

SUBSTRING()

Available in: [DSQL](#), [PSQL](#)

Added in: 1.0

Changed in: 2.0

Description

Returns a [string's](#) substring starting at the given position, either to the end of the string or with a given length.

Result type: [\(VAR\)CHAR\(n\)](#)

Syntax

```
SUBSTRING (<str> FROM startpos [FOR length])
```

str ::= a string expression

pos ::= an integer expression

len ::= an integer expression

This function returns the substring starting at character position [pos](#) (the first position being [1](#)). Without the optional FOR argument, it returns all the remaining characters in the [string](#). With it, it returns [len](#) characters or the remainder of the string, whichever is shorter.

Since Firebird 2.0, [SUBSTRING](#) fully supports multi-byte [character sets](#).

In Firebird 1.x, [pos](#) and [len](#) had to be [integer](#) literals. In 2.0 and above they can be any valid integer [expression](#).

The result type is [VARCHAR](#) for a [VARCHAR](#) or [BLOB](#) argument, and [CHAR](#) for a [CHAR](#) or literal argument.

The width – in characters – of the result field is always equal to the length of [str](#), regardless of [pos](#) and [len](#).

So, `substring('pinhead' from 4 for 2)` will return a [CHAR\(7\)](#) containing the string 'he'.

[SUBSTRING](#) can be used with:

- Any string, [\(var\)char](#) or text [BLOB](#) argument, regardless of its character set;
- Subtype 0 (binary) [BLOBs](#).

Example

```
insert into AbbrNames(AbbrName)
select substring(LongName from 1 for 3) from LongNames
```

Effect of [NULLs](#):

- If str is **NULL**, the function returns **NULL**.
- If str is a valid string but pos and/or len is **NULL**, the function returns **NULL** but describes the result field as non-nullable. As a result, most clients (including **isql**) will incorrectly show the result as an empty string.

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