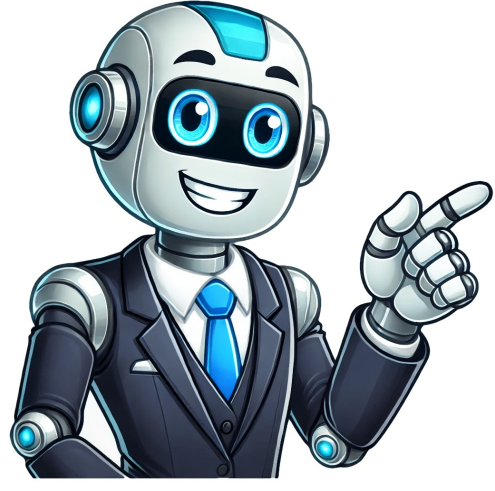


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A database is a structured and systematic way of storing information to be accessed, analyzed, transformed, updated and moved (to other databases). A database is a means of organizing information in a way that makes it easy to find and use. It is organized in tables and those tables have rows and columns. So, think of a simple database as a collection of spreadsheets (or tables) joined together in a systematic way. Related Reading From Built In ExpertsPython Databases 101: How to Choose a Database Library Database Tutorial for Beginners. | Video: Lucid Software What Is a Database? A database is a structured collection of information, or data, stored electronically in a computer system, often managed using a database management system (DBMS). Databases come in many formats – like relational, non-relational and more – in order to handle different types of data and perform various tasks. Databases can be hosted on servers located on-premises at an organization's office, off-premises at an organization's data center or within an organization's cloud infrastructure. Why Do We Use Databases? Computerized databases are the foundation for handling information related to products, data analysis, business processes and more. Many of the services you use online every day (banking, social media, shopping, email) are all built on top of databases. Today, databases are used for many reasons. Databases Hold Data Efficiently We use databases because they are an extremely efficient way of holding vast amounts of data and information. Databases around the world store everything from your credit card transactions to every click you make within any of your social media accounts. Given there are billions of people on the planet, that's a lot of data. Databases Allow Smooth Transactions Databases allow access to various services which, in turn, allow you to access your accounts and perform transactions all across the internet. For example, your bank's login page will ping a database to figure out if you've entered the right password and username. Your favorite online shop pings your credit card's database to pull down the funds needed for you to buy that item you've been eyeing. Databases Update Information Quickly Databases allow for easy information updates on a regular basis. Creating a post on a social media site requires updating a database with your new post. Email newsletters require sending a message to a database to ensure you're getting the latest news. Databases Organize Data Efficiently Databases organize data into a structured format, making it easier to find and use. They also help manage large amounts of data and information. This means businesses and organizations can easily analyze their data. Databases are structured. Common structures (e.g., tabular format, cell structures like date, currency, fields) and common database querying languages (e.g., SQL) make database analysis easy and efficient. Types of Databases There are many types of databases used today. Below are some of the more prominent ones. 1. Hierarchical Databases Hierarchical databases were the earliest form of database. You can think of these databases like a simplified family tree. There's a singular parent object (like a table) that has child objects (or tables) under it. A parent can have one or many child objects but a child object only has one parent. The benefit of these databases is that they're incredibly fast and efficient, plus there's a clear, threaded relationship from one object to another. The downside to hierarchical databases is that they're very rigid and highly structured. 2. Relational Databases Relational databases are perhaps the most popular type of database. Relational databases are set up to connect their objects (like tables) to each other with keys. For example, there might be one table with user information (name, username, date of birth, customer number) and another table with purchase information (customer number, item purchased, price paid). In this example, the key that creates a relationship between the tables is the customer number. 3. Non-Relational or NoSQL Databases Non-relational databases were invented more recently than relational databases and hierarchical databases in response to the growing complexity of web applications. Non-relational databases are any database that doesn't use a relational model. You might also see them referred to as NoSQL databases. Non-relational databases store data in different ways, such as unstructured data, structured document format or as a graph. Relational databases are based on a rigid structure, whereas non-relational databases are more flexible. 4. Cloud Databases Cloud databases refer to databases that are hosted on a cloud platform instead of on-premises hardware. They are typically managed by a third party and offer scalability and flexibility. 5. Centralized Databases Centralized databases are contained within a single computer or physical system. Although users may access data through devices connected within a network, the database itself operates from one location. This approach works best for larger companies or organizations that want to prioritize data security and efficiency. 6. Distributed Databases Distributed databases run on more than one device. That can be as simple as operating several computers on the same site, or a network that connects to many devices. An advantage of this method is that if one computer goes down, the other computers and devices keep functioning. 7. Object-Oriented Databases Object-oriented databases perceive data as objects and classes. Objects are specific data – like names and videos – while classes are groups of objects. Storing data as objects means users don't have to distribute data across tables. This makes it easier to determine the relationships between variables and analyze the data. 8. Graph Databases Graph databases highlight the relationships between various data points. While users may have to do extra work to determine trends in other types of databases, graph databases store relationships right next to the data itself. Users can then immediately see how various data points are connected to each other. What Are the Components of a Database? The components of a database vary slightly depending on whether the database is hierarchical, relational or non-relational. However, here's a list of database components you might expect to be associated with any database. Schema The database schema is essentially the design of the database. A schema is developed at the early conceptual stages of building a database. It's also a valuable source of ongoing information for those wanting to understand the database's design. Constraints and Rules Databases use constraints to determine what types of tables can (and cannot) be stored and what types of data can live in the columns or rows of the database tables, for example. These constraints are important because they ensure data is structured, less corruptible and unassociated data structure and that the database is regulated as users know what to expect. The constraints also ensure the reason why databases are considered rigid. Metadata Metadata is essentially the data about the data. For example, the metadata of a database would include its location, file name, storage space, size, etc. Managing data is done through metadata. Think of it as the "data about the data." It helps track and manage data throughout the database. Query Language Each database can be queried. That is, "queried" means people or services can access the database. That querying is done by way of a particular language or code snippet. The most common querying language is SQL (Structured Query Language) but there are also many other languages and even SQL variations like MySQL, Presto and Hive. Objects Each database is a collection of objects. There are a few different types of objects stored within databases such as tables, views, indexes, sequences and synonyms. The most well known of these are tables, which are like spreadsheets that organize data in rows and columns. You may also hear the term "object instance," which is simply an instance or element of an object. For example, a table called "Transactions" in a database is an instance of the object-type table. Database Advantages The structured nature of databases offers a range of benefits for professional and casual users alike. Below are some of the more prominent advantages:

