Chapter 5

The Relational Data Model and Relational Database Constraints
Chapter Outline

- Relational Model Concepts
- Relational Model Constraints and Relational Database Schemas
- Update Operations and Dealing with Constraint Violations
Relational Model Concepts

- The relational Model of Data is based on the concept of a Relation
  - The strength of the relational approach to data management comes from the formal foundation provided by the theory of relations
- We review the essentials of the formal relational model in this chapter
- In practice, there is a standard model based on SQL – this is described in Chapters 8 and 9
- Note: There are several important differences between the formal model and the practical model, as we shall see
Relational Model Concepts

- A Relation is a mathematical concept based on the ideas of sets

- The model was first proposed by Dr. E.F. Codd of IBM Research in 1970 in the following paper:
  - "A Relational Model for Large Shared Data Banks," Communications of the ACM, June 1970

- The above paper caused a major revolution in the field of database management and earned Dr. Codd the coveted ACM Turing Award
Informal Definitions

- Informally, a relation looks like a table of values.
- A relation typically contains a set of rows.
- The data elements in each row represent certain facts that correspond to a real-world entity or relationship
  - *In the formal model, rows are called tuples*
- Each column has a column header that gives an indication of the meaning of the data items in that column
  - *In the formal model, the column header is called an attribute name (or just attribute)*
Example of a Relation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ssn</th>
<th>Home_phone</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Office_phone</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gpa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Bayer</td>
<td>305-61-2435</td>
<td>373-1616</td>
<td>2918 Bluebonnet Lane</td>
<td>NULL</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chung-cha Kim</td>
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<td>125 Kirby Road</td>
<td>NULL</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>422-11-2320</td>
<td>NULL</td>
<td>3452 Elgin Road</td>
<td>749-1253</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>376-9821</td>
<td>265 Lark Lane</td>
<td>749-6492</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Benson</td>
<td>533-69-1238</td>
<td>839-8461</td>
<td>7384 Fontana Lane</td>
<td>NULL</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 5.1**
The attributes and tuples of a relation STUDENT.
Informal Definitions

- **Key of a Relation:**
  - *Each row has a value of a data item (or set of items) that uniquely identifies that row in the table*  
    - Called the *key*
  - *In the STUDENT table, SSN is the key*

- Sometimes row-ids or sequential numbers are assigned as keys to identify the rows in a table  
  - Called *artificial key or surrogate key*
Formal Definitions - Schema

- The **Schema** (or description) of a Relation:
  - Denoted by \( R(A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_n) \)
  - \( R \) is the **name** of the relation
  - The **attributes** of the relation are \( A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_n \)

- Example:
  CUSTOMER (Cust-id, Cust-name, Address, Phone#)
  - CUSTOMER is the relation name
  - Defined over the four attributes: Cust-id, Cust-name, Address, Phone#

- Each attribute has a **domain** or a set of valid values.
  - For example, the domain of Cust-id is 6 digit numbers.
Formal Definitions - Tuple

- A **tuple** is an ordered set of values (enclosed in angled brackets ‘< … >’)
- Each value is derived from an appropriate *domain*.
- A row in the CUSTOMER relation is a 4-tuple and would consist of four values, for example:
  - `<632895, "John Smith", "101 Main St. Atlanta, GA  30332", 
    "(404) 894-2000">`
  - *This is called a 4-tuple as it has 4 values*
  - *A tuple (row) in the CUSTOMER relation.*
- A relation is a **set** of such tuples (rows)
Formal Definitions - Domain

- **A domain** has a logical definition:
  - **Example:** “USA_phone_numbers” are the set of 10 digit phone numbers valid in the U.S.

- A domain also has a data-type or a format defined for it.
  - *The USA_phone_numbers may have a format: (ddd)ddd-dddd where each d is a decimal digit.*
  - *Dates have various formats such as year, month, date formatted as yyyy-mm-dd, or as dd mm, yyyy etc.*

- The attribute name designates the role played by a domain in a relation:
  - *Used to interpret the meaning of the data elements corresponding to that attribute*
  - **Example:** The domain Date may be used to define two attributes named “Invoice-date” and “Payment-date” with different meanings
Formal Definitions - State

- The **relation state** is a subset of the Cartesian product of the domains of its attributes
  - *each domain contains the set of all possible values the attribute can take.*
- Example: attribute Cust-name is defined over the domain of character strings of maximum length 25
  - *dom(Cust-name) is varchar(25)*
- The role these strings play in the CUSTOMER relation is that of the *name of a customer.*
Formal Definitions - Summary

