the same.

## **Planning for Deployment**

Before you deploy an application, you must understand the dependencies between the database objects. You must create the objects in the correct order, so that if any objects depend on other objects, the dependent objects exist in each case. If a dependent object is missing, an error or problem such as the following will occur:

- The `CREATE` statement will fail, such as with constraints.
- The object will be created but left in an invalid state, such as with functions, procedures, and packages.

To deploy data, you can take one of the following approaches with the data for each table, depending on how confident you are of the validity of the data:

- Load the data without worrying about any possible validity issues.  
 You can use this approach if you are confident you are of the following: the data will not violate any constraint, no duplicate values exist in primary key and unique key columns, all foreign key references will already exist, and the data in any column governed by a check constraint meets that constraint. For example, if you are simply loading lookup data from your development environment, and load your data in a proper order, the constraints will not need to be disabled because the constraints will not be violated.
- Disable all constraints before you load the data, and then enable the constraints after the data loading is complete.

If you want to load data without needing to sequence it (such as when you have many tables to load and much dependent data) or if you will be loading data from

an outside source (such as an older application or from a flat file or spreadsheet), you should disable the constraints before loading the data.

If any data fails to meet the constraints, that constraint will not be enabled and you will need to correct the data and try again.

The following is a general guideline for the order in which to run the installation scripts for different types of database objects:

1. Package specifications
2. Tables (with constraints and indexes) in proper order
3. Sequences (because they are most often used by triggers)
4. Triggers
5. Synonyms
6. Views (because they may reference functions, procedures, or synonyms)
7. Package bodies
8. Data (optionally disabling all constraints before loading the data and re-enabling them afterwards)

Package specifications are listed first because they will always be valid and other objects might refer to them. Package bodies should be the last object type created because they will probably refer to other object types. Because of dependency issues, you are encouraged to put functions and procedures into packages.

If you followed the instructions in other sections of this guide, you created objects in the sample Oracle HR schema. This section assumes that you are deploying them to another standard HR schema.

In the tables you have created, *scores* has foreign keys to both *performance\_parts* and *evaluations*. This means that you cannot create those foreign keys until the primary keys for the referenced tables are created. You will first create the *evaluations* table and constraints, then the *performance\_parts* table, and then the *scores* table. You will have just one script for tables, sequences, and triggers. This will minimize the manual editing for this exercise. You will also create just one script for the function and the package because you only have one of each. The last script you will create will be for the synonym and view.

This is obviously a simplistic deployment example. For real-world applications, you will need to consult with the database designer and map out the order for creating the objects. If you have a diagram of the design, such as an Entity Relationship Diagram, it can be very useful during this phase

## Exporting the Database Objects

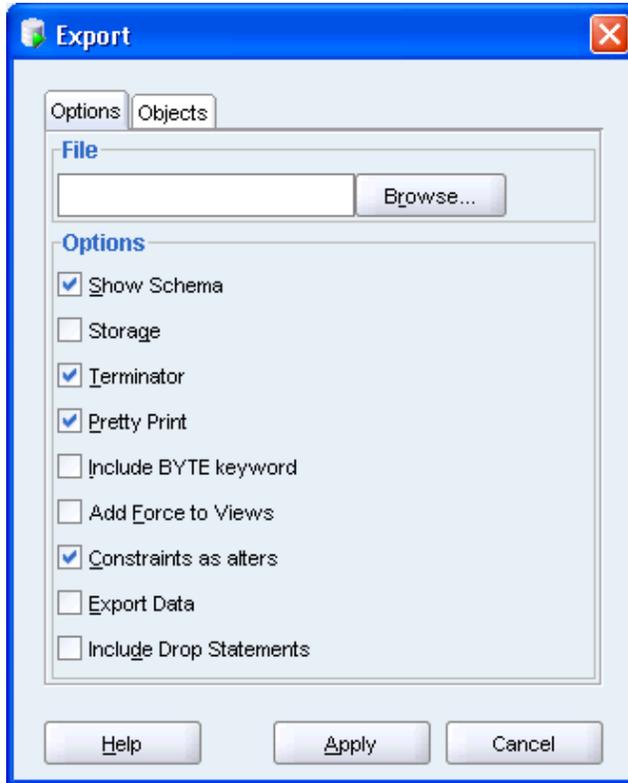
This section demonstrates how to export the database objects.

