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Tony Andrews

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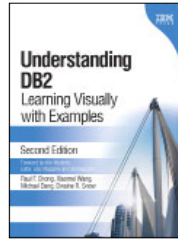
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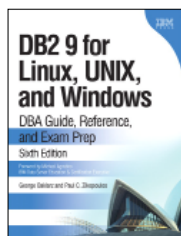
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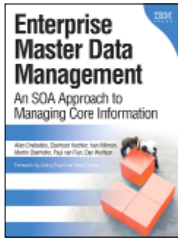


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# **DB2 SQL Tuning Tips for z/OS Developers**

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# DB2 SQL Tuning Tips for z/OS Developers

Tony Andrews

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## **Dedication**

*This book is dedicated to the many DB2 SQL professional developers who want to do the best they can but are not sure where to start improving performance. It is also for those who do not have the time or resources to improve their skills. I have worked with so many developers over the years and am continually impressed by their commitment and abilities to getting the jobs done and the commitment to their profession. But I have also noticed that when it comes to performance and tuning of SQL statements, programs, or applications, most are unsure of what exactly to do. Performance and tuning at times can be quite obvious and easy, and other times it can be quite involved. My hope is that this book will help educate those in these areas and empower them for answers and direction.*

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# Contents

- CHAPTER 1 SQL Optimization Top 100+ . . . . . 1**
  - 1. Take Out Any/All Scalar Functions Coded on Columns in Predicates . . . . .2
  - 2. Take Out Any/All Mathematics Coded on Columns in Predicates . . . . .3
  - 3. Code Only the Columns Needed in the Select Portion of the SQL Statement . . . . .4
  - 4. Stay Away from Distinct if Possible . . . . .4
  - 5. Try Rewriting an In Subquery as an Exists Subquery. . . . .5
  - 6. Always Make Sure Host Variables Are Defined to Match the Columns Datatype. . . . .6
  - 7. Because Or Logic Can Be Problematic to the Optimizer, Try a Different Rewrite . . . . .6
  - 8. Make Sure the Data Distribution and Other Statistics Are Good and Current in the Tables Being Processed . . . . .8
  - 9. Use UNION ALL in Place of UNION Where Possible . . . . .9
  - 10. Consider Hardcoding Versus Using a Host Variable . . . . .9
  - 11. Minimize DB2's SQL Requests . . . . .11
  - 12. Try Rewriting Range Predicates as Between Predicates . . . . .12
  - 13. Consider Using Global Temporary Tables . . . . .13
  - 14. Give Prominence to Stage 1 over Stage 2 Predicates . . . . .14
  - 15. Remember That the Order of (Some) Predicates Does Matter . . . . .15
  - 16. Streamline Multiple Subqueries . . . . .16
  - 17. Index Correlated Subqueries . . . . .17
  - 18. Get to Know the DB2 Explain Tool . . . . .17
  - 19. Use Tools for Monitoring. . . . .18
  - 20. Employ Commit and Restart Strategies. . . . .19
  - 21. Implement Good Index Design . . . . .19
  - 22. Avoid Discrepancies with Non-Column Expressions . . . . .20
  - 23. Begin with All Filtering Logic Outside Application Code . . . . .21
  - 24. Ensure That Subquery Predicates Involving Min and Max Have the Possibility of Nulls Being Returned Handled . . . . .21
  - 25. Always Code For Fetch Only or For Read Only with Cursor Processing When a Query Is Only Selecting Data. . . . .22

- 26. Avoid Selecting a Row from a Table to Help Decide Whether the Logic in the Code Should Execute an Update or an Insert . . . . .23
- 27. Avoid Selecting a Row from a Table in Order to Get Values for an Update. . . . .23
- 28. Make Use of Dynamic SQL Statement Caching . . . . .23
- 29. Avoid Using Select \* . . . . .24
- 30. Watch Out for Nullable Columns or Times When SQL Statements Could Have Nulls Returned from the Database Manager . . . . .25
- 31. Minimize the Number of Times Open and Close Cursors Are Executed. . . . .25
- 32. Avoid Not Logic in SQL . . . . .26
- 33. Use Correlation IDs for Better Readability . . . . .26
- 34. Keep Table and Index Files Healthy and Organized . . . . .27
- 35. Take Advantage of Update Where Current of Cursor and Delete Where Current of Cursor . . . . .27
- 36. When Using Cursors, Use ROWSET Positioning and Fetching Using Multiple-Row Fetch, Multiple-Row Update, and Multiple-Row Insert . . . . .28
- 37. Know the Locking Isolation Levels. . . . .28
- 38. Know Null Processing . . . . .30
- 39. Always Program with Performance in Mind . . . . .31
- 40. Let SQL Do the Work . . . . .32
- 41. Code with Lock Table . . . . .32
- 42. Consider OLTP Front-End Processing. . . . .33
- 43. Consider Using Dynamic Scrollable Cursors . . . . .34
- 44. Take Advantage of Materialized Query Tables to Improve Response Time (Dynamic SQL Only). . . . .35
- 45. Insert with Select . . . . .37
- 46. Take Advantage of Multiple-Row Fetch . . . . .38
- 47. Take Advantage of Multiple-Row Insert . . . . .39
- 48. Take Advantage of Multiple-Row Update. . . . .40
- 49. Take Advantage of Multiple-Row Delete . . . . .42
- 50. Try Scalar Fullselects Within the Select Clause . . . . .42
- 51. Take Advantage of REOPT ONCE and REOPT AUTO in Dynamic SQL and REOPT VARS and REOPT ALWAYS in Static SQL . . . . .43
- 52. Identify Times for Volatile Tables. . . . .44
- 53. Use the ON COMMIT DROP Enhancement. . . . .45
- 54. Use Multiple Distincts . . . . .45
- 55. Take Advantage of Backward Index Scanning . . . . .46

