# **Standard SQL Functions Cheat Sheet**

## **TEXT FUNCTIONS CONCATENATION**

Use the | | operator to concatenate two strings: SELECT 'Hi ' || 'there!'; -- result: Hi there!

Remember that you can concatenate only character strings using ||. Use this trick for numbers: SELECT '' || 4 || 2; -- result: 42

Some databases implement non-standard solutions for concatenating strings like CONCAT() or CONCAT\_WS(). Check the documentation for your specific database.

## **LIKE OPERATOR – PATTERN MATCHING**

Use the  $\_$  character to replace any single character. Use the %character to replace any number of characters (including 0 characters).

Fetch all names that start with any letter followed by 'atherine': **SELECT** name **FROM** names WHERE name LIKE '\_atherine';

Fetch all names that end with 'a': **SELECT** name **FROM** names WHERE name LIKE '%a';

#### **USEFUL FUNCTIONS**

Get the count of characters in a string: SELECT LENGTH('LearnSQL.com'); -- result: 12

Convert all letters to lowercase: SELECT LOWER('LEARNSQL.COM'); -- result: learnsql.com

Convert all letters to uppercase: SELECT UPPER('LearnSQL.com'); -- result: LEARNSQL.COM

Convert all letters to lowercase and all first letters to uppercase (not implemented in MySQL and SQL Server): SELECT INITCAP('edgar frank ted cODD'); result: Edgar Frank Ted Codd

Get just a part of a string: SELECT SUBSTRING('LearnSQL.com', 9); result: .com SELECT SUBSTRING('LearnSQL.com', 0, 6); - result: Learn

Replace part of a string: SELECT REPLACE('LearnSQL.com', 'SQL', 'Python'); -- result: LearnPython.com

#### **AGGREGATION AND GROUPING DATE AND TIME** There are 3 main time-related types: date, time, and

- COUNT (expr) the count of values for the rows within the group
- SUM (expr) the sum of values within the group • AVG(expr) - the average value for the rows within the
- group • MIN(expr) - the minimum value within the group
- MAX (expr) the maximum value within the group

To get the number of rows in the table: SELECT COUNT(\*) FROM city;

To get the number of non-NULL values in a column: SELECT COUNT(rating) FROM city;

To get the count of unique values in a column: SELECT COUNT(DISTINCT country\_id) FROM city;

## -----

		<b>GROUP BY</b>		
	ΙТΥ	CITY		
	country_id	name		
СІТ	1	Paris		
	1	Marseille		

## **NUMERIC FUNCTIONS**

**BASIC OPERATIONS** Use +, –,  $\star$ , / to do some basic math. To get the number of seconds in a week:

SELECT 60 \* 60 \* 24 \* 7; -- result: 604800

#### CASTING

From time to time, you need to change the type of a number. The CAST() function is there to help you out. It lets you change the type of value to almost anything (integer, numeric, double precision, varchar, and many more).

Get the number as an integer (without rounding): SELECT CAST(1234.567 AS integer); -- result: 1234

Change a column type to double precision SELECT CAST(column AS double precision);

## **USEFUL FUNCTIONS**

Get the remainder of a division: SELECT MOD(13, 2); -- result: 1

Round a number to its nearest integer: SELECT ROUND(1234.56789); -- result: 1235

Round a number to three decimal places: SELECT ROUND(1234.56789, 3); -- result: 1234.568 PostgreSQL requires the first argument to be of the type numeric - cast the number when needed.

To round the number **up**: SELECT CEIL(13.1); -- result: 14 SELECT CEIL(-13.9); -- result: -13 The CEIL(x) function returns the **smallest** integer **not less** than x. In SOL Server, the function is called CEILING().

To round the number **down**: SELECT FLOOR(13.8); -- result: 13 SELECT FLOOR(-13.2); -- result: -14 The FLOOR(x) function returns the **greatest** integer **not** greater than x.

To round towards 0 irrespective of the sign of a number: SELECT TRUNC(13.5); -- result: 13 SELECT TRUNC(-13.5); -- result: -13 TRUNC(x) works the same way as CAST(x AS)integer). In MySQL, the function is called TRUNCATE().