### Using SQL Developer to Export Database Objects

If you have maintained scripts to create your database objects, you can use those. If you have not maintained scripts, you should generate the data definition language (DDL) statements for each object based on its definition in the database. To generate the DDL for your database objects, you can use Oracle SQL Developer, specifically the Export DDL (and Data) feature. This feature generates DDL statements to create specified objects and types of objects, and it can generate *INSERT* statements to insert exported data into the new tables that are created.

**To export DDL statements and table data:**

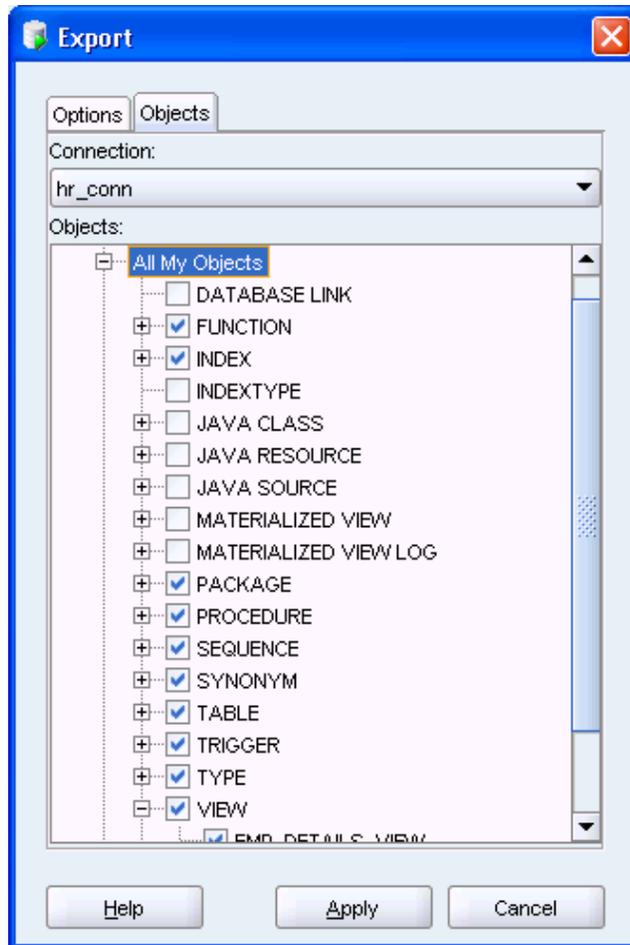
1. Create a directory in which to export the DDL statements and table data.  
Create this directory separate from the Oracle installation directory, for example, `C:\my_exports`.
2. From the SQL Developer main menu, select **Tools**, then **Export DDL (and Data)**.



3. Click the **Options** tab (it should be selected by default).
4. In the File field, specify the name and location of the export file to be created that will contain the SQL statements to create the objects and insert data. For example: `C:\my_exports\hr_export.sql`
5. Under Options, select from the following options to specify objects within object types, or to specify options for the generated SQL statements.
  - **Show Schema:** If this option is checked, the schema name is included in CREATE statements. If this option is not checked, the schema name is not included in CREATE statements, which is convenient if you want to re-create the exported objects under a schema that has a different name.
  - **Storage:** If this option is checked, any STORAGE clauses in definitions of the database objects are preserved in the exported DDL statements. If you do not want to use the current storage definitions (for example, if you will re-create the objects in a different system environment), uncheck this option.
  - **Terminator:** If this option is checked, a line terminator character is inserted at the end of each line.
  - **Pretty Print:** If this option is checked, the statements are attractively formatted in the output file, and the size of the file will be larger than it would otherwise be.

- **Include BYTE Keyword:** If this option is checked, column length specifications refer to bytes; if this option is not checked, column length specifications refer to characters.
  - **Add Force to Views:** If this option is checked, the `FORCE` option is added to any `CREATE VIEW` statements, causing each view to be created even if it contains errors.
  - **Constraints as Alters:** If this option is checked, constraints for each table are defined in separate `ALTER TABLE` statements instead of in the `CREATE TABLE` statement.
  - **Export Data:** If this option is checked, statements are included to insert the data for an exported table or view. If this option is not checked, statements are not included to insert the data for an exported table or view; that is, only the DDL statements are included.
  - **Include Drop Statements:** If this option is checked, `DROP` statements are included before the `CREATE` statements, to delete any existing objects with the same names.
6. Click the **Objects** tab.
  7. In the **Objects** tab:
    - Select `hr_conn` from the **Connection** list.
    - Under **Objects**, select **All**, and then select **All My Objects** to display the available objects in the `hr_conn` connection.

