

DBMS (Database Management System)

A collection of programs that enables you to store, modify, and extract information from a [database](#). There are many different types of DBMSs, ranging from small systems that run on personal computers to huge systems that run on mainframes. The following are examples of database applications:

- computerized library systems
- automated teller machines
- flight reservation systems
- computerized parts inventory systems

From a technical standpoint, DBMSs can differ widely. The terms relational, network, flat, and hierarchical all refer to the way a DBMS organizes information internally. The internal organization can affect how quickly and flexibly you can extract information.

Requests for information from a database are made in the form of a [query](#), which is a stylized question. For example, the query

```
SELECT ALL WHERE NAME = "SMITH" AND AGE > 35
```

requests all records in which the NAME field is SMITH and the AGE field is greater than 35. The set of rules for constructing queries is known as a query language. Different DBMSs support different query languages, although there is a semi-standardized query language called [SQL \(Structured Query Language\)](#). Sophisticated languages for managing database systems are called fourth-generation languages, or 4GLs for short.

The information from a database can be presented in a variety of formats. Most DBMSs include a report writer program that enables you to output [data](#) in the form of a report. Many DBMSs also include a graphics component that enables you to output information in the form of graphs and charts.

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