- Formally,
  - Given $R(A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_n)$
  - $r(R) \subseteq \text{dom}(A_1) \times \text{dom}(A_2) \times \ldots \times \text{dom}(A_n)$
  - $R(A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_n)$ is the **schema** of the relation
  - $R$ is the **name** of the relation
  - $A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_n$ are the **attributes** of the relation
  - $r(R)$: a specific **state** (or "value" or “population”) of relation $R$ – this is a **set of tuples** (rows)
    - $r(R) = \{t_1, t_2, \ldots, t_n\}$ where each $t_i$ is an $n$-tuple
    - $t_i = <v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n>$ where each $v_j$ element-of $\text{dom}(A_j)$
Formal Definitions - Example

- Let $R(A_1, A_2)$ be a relation schema:
  - Let $\text{dom}(A_1) = \{0, 1\}$
  - Let $\text{dom}(A_2) = \{a, b, c\}$

- Then: $\text{dom}(A_1) \times \text{dom}(A_2)$ is all possible combinations:
  \[ \{<0,a>, <0,b>, <0,c>, <1,a>, <1,b>, <1,c> \} \]

- The relation state $r(R) \subseteq \text{dom}(A_1) \times \text{dom}(A_2)$
- For example: $r(R)$ could be \{<0,a>, <0,b>, <1,c> \}
  - this is one possible state (or “population” or “extension”) $r$ of the relation $R$, defined over $A_1$ and $A_2$.
  - It has three 2-tuples: <0,a>, <0,b>, <1,c>
## Definition Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal Terms</th>
<th>Formal Terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column Header</td>
<td>Attribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All possible Column Values</td>
<td>Domain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row</td>
<td>Tuple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table Definition</td>
<td>Schema of a Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Populated Table</td>
<td>State of the Relation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example – A relation STUDENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ssn</th>
<th>Home_phone</th>
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Figure 5.1
The attributes and tuples of a relation STUDENT.
Characteristics Of Relations

- Ordering of tuples in a relation \( r(R) \):
  - \textit{The tuples are not considered to be ordered, even though they appear to be in the tabular form.}

- Ordering of attributes in a relation schema \( R \) (and of values within each tuple):
  - \textit{We will consider the attributes in } \( R(A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_n) \) \textit{and the values in } \( t=<v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n> \) \textit{to be ordered}.
    - (However, a more general alternative definition of relation does not require this ordering).
Same state as previous Figure (but with different order of tuples)

**Figure 5.2**
The relation \textit{STUDENT} from Figure 5.1 with a different order of tuples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ssn</th>
<th>Home_phone</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Office_phone</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gpa</th>
</tr>
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<td>19</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics Of Relations

- **Values in a tuple:**
  - *All values are considered atomic (indivisible).*
  - *Each value in a tuple must be from the domain of the attribute for that column*
    - If tuple \( t = \langle v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n \rangle \) is a tuple (row) in the relation state \( r \) of \( R(A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_n) \)
      - Then each \( v_i \) must be a value from \( \text{dom}(A_i) \)
  - *A special null value is used to represent values that are unknown or inapplicable to certain tuples.*
Characteristics Of Relations

- Notation:
  - *We refer to component values of a tuple t by:*
    - $t[A_i]$ or $t.A_i$
    - This is the value $v_i$ of attribute $A_i$ for tuple $t$
  - *Similarly, $t[A_u, A_v, \ldots, A_w]$ refers to the subtuple of $t$ containing the values of attributes $A_u, A_v, \ldots, A_w$, respectively in $t$*
Relational Integrity Constraints

- Constraints are **conditions** that must hold on all valid relation states.
- There are three *main types* of constraints in the relational model:
  - **Key** constraints
  - **Entity integrity** constraints
  - **Referential integrity** constraints
- Another implicit constraint is the **domain** constraint
  - Every value in a tuple must be from the domain of its attribute (or it could be **null**, if allowed for that attribute)
Key Constraints

- **Superkey** of R:
  - *Is a set of attributes SK of R with the following condition:*
    - No two tuples in any valid relation state r(R) will have the same value for SK
    - That is, for any distinct tuples t1 and t2 in r(R), t1[SK] \( \neq \) t2[SK]
    - This condition must hold in *any valid state* r(R)

- **Key** of R:
  - A *"minimal" superkey*
  - *That is, a key is a superkey K such that removal of any attribute from K results in a set of attributes that is not a superkey (does not possess the superkey uniqueness property)*
Key Constraints (continued)

- Example: Consider the CAR relation schema:
  - CAR(State, Reg#, SerialNo, Make, Model, Year)
  - CAR has two keys:
    - Key1 = {State, Reg#}
    - Key2 = {SerialNo}
  - Both are also superkeys of CAR
  - {SerialNo, Make} is a superkey but not a key.

