

Introduction to Looker and LookML

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Hi, welcome to the module on Introduction to Looker and LookML! My name is Barry Schmell, and I am a trainer here at Google.

In this module, we will explore the Looker platform as LookML developers and review the key terminology and tools for writing LookML code.

Agenda

- 01 Introduction to the Looker Platform
- 02 Understanding your Users' Experience
- 03 LookML Project Hierarchy
- 04 The Looker Development Environment

We will begin with an overview of the Looker platform and architecture to understand how Looker can play a key role in your organization's data workflows.

Agenda

- 01 Introduction to the Looker Platform
- 02 [Understanding your Users' Experience](#)
- 03 LookML Project Hierarchy
- 04 The Looker Development Environment

Next, we will complete a walkthrough of the Looker User Interface to understand how your business users leverage Looker to explore and analyze data.

Agenda

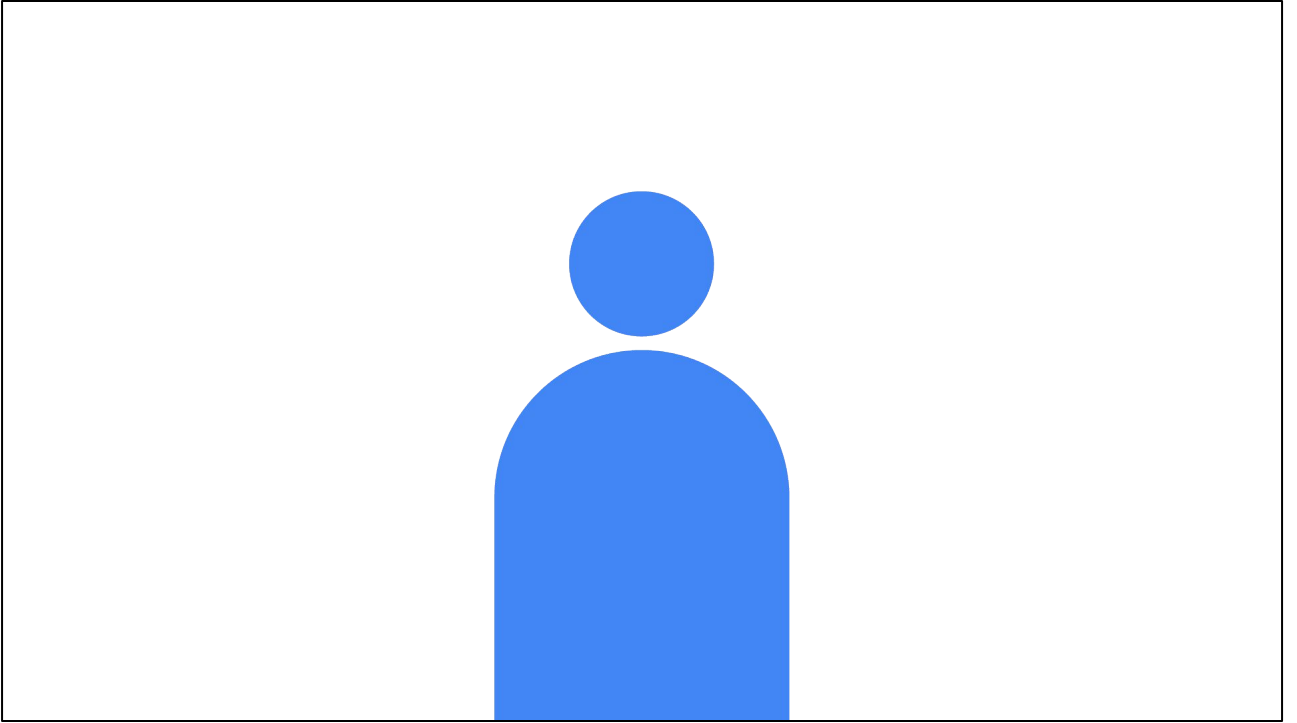
- 01 Introduction to the Looker Platform
- 02 Understanding your Users' Experience
- 03 [LookML Project Hierarchy](#)
- 04 The Looker Development Environment

Then, we will review the LookML project hierarchy to understand its key components and the role that each plays in the overall LookML structure.

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- 04 [The Looker Development Environment](#)

Last, we will explore the Looker development environment and review its key features for your workflow as a LookML developer.



Let's get started!

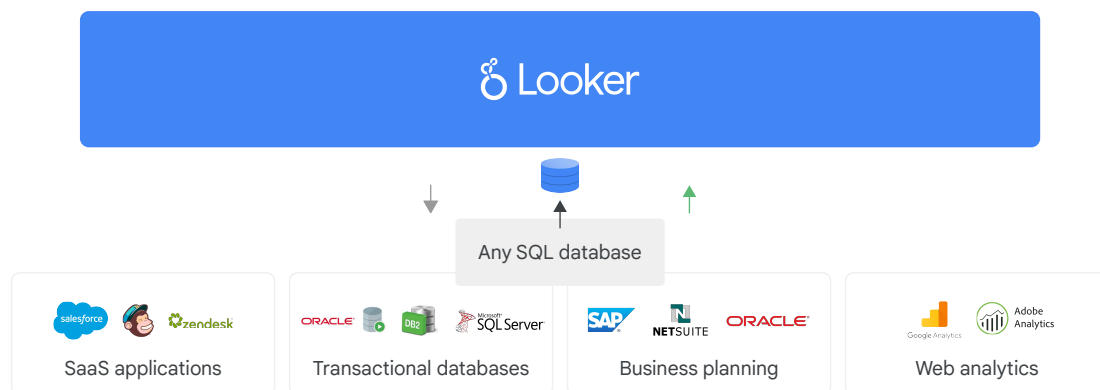
Introduction to Looker and LookML

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Looker is a Business Intelligence (BI) software and big data analytics platform that helps business users to explore, analyze and share real-time data analytics easily.

