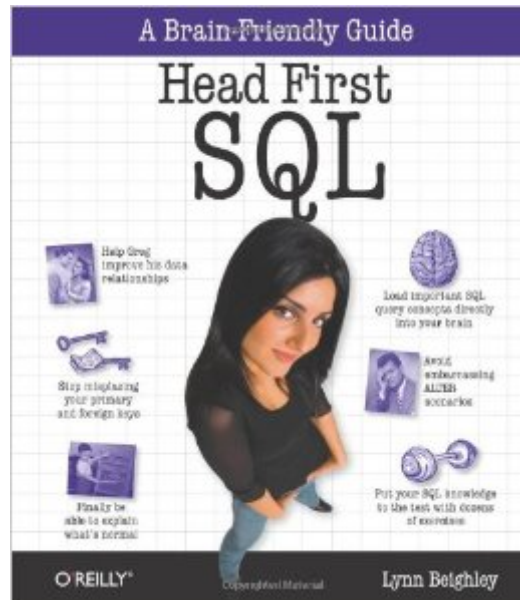


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# Head First SQL: Your Brain On SQL -- A Learner's Guide



## Synopsis

Is your data dragging you down? Are your tables all tangled up? Well we've got the tools to teach you just how to wrangle your databases into submission. Using the latest research in neurobiology, cognitive science, and learning theory to craft a multi-sensory SQL learning experience, Head First SQL has a visually rich format designed for the way your brain works, not a text-heavy approach that puts you to sleep. Maybe you've written some simple SQL queries to interact with databases. But now you want more, you want to really dig into those databases and work with your data. Head First SQL will show you the fundamentals of SQL and how to really take advantage of it. We'll take you on a journey through the language, from basic INSERT statements and SELECT queries to hardcore database manipulation with indices, joins, and transactions. We all know "Data is Power" - but we'll show you how to have "Power over your Data". Expect to have fun, expect to learn, and expect to be querying, normalizing, and joining your data like a pro by the time you're finished reading!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I haven't met a Head First/Head Rush title I didn't like, and this one is no exception... Head First SQL: Your Brain on SQL -- A Learner's Guide by Lynn Beighley. It's perfect for someone diving into the world of relational databases for the first time, as well as those who don't do it often enough to feel comfortable with things like normalized forms and outer joins. And along the way, you'll have

plenty of fun picking up the skills you lack/need to reinforce. Contents: Intro; Data and Tables - A Place for Everything; The SELECT Statement - Gifted Data Retrieval; DELETE and UPDATE - A Change Will Do You Good; Smart Table Design - Why Be Normal?; ALTER - Rewriting the Past; Advanced SELECT - Seeing Your Data With New Eyes; Multi-table Database Design - Outgrowing Your Table; Joins and Multi-table Operations - Can't We All Just Get Along?; Subqueries - Queries Within Queries; Outer Joins, Self Joins, and Unions - New Maneuvers; Constraints, Views, and Transactions - Too Many Cooks Spoil The Database; Security - Protecting Your Assets; The Top Ten Topics (We Didn't Cover); Try It Out For Yourself; All Your New SQL Tools. As with all Head First titles, Head First SQL sets out to engage all your senses during the learning process. Unusual diagrams, questions, exercises, and off-beat pictures are just some of the ways that the author works to grab your attention and force you down the path of learning (whether it feels like you're going down that path or not). The mixture of these techniques means that your mind doesn't really have a chance to drift off and start thinking about what you're going to have for dinner. It's this style that makes the Head First series the first one I'll recommend to people setting out to learn a new skill.

My first Head First book was Head First HTML with CSS & XHTML, and it was absolutely wonderful. Given that, I had very high hopes for Head First SQL as well, but I'm sad to say this book is very disappointing. I have two main complaints: the explanations in the book, and the typos. First off, I already studied a little SQL on my own a few months ago, mainly using websites and online tutorials. It's a fairly easy language to learn so I got pretty deep into it. I think it is for that reason only that I am able to follow along so well in Head First SQL. What I mean is, it seems to me that very little explanation is actually going on in the book. I understand the Head First method of teaching, but that doesn't have to preclude *any* kind of explanation at all. For the most part, the chapters in this book describe a bunch of different situations (Greg and his list of contacts, clowns traveling around town, donuts at different shops, etc.) and through these examples we are given a bunch of SQL queries. The problem is that only once or twice does the author actually stop to say "Ok, here is the structure of the SQL query we will use"...instead, she just throws a bunch of queries at us and I feel like I would be very lost if I hadn't already studied SQL a little bit previously. Instead of saying something like "You type the SELECT keyword, followed by your table name, followed by....." she just gives us the statement fully written. The problem I see with this is that it doesn't teach us how to construct our own. Our only real option is to pattern our own queries based on this single example she gives, rather than to know how to compose our queries from the ground up. (Sort of the whole

teach a man to fish metaphor.

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