---

56. Watch Out for the Like Statement . . . . .	.46
57. Set Your Clustering Index Correctly . . . . .	.47
58. Use Group By Expressions if Needed . . . . .	.48
59. Watch Out for Tablespace Scans . . . . .	.48
60. Do Not Ask for What You Already Know . . . . .	.49
61. Watch the Order of Tables in a Query . . . . .	.49
62. Use Left Outer Joins Over Right Outer Joins . . . . .	.51
63. Check for Non-Existence . . . . .	.51
64. Use Stored Procedures . . . . .	.52
65. Do Not Select a Column in Order to Sort on It . . . . .	.53
66. Always Limit the Result Set if Possible . . . . .	.53
67. Take Advantage of DB2 V8 Enhanced DISCARD Capabilities When It Comes to Mass Deletes . . . . .	.54
68. Take Advantage of the DB2 LOAD Utility for Mass Inserts . . . . .	.54
69. Watch Out for Materialization of Views, Nested Table Expressions, and Common Table Expressions . . . . .	.55
70. Consider Compressing Data . . . . .	.56
71. Consider Parallelism . . . . .	.57
72. Keep the STDDEV, STDDEV_SAMP, VAR, and VAR_SAMP Functions Apart from Other Functions . . . . .	.58
73. Consider Direct Row Access Using ROWID Datatype (V8) or RID Function (V9) . . . . .	.58
74. Test Your Queries with Realistic Statistics and a Level of Data to Reflect Performance Issues . . . . .	.60
75. Specify the Leading Index Columns in WHERE Clauses . . . . .	.61
76. Use WHERE Instead of HAVING for Filtering Whenever Possible . . . . .	.62
77. Keep in Mind Index Only Processing Whenever Possible . . . . .	.62
78. Index on Expression in DB2 V9 . . . . .	.63
79. Consider the DB2 V9 Truncate Statement . . . . .	.64
80. Use DB2 V9 Fetch First and Order by Within Subqueries . . . . .	.65
81. Take Advantage of DB2 V9 Optimistic Locking . . . . .	.65
82. Use the DB2 V9 MERGE Statement . . . . .	.66
83. Understand the DB2 NOFOR Precompile Option . . . . .	.68
84. Consider Select Into Using Order By . . . . .	.69
85. Code Boolean Term Predicates Whenever Possible . . . . .	.69
86. Try Transitive Closure Coding . . . . .	.70
87. Avoid Sorts with Order By . . . . .	.71
88. Use Joins Instead of Subqueries Whenever Possible . . . . .	.71

- 89. Watch Out for Case Logic . . . . .71
- 90. Take Advantage of Functions in the Order By Clause . . . . .72
- 91. Know Your Version of DB2 . . . . .72
- 92. Understand Date Arithmetic. . . . .73
- 93. Know Your High-Volume Insert Choices . . . . .73
- 94. Know About Skip Locked Data (V9) for Lock Avoidance. . . . .75
- 95. Sort Your Input Streams. . . . .75
- 96. If You Need True Uniqueness, Try the V8  
Generate\_Unique Function. . . . .76
- 97. Know the New Options for Declared Temporary Tables . . . . .76
- 98. Watch Out When Executing Get Diagnostics . . . . .77
- 99. Order Your In List Appropriately . . . . .77
- 100. Update and Delete with Select (V9) . . . . .77
- 101. Execute SQL Statements Only if Necessary . . . . .78
- 102. Take Advantage of In-Memory Tables . . . . .78
- 103. Stay Away from Catchall SQL Statements . . . . .79
- 104. Avoid Unnecessary Sorting . . . . .79
- 105. Understand Expressions and Column Functions . . . . .79
- 106. Watch Out When Combining Predicates . . . . .80
- 107. Add Redundant Predicates to Search Queries . . . . .80
- 108. Take Advantage of Improved Dynamic Caching (V10) . . . . .81
- 109. Try Currently Committed for Lock Avoidance (V10). . . . .82
- 110. Try System Temporal Tables for Historical Data (V10). . . . .83
- 111. Try Business Temporal Tables for Historical Data (V10). . . . .85
- 112. Know Your Ranking Functions (V10). . . . .86
- 113. Take Advantage of Extended Indicators (V10) . . . . .87
- 114. Get Greater Timestamp Precision (V10) . . . . .88
- 115. Try Index Includes (V10). . . . .89
- 116. Use With Return to Client (V10). . . . .89

- CHAPTER 2** DB2 SQL Hints . . . . . 91
  - 1. Try the Optimize for 1 Row Statement at the End  
of the SQL Statement. . . . .91
  - 2. Add the A.PKEY = A.PKEY Predicate to the SQL Query,  
Where PKEY Equals the Primary Key Column of the Table . . . . .92
  - 3. Disqualify an Index Choice . . . . .93
  - 4. Change the Order of Table Processing . . . . .95
  - 5. Use Distributed Dynamic SQL . . . . .96

**CHAPTER 3** SQL Standards and Guidelines . . . . . 99

    For COBOL Developers. . . . .99

    For All SQL Developers . . . . .102

**CHAPTER 4** SQL Program Walkthroughs. . . . . 107

**CHAPTER 5** Existence Checking . . . . . 111

    Example 1. . . . .111

    Example 2. . . . .113

**CHAPTER 6** Runstats . . . . . 115

**CHAPTER 7** Initial Steps in Tuning a Query . . . . . 117

**APPENDIX A** Predicate Rewrite Examples . . . . . 121

    Predicate Rewrites: Transitive Closure . . . . . 122

**APPENDIX B** DB2 SQL Terminology . . . . . 125

    Index. . . . . 131



## Preface

Most relational tuning experts agree that the majority of performance problems among applications that access a relational database are caused by poorly coded programs or improperly coded SQL. Industry experts also note that poor performing SQL is responsible for as much as 80 percent of response-time issues. I personally agree with this. Of all the IT shops for which I have provided performance and tuning consulting work in, most of the performance issues are directly related to modifying application and SQL code, or adding and altering indexes. That is why I continually try to educate developers in the ways of SQL programming and associated performance issues. I also believe more developers should be educated in how to read and analyze DB2 Explain output. In addition I believe that every large development project involved with a RDMS should have an SQL technical expert as part of the project. There are many SQL developers in the IT industry, but based on my experience, I have found that less than 10% of them really know the performance issues involved with SQL programming or how to fix them. By having an SQL technical expert, many performance and logic issues can be caught before ever migrating to production.

The purpose of this book is to provide a reference for developers who need to tune an SQL statement or program. Most developers are too quick to blame the network, the database, the system, the high volume of transactions, etc., for the slowness of their program or application. Yet most of the time the slowness is directly related to their code. Hopefully, this book will give them something to fall back on before calling DBAs or others, and try first to improve the performance issue(s) at hand.

There are also times when SQL, along with the Explain, looks good, but is not performing efficiently. This book also provides some “Tuning Tips” to tweak the SQL into possibly optimizing differently than the optimizer had chosen. These are tips that many experts in the industry use to get poor performing SQL statements to optimize differently and possibly execute faster, especially when time is an issue in getting performance issues fixed.