Architecture: Looker in the data stack



Google Cloud

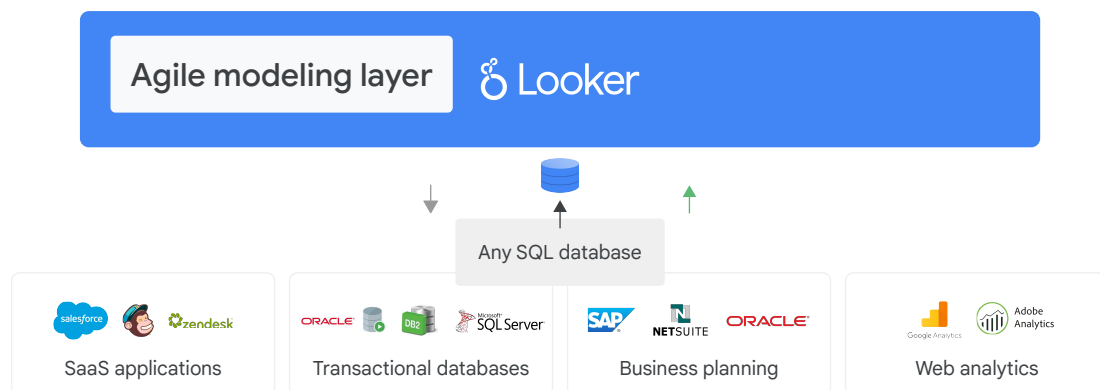
As a browser-based, Software as a Service (SaaS) platform, Looker connects directly to SQL databases.

For example, you can connect Looker to:

- Other SaaS applications such as Salesforce, Mailchimp, and Zendesk.
- Heavy read-write operations in transactional databases such as Oracle, IBM Db2, and Microsoft SQL Server.
- Business planning tools such as SAP, NetSuite, and Oracle.
- And web analytics products such as Google Analytics or Adobe Analytics.

These are just a few examples. Looker is multi-cloud and [supports over 65 database dialects](#).

Architecture: Looker's agile modeling layer



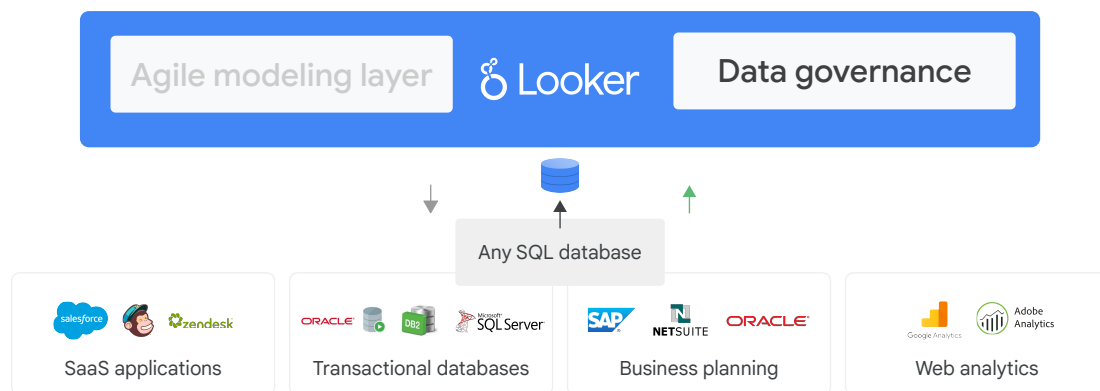
Google Cloud

One major benefit of Looker is its agile modeling layer, which can save data teams and business analysts time that would otherwise be spent manually writing and editing SQL queries. Looker's agile modeling layer allows developers to define, through Looker Modeling Language or LookML, how the database is structured and how the tables and columns relate to each other.

A useful way to think about LookML is that it is an abstraction layer for SQL that developers use to tell Looker what data to use from the connected database and how it should interpret that data.

As users explore and analyze the data, Looker uses the defined LookML models to automatically generate SQL **SELECT** queries to send to the database and return the appropriate results.

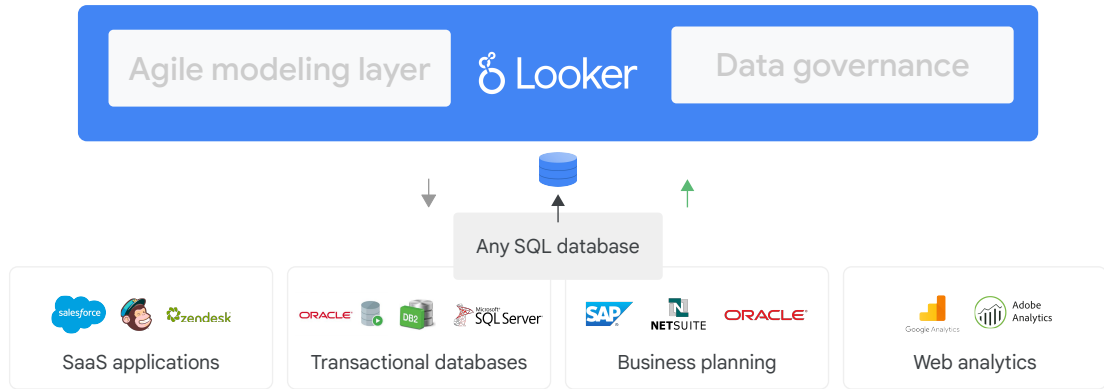
Architecture: Looker data governance



Another benefit of Looker is data governance, which means that you can define a single source of truth for data that everyone in the organization can understand and trust.

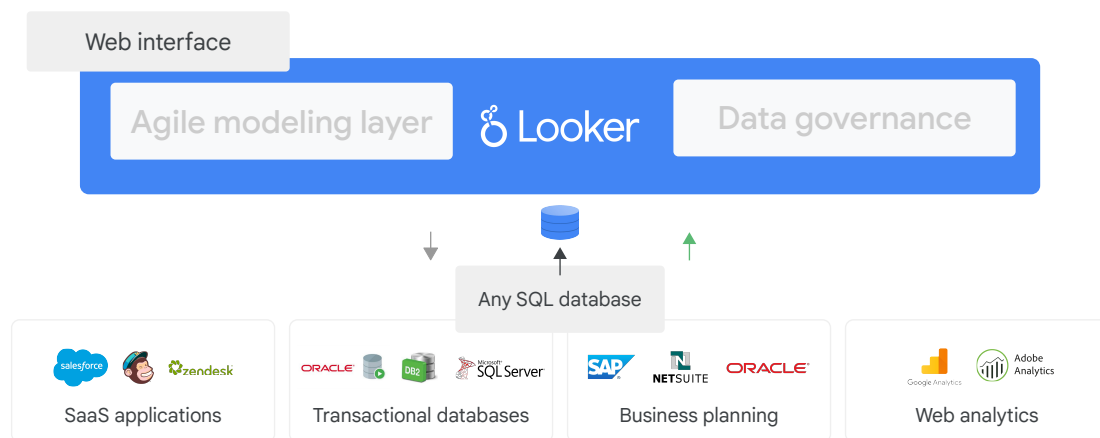
In Looker, you can enforce various types of data security and governance through the Looker User Interface (UI), such as assigning specific user roles, as well as through LookML, such as providing access to specific fields or rows of data.