To get the absolute value of a number: SELECT ABS(-12); -- result: 12

To get the square root of a number: SELECT SQRT(9); -- result: 3

## **NULLs**

To retrieve all rows with a missing value in the price column: WHERE price IS NULL

To retrieve all rows with the weight column populated: WHERE weight IS NOT NULL

Why shouldn't you use price = NULL or weight != NULL? Because databases don't know if those expressions are true or false – they are evaluated as NULLs. Moreover, if you use a function or concatenation on a column that is NULL in some rows, then it will get propagated. Take a look:

domain	LENGTH(domain)
LearnSQL.com	12
LearnPython.com	15
NULL	NULL
vertabelo.com	13

## **USEFUL FUNCTIONS**

COALESCE(x, y, ...) To replace NULL in a query with something meaningful: SELECT domain, COALESCE(domain, 'domain missing') FROM contacts;

## domain coalesce

LearnSQL.com LearnSQL.com domain missing NULL

The COALESCE() function takes any number of arguments and returns the value of the first argument that isn't NULL.

#### NULLIF(x, y)

To save yourself from *division by 0* errors: SELECT last month. this\_month, this\_month \* 100.0 / NULLIF(last\_month, 0) AS better\_by\_percent FROM video\_views;

last\_month this\_month better\_by\_percent 1085679

123100	1003019	130.0
Θ	178123	NULL

The NULLIF(x, y) function will return NULL if x is the same as y, else it will return the x value.

## **INTERVALs**

Note: In SOL Server, intervals aren't implemented – use the DATEADD() and DATEDIFF() functions.

To get the simplest interval, subtract one time value from another:

SELECT CAST('2021-12-31 23:59:59' AS timestamp) - CAST('2021-06-01 12:00:00' AS timestamp);

-- result: 213 days 11:59:59

#### To define an interval: INTERVAL '1' DAY

This syntax consists of three elements: the INTERVAL keyword, a quoted value, and a time part keyword (in singular form.) You can use the following time parts: YEAR, MONTH, WEEK, DAY, HOUR, MINUTE, and SECOND. In MySQL, omit the quotes. You can join many different INTERVALs using the + or – operator:

INTERVAL '1' YEAR + INTERVAL '3' MONTH

In some databases, there's an easier way to get the above value. And it accepts plural forms! INTERVAL '1 year 3 months'

There are two more syntaxes in the Standard SQL:

What it does

## **CASE WHEN**

The basic version of CASE WHEN checks if the values are equal (e.g., if fee is equal to 50, then 'normal' is returned). If there isn't a matching value in the CASE WHEN, then the ELSE value will be returned (e.g., if fee is equal to 49, then 'not available' will show up. SELECT

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**CASE** fee WHEN 50 THEN 'normal' WHEN 10 THEN 'reduced' WHEN 0 THEN 'free' ELSE 'not available' END AS tariff FROM ticket\_types;

The most popular type is the searched CASE WHEN - it lets you pass conditions (as you'd write them in the WHERE clause), evaluates them in order, then returns the value for the first condition met. SELECT

CASE WHEN score >= 90 THEN 'A' WHEN score > 60 THEN 'B' ELSE 'F' END AS grade

FROM test\_results; Here, all students who scored at least 90 will get an A, those with the score above 60 (and below 90) will get a B, and the rest will receive an F.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

**Integer division** 

When you don't see the decimal places you expect, it means that you are dividing between two integers. Cast one to decimal: CAST(123 AS decimal) / 2

#### **Division by 0**

To avoid this error, make sure that the denominator is not equal to 0. You can use the NULLIF() function to replace 0 with a NULL, which will result in a NULL for the whole expression.

count / NULLIF(count\_all, 0)

#### Inexact calculations

If you do calculations using real (floating point) numbers, you'll end up with some inaccuracies. This is because this type is meant for scientific calculations such as calculating the velocity. Whenever you need accuracy (such as dealing with monetary values), use the decimal / numeric type (or money if available).

#### Errors when rounding with a specified precision

Most databases won't complain, but do check the documentation if they do. For example, if you want to specify the rounding precision in PostgreSQL, the value must be of the numeric type.

## **TIME ZONES**

In the SQL Standard, the date type can't have an associated time zone, but the time and timestamp types can. In the real world, time zones have little meaning without the date, as the offset can vary through the year because of daylight saving time. So, it's best to work with the timestamp values.

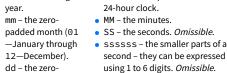
When working with the type timestamp with time zone (abbr. timestamptz), you can type in the value in your local time zone, and it'll get converted to the UTC time zone as it is inserted into the table. Later when you select from the table it gets converted back to your local time zone. This is immune to time zone changes.

#### AT TIME ZONE

To operate between different time zones use the AT\_TTME ZONE keyword.

If you use this format: {timestamp without time zone} AT TIME ZONE {time zone},then the database will read the time stamp in the specified time zone and convert it to the time zone local to the display. It returns the time in the format timestamp with time zone.

If you use this format: { timestamp with time zone } AT TIME ZONE {time zone}, then the database will convert the time in one time zone to the target time zone specified by AT TIME ZONE. It returns the time in the formattimestamp without time zone, in the targe time zone.