I have included a list of SQL Standards and Guidelines that I have implemented in numerous shops. If there are no SQL standards set up in your IT shop, then these would be a great place to start. Many shops choose to add more items to the list specific to their applications.

It's one thing to have in place Standards and Guidelines, and then it's another to ensure they are followed. I have been in many shops where they show me their shop standards for SQL programming, COBOL programming, Java programming, etc., but have no quality assurance set up to ensure that the standards are being followed. All programs going into production should have some kind of code walkthrough or review to ensure standards are followed, and also to ensure that their SQL was efficiently written. The reviews are a way to ensure that program and SQL logic is correct and the design of the program fits its needs. There is a chapter of items that should be asked and checked when performing code walkthroughs involving SQL programming. The minimal amount

of time for a code walkthrough far offsets any production performance or logic issues that may arise.

Many times developers have SQL code to tune and are not sure where to start. The first place I tell them is to look at all the predicates in each query and try to write them more efficient if possible. This book provides an appendix of poor performing SQL predicates and a more efficient way to rewrite them. It is important for developers to know whether a predicate is indexable or non indexable, and whether a predicate is Stage 1 or Stage 2. These are discussed in more detail later in this book.

Performance is not so much a DB2 issue as it is a relational issue. Developers have to be careful how they structure the queries, and how they design their application code around the queries. Database analysts and database modelers have to be careful how they design a database application. They need to take their time and do a good analysis. Performance depends on environment, applications and requirements. And performance, no matter how good it is, can always be better. Although the majority of tuning efforts are spent at the operating system and database level, the largest performance gains are obtained from tuning the application code. Applications that use SQL to retrieve data in a database are the best candidates for tuning. Since a relatively small number of SQL statements consume the majority of resources, SQL tuning often results in significant performance improvements. However, SQL tuning can at times be complex. This book provides a place to start and tries to keep simple the things that developers can do in order to get SQL driven programs and applications to perform more efficiently.

## **DISCLAIMER**

The tuning tips and comments in this book are my own personal opinions based on many years of designing, programming, and tuning DB2 applications. Some of the tuning tips may not necessarily reflect the positions or opinions of IBM, any of their affiliates, or so called experts in the field. These tuning tips are based upon my personal experience and have all been used from time to time in applications I have been a part of to obtain better performance. I have personally used each of the 100+ tips when tuning DB2 SQL applications in order to get queries and programs to execute more efficiently.

Everyone knows the saying “It Depends.” Please keep this in mind. Do not take every tip in this book and automatically expect instant performance gains. The tips are intended to give developers some direction and ideas to improve their queries or programs. Everyone should always conduct their own independent tests to verify the validity of any statements made in this book before automatically basing decisions upon those statements.

## Acknowledgments

A big “thank you” goes out to the many developers and DBAs I have worked with over the years. I am a true believer in program design walkthroughs and program code walkthroughs. I have personally learned much over the years from sitting in with other co-workers and taking suggestions to improve programs, with the purpose of promoting the best and most efficient code into production. Many of those developers pushed me to put together this book as we developed some huge applications years ago. I was continually having meetings and sending emails on tips to our teams for coding techniques that would improve their query and program performance. Finally, one day they all said I need to put those tips in a book.

I would like to thank the two individuals who did the technical editing, Chuck Kosin and David Simpson. They are two of the best technicians I know in DB2, and I was honored that they became a part of this project. I really appreciated their many comments and suggestions as they made the material much better. I have known David for more than 3 years, as we’ve worked together at Themis Inc., and I can truly say he is one of the most knowledgeable and experienced DB2 people I have met in the industry. Chuck has a strong technical background and has been through technical editing before, when he worked with Craig Mullins on *DB2 Developer’s Guide*.

Additionally, many thanks to the understanding and patient folks at IBM Press who have worked with me on this edition of the book, specifically Mary Beth Ray, Steven Stansel, Christopher Cleveland, and all the editorial and production staff who were involved in producing the first edition of the book. It wasn’t easy for me to follow all the formatting and styles to help get the material together. It made me acknowledge to myself that I really do need to take some advanced Word classes.

I would like to thank my employer Themis Inc., in Westfield, New Jersey for supporting me on this project. I have never met or worked with a better group of technicians and communicators in all my years of training and consulting. They make it fun to stay on top of the newest and latest releases, and their real world experiences are invaluable when questions arise.

And, most importantly, thank you to my wife, Jan. She was the one to help build my confidence, release any fears, and push me to publish what I had learned and implemented on so many projects.

If you have any questions or comments about this text, you can contact me at [tandrews@themisinc.com](mailto:tandrews@themisinc.com). You can also write to me in care of the publisher. I am open to any suggestions as my ego was parked many years ago during program walkthroughs. This book is all about educating the many developers in the ways of efficient DB2 SQL programming.

## **About the Author**

Tony Andrews has more than 23 years' experience in the development of IBM DB2 relational database applications. Most of this time, he has provided development and consulting services to Fortune 500 companies and government agencies. Tony has written literally thousands of queries and programs during his development years, and he has also served as a DB2 database analyst. For the past 10 years, Tony has been splitting his time between consulting engagements and training. His main focus is to teach today's developers the ways of RDMS application design, development, and SQL programming—always with a special emphasis on improving performance. Tony's training, consulting, and speaking engagements are through his employer, Themis, Inc., an onsite and virtual instructor-led, hands-on IT training company recognized internationally. It offers more than 400 IT courses and helps to support International DB2 Users Group North America (IDUG NA) and Europe, Middle East, and Africa (IDUG EMEA), along with many DB2 user groups.

Tony is a current IBM champion and regular lecturer at industry conferences and local user groups. You may have seen him present at such events as IDUG NA and EMEA. He is well known for his "Top 25+ Tuning Tips for Developers" presentation.

Tony graduated from Ohio State University with a major in business and a minor in mathematical statistics. He currently resides in Dublin, Ohio.

Visit Tony's site at [www.db2sqltuningtips.com](http://www.db2sqltuningtips.com), and follow him on Twitter, at [www.twitter.com/tonyandrews12](https://www.twitter.com/tonyandrews12).

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# SQL Standards and Guidelines

Every IT shop that has applications involving DB2 should have a set of SQL standards and guidelines for its developers to follow. This chapter is a start for developers and project managers to use as part of their development. Once you have a set of standards and guidelines, be sure to enforce them. Every program should have code walkthroughs to ensure that standards and guidelines are being followed.