- Improved data sharing and handling
- Improved data storage capacity
- Improved data integrity and data security
- Reduced data inconsistency
- Quick data access
- Increased productivity

Improved data-driven decision making Database Disadvantages Although databases can be helpful for many, there are some limitations to consider before investing in a database:

- High cost High complexity Required dedicated database management staff Risk of database failure Applications of Databases When used correctly, databases can be a helpful tool for organizations in various industries looking to better arrange their information. Common use cases include:

- Healthcare: storing massive amounts of patient data.
- Logistics: monitoring and analyzing route information and delivery statistics.
- Insurance: storing customer data like addresses, policy details and driver history.
- Finance: handling account details, invoices, stock information and other assets.
- E-commerce: comparing and arranging data on products and services.
- Education: tracking student progress and performance.
- Government: managing citizen records and public services.

Databases are used in many other ways beyond these examples. They are essential tools for organizing personal info, benefits and tax information. What Is a Database Management System? A database management system (DBMS) is a software package used to create and manage databases. In other words, a DBMS makes it possible for users to actually interact with the database. The DBMS is the user interface (UI) that allows us to access, add, modify and delete content from the database. There are several types of database management systems, including relational, non-relational and hierarchical. Evolution of Databases Storing information is nothing new, but the rise of computers in the 1960s marked a shift toward more digital forms of databases. While working for GE, Charles Bachman created the Integrated Data Store, ushering in a new age of computerized databases. IBM soon followed suit with its Information Management System, a hierarchical database. In the 1970s, IBM's Edgar F. Codd released a paper outlining the benefits of relational databases, leading to IBM and the University of California, Berkeley releasing their own models. Relational databases became popular in the following years, with more businesses developing models and using SQL. Even though object-oriented databases became an alternative in the 1980s, relational databases remained the gold standard. The invention of the World Wide Web led to greater demand for databases in the 1990s. MySQL and NoSQL databases entered the scene, competing with the commercial databases developed by businesses. Object-oriented databases also began to replace relational databases in popularity. During the 2000s and 2010s, organizations began to collect larger volumes of data, and many turned to the scalability offered by NoSQL databases. Distributed databases provided another way to organize this proliferating data, storing it away in multiple locations. Future of Databases As organizations handle increasing amounts of data, future databases must be able to keep up. Users will expect databases to be accessible across the globe and able to deal with limitless data growth. The future of databases lies in the cloud, where data can be accessed from anywhere, anytime. As technology advances, databases will continue to evolve, offering more powerful features and capabilities. Download Our Latest VisualGPS ReportData-backed trends. Generative AI demos. Answers to your usage rights questions. Our original video podcast covers it all—now on demand. Watch NowEnjoy sharper detail, more accurate color, lifelike lighting, believable backgrounds, and more with our new model update. Your generated images will be more polished than ever. See What's NewExplore how consumers want to see climate stories told today, and what that means for your visuals.Download Our Latest VisualGPS ReportData-backed trends. Generative AI demos. Answers to your usage rights questions. Our original video podcast covers it all—now on demand. Watch Now A database is an organized collection of information that can be searched, sorted, and updated. This data is often stored electronically in a computer system called a database management system (DBMS). Databases typically organize data in rows and columns for easy processing and retrieval. Oftentimes, you'll need to use a programming language, such as structured query language (SQL), to interact with your database.Databases are similar to spreadsheets, but there are several key differences. In general, databases are much larger than spreadsheets and so can store more data, and they allow for multiple users to access data at the same time. For these reasons, people who work with data, such as data analysts and data scientists, often work with databases rather than spreadsheets.SQL is a programming language used on almost all relational databases to query and manipulate data. It is still widely used today for querying databases to access the right data needed, but new languages have begun to appear in this space.Common database typesThere are several types of databases, including:Relational database: A relational database stores and allows access to data. These types of databases are considered "relational" because the items within them have pre-determined relationships with one another. Data is stored in tables, which are connected by unique IDs or "keys." To access specific information, users enter the key to access the data that has been programmed to be related to that key.NoSQL database (nonrelational database): A non-relational database does not rely on a fixed schema. Instead, data is organized in a more flexible way, allowing for a wide variety of data types and structures. Physical locations: Processing data in this type of database is spread out. Distributed databases can be homogenous and have the same hardware and run the same systems and applications, or they can be heterogeneous and have different operating systems in each location.Object-oriented database: An object-oriented database focuses on organizing objects rather than actions or logic. Instead of being assigned an alphanumeric value, it would remain its original object type.Graph database: A graph database is a type of NoSQL database. It stores, queries, and maps relationships according to the graph theory. Graph databases are used to analyze interactions and connections. They consist of nodes and edges and use a declarative programming language called SPARQL.Cloud database: A cloud database is built in a cloud to optimize for a virtual work setting and distribution. Organizations tend to be charged based on the amount of storage or bandwidth they use.Open-source database: These databases are open-source, meaning anyone can contribute or edit the source code. They can be SQL or NoSQL.Data warehouse: Data warehouses are central repositories for data. A data warehouse is designed to be swift, so users can query and analyze data quickly.Each database type is characterized by specific storage and retrieval practices, data types, job functions, and use cases.Learn more about databases from experts at Google:CloudSQLThe different types of databases vary in terms of data structure, data types, and schema. Database schema is a blueprint that outlines a database's architecture, describing how the data inside is organized and how different elements (such as foreign and primary keys, fields, etc.) relate to each other.All types of databases have the following five components:Hardware: Database hardware is the physical device that the software runs on, so that users can query and pull data from it. Hardware examples include computers, hard drives, and servers.Software: From the database software developers to the people who manage the database, software manages the databases. The software needs to be installed on the hardware and configured to work with the hardware. Examples of database software include Microsoft Access, Oracle, and PostgreSQL.Procedure: Procedures are the rules that determine how the database runs and interacts with other systems. Examples of database procedures include backup and recovery procedures, data entry procedures, and reporting procedures.Data access language: Data access language is a programming language that is used to control and manage the data in the database. Examples of data access languages include SQL, PL/SQL, and COBOL.Data manipulation language: Data manipulation language (DML) is a programming language that is used to manipulate the data in the database. Examples of DML include INSERT, UPDATE, DELETE, and SELECT.Related topicsLearn more about database types and data analysis on CourseraGain hands-on experience with gathering, cleaning, and analyzing data using databases and other analytics tools by pursuing the Google Data Analytics Professional Certificate on Coursera. Develop skills for an in-demand career in data analytics while you learn at the pace that works for you. Data is the cornerstone of any modern software application, and databases are the most common way to store and manage data used by applications. With the explosion of web and cloud technologies, databases have evolved from traditional relational databases to more advanced types of databases such as NoSQL, columnar, key-value, hierarchical, and distributed databases. Each type has the ability to handle structured, semi-structured, and even unstructured data. On top of that, databases are continuously handling mission-critical and sensitive data. When this is coupled with compliance requirements and the distributed nature of most data sets, managing databases has become highly complex. As a result, organizations require robust, secure, and user-friendly tools to maintain these databases. This is where database management systems come into play—by offering a platform to manage databases. Let's take a look. Introduction of DBMS What is a database management system (DBMS)? A database management system (DBMS) is a software tool for creating, managing, and reading a database. With DBMS, users can access and interact with the underlying data in the database. These actions can range from simply querying data to defining database schemas that fundamentally affect the structure of DBMS. Furthermore, DBMS allows users to interact with a database securely and conveniently without having to worry about maintaining data integrity, backing up the data, or service management issues. The functions of DBMS are typically divided into three main categories: user access and control, administrative functions, and security. User access and control involves configuring the database to meet the needs of users, policies, modifying data, and accessing scopes to limit access to unauthorized database users. Administrative functions involve simplifying the database structure through simpler and intuitive tools for managing and controlling the database. Security involves ensuring the database is safe from threats and attacks. For safeguarding the database, DBMS provides a recovery platform to fully or partially restore databases to their previous state—effortlessly. Database query language and APIs. Access and use data via a variety of query languages and API connections. Data dictionary management. Dictionaries include metadata about the structure of the data and relationships between data points so that functionality can rely on structural abstractions rather than complex coding. Data transformation and display. DBMS transforms data on command, such as assembling attributes for the month, day and year as December 14, 2024, or 12