Ensure that the types of objects (Constraints, Database Links, Functions, and so on) to be exported are checked. If you want `INSERT` statements created to insert table data, ensure that **Data** is checked. If you want certain object types or the table data not to be exported, uncheck the appropriate options.



8. Click **Apply** to generate the script.

## Special Considerations for Exporting Sequences and Triggers

Sequences and triggers require special consideration when you export them. For sequences, the DDL generated will start your sequence relative to the current value. If you have a sequence that is used to populate a primary key and the data for that table will be loaded, keep the sequence as it is. However, if you will not be loading data, you might want to edit your script, after creation, to reset the `START WITH` value.

For triggers, if you have a before-insert trigger on a table and plan to load data, you must examine that trigger and decide if you want the actions specified in the trigger to occur. For example, primary key values are often populated in triggers, and if you want to preserve the primary key from the `INSERT` statement, ensure that your trigger only populates the primary key value if it is null, as in the following example:

```
IF :new.evaluation_id IS NULL
  THEN SELECT evaluations_seq.Nextval
         INTO :new.evaluation_id
         FROM dual;
END IF;
```

However, if the trigger is not written as in the preceding example, you must either rewrite your trigger, or disable the trigger before loading the data and then enable it after the data load is complete. Also check that the current value of the sequence is greater than the maximum value in the primary key column.

If triggers populate any auditing columns (such as `CREATED_ON` or `CREATED_BY`), you must preserve the data from your source table by having the trigger set a new value only if the current value is null, as in the following example:

```
if :new.created_on is null
    then :new.created_on := sysdate;
end if;
```

The tables that you created using the instructions in this guide did not use any triggers, so you will not need to edit the code generated if you follow the instructions in the related topics for generating scripts.

## Generating a Script for Creating the Sequence and Tables

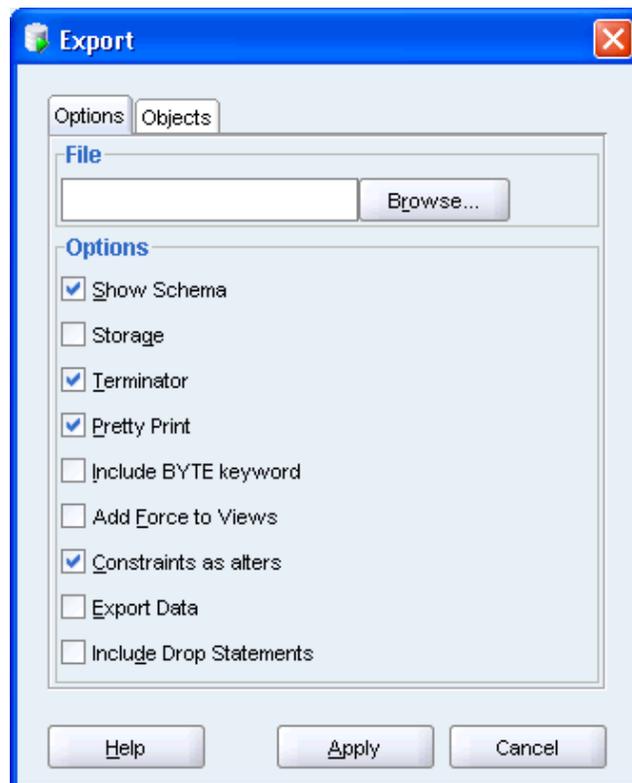
Generate a script to create the sequence and tables that you created if you followed the instructions earlier in this guide. This script will also create any necessary constraints, indexes, and triggers.

### To generate a script for creating the sequence and tables:

1. Create a directory in which to export the DDL statements and table data.

Create this directory separate from the Oracle installation directory, for example, `C:\my_exports`.