Architecture: Looker data democratization



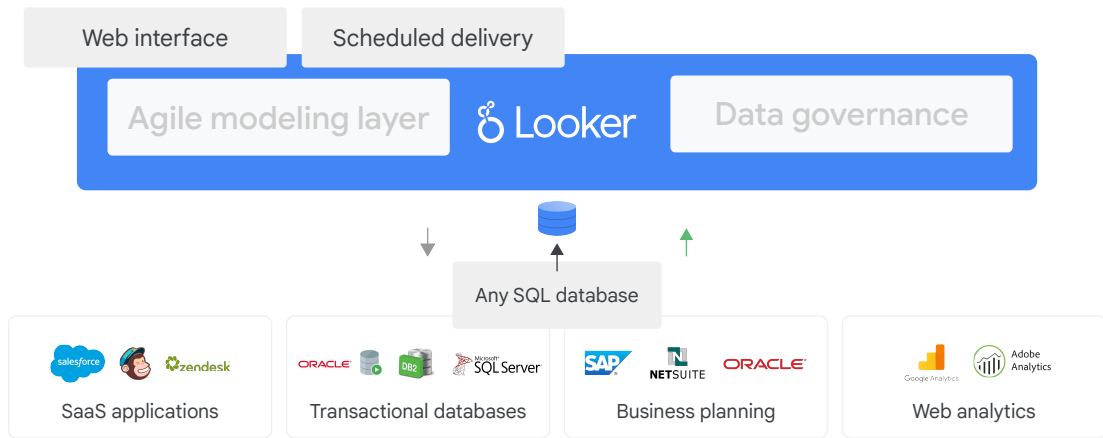
To help organizations disseminate data, Looker can surface and expose query results in several ways.

Architecture Looker's user interface



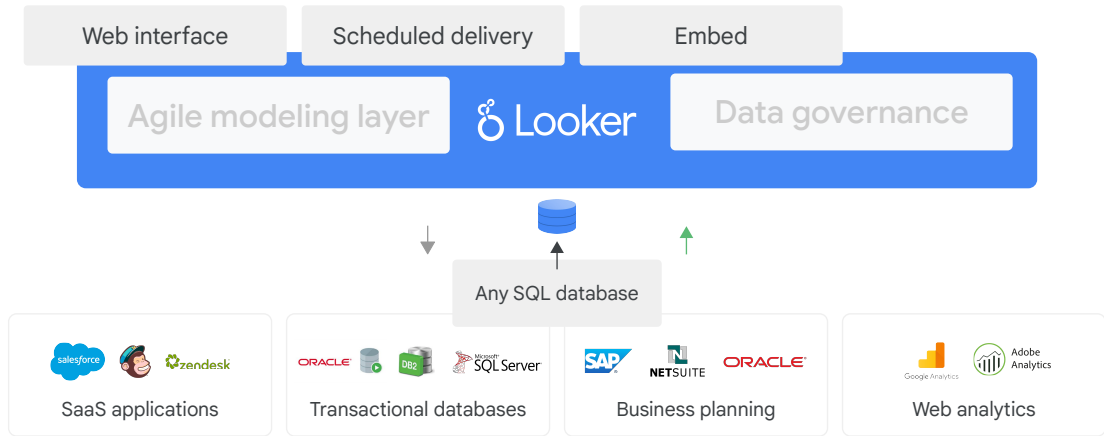
The first is through the web interface. This can be in the form of Explores (which are report-builder interfaces), Looks (which are standalone reports or visualizations), and dashboards (which contain multiple visualizations).

Architecture: Looker's data scheduling and delivery



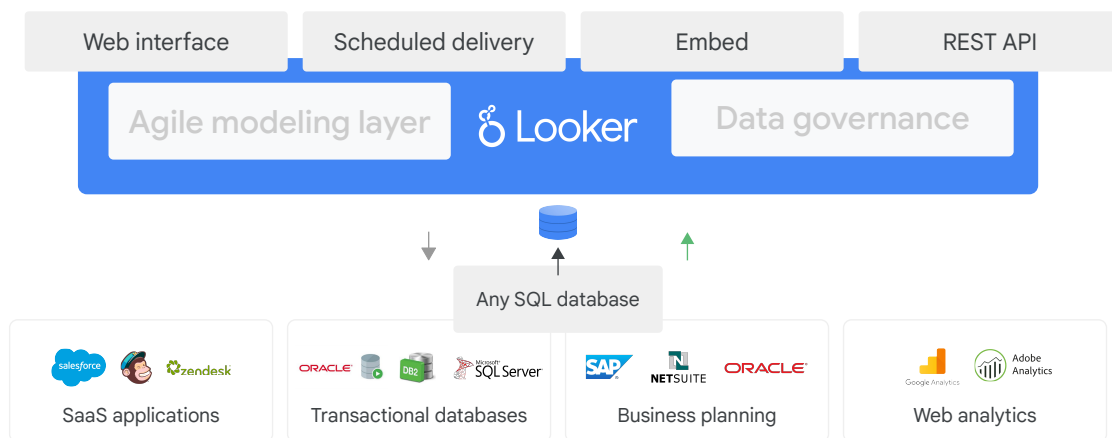
Another way is through scheduled data deliveries, such as sending Looks and dashboards to specific email addresses or Cloud Storage buckets on a one-time or recurring basis.

