

# Create virtual databases

Create virtual databases to access, compare, recover, and report on data from previous backups of databases in your environment.

For example, you can create multiple virtual databases, at different points in time, from backups of the same live database. This strategy allows you to compare column values and schema objects from one version of the database to another version several days later without restoring the database.

You can create a virtual database by either:

- [Attaching a single backup file](#)
- [Attaching multiple backup files](#), including transaction log backups

Virtual databases can be created through the SQL VDB Console or CLI.

## To access the SQL VDB CLI:

To access the SQL VDB CLI, start the Windows Command Prompt, and then enter `sqlvdbcmd` to see which commands and options you can use. For more information about the SQL virtual database components, see the [product components](#).

## About virtual databases

A virtual database (vdb) is a patent-pending software implementation of a database that allows for data storage and retrieval like a physical database.

Because a virtual database acts like a physical database, you can access any data or object in the virtual database using T-SQL scripts, third-party applications, reporting tools, and database management tools such as Microsoft SQL Server Management Studio.

Database management tools interface with and display the virtual database as a physical database.

Each SQL Server instance can host multiple virtual databases.

## What you can do with a virtual database

Any operation that you can perform on a physical database can be performed on a virtual database. Likewise, applications that rely on getting information from this database can continue using the virtual version.

You can use the built-in query tool to execute commands on objects in this virtual database. You can also access this virtual database using Microsoft SQL Server tools, such as Management Studio, and other third-party applications. For more information, see our [Tips and tricks](#).



You can modify the data and objects in the virtual database. However, because the virtual database is based on archived data, your changes will not persist when you recreate the same virtual database later. To preserve your changes, back up the modified virtual database and then create a new virtual database using those backup files.

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