Working with SQL Server Management Studio

SQL Server Management Studio (SSMS) is the client tool you use to both develop T-SQL code and manage SQL Server. The purpose of this section is not to provide a complete guide to working with SSMS, but rather just to help you get started writing and executing T-SQL code against SQL Server.

To start working with SSMS:

1. Start SSMS from the Microsoft SQL Server program group.

   If this is the first time you have run SSMS, I recommend setting up the startup options so that the environment is set up the way you want it.

   If a Connect To Server dialog box appears, click Cancel for now.

2. Choose the menu item Tools | Options to open the Options dialog box. Under Environment | General, set the At Startup option to Open Object Explorer and New Query. This choice tells SSMS that whenever it starts it should open the Object Explorer and a new query window.

   Object Explorer is the tool you use to manage SQL Server and graphically inspect object definitions, and a query window is where you develop and execute T-SQL code against SQL Server. Feel free to navigate the tree to explore the options that you can set, but few of them are likely to mean much at this point. After you gain some experience with SSMS, you will find many of the options more meaningful and will likely want to change some of them.

3. When you're done exploring the Options dialog box click OK to confirm your choices.

4. Close SSMS and start it again to verify that it actually opens the Object Explorer and a new query window. You should see the Connect To Server dialog box as shown in Figure A-12.

Figure A-12. The Connect To Server dialog box

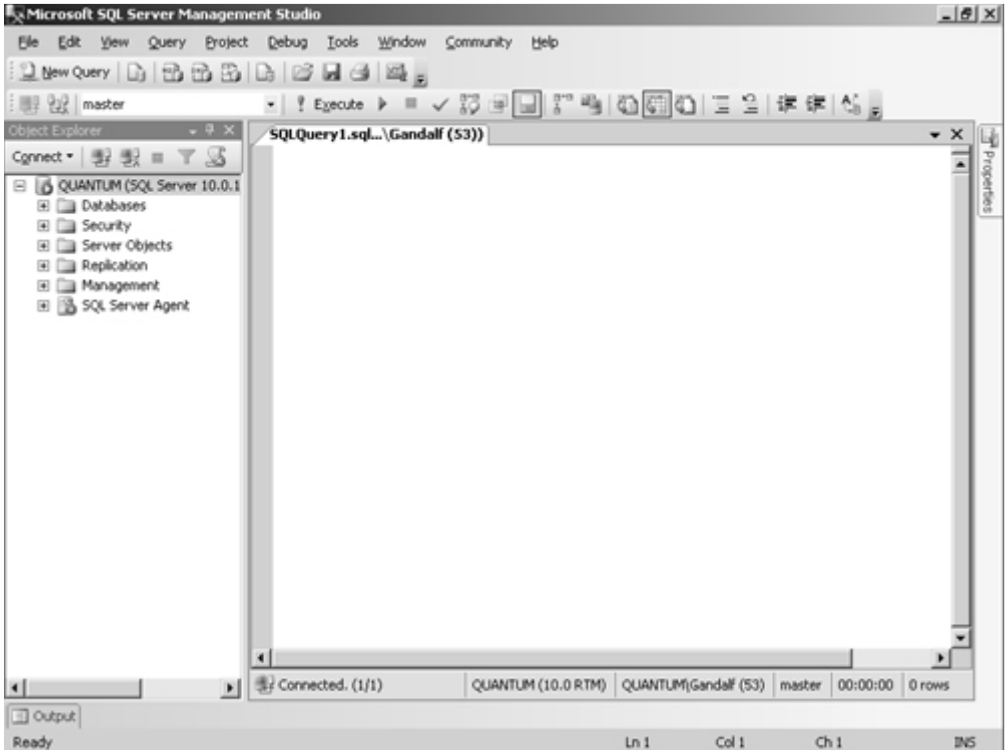
5. In this dialog box, you specify the details of the SQL Server instance you want to connect to:

   5-1. Type the name of the instance you want to connect to in the Server Name box.

   5-2. Make sure Windows Authentication is chosen in the Authentication box.