- In general:
  - Any key is a superkey (but not vice versa)
  - Any set of attributes that includes a key is a superkey
  - A minimal superkey is also a key
Key Constraints (continued)

- If a relation has several **candidate keys**, one is chosen arbitrarily to be the **primary key**.
  - The primary key attributes are **underlined**.
- Example: Consider the CAR relation schema:
  - CAR(State, Reg#, **SerialNo**, Make, Model, Year)
  - We chose SerialNo as the primary key
- The primary key value is used to **uniquely identify** each tuple in a relation
  - Provides the tuple identity
- Also used to **reference** the tuple from another tuple
  - General rule: Choose as primary key the smallest of the candidate keys (in terms of size)
  - Not always applicable – choice is sometimes subjective
CAR table with two candidate keys – LicenseNumber chosen as Primary Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>License_number</th>
<th>Engine_serial_number</th>
<th>Make</th>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Texas ABC-739</td>
<td>A69352</td>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>Mustang</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida TVP-347</td>
<td>B43696</td>
<td>Oldsmobile</td>
<td>Cutlass</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York MPO-22</td>
<td>X83554</td>
<td>Oldsmobile</td>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California 432-TFY</td>
<td>C43742</td>
<td>Mercedes</td>
<td>190-D</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California RSK-629</td>
<td>Y82935</td>
<td>Toyota</td>
<td>Camry</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas RSK-629</td>
<td>U028365</td>
<td>Jaguar</td>
<td>XJS</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relational Database Schema

- **Relational Database Schema:**
  - A set $S$ of relation schemas that belong to the same database.
  - $S$ is the name of the whole database schema
  - $S = \{R1, R2, \ldots, Rn\}$
  - $R1, R2, \ldots, Rn$ are the names of the individual relation schemas within the database $S$

- Following slide shows a COMPANY database schema with 6 relation schemas
### COMPANY Database Schema

#### EMPLOYEE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fname</th>
<th>Minit</th>
<th>Lname</th>
<th>Ssn</th>
<th>Bdate</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Super_ssn</th>
<th>Dno</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### DEPARTMENT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dname</th>
<th>Dnumber</th>
<th>Mgr_ssn</th>
<th>Mgr_start_date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### DEPT_LOCATIONS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dnumber</th>
<th>Dlocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### PROJECT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pname</th>
<th>Pnumber</th>
<th>Plocation</th>
<th>Dnum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### WORKS_ON
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essn</th>
<th>Pno</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### DEPENDENT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essn</th>
<th>Dependent_name</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Bdate</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Figure 5.5*
Schema diagram for the COMPANY relational database schema.
Entity Integrity

- **Entity Integrity:**
  - The primary key attributes PK of each relation schema R in S cannot have null values in any tuple of r(R).
    - This is because primary key values are used to identify the individual tuples.
    - t[PK] ≠ null for any tuple t in r(R)
    - If PK has several attributes, null is not allowed in any of these attributes
  - Note: Other attributes of R may be constrained to disallow null values, even though they are not members of the primary key.
Referential Integrity

- A constraint involving two relations
  - The previous constraints involve a single relation.
- Used to specify a relationship among tuples in two relations:
  - The referencing relation and the referenced relation.
Referential Integrity

- Tuples in the **referencing relation** $R_1$ have attributes $FK$ (called **foreign key** attributes) that reference the primary key attributes $PK$ of the **referenced relation** $R_2$.
  - A tuple $t_1$ in $R_1$ is said to **reference** a tuple $t_2$ in $R_2$ if $t_1[FK] = t_2[PK]$.

- A referential integrity constraint can be displayed in a relational database schema as a directed arc from $R_1.FK$ to $R_2$. 
Referential Integrity (or foreign key) Constraint

- **Statement of the constraint**
  - The value in the foreign key column (or columns) FK of the referencing relation R1 can be either:
    - (1) a value of an existing primary key value of a corresponding primary key PK in the referenced relation R2, or
    - (2) a null.
  - In case (2), the FK in R1 should **not** be a part of its own primary key.
Displaying a relational database schema and its constraints

- Each relation schema can be displayed as a row of attribute names.
- The name of the relation is written above the attribute names.
- The primary key attribute (or attributes) will be underlined.
- A foreign key (referential integrity) constraint is displayed as a directed arc (arrow) from the foreign key attributes to the referenced table.
  - Can also point the primary key of the referenced relation for clarity.
- Next slide shows the COMPANY relational schema diagram.
Referential Integrity Constraints for COMPANY database

Figure 5.7
Referential integrity constraints displayed on the COMPANY relational database schema.
Other Types of Constraints

- **Semantic Integrity Constraints:**
  - Based on application semantics and cannot be expressed by the model per se
  - Example: “the max. no. of hours per employee for all projects he or she works on is 56 hrs per week”

- A **constraint specification** language may have to be used to express these

- SQL-99 allows triggers and **ASSERTIONS** to express for some of these
Populated database state