Architecture: Embed Looker content in your applications



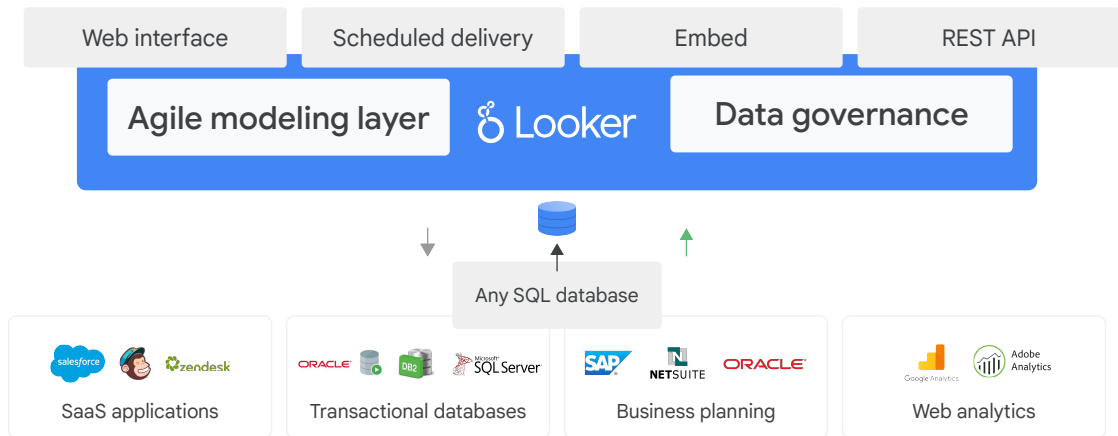
Explores, dashboards, and Looks can also be embedded within other websites or applications.

Architecture: The Looker API



Last, Looker provides a REST API that allows you to retrieve, analyze, and transform data and metadata directly from the Looker platform.

Architecture: Looker's rich development framework



Looker's unique architecture provides a rich development framework that is built to support enterprise-grade workflows and help your users and tools access the most accurate and up-to-date version of your organization's data.

With this unified view into your organization's data, you, as a LookML developer, can curate data experiences to ensure that both people and systems get the data they need, how and when they need it.

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To understand how you as a LookML developer can support business users, it's important to become familiar with the business user experience and how they use the Looker platform on a daily basis to answer data-driven questions.

Furthermore, the ability to navigate the Looker platform as a business user will help you to fully test your changes to LookML code by reviewing how results appear when accessed by business users.

Let's explore the business user experience by walking through an example Looker instance.

Looker

Explore
Develop

Shared folders
Recently Viewed
Favorites
Boards
No boards added yet
Folders
Blocks

Development Mode

Your organization's folders

Folders contain Dashboard Views and Looks for specific groups of people. You can copy, move, or save Dashboard Views and Looks to a folder.

Folders

Sort by Name

Customer Metrics Human Resources

Dashboards

Sort by Name Favorite

Business Pulse
42 Views, Created by Jenny

Company health
3 Views, Created by Brian

Looks

Sort by Name Favorite

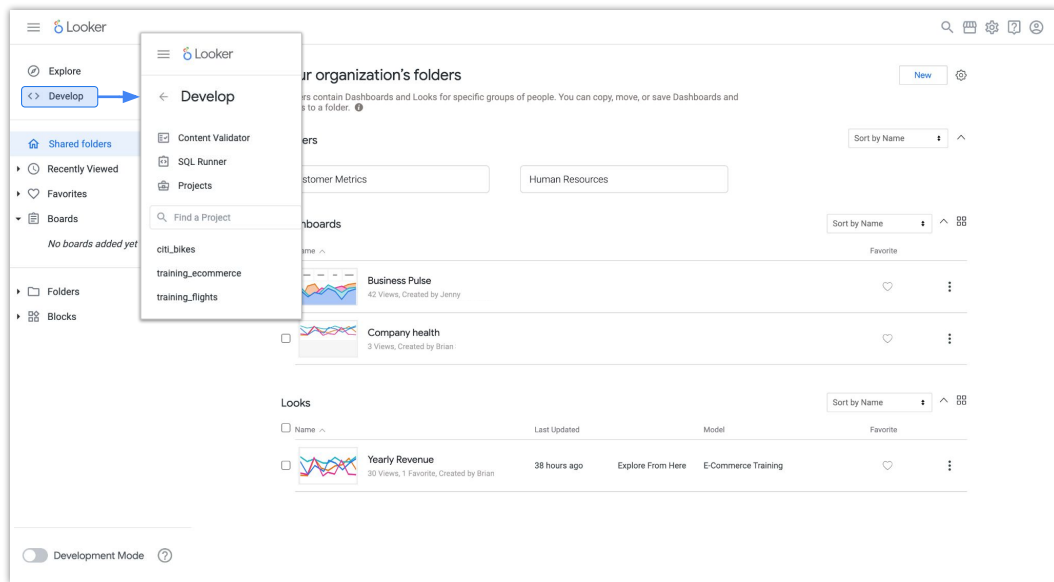
Name	Last Updated	Model	Favorite
<input type="checkbox"/> Yearly Revenue 30 Views, 1 Favorite, Created by Brian	38 hours ago	Explore From Here E-Commerce Training	<input type="checkbox"/>

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

When you first log in to the Looker platform, your home page may vary depending on what your company's Looker administrator has configured.

In this example instance, we will begin on the **Shared** folders page. Folders in Looker are where content lives, just as files in your computer or Google Drive are stored in folders.

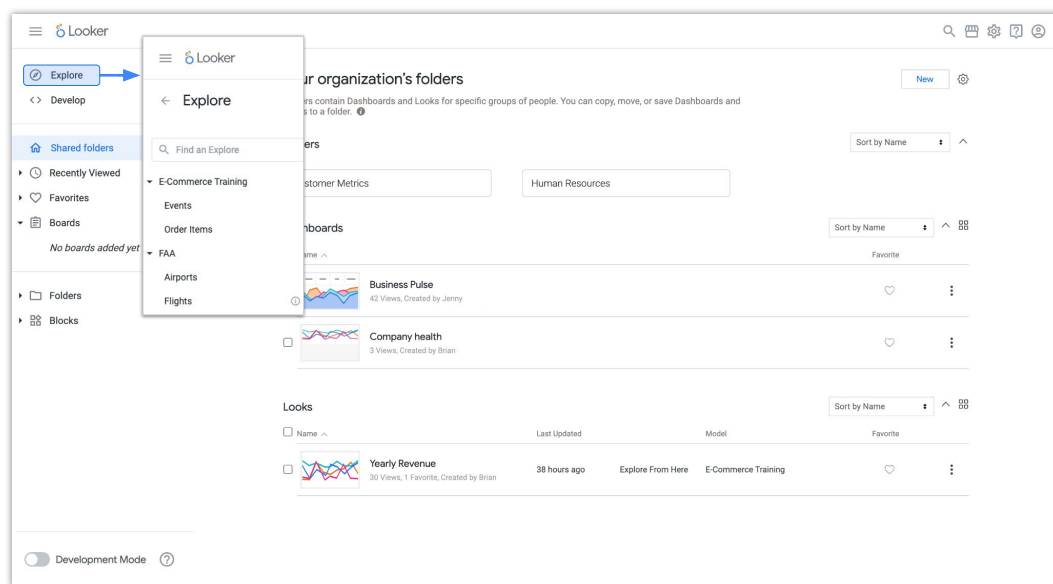


Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

As you may know, Looker has two primary categories of users: business users and developers.