 ±TZ – the timezone. It must start with either + or -, and use two digits relative to UTC. Omissible.

In the date part: • YYYY - the 4-digit year. • mm - the zero-

- –January through 12-December).
- dd the zeropadded day.
- using 1 to 6 digits. Omissible.

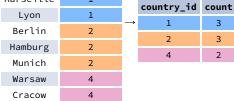
can be as vague as just hour and minutes (e.g., 15:30 - 3:30 p.m.) or as precise as microseconds and time zone (as shown below): 2021-12-31 14:39:53.662522-05 date time timestamp

YYYY-mm-dd HH:MM:SS.ssssss±TZ

14:39:53.662522-05 is almost 2:40 p.m. CDT (e.g., in Chicago; in UTC it'd be 7:40 p.m.). The letters in the above example represent:

timestamp. Time is expressed using a 24-hour clock, and it

#### In the time part: • HH – the zero-padded hour in a



The example above - the count of cities in each country: SELECT name, COUNT(country\_id) FROM city GROUP BY name;

The average rating for the city: SELECT city\_id, AVG(rating) FROM ratings GROUP BY city\_id;

#### Common mistake: COUNT(\*) and LEFT JOIN

When you join the tables like this: client LEFT JOIN project, and you want to get the number of projects for every client you know, COUNT (\*) will return 1 for each client even if you've never worked for them. This is because, they're still present in the list but with the NULL in the fields related to the project after the JOIN. To get the correct count (**0** for the clients you've never worked for), count the values in a column of the other table, e.g., COUNT (project\_name). Check out this exercise to see an example.

#### What time is it?

To answer that question in SOL, you can use:

- CURRENT TIME to find what time it is.
- CURRENT\_DATE to get today's date. (GETDATE() in SOL Server.)
- CURRENT\_TIMESTAMP to get the timestamp with the two above.

#### **Creating values**

To create a date, time, or timestamp, simply write the value as a string and cast it to the proper type. SELECT CAST('2021-12-31' AS date); SELECT CAST('15:31' AS time); SELECT CAST('2021-12-31 23:59:29+02' AS timestamp); SELECT CAST('15:31.124769' AS time);

Be careful with the last example – it will be interpreted as 15 minutes 31 seconds and 124769 microseconds! It is always a good idea to write 00 explicitly for hours: '00:15:31.124769'.

You might skip casting in simple conditions - the database will know what you mean. SELECT airline, flight\_number, departure\_time FROM airport\_schedule WHERE departure\_time < '12:00';

INTERVAL	1.4. 1.1	VEAD		1			
INTERVAL	x-y	TEAR	INTERVAL	X	year	У	
TO MONTH			monthl				

TO MONTH	month
INTERVAL 'x-y' DAY	INTERVAL 'x day y
TO SECOND	second'

In MySQL, write year\_month instead of YEAR TO MONTH and day\_second instead of DAY  $\,$  TO  $\,$  SECOND.

To get the last day of a month, add one month and subtract one day:

SELECT CAST('2021-02-01' AS date)

+ INTERVAL '1' MONTH

- INTERVAL '1' DAY;

To get all events for next three months from today: SELECT event\_date, event\_name **FROM** calendar WHERE event\_date BETWEEN CURRENT\_DATE AND CURRENT\_DATE + INTERVAL '3' MONTH;

To get part of the date: SELECT EXTRACT(YEAR FROM birthday) FROM artists; One of possible returned values: 1946. In SQL Server, use the DATEPART(part, date) function.

You can define the time zone with popular shortcuts like UTC, MST, or GMT, or by continent/city such as: America/New\_York, Europe/London, and Asia/Tokyo.

#### Examples

We set the local time zone to 'America/New\_York'.

SELECT TIMESTAMP '2021-07-16 21:00:00' AT TIME ZONE 'America/Los\_Angeles'; result: 2021-07-17 00:00:00-04

Here, the database takes a timestamp without a time zone and it's told it's in Los Angeles time, which is then converted to the local time - New York for displaying. This answers the question "At what time should I turn on the TV if the show starts at 9 PM in Los Angeles?"

SELECT TIMESTAMP WITH TIME ZONE '2021-06-20 19:30:00' AT TIME ZONE 'Australia/Sydney'; -- result: 2021-06-21 09:30:00

Here, the database gets a timestamp specified in the local time zone and converts it to the time in Sydney (note that it didn't return a time zone.) This answers the question "What time is it in Sydney if it's 7:30 PM here?"

Try out the interactive **<u>Standard SQL Functions</u>** course at **<u>LearnSQL.com</u>**, and check out our other SQL courses.

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