The standards and guidelines that follow serve multiple purposes:

- Relate to performance
- Alleviate abends and/or production incident reporting
- Reduce I/O and CPU costs
- Increase productivity
- Improve client satisfaction
- Improve readability and understandability

The standards and guidelines that follow are grouped into two separate areas: one specific to COBOL SQL developers and the other specific to all SQL developers (no matter the language in which they are embedding their SQL code).

## For COBOL Developers

1. The SQLCODE must be checked after every SQL statement. The Declare cursor statement is only a declarative, and it gets no return code from DB2. All other SQL calls get some return code. Return code data from the DB2 database system gets automatically loaded in the SQLCA communications area.
2. Every program must include the SQLCA and a DCLGEN for each table being coded against. The DCLGEN is predefined with host variables that match the column definitions. They are used to select data into, insert and update from, and serve as the host variables in any Where clause.

If DCLGEN fields are not being used, then any program declaring variables in the code must make sure that the variable being declared *exactly* matches the definition in DB2. If it doesn't, then there is a possibility that DB2 may not choose an index to process. For example, if Column1 is defined as an Integer, then the host variable in COBOL should be defined as S9(9) comp.

3. Every program must have a consistent DB2 abend routine. For batch programs, it is easiest to have a called program that handles the display of the SQLCA fields and calls the DSNTIAR DB2 routine to display further DB2 messages. For online programs, sometimes it is good to write out the SQLCA and DSNTIAR

information to a file or table in order to fall back on errors that occur. The SQLCA contains a lot of information specific to a call that is critical to troubleshooting an error. It is important to write out all the information captured. Make sure that at least the SQLSTATE is displayed, along with the SQLCODE.

4. Never code `Select *` in a program. Only code for the columns needed. If a program needs all the columns, then code each one. This will prevent an abend if a new column is ever added to the table. The fewer columns being brought into the program, the more efficient the processing. (See tuning tip #3 and tuning tip #29 in Chapter 1, “SQL Optimization Top 100+.”) More columns can have an effect on performance due to larger sort sizes, possible index-only processing, and join types. When DB2 looks at which join type is best, part of its analysis is the number of columns from each table being selected.
5. Make sure any columns defined as Nullable contain a null indicator host variable as part of the Select, Insert, or Update statements. This is most important in Select statements because DB2 will return an invalid -305 SQLCODE when it returns a column of null to the program and there is no null indicator specified. These null indicators must be defined in working storage as Pic S9(4) Comp.

It is preferable to code the VALUE, COALESCE, or IFNULL SQL scalar function for any nullable columns because the program will not receive null indicators from DB2. This will alleviate -305 SQL errors where a program is not set up to handle the null indicator. It will also spare the program from having to define the null indicators in working storage.

For example, `Select COALESCE(PK_ID, 0)` will return the PK\_ID value if there is one, or it will return a zero if it is null. This could also be coded with the VALUE and COALESCE functions. All three would return the same result. The default specified must match the column definition. For example, since PK\_ID is numeric, then the default must be a numeric—in this case, zero.

6. Any SQL statement that contains one of the following aggregate functions should have a Null-Indicator host variable as part of the select (MIN MAX, AVG, SUM). DB2 will return a null indicator to the program if it finds no data to process these functions, and the COBOL program will have to define a null indicator. If the program is not set up with a null indicator, an invalid -305 SQLCODE is returned. It is preferable to code the VALUE, COALESCE, or IFNULL function to alleviate any null indicator logic. For example:

```
SELECT IFNULL (AVG (SALARY) , 0)
FROM EMP
WHERE WORKDEPT = 'XYZ'
```

This will either return the average if rows are found or a zero if no rows were met in order to calculate an average.

7. Minimize the number of times cursors are opened and closed during execution. If most of the time the open cursor and fetch retrieves only one row, then code a simple Select statement and execute the cursor processing only when a -811 (duplicate rows) SQLCODE is returned.

Do not break up processing into multiple cursors unless performance seems to be an issue. If it takes a seven-table join, then code all seven tables in one cursor and

let DB2 do the work. When you break it up, the process usually takes longer due to the extra times DB2 is sent SQL statements to process. So break up the join only when all other tuning efforts have been applied. Typically it would be more efficient to execute a seven-table join.

8. CASE expressions should always contain an ELSE clause. If none of the conditions in the CASE are met, then DB2 will return a null (via a null indicator) to the program. If the program is not set up to handle a null being returned from the CASE expression, then a -305 SQLCODE is returned, which usually causes the program to abend.
9. Always display counts for the number of Selects, Inserts, Updates, Deletes, and Open cursors that have been executed in the program. The overhead in COBOL to define the counters and increment them through the processing is minimal to the overall runtime of the program. Displaying these counts provides invaluable information when problems occur, helping a developer figure out which program to look into. Make sure the counts are displayed on every abend and at the end of processing.
10. Always display the values in host variables for a SQL statement that has an invalid SQL return code and the program goes into its abend error routine. Every developer knows how frustrating it is to have a program error out or even abend and not know what values were being processed.
11. Watch out for any SQL warnings that may occur in an SQL statement. Most programs seem to ignore warnings that many times help to detect potential problems. There are two indications of a warning message in the SQLCA: One is a positive SQLCODE other than +100; the other is a W in the SQLCA's SQLWARN0 field. When either of these exists, DB2 is issuing a warning that something worrisome happened on the prior call and that while you may have received data back, it may not be what you expected. When SQLWARN0 is a W, DB2 also provides helpful information about the problem in one or more of the other SQLWARNn fields. Also check warnings on every SQL statement return. For example:

```

Evaluate SQLCODE
  When 0
    If SQLWARN0 = 'W'
      Display '*** Warning error ***'
      Display 'Sqlstate = ' Sqlstate
    End-If
  When Other
    ...
End-Evaluate

```

12. Take advantage of the SQLERRD (3) out of the SQLCA. The third occurrence of the SQLERRD array is one of the most useful fields in the SQLCA. This field is populated after a successful insert, update, or delete with a count of the number of rows inserted, updated, or deleted. This is not populated when a mass delete with no Where logic is coded or populated due to deletes affected by delete cascade.
13. Take advantage of fetching rowsets in your cursor processing. (See tuning tip #46 in Chapter 1.) This should be strictly enforced for large cursors because of the runtime savings.



