

# Column

A column is part of a database [table](#), and is also known as an attribute or [field](#). Columns list the names of the individual fields in a table.

A column describes an atomic or indivisible basic piece of information in the database, clearly differentiated from other data, e.g. zip code (and not zip code + city). Each column is assigned a certain [data type](#), e.g. [text](#), [numeric](#), [date](#) or [blob](#). The data can also be assigned properties, such as unique, contain [check constraints](#), [autoincrements](#), computed values, restricted to minimum and maximum values etc. etc.

The screenshot shows a database application window titled 'Table: [EMPLOYEE]: Employee\_2\_1 (C:\Programme\Firebird\Firebird\_2\_1\EMPLOYEE.FDB)'. The window displays a table with 42 records. The columns are: EMP..., FIRST\_NAME, LAST\_NAME, PHONE\_EXT, HIRE\_DATE, DEPT..., JOB\_C..., JOB\_GR..., JOB\_COUNT..., SALARY, and FULL\_NAME. The 'LAST\_NAME' column is highlighted with a red box. The data in the table is as follows:

EMP...	FIRST_NAME	LAST_NAME	PHONE_EXT	HIRE_DATE	DEPT...	JOB_C...	JOB_GR...	JOB_COUNT...	SALARY	FULL_NAME
14	Stewart	Hall	227	06.04.1990 12:00 am	900	Finan		3 USA	69.482,63	Hall, Stewart
15	Katherine	Young	231	06.14.1990 12:00 am	623	Mngr		3 USA	67.241,25	Young, Katherine
20	Chris	Papadopoulos	887	01.01.1990 12:00 am	671	Mngr		3 USA	89.655,00	Papadopoulos, Chr
24	Pete	Fisher	888	09.12.1990 12:00 am	671	Eng		3 USA	81.810,19	Fisher, Pete
28	Ann	Bennet	5	02.01.1991 12:00 am	120	Admin		5 England	22.935,00	Bennet, Ann
29	Roger	De Souza	288	02.18.1991 12:00 am	623	Eng		3 USA	69.482,63	De Souza, Roger
34	Janet	Baldwin	2	03.21.1991 12:00 am	110	Sales		3 USA	61.637,81	Baldwin, Janet
36	Roger	Reeves	6	04.25.1991 12:00 am	120	Sales		3 England	33.620,63	Reeves, Roger
37	Willie	Stansbury	7	04.25.1991 12:00 am	120	Eng		4 England	39.224,06	Stansbury, Willie
44	Leslie	Phong	216	06.03.1991 12:00 am	623	Eng		4 USA	56.034,38	Phong, Leslie
45	Ashok	Ramanathan	209	08.01.1991 12:00 am	621	Eng		3 USA	80.689,50	Ramanathan, Asho
46	Walter	Steadman	210	08.09.1991 12:00 am	900	CFO		1 USA	116.100,00	Steadman, Walter
52	Carol	Nordstrom	420	10.02.1991 12:00 am	180	PRel		4 USA	42.742,50	Nordstrom, Carol
61	Luke	Leung	3	02.18.1992 12:00 am	110	SRep		4 USA	68.805,00	Leung, Luke
65	Sue Anne	O'Brien	877	03.23.1992 12:00 am	670	Admin		5 USA	31.275,00	O'Brien, Sue Anne
71	Jennifer M.	Burbank	289	04.15.1992 12:00 am	622	Eng		3 USA	53.167,50	Burbank, Jennifer M
72	Claudia	Sutherland	crub	04.20.1992 12:00 am	140	SRep		4 Canada	100.914,00	Sutherland, Claudi
83	Dana	Bishop	290	06.01.1992 12:00 am	621	Eng		3 USA	62.550,00	Bishop, Dana
85	Mary S.	MacDonald	477	06.01.1992 12:00 am	100	VP		2 USA	111.262,50	MacDonald, Mary S
94	Randy	Williams	892	08.08.1992 12:00 am	672	Mngr		4 USA	56.295,00	Williams, Randy
105	Oliver H.	Bender	255	10.08.1992 12:00 am	000	CEO		1 USA	212.850,00	Bender, Oliver H.
107	Kevin	Cook	894	02.01.1993 12:00 am	670	Dir		2 USA	111.262,50	Cook, Kevin

Columns are defined under the *Field Definition* in the [Create Table](#) dialog or [Table Editor](#), or their definition can be based on [domains](#). They can, of course, also be defined directly in the [SQL Editor](#). Each defined column has the following syntax:

```
ColumnName <data_type>
DEFAULT < Default value > | NULL | USER NOT NULL
CONSTRAINT <constraint name> <constraint def>
COLLATE <collation sequence>;
```

In a relational database the physical sequence of rows and columns is irrelevant.

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