

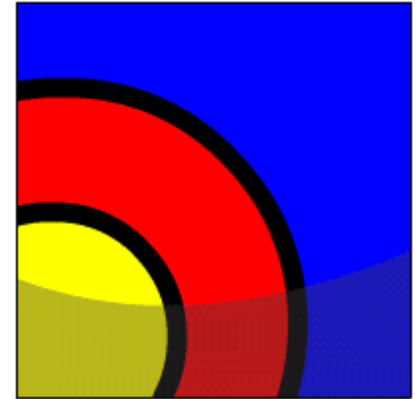
Using Scalar Data Types



What Will I Learn?

In this lesson, you will learn how to:

- Declare and use scalar data types
- Define guidelines for declaring and initializing PL/SQL variables
- Identify the benefits of anchoring data types with the `%TYPE` attribute

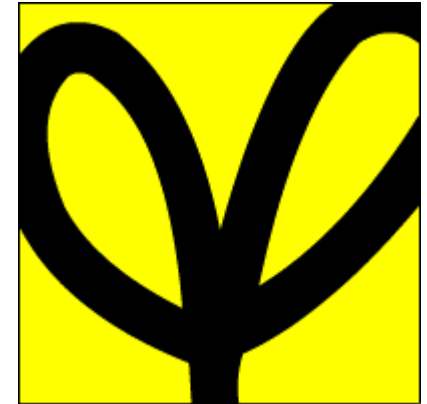




Why Learn It?

Most of the variables you define and use in PL/SQL have scalar data types.

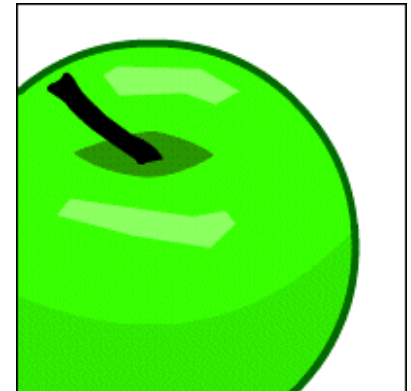
A variable can have an explicit data type, such as `VARCHAR2`, or it can automatically have the same data type as a table column in the database. You will learn the benefits of basing some variables on table columns.



Tell Me/Show Me

Declaring Character Variables

Character data types include CHAR, VARCHAR2, and LONG.



```
DECLARE
  v_emp_job          VARCHAR2(9);
  v_order_no         VARCHAR2(6);
  v_product_id       VARCHAR2(10);
  v_rpt_body_part    LONG;
  ...
```



Tell Me/Show Me

Declaring Number Variables

Number data types include NUMBER, PLS_INTEGER, BINARY_INTEGER, and BINARY_FLOAT. In the syntax, CONSTANT constrains the variable so that its value cannot change. Constants must be initialized.

INTEGER is an alias for NUMBER(38,0).

```
DECLARE
  v_dept_total_sal    NUMBER(9,2) := 0;
  v_count_loop        INTEGER := 0;
  c_tax_rate          CONSTANT NUMBER(3,2) := 8.25;
  ...
```



Tell Me/Show Me

Declaring Date Variables

Date data types include `DATE`, `TIMESTAMP`, and `TIMESTAMP WITH TIMEZONE`.

```
DECLARE
  v_orderdate          DATE := SYSDATE + 7;
  v_natl_holiday       DATE;
  v_web_sign_on_date   TIMESTAMP;
  ...
```



Tell Me/Show Me

Declaring Boolean Variables

Boolean is a data type that stores one of the three possible values used for logical calculations: TRUE, FALSE, or NULL.

```
DECLARE
  v_valid          BOOLEAN NOT NULL := TRUE;
  v_is_found       BOOLEAN := FALSE;
  v_underage       BOOLEAN;
  ...
```



Tell Me/Show Me

Declaring Boolean Variables

- Only the values `TRUE`, `FALSE`, and `NULL` can be assigned to a Boolean variable.
- Conditional expressions use the logical operators `AND` and `OR`, and the operator `NOT` to check the variable values.
- The variables always yield `TRUE`, `FALSE`, or `NULL`.
- You can use arithmetic, character, and date expressions to return a Boolean value.