14. Apply all calculations within the COBOL code and then move the value to a host variable. Then reference the host variable in the SQL statement. Keep calculations out of SQL statements whenever possible.
15. Hard code any and all values known within an SQL statement. For example, if a program always processes the terminated rows on a table, then use the SQL statement Where Status\_Code = 'T'. This is extremely helpful especially if frequency value statistics are present for the different values of Status\_Code in the catalog tables. (See tuning tip #10 in Chapter 1.)

## For All SQL Developers

1. All SQL join statements should have the columns from each table noted with a Correlation ID when referenced in Select, Where, Group By, or Order By clauses. A Correlation ID should be something other than a letter of the alphabet. Use something descriptive so others can understand from which table each column is coming. This makes the join logic more clear and readable.
2. Do not apply any SQL scalar functions against columns coded in the Where clause. This is especially important for columns that make up any index for a table. For example, coding Where Integer(CLM\_ID) will automatically eliminate the use of the index for CLM\_ID. As another example, the following:

```
WHERE YEAR(HIREDATE) = 2003
```

should be coded as:

```
WHERE HIREDATE BETWEEN '2003-01-01' and '2003-12-31'
```

to make it an indexable predicate.

3. Check your queries with the DB2 Explain tool. A Plan\_Table under your ID will need to be created from the DBAs, or use the Plan\_Table defined for the DB2 sub-system you are operating under. For example:

```
Delete from Plan_Table  
;
```

```
Explain Plan Set Queryno = 11 for
```

```
SELECT EMPNO, LASTNAME,  
        FIRSTNME, WORKDEPT  
FROM EMP  
WHERE DEPTNO = ?
```

```
;
```

```
Select * from Plan_Table  
Order by Queryno, Planno, Qblockno, Mixopseq  
;
```

4. Watch out for Order By and Group By statements in queries. Each of these may cause a sort, which requires resource utilization. Code them only if needed. The fewer the columns and rows in a sort, the faster the sort will run, so make sure only the columns needed are coded.
5. When coding UNION statements in SQL, start with UNION ALL. By just coding UNION, a sort gets executed to eliminate duplicates, causing more resource utilization. Many times there are not duplicates, so UNION ALL should be the choice that prevents a sort from taking place. Avoid UNIONS if possible. Sometimes the logic can be rewritten using outer joins, case statements, etc.
6. Watch out for DISTINCT. This also causes a sort, which requires more runtime. Only code this when absolutely necessary. Many times a rewrite of the statement that can get the same results without the DISTINCT may run more efficiently. (See tuning tip #4 in Chapter 1.)
7. Be careful when using the CASE expression as part of the Select statement. This expression can have some considerable overhead during execution. If there are many rows being returned as part of the query, it may help to move that logic as part of your source code after each row is returned. This is especially true if your source is compiled code.
8. Do not use Select Count(\*) for existence checking. Use this only when you need a total number of rows. It is best to code a Select using the FETCH FIRST 1 ROW ONLY and then check for SQLCODE = 0 or +100.
9. Always check the Performance Monitoring and Tuning guide for V9, and the Managing Performance guide for V10 for how to code (or how not to code) predicates to make them indexable and/or stage 1 versus stage 2. (See tuning tip #14 in Chapter 1.) The IBM Data Studio Visual Explain tool will also note any stage 2 predicates.
10. Watch out for <> (not equal) predicates. These predicates are non-indexable, but they are stage 1.
11. Make sure there is an understanding of inner vs. outer joins. Many times SQL is written with Table1 outer joined to Table2, and then inner joined to Table3. The inner join being coded last can offset the exceptions that took place in the outer join. Many times the three tables could all be coded with inner joins, which would run more efficiently. Outer joins are not inefficient, but if they bring in extra exception rows, and a subsequent inner join then gets rid of those extra rows, it was processing not needed.

Also, make sure that if outer joins are coded, the program is set up to handle nulls being returned from the table where the join is not met. The VALUE, COALESCE, or IFNULL function should be used to keep DB2 from trying to send a null indicator back to the program.

12. Try to stay away from NOT logic in general. Try to keep predicates positive as much as possible. For example, the following predicate:

```
WHERE NOT HIREDATE > :WS-DATE
```

could be recoded as:

```
Where HIREDATE <= :WS-DATE
```

13. When coding predicates, keep the logic away from the column to make it an indexable predicate. For example:

```
WHERE SALARY * 1.10 > 100000.00
```

is a non-indexable predicate and should be coded as:

```
WHERE SALARY > 100000.00 / 1.1
```

14. When using date-labeled durations (adding or subtracting years/months/days) to a date, it is logically important in which order they are coded and executed. For example, when adding, the order should be years first, then months, then days:

```
SELECT CURRENT DATE + 2 YEARS + 3 MONTHS + 1 DAY
```

When subtracting, the order should be just the opposite: days first, then months, then years:

```
SELECT CURRENT DATE - 1 DAYS - 3 MONTHS - 2 YEARS
```

This is important because if they are coded in a different order, the results could be incorrect! Results can be different due to date adjustments on the months. For example, subtracting 1 month from March 31 will result in February 28 or 29.

15. If you need to know the last day of a month, use the Last\_Day SQL function to get it. For example:

```
SELECT LAST_DAY(CURRENT DATE)
INTO :HV1          -- Where HV1 is some Host Variable
FROM SYSIBM.SYSDUMMY1
```

16. A more efficient way to get the same result as in #15 above is to use the Set statement. For example:

```
SET :HV1 = LAST_DAY(CURRENT DATE)
```

**NOTE** Use the Set Host Variable assignment over the SYSIBM.SYSDUMMY1 whenever possible, especially when the statement may get executed hundreds or thousands of times within its runtime.

17. Take advantage of the many date functions in SQL instead of programming code to provide the information needed:

Year/Month/Day returns only that portion of the date value.

DAYOFWEEK/DAYOFWEEK\_ISO returns a number (1–7), depending on whether the week begins on Sunday or Monday. DAYOFWEEK\_ISO states Monday as the first day of the week.

DAYOFMONTH/DAYOFYEAR returns the specific day number in a month (1–31) or year (1–366).

LAST\_DAY returns the last day of the month for a specific date. If the date was 10/15/2005, the date returned would be 10/31/2005.

NEXT\_DAY returns a timestamp representing the first weekday greater than the specified date. The function needs to have the weekday specified. For example:

```
NEXTDAY('01/31/2005', 'MON')
```

returns the date of the next Monday after the date '01/31/2005'.

DAYS is used to get the days difference between two dates. For example:

```
SELECT DAYS(HIREDATE) - DAYS(BIRTHDATE)
```

returns the number of days difference.

