

## SQL SERVER – THE UNDOCUMENTED SP\_MSFOREACHTABLE PROCEDURE

As database administrators or developers, sometimes we need to perform an action on all of the tables within a database.

For example, we may want to disable check constraints for all tables prior to loading a bunch of data; or perhaps we need to run **DBCC CHECKTABLE** for every table in our database to ensure the integrity of all pages and structures that make up the tables.

We could, of course, create a script that uses a cursor to loop through all of the tables in the database to do our bidding through dynamic **SQL**. Yuck!

Fortunately, there's a better way. It's the undocumented **sp\_MSforeachtable** stored procedure in the **master database**. It's like a cursor in that it loops through each table in the current database and executes a script that you define. But it requires considerably less code.

For example, the following script checks the integrity of each table in the AdventureWorks database using the **DBCC CHECKTABLE** command. Notice that a [?] is used as a placeholder for the table name in the **SQL** statement.

```
USE AdventureWorks;  
EXECUTE sp_MSforeachtable 'DBCC CHECKTABLE ([?])';
```

That's a whole lot more palatable than developing a cursor-based solution!

Here's another example. The following script reports the space used and allocated for every table in the database.

```
USE AdventureWorks;  
EXECUTE sp_MSforeachtable 'EXECUTE sp_spaceused [?];';
```

So, the next time you need to loop through each table, give the **sp\_MSforeachtable** procedure a try.

Cheers!