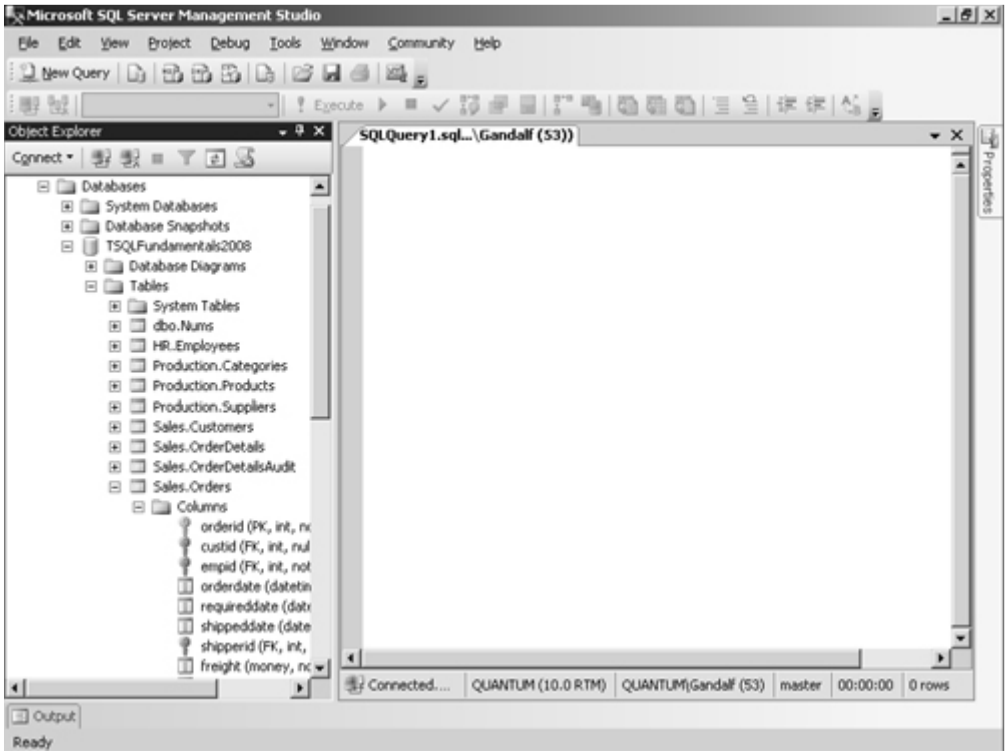
   5-3. Click Connect. SSMS should start as shown in Figure A-13.

Figure A-13. SSMS started



The Object Explorer window appears on the left, and the query window appears to the right of Object Explorer. Although the focus of this book is developing T-SQL code and not SQL Server management, I urge you to explore the Object Explorer by navigating the tree and by right-clicking the various nodes. You will find Object Explorer a very convenient tool to graphically inspect your databases and database objects as shown in Figure A-14.

Figure A-14. Object Explorer



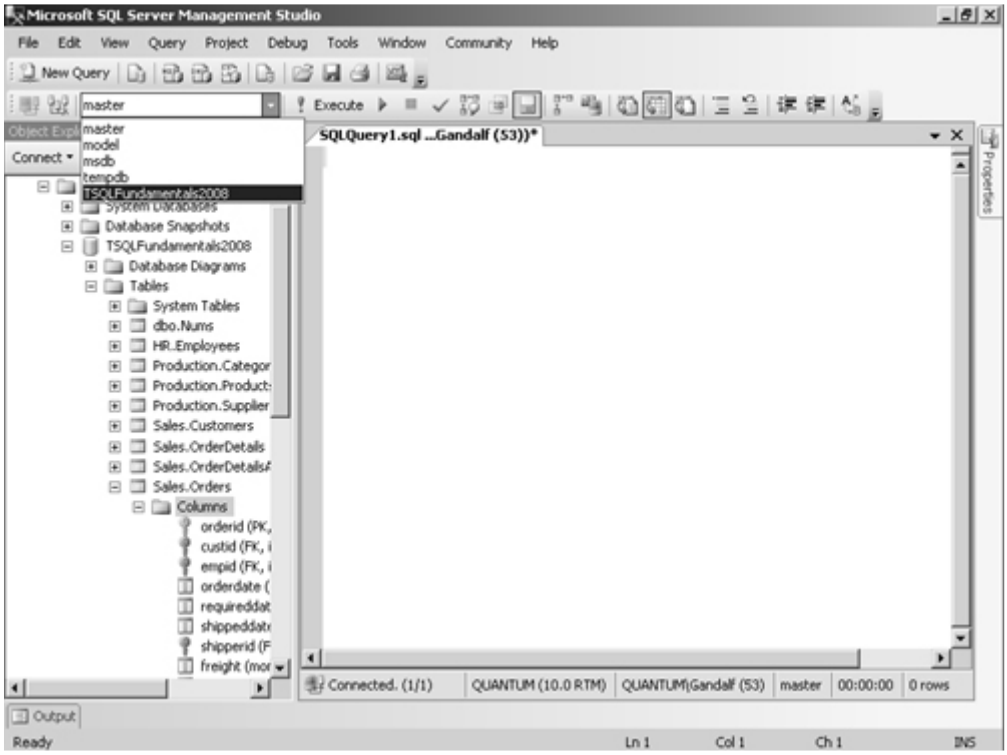
Note that you can drag items from the Object Explorer to the query window.