As a LookML developer, you use the **Develop** environment to curate report-builder interfaces called Explores that are used by business users and to configure other aspects in your Looker instance such as rules for caching and data security.



Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

Business users can click on Explore to see a list of the custom Explores that LookML developers have modeled for them. Within the Explores, they can analyze and visualize data to answer business questions and save their results as visualizations and reports.

This example Looker instance has many Explores including one for Order Items under the E-Commerce Training header and another for Flights under the FAA header.

Looker

Explore
Develop

Shared folders
Recently Viewed
Favorites
Boards
No boards added yet
Folders
Blocks

Development Mode

Your organization's folders

Folders contain Dashboards and Looks for specific groups of people. You can copy, move, or save Dashboards and Looks to a folder.

Customer Metrics
Human Resources

Dashboards

Name	Views	Created by	Favorite	More
Business Pulse	42 Views	Created by Jersey	<input type="checkbox"/>	⋮
Company health	3 Views	Created by Brian	<input type="checkbox"/>	⋮

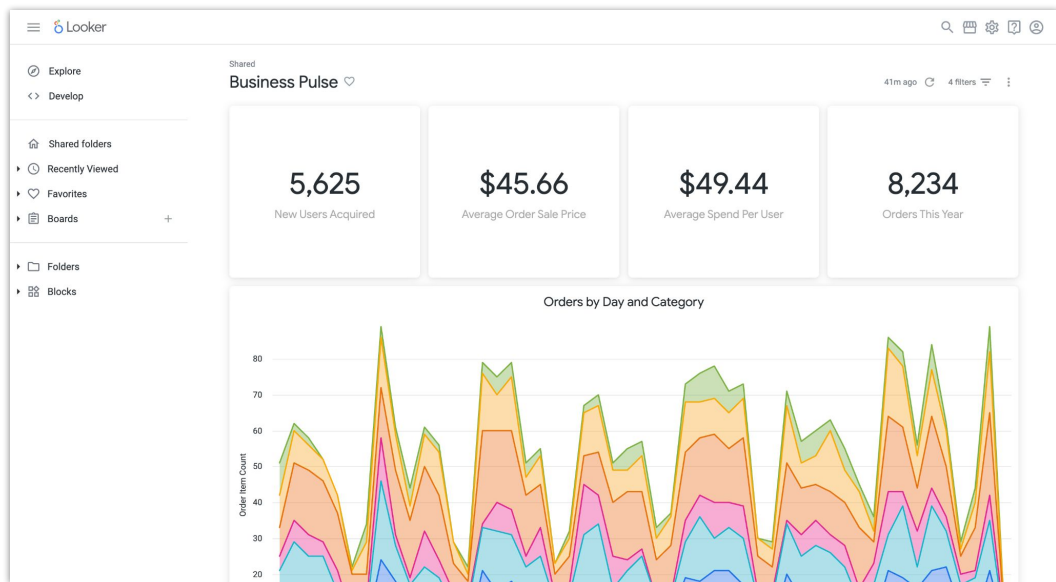
Looks

Name	Last Updated	Model	Favorite	More		
Yearly Revenue	38 hours ago	Explore From Here	E-Commerce Training	30 Views, 1 Favorite, Created by Brian	<input type="checkbox"/>	⋮

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

As a business user working at a hypothetical e-commerce company, you can also navigate through the various folders of the Looker instance to find content that has already been built using the available Explores, such as the Business Pulse dashboard.



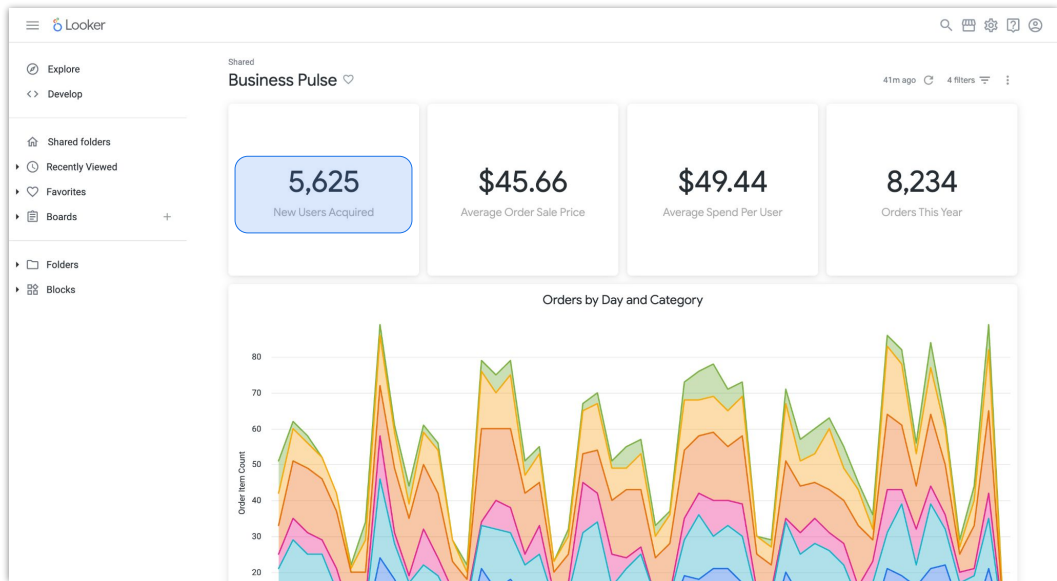
Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

For business users, this example Business Pulse dashboard provides some high-level key performance indicators (KPIs) that a typical ecommerce company might care about, such as the number of new users acquired and the average order amount.

In Looker, these are called single value visualizations.

