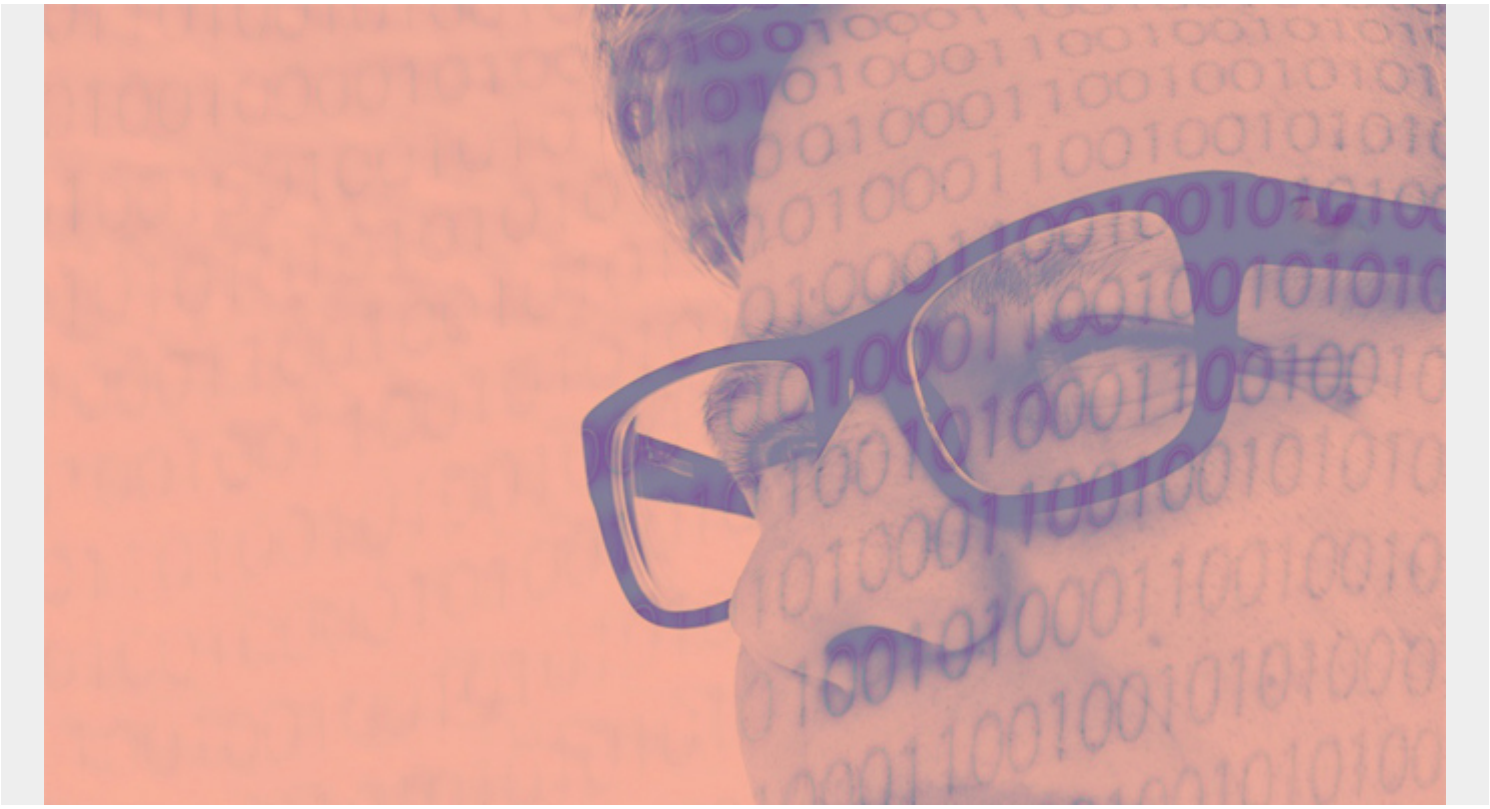
HOW TO READ IBM® SYNTAX DIAGRAMS FOR DB2 12



Read the syntax diagrams from left to right, from top to bottom, following the path of the line.

(This article is part of our Db2 Guide. Use the right-hand menu to navigate.)

```
The >>--- symbol indicates the beginning of the statement
The ---> symbol indicates that the statement syntax is continued on the next
line
The >--- symbol indicates that a statement is continued from the previous
line
The --->< symbol indicates the end of a statement
Diagrams of syntactical units other than complete statements start with the
>--- symbol and end with the ---> symbol.
```

Required items appear on the horizontal line (the main path).

```
>>__required_item_____________________________________________________________
____><
```

Optional items appear below the main path.

```
>>__required_item_____________________________________________________________
____><
        I_optional_item_I
```

If an optional item appears above the main path, that item has no effect on the execution of the statement and is used only for readability.

```
                    _optional_item_
>>__required_item__|______________|_____________________________________________
____><
```

If you can choose from two or more items, they appear vertically, in a stack. If you must choose one of the items, on item of the stack appears on the main path.

```
>>__required_item____required_choice1_____________________________________________
____><
                  |_required_choice2_|
```

If choosing one of the items is optional, the entire stack appears below the main path.

```
>>__required_item_____________________________________________________________________
____><
          |_optional_choice1_|
          |_optional_choice2_|
```

If one of the items is the default, it appears above the main path and the remaining choices are shown below.

```
                      _default_choice_
>>__required_item____|________________|_____________________________________________
____><
           |_optional_choice_|
           |_optional_choice_|
```

An arrow returning to the left, above the main line, indicates an item that can be repeated.

```
                     <________________
>>__required_item______repeatable_item_|_____________________________________________
____><
```

If the repeat arrow contains a comma, you must separate repeated items with a comma.

```
                    <_,________________
>>__required_item______repeatable_item_|_____________________________________________
____><
```

A repeat arrow above a stack indicates that you can repeat the items in the stack.

Keywords appear in uppercase (for example, FROM). They must be spelled exactly as shown. Variables appear in all lowercase letters (for example, column-name). They represent user-supplied names or values. If punctuation marks, parentheses, arithmetic operators, or other such symbols are shown, you must enter them as part of the syntax.

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