

Hot tip



Discover more MySQL built-in features in the MySQL 5.6 Reference Manual online at dev.mysql.com/doc

Making comparisons

Like PHP, MySQL has built-in operators and functions that can be used to provide fast filtration of data stored in a database. Using these is highly recommended as it is more efficient than having an SQL query retrieve all data for filtration by PHP. Comparison operators available in MySQL are listed below:

Operator:	Description:
=	Equality
!=	Inequality
<	Less than
<=	Less than or equal
>	More than
>=	More than or equal
BETWEEN min AND max	Within the range min to max
IS NULL	Is a NULL value
IS NOT NULL	Is not a NULL value

Comparison operators are used in a query with a **WHERE** clause to test if a specified condition is met. When the evaluation is **TRUE** the query will return the data, otherwise nothing will be returned.

Usefully, the built-in MySQL **NOW()** function returns the current date and time in the format YYYY-MM-DD HH:MM:SS, which provides a timestamp of when the database was accessed. Additionally, the built-in MySQL **SHA2()** cryptographic hash function allows passwords to be stored securely. This takes two arguments to specify a password and hash string length to return of either 224, 256, 384, or 512 characters.



comparison.sql

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Launch a plain text editor, such as Notepad, and create a query defining a table with five columns

```
CREATE TABLE IF NOT EXISTS items
(id INT AUTO_INCREMENT PRIMARY KEY ,
name CHAR(16) NOT NULL ,
quantity INT NOT NULL ,
pass TEXT(256) NOT NULL ,
stamp DATETIME NOT NULL
);
```