WEEK returns a number (1–54) that represents the week of the year. Week 1 is the first week that contains the first day of the year.

WEEK\_ISO returns a number (1–53) that represents the week of the year. Week 1 is the first week of the year that contains a Thursday, which is equivalent to the first week that contains January 4.

CHAR is used to get a date column back in a specific format (USA, ISO or JIS, EUR).

Subtracting two dates from each other returns a decimal number that has the number of years, months, and days difference between the dates:

```
SELECT DATE('2010-01-01') - DATE('2007-10-15')
FROM SYSIBM.SYSDUMMY1
```

returns 20217, which means 2 years, 2 months, 17 days. To get just the years difference, use:

```
SELECT YEAR(DATE('2010-01-01') - DATE('2007-10-15'))
```

18. Not Between is non-indexable. For example, the following predicate:

```
WHERE SALARY NOT BETWEEN 50000.00 and 100000.00
```

is a non-indexable predicate and should be coded as follows:

```
WHERE SALARY < 50000.00
OR SALARY > 100000.00
```

19. Watch out for the Like predicate. If the Like statement is a Begins With predicate, then that predicate is indexable. If the Like statement is a Contains or Ends With predicate, then it is non-indexable. For example:

```
WHERE LASTNAME LIKE 'A%'      - Begins with logic
WHERE LASTNAME LIKE '%A%'    - Contains logic
WHERE LASTNAME LIKE '%A'     - End with logic
```

20. Code only the columns needed in the Select. Extra columns can cause the optimizer to choose a different access path that may not be the best choice. Extra columns cause sorts to be more expensive and adds to transmission cost. Even one extra column (at times) can cause the optimizer to choose a different access path. Basically, the wider the result set, the more DB2 has to pull and ship.
21. Queries and/or cursors that bring back multiple rows in the result set should have For Fetch Only at the end of the query. This tells DB2 that there is no intention of updating any of the rows being fetched. Because of this, DB2 will try to avoid locking the pages and will possibly block the data rows being returned. For Read Only also does the same.

22. Code the most restrictive predicates first. This does not mean that this is the exact order in which DB2 will execute the queries. DB2 will always pick stage 1 indexable predicates first, no matter where they are coded. But within these, it is important to use the correct order.
23. Rewrite > Any and > All subqueries. For example, recode this:

```
SELECT EMPNO, LASTNAME
From Emp
Where Salary > Any
      (Select Salary
       from Emp
       Where Workdept = 'C11')
```

as follows:

```
Select Empno, lastname
From Emp
Where Salary >
      (Select Min(Salary)
       from Emp
       Where Workdept = 'C11')
```

## A

- A.PKEY = A.PKEY statement, 92-93
- aggregate functions, 58, 100
- applications, 125
- arrays
  - Delete statement, 42
  - Fetch statement, 38-39
  - Insert statement, 39-40
  - Update statement, 40-41
- ATOMIC keyword, 40

## B

- backward index scanning, 46
- between predicates, 12
- bi-temporal tables, 86
- block fetching, 22
- Boolean term predicates, 69
- business temporal data support (V10), 85-86

## C

- caching
  - dynamic caching, 81-82
  - dynamic SQL statements, 23-24
- cardinality statistics, 115, 125
- case logic, 71-72, 101
- catchall SQL statements, 79
- closing cursors, 25-26
- clustering indexes, 47-48, 125
- COALESCE function, 22

- COBOL developers
  - DCLGEN host variables, 6
  - SQL standards and guidelines, 99-102
- code, existence checking, 111-113
- columns
  - functions, 79
  - predicates, 2-4
  - sorts, 53
- combining predicates, 80
- commit strategies, 19
- common table expressions,
  - materialization, 56
- Compatibility mode, 72
- compression of data, 56-57
- correlated subqueries, 6, 17
- correlation IDs, 26-27
- Create Index statement, 63-64
- CS (Cursor Stability) locking isolation level, 28-29
- Currently Committed, lock avoidance, 82-83
- cursor processing, 100
  - fetching data from a cursor, 28
  - For Fetch Only/For Read Only clauses, 22
  - minimizing execution of open and close cursors, 25-26
  - scrollable cursors, 34-35
  - Update/Delete statements, 27-28
- Cursor Stability (CS) locking isolation level, 28-29

**D**

- data compression, 56-57
- data distribution, Runstats utility, 8-9
- Data Manager, 14
- Data Manipulation Language (DML)
  - statements, 52
- Data Studio tool (IBM), 116
- database objects, 125
- datatypes, defining host variables to match, 6
- date arithmetic, 73
- date functions, 104
- DB2 optimizer, 2
- DB2 versions, 72-73
- DCLGEN host variables, 6
- Declarations Generator, 6
- declared GTTs, 13
- declared temporary tables, 76
- Delete clause (Select statement), 77-78
- Delete statement
  - arrays, 42
  - cursor processing, 27-28
- Dense\_Rank function, 86
- developers
  - initial steps in tuning queries, 117-119
  - program with performance in mind, 31-32
  - SQL standards and guidelines, 99
    - all SQL developers, 102-106
    - COBOL developers, 99-102
    - purposes, 99
- direct row access
  - RID function, 60
  - ROWID datatype, 58-59
- DISCARD capabilities, 54
- discrepancies, non-column expressions, 20-21
- disqualification, index choice, 93-95
- Distinct feature, 4-5, 45
- distributed dynamic SQL, 96-97
- DML (Data Manipulation Language)
  - statements, 52
- duplicates, UNION ALL in place of UNION, 9

- dynamic caching, 81-82
- dynamic distributed SQL, 96-97
- dynamic SQL
  - REOPT ONCE/REOPT AUTO, 43
  - statement caching, 23-24

**E**

- Enabling New Function mode, 72
- enhancement, DISCARD capabilities, 54
- EXCEPT statements, 9
- existence checking, 111-113
- Exists subqueries, 5-6
- Explain tool, 17-18
- expressions, combining with column functions, 79
- extended indicators, 87-88

**F**

- Fetch First n Rows Only clause, 53
- Fetch statement, 28, 38-39
- fetching data from a cursor, 28
- filter factor, 126
- filtering
  - logic, 21
  - records, 62
- For Fetch Only clause (cursor processing), 22
- For Read Only clause (cursor processing), 22
- frequency value statistics, 10, 115, 126
- front-end OLTP programs, 33-34
- functions
  - DB2 optimizers, 2
  - Dense\_Rank, 86
  - Generate\_Unique, 76
  - Order By clause, 72
  - Rank, 86
  - ranking (V10), 86-87