2. From the SQL Developer main menu, select **Tools**, then **Export DDL (and Data)**.



3. In the Export dialog box, specify the name and location of the to be created that will contain the SQL statements to create the objects and insert data. For example:  
`C:\my_exports\2day_tables.sql`
4. Under Options, specify the following options for creating the tables for this example:

- **Show Schema:** Uncheck. In this example, if you check this option, it might be inappropriate because the schema name in your test or production environment might not be the same as that in your development environment.
  - **Storage:** Uncheck. If you have specified specific storage clauses for your tables that you want to preserve, check this option; however, if you have not specified storage clauses or if you have specified storage clauses that are specific to your development or test environment (that will be different in the production environment), uncheck this option.
  - **Terminator:** Check. This is necessary because you want to be able run the resulting script.
  - **Pretty Print:** Check. If you check this option, the output is more readable.
  - **Include BYTE Keyword:** Uncheck, unless you are working with a multibyte character set, in which case you should check this option.
  - **Add Force to Views:** Uncheck, because views will be added in another script for this example.
  - **Constraints as Alters:** Check, to have constraints added in separate SQL statements after each `CREATE TABLE`.
  - **Export Data:** Uncheck, because you will export the data separately for this example.
  - **Include Drop Statements:** Uncheck. If you want these objects to replace any existing objects with the same name, you can include this. However, a better practice is to have a separate drop script that can be run to remove an older version of your objects before creation. This avoids the chance of accidentally removing an object you did not intend to drop.
5. Click the **Objects** tab.
  6. In the Objects tab:
    - Select `hr_conn` for the database connection to be used.
    - For the type of objects to be exported, expand **All My Objects**. Then expand **Sequences**, and select `EVALUATIONS_SEQ`. Expand **Tables**, and select `EVALUATIONS`, `PERFORMANCE_PARTS` and `SCORES`. Uncheck the other object types.
  7. Click **Apply** to generate the script.

Object definitions are added to the file in alphabetic order by object type. The sequence will be the first object created, which is good because it is referenced by the trigger on `evaluations`. The table dependencies require that `evaluations` be created first, then `performance_parts`, and then `scores`. These happen to be in alphabetical order, so you do not need to make any changes. However, if you did need to make changes, you could edit the generated script with any text editor or by opening it within SQL Developer.

## Generating a Script for Creating the PL/SQL Objects

Generate a script to create the package (including the function) that you created if you followed the instructions earlier in this guide.

### To generate a script for creating the PL/SQL objects:

1. From the SQL Developer main menu, select **Tools**, then **Export DDL (and Data)**.

2. In the Export dialog box, specify the name and location of the to be created that will contain the SQL statements to create the objects and insert data. For example:  
C:\my\_exports\2day\_plsql.sql
3. Under Options, specify the following options for creating the tables for this example:
  - **Show Schema:** Uncheck. In this example, if you check this option, it might be inappropriate because the schema name in your test or production environment might not be the same as that in your development environment.
  - **Storage:** Uncheck, because this does not apply here.
  - **Terminator:** Check. This is necessary because you want to be able run the resulting script.
  - **Pretty Print:** Check. If you check this option, the output is more readable.
  - **Include BYTE Keyword:** Uncheck, unless you are working with a multibyte character set, in which case you should check this option.
  - **Add Force to Views:** Uncheck, because this does not apply here.
  - **Constraints as Alters:** Uncheck, because this does not apply here.
  - **Export Data:** Uncheck, because you will export the data separately for this example.
  - **Include Drop Statements:** Uncheck. If you want these objects to replace any existing objects with the same name, you can include this. However, a better practice is to have a separate drop script that can be run to remove an older version of your objects before creation. This avoids the chance of accidentally removing an object you did not intend to drop.
4. Click the **Objects** tab.
5. In the Objects tab:
  - Select **hr\_conn** for the database connection to be used.
  - For the type of objects to be exported, expand **All My Objects**. Expand **Functions**, and then select **CALCULATE\_SCORE**. Expand **Packages**, and then select **EMP\_EVAL**. Uncheck the other object types.
6. Click **Apply** to generate the script.

## Generating a Script for Creating a Synonym and a View

Generate a script to create the synonym and the view that you created if you followed the instructions earlier in this guide.

### To generate a script for creating a synonym and a view:

1. From the SQL Developer main menu, select **Tools**, then **Export DDL (and Data)**.
2. In the Export dialog box, specify the name and location of the to be created that will contain the SQL statements to create the objects and insert data. For example:  
C:\my\_exports\2day\_other.sql
3. Under Options, specify the following options for creating the tables for this example:
  - **Show Schema:** Uncheck. In this example, if you check this option, it might be inappropriate because the schema name in your test or production environment might not be the same as that in your development environment.