- Each *relation* will have many tuples in its current relation state
- The *relational database state* is a union of all the individual relation states
- Whenever the database is changed, a new state arises
- Basic operations for changing the database:
  - *INSERT* a new tuple in a relation
  - *DELETE* an existing tuple from a relation
  - *MODIFY* an attribute of an existing tuple
- Next slide shows an example state for the COMPANY database
Populated database state for COMPANY

**Figure 5.6**  
One possible database state for the COMPANY relational database schema.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPLOYEE</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frame</td>
<td>Mint</td>
<td>Lname</td>
<td>Ssn</td>
<td>Bdate</td>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>123456789</td>
<td>1965-01-09</td>
<td>731 Fondren, Houston, TX</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Wong</td>
<td>333445555</td>
<td>1955-12-08</td>
<td>838 Voss, Houston, TX</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alicia</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>Zelaya</td>
<td>999887777</td>
<td>1968-01-19</td>
<td>3321 Castle, Spring, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jennifer</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Wallace</td>
<td>987654321</td>
<td>1941-06-20</td>
<td>291 Berry, Bellaire, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramesh</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>Nayaran</td>
<td>666884444</td>
<td>1962-09-15</td>
<td>975 Fire Oak, Humble, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joyce</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>453453453</td>
<td>1972-07-31</td>
<td>5631 Rice, Houston, TX</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmad</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Jabbar</td>
<td>997879879</td>
<td>1969-03-29</td>
<td>980 Dallas, Houston, TX</td>
<td>M</td>
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<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Borg</td>
<td>888665555</td>
<td>1937-11-10</td>
<td>450 Stone, Houston, TX</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| DEPARTMENT |  |  |  |  |
|-------------|---|---|---|
| Dname       | Dnumber | Mgr_ssn | Mgr_start_date |
| Research    | 5       | 333445555 | 1988-05-22    |
| Administration | 4       | 987654321 | 1995-01-01    |
| Headquarters | 1       | 888665555 | 1981-06-19    |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORKS_ON</th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
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Update Operations on Relations

- INSERT a tuple.
- DELETE a tuple.
- MODIFY a tuple.
- Integrity constraints should not be violated by the update operations.
- Several update operations may have to be grouped together.
- Updates may propagate to cause other updates automatically. This may be necessary to maintain integrity constraints.
In case of integrity violation, several actions can be taken:

- Cancel the operation that causes the violation (RESTRICT or REJECT option)
- Perform the operation but inform the user of the violation
- Trigger additional updates so the violation is corrected (CASCADE option, SET NULL option)
- Execute a user-specified error-correction routine
Possible violations for each operation

- INSERT may violate any of the constraints:
  - **Domain constraint:**
    - if one of the attribute values provided for the new tuple is not of the specified attribute domain
  - **Key constraint:**
    - if the value of a key attribute in the new tuple already exists in another tuple in the relation
  - **Referential integrity:**
    - if a foreign key value in the new tuple references a primary key value that does not exist in the referenced relation
  - **Entity integrity:**
    - if the primary key value is null in the new tuple
Possible violations for each operation

- **DELETE** may violate only referential integrity:
  - *If the primary key value of the tuple being deleted is referenced from other tuples in the database*
  - Can be remedied by several actions: **RESTRICT**, **CASCADE**, **SET NULL** (see Chapter 8 for more details)
    - **RESTRICT** option: reject the deletion
    - **CASCADE** option: propagate the new primary key value into the foreign keys of the referencing tuples
    - **SET NULL** option: set the foreign keys of the referencing tuples to **NULL**
  - *One of the above options must be specified during database design for each foreign key constraint*
Possible violations for each operation

- UPDATE may violate domain constraint and NOT NULL constraint on an attribute being modified
- Any of the other constraints may also be violated, depending on the attribute being updated:
  - *Updating the primary key (PK):*
    - Similar to a DELETE followed by an INSERT
    - Need to specify similar options to DELETE
  - *Updating a foreign key (FK):*
    - May violate referential integrity
  - *Updating an ordinary attribute (neither PK nor FK):*
    - Can only violate domain constraints
Summary

- Presented Relational Model Concepts
  - Definitions
  - Characteristics of relations
- Discussed Relational Model Constraints and Relational Database Schemas
  - Domain constraints’
  - Key constraints
  - Entity integrity
  - Referential integrity
- Described the Relational Update Operations and Dealing with Constraint Violations
In-Class Exercise

(Taken from Exercise 5.15)

Consider the following relations for a database that keeps track of student enrollment in courses and the books adopted for each course:

STUDENT(SSN, Name, Major, Bdate)

COURSE(Course#, Cname, Dept)

ENROLL(SSN, Course#, Quarter, Grade)

BOOK_ADOPTION(Course#, Quarter, Book_ISBN)

TEXT(Book_ISBN, Book_Title, Publisher, Author)

Draw a relational schema diagram specifying the foreign keys for this schema.