

## SQL SERVER – HOW TO CHECK IF COLUMN EXISTS IN TABLE

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### SCENARIO

*I need to add a specific column if it does not exist. I have something like this, but it always returns false:*

```
IF EXISTS( SELECT * FROM INFORMATION_SCHEMA.COLUMNS
           WHERE TABLE_NAME = 'myTableName'
           AND COLUMN_NAME = 'myColumnName')
```

How can I check if a column exists on a table in **SQL Server**?

### SOLUTION

**SQL Server 2005** onwards:

```
if Exists(select * from sys.columns where Name = N'columnName'
         and Object_ID = Object_ID(N'tableName'))
begin
    -- Column Exists
end
```

Or, as an alternative, you could use a more concise version, using **COL\_LENGTH**:

```
IF COL_LENGTH('table_name','column_name') IS NULL
BEGIN
    /*Column does not exist or caller does not have permission to view the object*/
END
```

### SOLUTION (Function Version)

Try something like:

```
CREATE FUNCTION ColumnExists(@TableName varchar(100), @ColumnName varchar(100))
RETURNS varchar(1) AS
BEGIN
    DECLARE @Result varchar(1);
```

```
IF EXISTS (SELECT * FROM INFORMATION_SCHEMA.Columns WHERE TABLE_NAME =
@TableName AND COLUMN_NAME = @ColumnName)
BEGIN
    SET @Result = 'T'
END
ELSE
BEGIN
    SET @Result = 'F'
END
RETURN @Result;
END
GO
GRANT EXECUTE ON [ColumnExists] TO [whoever]
GO
```

Then use it like this:

```
IF ColumnExists('xxx', 'yyyy') = 'F'
BEGIN
    ALTER TABLE xxx
    ADD yyyy varChar(10) NOT NULL
END
GO
```

It should work on both **SQL Server 2000** & **SQL Server 2005**.