- **Storage:** Uncheck, because this does not apply here.
  - **Terminator:** Check. This is necessary because you want to be able run the resulting script.
  - **Pretty Print:** Check. If you check this option, the output is more readable.
  - **Include BYTE Keyword:** Uncheck, unless you are working with a multibyte character set, in which case you should check this option.
  - **Add Force to Views:** Check. This will cause your views will be created, even if they are invalid. If any views are invalid, you can correct problems later and then compile these views.
  - **Constraints as Alters:** Uncheck, because this does not apply here.
  - **Export Data:** Uncheck, because you will export the data separately for this example.
  - **Include Drop Statements:** Uncheck. If you want these objects to replace any existing objects with the same name, you can include this. However, a better practice is to have a separate drop script that can be run to remove an older version of your objects before creation. This avoids the chance of accidentally removing an object you did not intend to drop.
4. Click the **Objects** tab.
  5. In the Objects tab:
    - Select `hr_conn` for the database connection to be used.
    - For the type of objects to be exported, expand **All My Objects**. Expand **Synonyms**, and select **POSITIONS**. Expand **Views**, and select **EMP\_LOCATION**. Uncheck the other object types.
  6. Click **Apply** to generate the script.

After you have generated the scripts to create the tables, PL/SQL objects, synonym, and view, you can generate the script that retrieves any data that you want to bring to the target database.

## Exporting the Data

To export the data, you must capture the existing table data for insertion into the deployed tables. As mentioned in "[Planning for Deployment](#)" on page 7-2, you have two options: you can insert data into your target schema if you are confident that all dependent data exists and there are no validity problems, or you can disable constraints, load the data, and then enable them again after loading the data.

If you choose to disable and then enable the constraints, then you have the following options:

- Review the tables and constraints using SQL Developer, and disable and enable them one at a time.
- Create a copy of the `2day_tables.sql` file, find the name of each constraint, and edit the file so that it contains the SQL statements to disable and enable each constraint.
- Find the constraints in the Oracle Database data dictionary, and create a SQL script with the SQL statements to disable and enable each constraint.

To find and enable the constraints used in the `EVALUATIONS`, `PERFORMANCE_PARTS`, and `SCORES` tables, enter the following statements into a SQL Worksheet window:

```
SELECT 'ALTER TABLE ' || TABLE_NAME || ' DISABLE CONSTRAINT ' ||
CONSTRAINT_NAME || ';'
FROM user_constraints
WHERE table_name IN ('EVALUATIONS', 'PERFORMANCE_PARTS', 'SCORES');

SELECT 'ALTER TABLE ' || TABLE_NAME || ' ENABLE CONSTRAINT ' ||
CONSTRAINT_NAME || ';'
FROM user_constraints
WHERE table_name IN ('EVALUATIONS', 'PERFORMANCE_PARTS', 'SCORES');
```

If you followed the instructions in this guide, the only table to which you added data was `performance_parts`. Use the Export DDL (and Data) feature to export data, but this method outputs the DDL along with the data. You can also select a table from within the tree under Connections in the Connections navigator, and then right-click and select Export Data, and then `INSERT`. This option enables you to restrict your export to just select columns and to include a `WHERE` clause to control which data is exported. This is the method you will use.

#### To create `INSERT` statements for the data:

1. In the Connections navigator in SQL Developer, expand the database connection that you used for generating scripts (`hr_conn`) for the database objects.
2. Expand **Tables** under the `hr_conn` connection.
3. Right-click the **PERFORMANCE\_PARTS** table name and select **Export Data**, and then **INSERT**.
4. In the Export dialog box, in the **File** field, enter `C:\my_exports\2day_data.sql` to specify the export file name.
5. Click **Apply**.

If you need to create `INSERT` statements for another table, rather than exporting the data for the other tables to separate files, you can also export the data to the Clipboard and then paste it into your first file. To do this, specify **Clipboard** for Output, which causes the statements to be placed on the Clipboard, so that you can add them to a file.

