

Super Basic Database Diagramming

- Databases have structure, and when you have structure, you have the need for diagrams
- But diagrams also need to be mutually understandable, and so we also have diagram standards or conventions. Common standards that apply to databases include entity-relationship (which has lots of variants) and Unified Modeling Language (UML) structural diagrams—but we can get into these later; this document is about getting you started right away

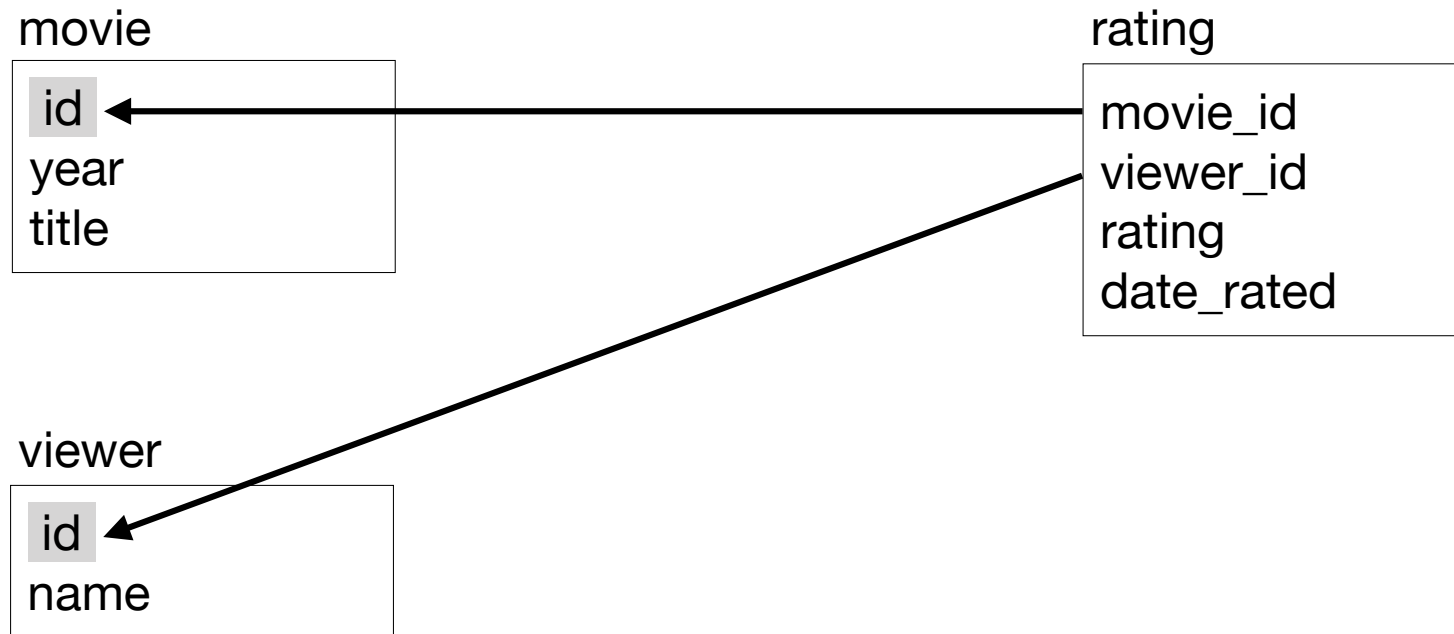
Super Basic Relational Concepts

- Relational databases are made up of tables (mathematically known as relations—thus the name “relational”)
- Tables are defined by their columns (or fields, or attributes, or properties)
- One or more of these columns may serve as a table’s key—the column(s) that uniquely identify a specific row (or record) in the table
- Tables may reference each other via these keys

Super Basic Mapping to a Diagram

- Tables are drawn as rectangles, with their names above the rectangles
- A table's columns are listed within the rectangles; optionally, the column's data type can be given
- Columns which comprise a table's key are highlighted in some way—a gray background works nicely
- Table columns which reference another table's key are drawn with arrows from the reference to the referent

The diagram below communicates the structure of a hypothetical database of movies, viewers, and ratings



Note how tables don't have to have keys (although in practice they almost always will)

That's it for now—go forth and diagram!