

Introduction to MySQL

MySQL Overview

By [Mike Chapple](#), About.com Guide

Fed up with the world of commercial software licensing? Are you looking for a stable database platform for your organization but sweating at the hefty price tags attached to mainstream products from Microsoft and Oracle? MySQL may be for you!

Once the refuge of geeky hackers, MySQL is now a well-respected product that is more than capable of commercial operation. In fact, the entire Google search engine is built upon MySQL technology!

What about features? MySQL actually supports most of the functionality you've come to expect in a commercial RDBMS. It ensures that transactions comply with the [ACID Model](#)¹, allows the building of indexes, supports standard data types, and allows for database replication, among other features. One major area where MySQL currently falls short is its lack of support for stored procedures and triggers. However, both of these features are slated for the next major release: MySQL 5.0.

If you're a heavy user of web applications, you'll be pleased to learn that MySQL meshes perfectly with the Perl Hypertext Preprocessor (PHP) dynamic web development language. If you're a Microsoft IIS user, it works quite well with Active Server Pages (ASP), as well. In fact, if your ASP code is ANSI SQL-compliant, you may be able to simply plug and play a MySQL server into your production environment very easily!

Like the popular Linux operating system, MySQL is released as open source software under the GNU Public License (GPL). In most cases, you can download, install and work with MySQL without paying a cent. There are some exceptions for those who create software built upon MySQL for resale. If you think you might fit this exception, take a look at the [terms of the MySQL commercial license](#)².

If that's enough for you to decide that you'd like to give MySQL a try, you can download a copy from [MySQL.com](#)³. That site is also a great resource for information on the MySQL platform geared toward administrators and developers alike.

Be sure to read the next page of this article for a look at installing MySQL on your system!

*This About.com page has been optimized for print. To view this page in its original form, please visit: <http://databases.about.com/od/shareware/a/mysql.htm>
©2012 About.com, Inc., a part of [The New York Times Company](#). All rights reserved.*

Links in this article:

1. <http://databases.about.com/library/weekly/aa120102a.htm>
2. <http://www.mysql.com/company/legal/licensing/commercial-license.html>
3. <http://www.mysql.com>