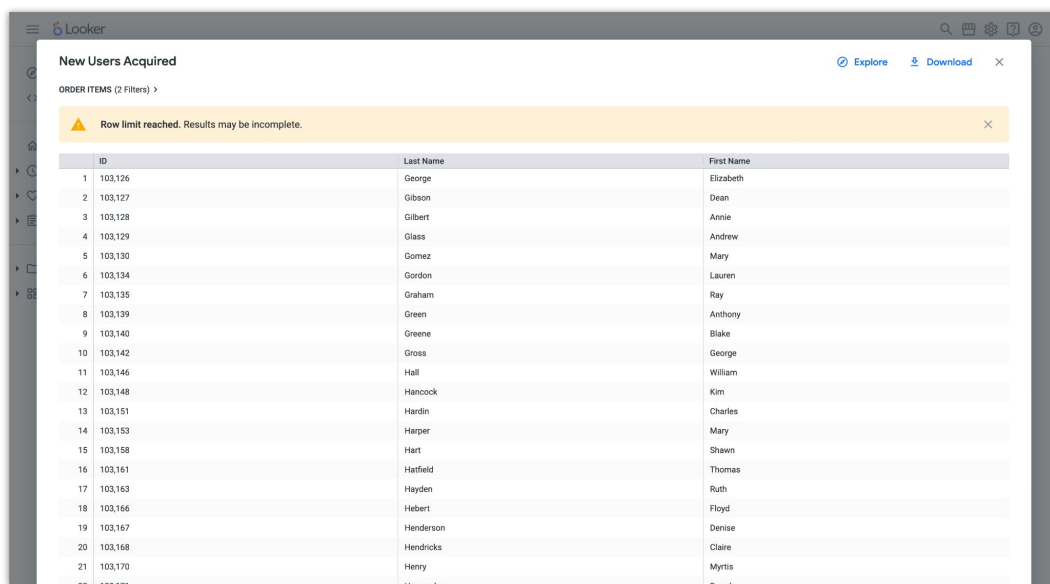
Scrolling down, you can see other visualizations such as the number of orders by category over time in an area chart.



Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

Let's say you want to learn more about new users your company has acquired. You can click on the number provided in the New Users Acquired tile to drill down to the underlying data.



Looker

New Users Acquired

ORDER ITEMS (2 Filters) >

Row limit reached. Results may be incomplete.

ID	Last Name	First Name
1	George	Elizabeth
2	Gibson	Dean
3	Gilbert	Annie
4	Glass	Andrew
5	Gomez	Mary
6	Gordon	Lauren
7	Graham	Ray
8	Green	Anthony
9	Greene	Blake
10	Gross	George
11	Hall	William
12	Hancock	Kim
13	Hardin	Charles
14	Harper	Mary
15	Hart	Shawn
16	Hatfield	Thomas
17	Hayden	Ruth
18	Hebert	Floyd
19	Henderson	Denise
20	Hendricks	Claire
21	Henry	Myrtis
22	Hernandez	Brooks

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

After drilling down on the New Users Acquired tile, you can view the granular rows of data that constitute the overall number of new users acquired.

For example, for this tile, you can see each user's ID, first name, and last name. In Looker, these data attributes are called dimensions.

The screenshot shows the Looker interface with a table titled "New Users Acquired". The table has three columns: "ID", "Last Name", and "First Name". A yellow warning banner at the top of the table area says "Row limit reached. Results may be incomplete." The table contains 21 rows of data, each representing a user. The "ID" column contains values from 103,126 to 103,170. The "Last Name" and "First Name" columns contain fictional names.

ID	Last Name	First Name
1	George	Elizabeth
2	Gibson	Dean
3	Gilbert	Annie
4	Glass	Andrew
5	Gomez	Mary
6	Gordon	Lauren
7	Graham	Ray
8	Green	Anthony
9	Greene	Blake
10	Gross	George
11	Hall	William
12	Hancock	Kim
13	Hardin	Charles
14	Harper	Mary
15	Hart	Shawn
16	Hatfield	Thomas
17	Hayden	Ruth
18	Hebert	Floyd
19	Henderson	Denise
20	Hendricks	Claire
21	Henry	Myrtis

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

If you want to learn even more about these users, you can click on the **Explore** link.

The screenshot shows the Looker Explore interface. At the top, it says "Explore" and "500 rows · from cache · 1m ago" with a "Run" button. Below this, there are filters: "Inventory Items Created Date 'this year'", "Products Brand is any value", "Users City is any value", "Users Created Date is in the past 180 days", and "Users State is any value". The visualization is set to "Data". A warning message states "Row limit reached. Results may be incomplete". The table displays columns for "Users ID", "Users Last Name", and "Users First Name". The field picker on the left shows "Order Items" as the overall explore, with sub-views for "Custom Fields", "Distribution Centers", "Inventory Items", "Order Items", "Products", and "Users".

Users ID	Users Last Name	Users First Name	
1	103126	George	Elizabeth
2	103127	Gibson	Dean
3	103128	Gilbert	Annie
4	103129	Glass	Andrew
5	103130	Gomez	Mary
6	103134	Gordon	Lauren
7	103135	Graham	Ray
8	103139	Green	Anthony
9	103140	Greene	Blake
10	103142	Gross	George
11	103146	Hall	William
12	103148	Hancock	Kim
13	103151	Hardin	Charles
14	103153	Harper	Mary
15	103158	Hart	Shawn
16	103161	Hatfield	Thomas
17	103163	Hayden	Ruth
18	103166	Hebert	Floyd
19	103167	Henderson	Denise
20	103168	Hendricks	Claire
21	103170	Henry	Myrtis
22	103171	Hernandez	Brenda
23	103175	Hoffman	Sharon
24	103177	Holloway	Connessa
25	103178	Holt	Judy

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

This takes you out of the dashboard and into the Explore, which is the report-builder interface that has been curated by a LookML developer.

In this example, the overall Explore is called **Order Items**, but there are several expandable groups of fields in the field picker found in the left-side panel. These are called views.

An Explore is composed of one or more views. For example, when you want to analyze order information, you also might want to include fields from other related views such as **Users**.

In SQL terms, each view represents a database table, and the tables are pre-joined in the LookML model file to define the overall Explore, like this **Order Items** Explore.

The screenshot shows the Looker Explore interface. On the left, a sidebar lists various data models: Order Items, Distribution Centers, Inventory Items, Products, and Users. The 'Users' model is expanded, showing dimensions like Age, City, Country, Created Date, Email, First Name, Gender, ID, Last Name, Latitude, Longitude, State, Traffic Source, and Zip. The 'Age' dimension is highlighted. The main area displays a table with columns: Users ID #, Users Last Name, Users First Name, and Users Age. The table contains 25 rows of user data. A yellow warning banner at the top of the table indicates 'Row limit reached. Results may be incomplete'. At the top right of the interface, there is a 'Run' button and a status indicator '500 rows - 1.0s - just now'.