Tell Me/Show Me

Guidelines for Declaring and Initializing PL/SQL Variables

- Use meaningful names and follow naming conventions.
- Declare one identifier per line for better readability, code maintenance, and easier commenting.
- Use the `NOT NULL` constraint when the variable must hold a value.
- Avoid using column names as identifiers.

```
DECLARE
    country_id    CHAR(2);
BEGIN
    SELECT country_id
    INTO country_id
    FROM countries
    WHERE country_name = 'Canada';
END;
```



Tell Me/Show Me

Anchoring Variables with the %TYPE Attribute

Rather than hard-coding the data type and precision of a variable, you can use the %TYPE attribute to declare a variable according to another previously declared variable or database column.

The %TYPE attribute is most often used when the value stored in the variable is derived from a table in the database.

When you use the %TYPE attribute to declare a variable, you should prefix it with the database table and column name.



Tell Me/Show Me

%TYPE Attribute

Look at this database table and the PL/SQL block that uses it:

```
CREATE TABLE myemps (  
    emp_name          VARCHAR2(6),  
    emp_salary        NUMBER(6,2));  
  
DECLARE  
    v_emp_salary      NUMBER(6,2);  
BEGIN  
    SELECT emp_salary INTO v_emp_salary  
        FROM myemps WHERE emp_name = 'Smith';  
END;
```

This PL/SQL block stores the correct salary in the `v_emp_salary` variable. But what if the table column is altered later?



Tell Me/Show Me

`%TYPE` Attribute (continued)

The `%TYPE` attribute:

- Is used to automatically give a variable the same data type and size as:
 - A database column definition
 - Another declared variable
- Is prefixed with either of the following:
 - The database table and column
 - The name of the other declared variable



Tell Me/Show Me

Declaring Variables with the %TYPE Attribute

Syntax:

```
identifier       table.column_name%TYPE;
```

Examples:

```
...  
  v_emp_lname       employees.last_name%TYPE;  
  v_balance        NUMBER(7,2);  
  v_min_balance     v_balance%TYPE := 1000;  
...
```



Tell Me/Show Me

Advantages of the %TYPE Attribute

- You can avoid errors caused by data type mismatch or wrong precision.
- You need not change the variable declaration if the column definition changes. That is, if you have already declared some variables for a particular table without using the %TYPE attribute, then the PL/SQL block can return errors if the column for which the variable declared is altered.
- When you use the %TYPE attribute, PL/SQL determines the data type and size of the variable when the block is compiled. This ensures that such a variable is always compatible with the column that is used to populate it.



Tell Me/Show Me

%TYPE Attribute

Look again at the database table and the PL/SQL block:

```
CREATE TABLE myemps (  
    emp_name          VARCHAR2(6),  
    emp_salary        NUMBER(6,2));  
  
DECLARE  
    v_emp_salary      myemps.emp_salary%TYPE;  
BEGIN  
    SELECT emp_salary INTO v_emp_salary  
    FROM myemps WHERE emp_name = 'Smith';  
END;
```

Now the PL/SQL block continues to work correctly even if the column data type is altered later.

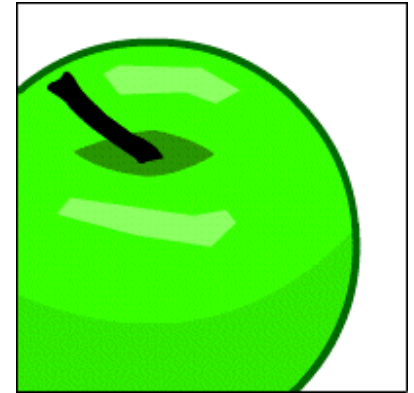
Tell Me / Show Me

Terminology

Key terms used in this lesson include:

Boolean

%TYPE

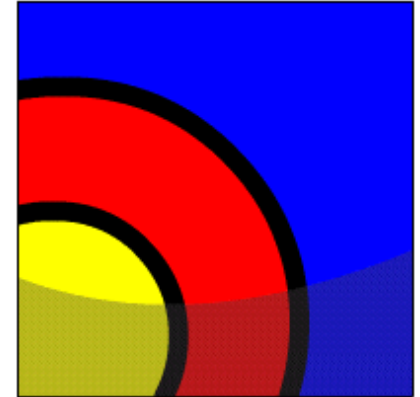




Summary

In this lesson, you have learned how to:

- Declare and use scalar data types
- Define guidelines for declaring and initializing PL/SQL variables
- Identify the benefits of anchoring data types with the `%TYPE` attribute





Try It/Solve It

This practice covers the following topics:

- Declaring and using scalar data types (character, number, date, and Boolean)
- Defining guidelines for declaring and initializing PL/SQL variables
- Identifying the benefits of anchoring data types with the `%TYPE` attribute