## Performing the Installation

At this stage, you now have all the script files necessary to create the objects in another schema. These scripts must be executed in the following order (the order in which you created them in this exercise), to ensure that the tables exist before you load the data:

1. `2day_tables.sql`
2. `2day_plsql.sql`
3. `2day_other.sql`
4. `2day_data.sql`

If you want, you can create a master script to execute these scripts in the proper order and log the results to a file. This kind of master script is typically run using `SQL*Plus`. The master script for this exercise looks like the following example:

```
spool my_dir/create_log.txt
@my_dir/2day_tables.sql
@my_dir/2day_plsql.sql
```

```
@my_dir/2day_other.sql
@my_dir/2day_data.sql
commit;
spool off
```

You can also use SQL Developer to execute the scripts that you created. If a master script fully specifies the file path and name (for example, `C:\my_dir\2day_tables.sql`), you can open and execute the master script. Alternatively, you can open and execute each script individually.

**To run installation scripts in SQL Developer:**

1. Right-click in the SQL Worksheet window and select **Open File**.
2. Find and open the **2day\_tables.sql** file, which is located in the `C:\my_exports` directory.

You now see the DDL statements for creating the tables. In the next step you run these statements as a script, because you want to monitor the success or failure of each statement.

3. Click the **Run Script** icon, or press **F5** on your keyboard.

The results of each statement are displayed in the Script Output pane. The results should show the successful execution of each statement.

4. Click the **Clear** icon to erase the contents of the SQL Worksheet.
5. Perform the preceding three steps (finding and opening a file, running its contents as a script, and clearing the SQL Worksheet entry area) for each of the following additional script files:
  - **2day\_plsql.sql**
  - **2day\_other.sql**
6. Find and open the **2day\_data.sql** file.

You now see the DDL statements for inserting the table data. In the next step you run these statements as a script, because you want to monitor the success or failure of each statement.

7. Click the **Run Script** icon (or press **F5**).

Note that in Oracle, DML statements are not automatically committed, which means that you can roll back any `INSERT`, `UPDATE`, or `DELETE` statements. To store the data in the database, you must commit the transaction, which you will do in the next step.

8. Click the **Commit** icon to commit the data to the database.

## Validating the Installation

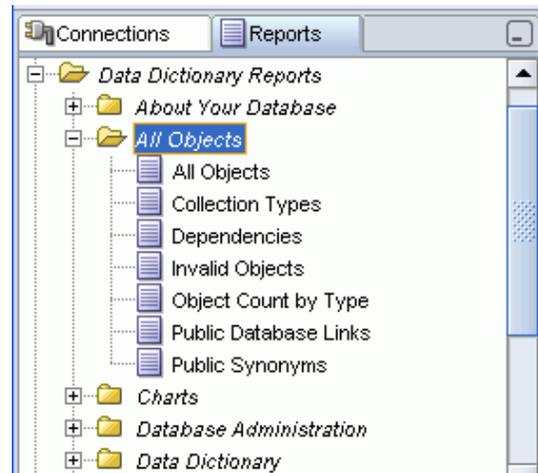
After you have created all the database objects that support an application, you can access the definitions of the new objects, using SQL Developer. You can also use SQL Developer reports to see information to help you determine whether or not the installation is valid. These reports include the following:

- **All Objects:** For each object, lists the owner, name, type (table, view, index, and so on), status (valid or invalid), the date it was created, and the date when the last data definition language (DDL) operation was performed on it. The Last DDL date can help you to find if any changes to the object definitions have been made on or after a specific time.

- **Invalid Objects:** Lists all objects that have a status of invalid.
- **Object Count by Type:** For each type of object associated with a specific owner, lists the number of objects. This report can be useful in checking that two schemas match. It might help you to identify users that have created an especially large number of objects, particularly objects of a specific type.

**To display reports to check the validity of an installation:**

1. In the Reports navigator in SQL Developer, expand **Data Dictionary Reports**, and then expand **All Objects**.



2. Click each report that you want to see, such as All Objects, Invalid Objects, and Object Type by Count.

For each report that you specify, select the database connection to use, and click **Apply** when you are asked for any bind variables (unless you want to restrict the display).

## Archiving the Installation Scripts

After you have deployed the database application and validated the installation, if you have created installation scripts for your application, consider archiving them in a source code control system, with comments describing the purpose of each script and when it was created. This archive will be useful if you ever need to deploy to another environment, because you can use the scripts to re-create a clean installation. To archive data, you can use Oracle Data Pump.

**See Also:**

- *Oracle Database Utilities* for detailed information on Oracle Data Pump



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