Tip

If you drag the Columns folder of a table from the Object Explorer to the query window, SQL Server will list all table columns separated by commas.

In the query window you develop and execute T-SQL code. The code you run is executed against the database you are connected to. You can choose the database you want to connect to from the Available Databases combo box as shown in Figure A-15.

Figure A-15. The Available Databases combo box



6. Make sure you are currently connected to the TSQLFundamentals2008 sample database.

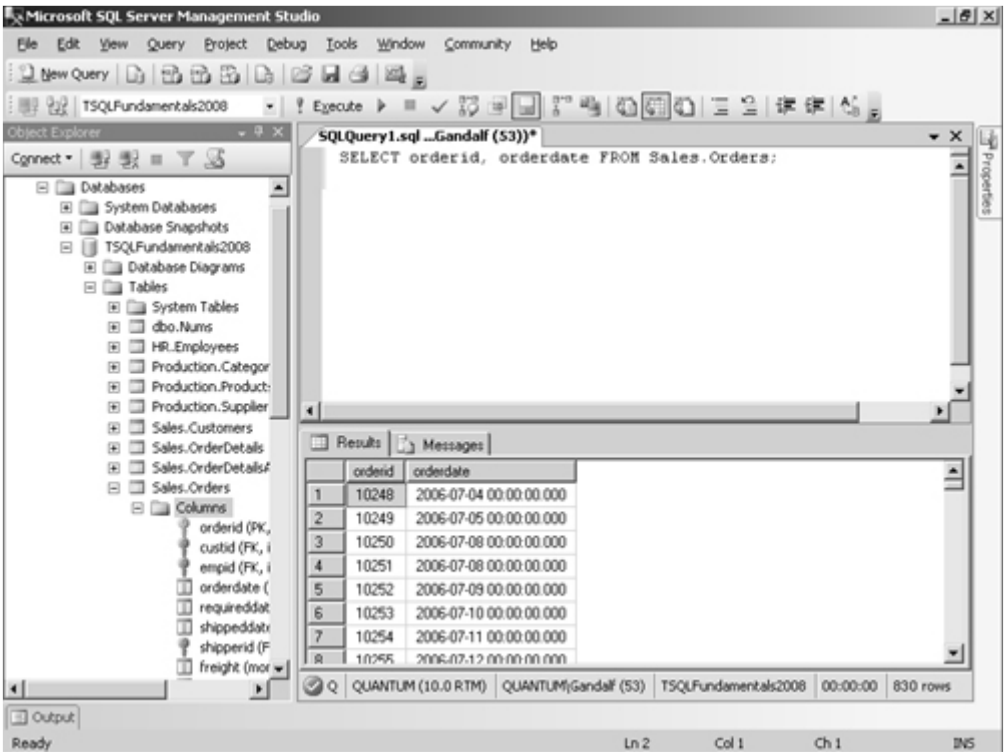
Note that at any point you can change the instance you are connected to by right-clicking an empty area in the query window and then choosing Connection | Change Connection.

7. You are now ready to start developing T-SQL code. Type the following code in the query window:

```
SELECT orderid, orderdate FROM Sales.Orders;
```

8. Press F5 to execute the code. Alternatively, you can click Execute (the icon with the red exclamation point; not the green arrow, which starts the debugger). You will get the output of the code in the Results pane as shown in Figure A-16.