Users ID #	Users Last Name	Users First Name	Users Age	
1	103136	George	Elizabeth	12
2	103127	Gibson	Dean	12
3	103128	Gilbert	Annie	12
4	103129	Glass	Andrew	46
5	103130	Gomez	Mary	12
6	103134	Gordon	Lauren	48
7	103135	Graham	Ray	39
8	103139	Green	Anthony	16
9	103140	Greene	Blake	33
10	103142	Gross	George	47
11	103146	Hall	William	30
12	103148	Hancock	Kim	62
13	103151	Hardin	Charles	19
14	103153	Harper	Mary	51
15	103158	Hart	Shawn	56
16	103161	Hatfield	Thomas	16
17	103163	Hayden	Ruth	12
18	103166	Hebert	Floyd	74
19	103167	Henderson	Denise	37
20	103168	Hendricks	Claire	62
21	103170	Henry	Myrtis	41
22	103171	Hernandez	Brandi	44
23	103175	Huffman	Sharon	27
24	103177	Holloway	Contessa	58
25	103178	Holt	Judy	52

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

Using this Explore, you can ask questions about the newly acquired users. For example, maybe you are curious about the age of each of these users.

To see age information about these users, you can expand the **Users** view, and click on the **Age** dimension to add it to your results set. Then, you can click **Run** to view the results.

The screenshot shows the Looker 'Explore' interface. On the left, the 'Order Items' view is selected. The main area displays a table with columns: Users ID #, Users Last Name, Users First Name, Users Age, and Order Items Total Revenue. The table contains 25 rows of data. A yellow warning banner at the top of the table reads 'Row limit reached. Results may be incomplete'. The 'Run' button is highlighted in the top right corner.

Users ID #	Users Last Name	Users First Name	Users Age	Order Items Total Revenue	
1	103126	George	Elizabeth	12	\$25.00
2	103127	Gibson	Dean	12	\$23.99
3	103128	Gilbert	Annie	12	\$9.99
4	103129	Glass	Andrew	46	\$54.00
5	103130	Gomez	Mary	12	\$70.00
6	103134	Gordon	Lauren	48	\$54.43
7	103135	Graham	Ray	39	\$112.55
8	103139	Green	Anthony	16	\$9.95
9	103140	Greene	Blake	33	\$24.00
10	103142	Gross	George	47	\$132.00
11	103146	Hall	William	30	\$25.00
12	103148	Hancock	Kim	62	\$15.55
13	103151	Hardin	Charles	19	\$25.00
14	103153	Harper	Mary	51	\$6.07
15	103158	Hart	Shawn	56	\$36.99
16	103161	Hatfield	Thomas	16	\$34.55
17	103163	Hayden	Ruth	12	\$32.50
18	103166	Hebert	Floyd	74	\$69.50
19	103167	Henderson	Denise	37	\$228.48
20	103168	Hendricks	Claire	62	\$95.00
21	103170	Henry	Myrtis	41	\$43.98
22	103171	Hernandez	Brandis	44	\$14.99
23	103175	Hoffman	Sharon	27	\$14.70
24	103177	Holloway	Contessa	58	\$43.44
25	103178	Holt	Judy	52	\$29.99

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

If you want to know how much each of these new users has already spent, you can expand the **Order Items** view, and click on the **Total Revenue** measure, which aggregates all of the purchases for each user.

Once again, you need to click **Run** to view the new results.

The screenshot shows the Looker Explore interface. On the left, the 'Order Items' table is selected, and the 'Total Revenue' measure is highlighted. The main panel displays a SQL query in the 'SQL' tab, which is highlighted with a blue box. The query is as follows:

```
SELECT
  users.id AS users_id,
  users.last_name AS users_last_name,
  users.first_name AS users_first_name,
  users.age AS users_age,
  COALESCE(SUM(order_items.sale_price), 0) AS order_items_total_revenue
FROM
  AS order_items
  looker_ecomm.order_items'
LEFT JOIN
  AS users ON order_items.user_id = users.id
LEFT JOIN
  looker_ecomm.inventory_items'
  AS inventory_items ON order_items.inventory_item_id = inventory_items.id
WHERE ((( users.created_at ) >= ((TIMESTAMP_ADD(TIMESTAMP_TRUNC(CURRENT_TIMESTAMP(), DAY), INTERVAL -179 DAY))) AND ( users.created_at ) <
((TIMESTAMP_ADD(TIMESTAMP_ADD(TIMESTAMP_TRUNC(CURRENT_TIMESTAMP(), DAY), INTERVAL -179 DAY), INTERVAL 180 DAY)))))) AND ((( inventory_items.created_at
) >= ((DATE_TRUNC(CURRENT_DATE(), YEAR))) AND ( inventory_items.created_at ) < ((DATE_ADD(DATE_TRUNC(CURRENT_DATE(), YEAR), INTERVAL 1 YEAR))))))
GROUP BY
  1,
  2,
  3,
  4
ORDER BY
  1
LIMIT 500
```

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

Behind the scenes, Looker has automatically generated a SQL query for the drill-down results and is updating it with the new selections.

As a LookML developer, you can click on the SQL tab—typically hidden from business users—to see that Looker is **SELECTing** **users.id**, **users.first_name**, **users.last_name**, and **users.age**, which are the dimensions selected in the Explore.

Looker is also executing a **SUM** of **order_items.sale_price** for **total_revenue**, which is the measure selected to aggregate the purchase data for each user.

