# SQL Server – Alternative way to get the table's row count

To get the total row count in a table, we usually use the following select statement:

```
SELECT count(*) FROM table_name
```

*This query performs full table scan to get the row count.*

You can check it by setting **SET SHOWPLAN ON** for **SQL Server 6.5** or **SET SHOWPLAN_TEXT ON** for **SQL Server 7.0/2000**. So, if the table is very big, it can take a lot of time. In this example, the **tbTest** table will be created and **10000** rows will be inserted into this table:

```
CREATE TABLE tbTest (
  id int identity primary key,
  Name char(10)
)
GO
DECLARE @i int
SELECT @i = 1
WHILE @i <= 10000
  BEGIN
    INSERT INTO tbTest VALUES (LTRIM(str(@i)))
    SELECT @i = @i + 1
  END
GO
```

There is another way to determine the total row count in a table. You can use the **sysindexes** system table for this purpose. There is **ROWS** column in the **sysindexes** table. This column contains the total row count for each table in your database. So, you can use the following select statement instead of above one:

```
SELECT rows FROM sysindexes WHERE id = OBJECT_ID('table_name') AND indid < 2
```

There are physical read and logical read operations. A logical read occurs if the page is currently in the cache. If the page is not currently in the cache, a physical read is performed to read the page into the cache. To see how many logical or physical read operations were made, you can use **SET STATISTICS IO ON** command.

This is the example:

```
SET STATISTICS IO ON
GO
SELECT count(*) FROM tbTest
GO
SELECT rows FROM sysindexes WHERE id = OBJECT_ID('tbTest') AND indid < 2
GO
SET STATISTICS IO OFF
GO
```

This is the result:

```
-----------
10000
(1 row(s) affected)

Table 'tbTest'. Scan count 1, logical reads 32, physical reads 0, read-ahead
reads 0.
rows
-----------
10000
(1 row(s) affected)

Table 'sysindexes'. Scan count 1, logical reads 2, physical reads 0, read-ahead
reads 0.
```

So, you can improve the speed of the first query in several times.

This works for **SQL Server 6.5** and **SQL Server 7.0/2000/2005** as well.