**G**

- Generate\_Unique function, 76
- Get Diagnostics command, 39

Get Diagnostics statement, 77  
 global temporary tables (GTTs), 13-14  
 Group By expressions, 48  
 GTTs (global temporary tables), 13-14  
 guidelines, 99
 

- all SQL developers, 102-106
- COBOL developers, 99-102
- purposes, 99

## H

hard coding, 9-10  
 hash joins, 4  
 HAVING clause, filtering records, 62  
 high-volume inserting, 73-74  
 hints, SQL statements, 91
 

- A.PKEY = A.PKEY statement, 92-93
- changing order of table processing, 95-96
- disqualification of an index choice, 93-95
- dynamic distributed SQL, 96-97
- Optimize for Row 1 statement, 91-92

Histogram statistics, 12, 116  
 Host Declared Variables fields, 9  
 host variables, 101
 

- define to match columns datatypes, 6
- hard coding versus, 9-10

 hybrid joins, 4, 127

## I

IBM Data Studio tool, 116  
 IBM Data Studio Visual Explain tool, 128-129  
 In list predicates, 77  
 in-memory tables, 78-79  
 In subqueries, 5-6  
 IFNULL function, 22  
 INCLUDE option, 89  
 Index on Expression, 3, 63-64  
 index only processing, 62-63

indexable predicates, 127  
 indexes
 

- clustering, 47-48, 125
- disqualification of a choice, 93-95
- file maintenance, 27
- implementation of good index design, 19-20
- includes, 89
- lookaside, 126

 indicators, extended (V10), 87-88  
 inner joins, 127  
 input streams, 75-76  
 Insert statements
 

- arrays, 39-40
- high-volume inserting, 73-74
- with Select statements, 37-38

 insufficient statistics, 115-116  
 INTERSECT statements, 9

## J-K

joins, 4
 

- defined, 127
- hybrid, 127
- merge scan, 127
- nested loop, 127
- outer, 128
- outer join logic, 51
- processing, 4
- subqueries versus, 71

## L

labeled duration, 73  
 leading index columns, 61-62  
 Like statements, 46, 105  
 limiting the result set, 53  
 List Prefetch, 127  
 literal replacement, 24  
 LOAD utility, mass inserts, 54  
 lock avoidance, 75, 82-83  
 Lock Table statements, 32-33  
 locking isolation levels, 28-30



## M

- maintenance, table and index files, 27
- mass deletes, 54
- mass inserts, 54
- materialization
  - common table expressions, 56
  - nested table expressions, 55
  - views, 55
- materialized query tables (MQTs), 35-37
- mathematics, removal from predicate
  - columns, 3-4
- Max values, null possibilities, 21-22
- merge scan joins, 4, 127
- MERGE statements, 66-68
- Min values, null possibilities, 21-22
- minimizing SQL requests, 11
- mode levels, 72
- monitoring tools, 18-19
- MQTs (materialized query tables), 35-37
- multiple distincts, 45
- multiple-row Delete, 42
- multiple-row Fetch, 38-39
- multiple-row Insert, 39-40
- multiple-row Update, 40-41
- multiple subqueries, streamlining, 16

## N

- nested loop joins, 4, 127
- nested table expressions, 55
- New Function mode, 72
- NOFOR precompile option, 68-69
- non-column expressions, 20-21
- noncorrelated subqueries, 6
- Not Exists logic, 51-52
- Not logic, 26
- nulls
  - areas nulls can occur, 25
  - Min and Max values, 21-22
  - null processing, 30-31

## O

- OLTP front-end processing, 33-34
- ON COMMIT DROP enhancement, 45
- opening cursors, minimizing execution, 25-26
- optimistic locking, 65-66
- optimization. *See* performance improvement
- Optimize For n Rows clause, 54
- Optimize for Row 1 statement, 91-92
- OR logic, 6-7
- order
  - In list, 77
  - predicates, 15-16
  - table processing, 95-96
  - tables, 49-50
- Order By, sort avoidance, 71
- Order By clause, functions, 72
- outer join logic, 51
- outer joins, 128

## P

- parallel processing, 57-58
- performance improvement, 1-2
  - aggregate functions, 58
  - backward index scanning, 46
  - block fetching, 22
  - Boolean term predicates, 69
  - business temporal data support, 85-86
  - case logic, 71-72
  - catchall SQL statements, 79
  - clustering indexes, 47-48
  - combining predicates, 80
  - commit and restart strategies, 19
  - common causes for poor performance, 1
  - correlated subqueries, 17
  - correlation IDs, 26-27
  - cursor processing, 27-28
  - data compression, 56-57

- date arithmetic, 73
- declared temporary tables, 76
- direct row access, 58-60
- Distinct feature, 4-5, 45
- dynamic caching, 81-82
- dynamic SQL statement caching, 23-24
- enhanced DISCARD
  - capabilities, 54
- execution of necessary SQL statements, 78
- Exists subqueries, 5-6
- Explain tool, 17-18
- expressions and column functions, 79
- extended indicators, 87-88
- Fetch First and Order by within subqueries, 65
- filtering logic, 21
- functions in Order By clause, 72
- Generate\_Unique function, 76
- Get Diagnostics statement, 77
- global temporary tables (GTTs), 13-14
- Group By expressions, 48
- hard coding versus host variables, 9-10
- high-volume inserting, 73-74
- host variables, 6
- implementation of good index design, 19-20
- in-memory tables, 78-79
- In subqueries, 5-6
- index includes, 89
- index on expression, 63-64
- index only processing, 62-63
- initial steps in tuning queries, 117-119
- Insert with Select statements, 37-38
- joins over subqueries, 71
- Like statements, 46
- limiting the result set, 53
- LOAD utility, 54
- lock avoidance, 75, 82-83
- Lock Table statements, 32-33
- locking isolation levels, 28-30
- maintaining table and index files, 27
- materialization, 55-56
- MERGE statement, 66-68
- minimizing execution of open and close cursors, 25-26
- minimizing SQL requests, 11
- monitoring tools, 18-19
- MQTs (materialized query tables), 35-37
- multiple-row Delete, 42
- multiple-row Fetch, 38-39
- multiple-row Insert, 39-40
- multiple-row Update, 40-41
- multiple subqueries, 16
- NOFOR precompile option, 68-69
- non-column expressions, 20-21
- Not Exists logic, 51-52
- Not logic, 26
- null processing, 30-31
- nullable columns, 25
- OLTP front-end processing, 33-34
- ON COMMIT DROP
  - enhancement, 45
- optimistic locking, 65-66
- OR logic, 6-7
- ordering In list, 77
- outer join logic, 51
- parallel processing, 57-58
- predicate columns, 2-4
- predicate sequence, 15-16
- predicates involving Min and Max, 21-22
- program with performance in mind, 31-32
- ranking functions, 86-87
- record filtering, 62
- redundant predicates, 80-81
- REOPT ONCE/REOPT AUTO, 43
- REOPT VARS/REOPT ALWAYS, 43-44

