

MySQL/MariaDB Cheatsheet

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Quick reference for common MySQL and MariaDB command-line administration tasks

MySQL and MariaDB share the same client syntax for most day-to-day administration. This cheatsheet covers common commands for connecting, managing databases and users, running backups, and checking server state.

Connect and Exit

Open a SQL session and disconnect safely.

<code>mysql -u root -p</code>	Connect as root (prompt for password)
<code>mysql -u user -p -h 127.0.0.1</code>	Connect to specific host
<code>mysql -u user -p -P 3306</code>	Connect on custom port
<code>sudo mysql</code>	Login using Unix socket auth (common on Debian/Ubuntu)
<code>exit</code>	Leave MySQL/MariaDB shell

Basic SQL Checks

Run quick checks after connecting.

<code>SELECT VERSION();</code>	Show server version
<code>SHOW DATABASES;</code>	List all databases
<code>USE db_name;</code>	Switch active database
<code>SHOW TABLES;</code>	List tables in current database
<code>SHOW GRANTS FOR 'user'@'host';</code>	Show user privileges

Database Management

Create, inspect, and remove databases.

<code>CREATE DATABASE db_name;</code>	Create a database
<code>CREATE DATABASE db_name CHARACTER SET utf8mb4 COLLATE utf8mb4_unicode_ci;</code>	Create DB with charset/collation
<code>SHOW DATABASES LIKE 'db_name';</code>	Check if DB exists
<code>DROP DATABASE db_name;</code>	Delete a database
<code>SELECT SCHEMA_NAME FROM INFORMATION_SCHEMA.SCHEMATA;</code>	List schemas via information schema

User Management

Create users and manage authentication.

<code>CREATE USER 'app'@'localhost' IDENTIFIED BY 'strong_password';</code>	Create local user
<code>CREATE USER 'app'@%' IDENTIFIED BY 'strong_password';</code>	Create remote-capable user
<code>ALTER USER 'app'@'localhost' IDENTIFIED BY 'new_password';</code>	Change password
<code>DROP USER 'app'@'localhost';</code>	Delete user
<code>SELECT user, host FROM mysql.user;</code>	List users and hosts

Privileges

Grant, review, and revoke access.

<code>GRANT ALL PRIVILEGES ON db_name.* TO 'app'@'localhost';</code>	Grant full DB access
<code>GRANT SELECT,INSERT,UPDATE,DELETE ON db_name.* TO 'app'@'localhost';</code>	Grant specific privileges
<code>REVOKE ALL PRIVILEGES ON db_name.* FROM 'app'@'localhost';</code>	Remove DB privileges
<code>SHOW GRANTS FOR 'app'@'localhost';</code>	Review granted privileges
<code>FLUSH PRIVILEGES;</code>	Reload grant tables

Backup and Restore

Use `mysqldump` for exports and imports.

<code>mysqldump -u root -p db_name > db_name.sql</code>	Backup one database
<code>mysqldump -u root -p --databases db1 db2 > multi.sql</code>	Backup multiple databases
<code>mysqldump -u root -p --all-databases > all.sql</code>	Backup all databases
<code>mysql -u root -p db_name < db_name.sql</code>	Restore into existing database
<code>gunzip < db_name.sql.gz mysql -u root -p db_name</code>	Restore compressed SQL dump

Import and Export Data

Common import/export patterns.

<code>mysql -u root -p -e "SHOW DATABASES;"</code>	Run one-off SQL from shell
<code>mysql -u root -p db_name -e "SOURCE /path/file.sql"</code>	Import SQL file via client
<code>mysql -u root -p -Nse "SELECT NOW();" </code>	Non-interactive query output
<code>mysqldump -u root -p db_name table_name > table.sql</code>	Export one table
<code>mysql -u root -p db_name < table.sql</code>	Import one table dump

Service and Health Checks

Verify daemon state and open ports.

<code>systemctl status mysql</code>	Check MySQL service status
<code>systemctl status mariadb</code>	Check MariaDB service status
<code>sudo systemctl restart mysql</code>	Restart MySQL service
<code>sudo systemctl restart mariadb</code>	Restart MariaDB service
<code>ss -tulpn grep 3306</code>	Confirm server is listening

Common Troubleshooting

Quick checks for frequent connection and auth problems.

Access denied for user	Verify user/host pair and password, then check SHOW GRANTS
Can't connect to local MySQL server through socket	Check service status and socket path in config
Can't connect to MySQL server on 'host'	Confirm host/port reachability and firewall rules
Unknown database	Verify database name with SHOW DATABASES;
Restore fails on collation/charset	Ensure server supports source collation and set utf8mb4 where needed

Related Guides

Use these articles for detailed MySQL/MariaDB workflows.

How to Manage MySQL Databases and Users from the Command Line	End-to-end admin workflow
How to Create MySQL Users Accounts and Grant Privileges	User and privilege setup
How to Back Up and Restore MySQL Databases with Mysqldump	Backup and restore patterns
How to Show a List of All Databases in MySQL	Database discovery commands
List (Show) Tables in a MySQL Database	Table listing commands
How to Check the MySQL Version	Version checks and verification