

MULTIVALUED, DEPENDENCY & 4NF

Rules for 4th Normal Form

For a table to satisfy the Fourth Normal Form, it should satisfy the following two conditions:

1. It should be in the **Boyce-Codd Normal Form**.
2. And, the table should not have any **Multi-valued Dependency**.

Let's try to understand what multi-valued dependency is in the next section.

What is Multi-valued Dependency?

s_id	Course	hobby
1	Science	Cricket
1	Maths	Hockey
2	C#	Cricket
2	Php	Hockey

As you can see in the table above, student with **s_id 1** has opted for two courses, **Science** and **Maths**, and has two hobbies, **Cricket** and **Hockey**.

You must be thinking what problem this can lead to, right?

Well the two records for student with **s_id 1**, will give rise to two more records, as shown below, because for one student, two hobbies exists, hence along with both the courses, these hobbies should be specified.

s_id	course	hobby
1	Science	Cricket
1	Maths	Hockey
1	Science	Hockey
1	Maths	Cricket

And, in the table above, there is no relationship between the columns **course** and **hobby**. They are independent of each other.

So there is multi-value dependency, which leads to un-necessary repetition of data and other anomalies as well.

How to satisfy 4th Normal Form?

To make the above relation satisfy the 4th normal form, we can decompose the table into 2 tables.

CourseOpted Table

s_id	course
1	Science
1	Maths
2	C#
2	Php

And, **Hobbies Table**,

s_id	hobby
1	Cricket
1	Hockey
2	Cricket
2	Hockey

Now this relation satisfies the fourth normal form.