- rewriting range predicates as
  - between predicates, 12
- Runstats utility, 8-9
- scalar fullselects, 42-43
- scalar functions, 32
- scrollable cursors, 34-35
- Select \*, 24-25
- Select Into using Order By, 69
- sort avoidance with Order By, 71
- sorting input streams, 75-76
- sorts, 53
- specification of the leading index
  - column, 61-62
- SQL hints, 91-97
- SQL INSERT/SQL UPDATE, 23
- stage 1 versus stage 2 predicates, 14-15
- stored procedures, 52-53
- table order, 49-50
- tablespace scans, 48-49
- temporal data support, 83-84
- testing queries, 60-61
- timestamp precision, 88
- transitive closure coding, 70
- Truncate statement, 64
- understanding DB2 versions, 72-73
- UNION ALL in place of UNION, 9
- unnecessary sorting, 79
- Update or Delete with Select statement, 77-78
- VOLATILE tables, 44-45
- With Return to Client, 89-90

positioned updates, 27

predicates

- Boolean term, 69
- categories, 14
- code only columns needed, 4
- combining, 80
- indexable, 127
- Min and Max values, 21-22
- optimal sequence, 15-16
- removal of mathematics from columns, 3-4
- removal of scalar functions from columns, 2-3

- rewrite examples, 121-122
  - stage 1 versus stage 2, 14-15
- Prepare statement, 116
- procedural programming, 32
- program walkthroughs, 107-109
- project management, SQL standards and guidelines, 99
  - all SQL developers, 102-106
  - COBOL developers, 99-102
  - purposes, 99

## Q-R

- queries, testing, 60-61
- Query CP parallelism, 58
- Query I/O parallelism, 58
- range predicates, 12
- Rank function, 86
- ranking functions, 86-87
- RDBMS (relational database management systems), 1
- RDS (relational data services), 14
- Read Stability (RS) locking isolation level, 28-29
- readability, correlation IDs, 26-27
- record filtering, 62
- redundant predicates, 80-81
- relational data services (RDS), 14
- relational database management systems (RDBMS), 1
- relational programming, 32
- REOPT ALWAYS (static SQL), 43-44
- REOPT AUTO (dynamic SQL), 43
- REOPT bind parameter, 10
- REOPT ONCE (dynamic SQL), 43
- REOPT VARS (static SQL), 43-44
- REORG utility, 27
- Repeatable Read (RR) locking isolation level, 28-29
- residual predicates, 14
- response time, MQTs (materialized query tables), 35-37
- restart strategies, 19
- result sets, limiting, 53

rewriting predicates, 12, 121-122  
 RID function, 60  
 ROWID datatype, 58-59  
 ROWSET positioning, 28  
 RR (Repeatable Read) locking isolation level, 28-29  
 RS (Read Stability) locking isolation level, 28-29  
 runstats, 115-116  
 Runstats utility, 8-9, 116

## S

scalar fullselects, 42-43  
 scalar functions, 2-3, 32  
 scrollable cursors, 34-35  
 search queries, 80-81  
 Select \*, 24-25, 100  
 Select Count(\*) statements, 111-113  
 Select Into using Order By, 69  
 Select statements  
   Update and Delete, 77-78  
   with Insert statements, 37-38  
 sequence, predicates, 15-16  
 share locks, 29  
 SKIP LOCKED DATA, 75  
 sorts, 4  
   avoidance with Order By, 71  
   column selection, 53  
   input streams, 75-76  
   UNION ALL in place of UNION, 9  
   unnecessary sorting, 79  
 SQL INSERT, 23  
 SQL requests, 11  
 SQL Select Count(\*) statements, 111-113  
 SQL statements  
   catchall, 79  
   dynamic caching, 23-24  
   execution of necessary statements only, 78  
   hints, 91-97  
   SKIP LOCKED DATA, 75  
 SQL UPDATE, 23  
 stage 1 predicates, 14-15  
 stage 2 predicates, 14-15  
 standards, 99  
   all SQL developers, 102-106  
   COBOL developers, 99-102  
   purposes, 99  
 star joins, 4  
 static SQL, 43-44  
 statistics  
   frequency value, 126  
   runstats, 115-116  
   Runstats utility, 8-9  
 stored procedures, 52-53  
 streamlining multiple subqueries, 16  
 subqueries  
   correlated, 17  
   Exists, 5-6  
   Fetch First and Order by, 65  
   In, 5-6  
   joins versus, 71  
   Min and Max values, 21-22  
   streamlining multiple subqueries, 16  
 subsystems, 125  
 SYSIBM.SYSCOLDIST catalog table, 116  
 SYSPLEX parallelism, 58  
 systems, 125

## T

tables  
   files, 27  
   order, 49-50  
   processing, 95-96  
   Runstats utility, 8-9  
 tablespace scans, 48-49  
 temporal data support, 83-86  
 testing queries, 60-61  
 timestamp precision, 88  
 transitive closure, 122  
 transitive closure coding, 70  
 Truncate statements, 64

## U

Uncommitted Read (UR) locking isolation level, 28-30  
 UNION ALL, 9

- unnecessary sorting, 79
- Update clause (Select statement), 77-78
- Update statements
  - arrays, 40-41
  - cursor processing, 27-28
- UR (Uncommitted Read) locking isolation level, 28-30

## **V**

- V10
  - business temporal data support, 85-86
  - extended indicators, 87-88
  - index includes, 89
  - literal replacement, 24
  - ranking functions, 86-87
  - temporal data support, 83-84
  - timestamp precision, 88
  - With Return to Client, 89-90
- VALUE function, 22
- versions of DB2, 72-73
- Visual Explain tool, 15, 128-129
- VOLATILE tables, 44-45

## **W-Z**

- walkthroughs (program), 107-109
- WHERE clauses, 61-62
- With Return to Client (V10), 89-90