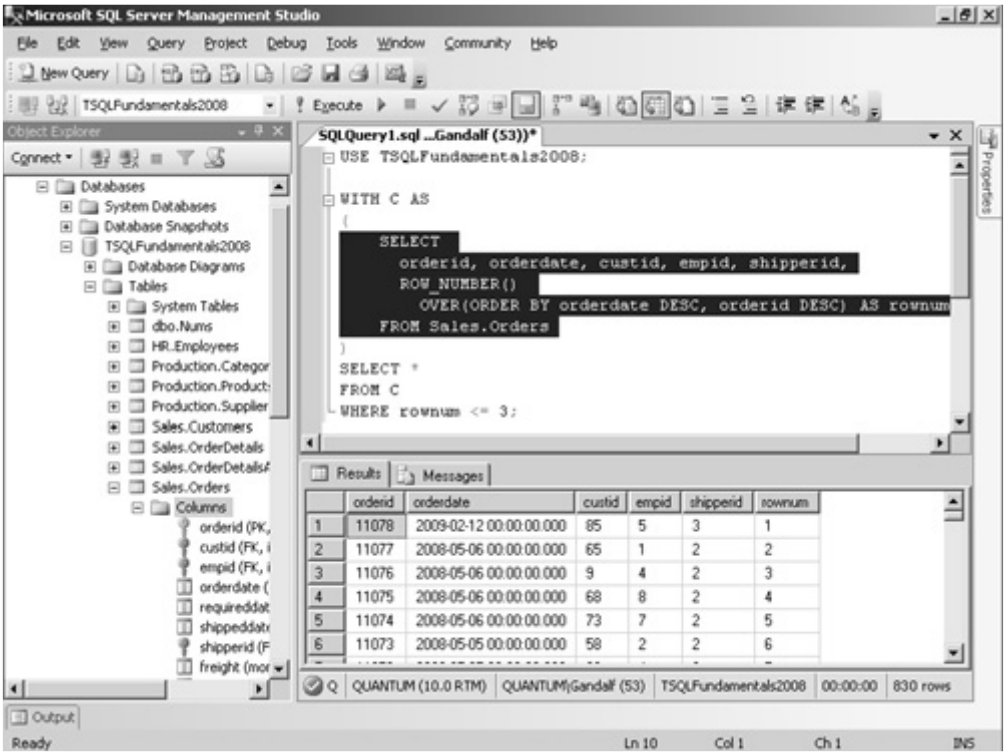
Figure A-16. Executing your first query



You can control the target of the results from the Query | Results To menu item or by clicking the corresponding icons in the SQL Editor toolbar. You have the following options: Results To Grid (default), Results To Text, and Results To File.

Note that if some of the code is highlighted, as shown in Figure A-17, when you execute the code, SQL Server executes only the selected part. SQL Server executes all code in the script only if no code is highlighted.

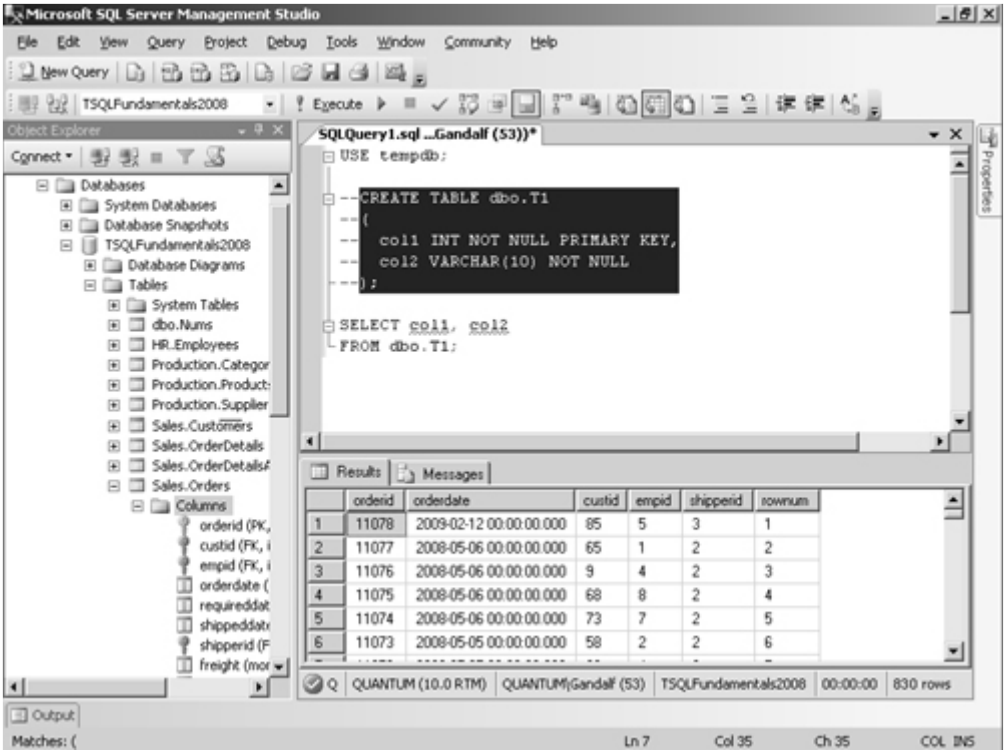
Figure A-17. Executing only selected code



Tip

If you press and hold the Alt button before you start highlighting code, you can highlight a rectangle block that doesn't necessarily start at the beginning of the lines of code for purposes of copying or executing, as shown in Figure A-18.

Figure A-18. Highlighting a rectangle block



Finally, before I leave you to your own explorations, I'd like to remind you that all of the source code of the book is available for download from the book's Web site. The previous section in this appendix, "Downloading Source Code and Installing the Sample Database," provides the details. Assuming you downloaded the source code and extracted the compressed files to a local folder, you can open the script file you want to work with from the menu item File | Open | File or the Open File icon on the Standard toolbar. Alternatively, you can double-click the script file's name in Windows Explorer to open the script file within SSMS.