The screenshot shows the Looker 'Explore' interface. On the left, the 'Order Items' table is selected, showing dimensions like 'Created Date', 'Delivered Date', 'Inventory Item ID', 'Order ID', 'Order Item ID', 'Returned Date', 'Sale Price', 'Shipped Date', 'Status', and 'User ID'. Measures include 'Average Sale Price', 'Order Count', 'Order Item Count', and 'Total Revenue'. The main panel displays a SQL query:

```
SELECT
  users.id AS users_id,
  users.last_name AS users_last_name,
  users.first_name AS users_first_name,
  users.age AS users_age,
  COALESCE(SUM(order_items.sale_price), 0) AS order_items_total_revenue
FROM
  AS order_items
  looker_ecomm.order_items`
LEFT JOIN
  AS users ON order_items.user_id = users.id
LEFT JOIN
  looker_ecomm.inventory_items`
  AS inventory_items ON order_items.inventory_item_id = inventory_items.id
WHERE ((( users.created_at ) >= ((TIMESTAMP_ADD(TIMESTAMP_TRUNC(CURRENT_TIMESTAMP(), DAY), INTERVAL -179 DAY))) AND ( users.created_at ) <
((TIMESTAMP_ADD(TIMESTAMP_ADD(TIMESTAMP_TRUNC(CURRENT_TIMESTAMP(), DAY), INTERVAL -179 DAY), INTERVAL 180 DAY)))))) AND ((( inventory_items.created_at
) >= ((DATE_TRUNC(CURRENT_DATE(), YEAR))) AND ( inventory_items.created_at ) < ((DATE_ADD(DATE_TRUNC(CURRENT_DATE(), YEAR), INTERVAL 1 YEAR))))))
GROUP BY
  1,
  2,
  3,
  4
ORDER BY
  1
LIMIT 500
```

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

You can also see that the data comes **FROM** a table called **looker_ecomm.order_items**, with a **LEFT JOIN** to **looker_ecomm.users**.

Finally, there's a big **WHERE** condition that is identifying only the new users from the past 180 days.

Looker

Explore

500 rows - 1.6s - just now Run

Filters (5) Inventory Items Created Date "this year" Products Brand is any value Users City is any value Users Created Date is in the past 180 days Users State is any value

Visualization

Data Results SQL

Row Limit 500 Totals Subtotals

Row limit reached. Results may be incomplete

Users ID ↑	Users Last Name	Users First Name	Users Age	Order Items Total Revenue	
1	103126	George	Elizabeth	12	\$25.00
2	103127	Gibson	Dean	12	\$23.99
3	103128	Gilbert	Annie	12	\$9.99
4	103129	Glass	Andrew	46	\$54.00
5	103130	Gomez	Mary	12	\$70.00
6	103134	Gordon	Lauren	48	\$54.43
7	103135	Graham	Ray	39	\$112.95
8	103139	Green	Anthony	16	\$9.95
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12	103148	Hancock	Kim	62	\$15.55
13	103151	Hardin	Charles	19	\$25.00
14	103153	Harper	Mary	51	\$6.07
15	103158	Hart	Shawn	56	\$36.99
16	103161	Hatfield	Thomas	16	\$34.55
17	103163	Hayden	Ruth	12	\$32.50
18	103166	Hebert	Floyd	74	\$69.50
19	103167	Henderson	Denise	37	\$228.48
20	103168	Hendricks	Claire	62	\$95.00
21	103170	Henry	Myrtis	41	\$43.98
22	103171	Hernandez	Brandis	44	\$14.99
23	103175	Hoffman	Sharon	27	\$14.70
24	103177	Holloway	Contessa	58	\$43.44
25	103178	Holt	Judy	52	\$29.99

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

Rather than writing this SQL query manually, it was so easy for the business user to click on some fields and get this output automatically. This is all because of the agile modeling layer in LookML.

A LookML developer or team of developers had already created this **Order Items** Explore, specified which views should be in the Explore, specified which dimensions and measures should be in each view, and defined the SQL logic for each dimension and measure.

Looker

Explore

500 rows - 1.6s - 3m ago Run

Filters (5) Inventory Items Created Date "this year" Products Brand is any value Users City is any value Users Created Date is in the past 180 days Users State is

Save as a Look... 🔗
Save to Dashboard... 🔗

Visualization

ID	Last Name	First Name	Age	Total Revenue	
1	103,126	George	Elizabeth	12	\$25.00
2	103,127	Gibson	Dean	12	\$15.55
3	103,128	Gilbert	Annie	12	\$25.00
4	103,129	Glass	Andrew	46	\$6.07
5	103,130	Gomez	Mary	12	\$36.99
6	103,134	Gordon	Lauren	48	\$34.55
7	103,135	Graham	Ray	39	\$32.50
8	103,139	Green	Anthony	16	
9	103,140	Greene	Blake	33	
10	103,142	Gross	George	47	
11	103,146	Hall	William	30	
12	103,148	Hancock	Kim	62	
13	103,151	Hardin	Charles	19	
14	103,153	Harper	Mary	51	
15	103,158	Hart	Shawn	56	
16	103,161	Hatfield	Thomas	16	
17	103,163	Hayden	Ruth	12	

Data Results SQL

Row Limit: 500 Totals Subtotals

Row limit reached. Results may be incomplete

Users ID	Users Last Name	Users First Name	Users Age	Order Items Total Revenue	
1	103126	George	Elizabeth	12	\$25.00
2	103127	Gibson	Dean	12	\$23.99
3	103128	Gilbert	Annie	12	\$9.99
4	103129	Glass	Andrew	46	\$54.00
5	103130	Gomez	Mary	12	\$70.00
6	103134	Gordon	Lauren	48	\$54.43
7	103135	Graham	Ray	39	\$112.95

Order Items

Search

All Fields In Use

Custom Fields + Add

Distribution Centers

Inventory Items 1

Order Items 1

DIMENSIONS

- Created Date
- Delivered Date
- Inventory Item ID
- Order ID
- Order Item ID
- Returned Date
- Sale Price
- Shipped Date
- Status
- User ID

MEASURES

- Average Sale Price
- Order Count
- Order Item Count
- Total Revenue
- Total Revenue From Completed Orders

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

Now, you can save these results as a standalone report, or Look, for ongoing reference by clicking on the gear icon in the top right, and selecting **Save as a Look**.

500 rows · from cache · 5m ago [Run](#) [Edit](#)

Filters (5) Inventory Items Created Date "this year" Products Brand is any value Users City is any value Users Created [Reset Look](#) | [Explore from Here](#)

ID	Last Name	First Name	Age	Total Revenue
1	George	Elizabeth	12	\$25.00
2	Gibson	Dean	12	\$23.99
3	Gilbert	Annie	12	\$9.99
4	Glass	Andrew	46	\$54.00
5	Gomez	Mary	12	\$70.00
6	Gordon	Lauren	48	\$54.43
7	Graham	Ray	39	\$112.95
8	Green	Anthony	16	\$9.95
9	Greene	Blake	33	\$24.00
10	Gross	George	47	\$132.00
11	Hall	William	30	\$25.00
12	Hancock	Kim	62	\$15.55
13	Hardin	Charles	19	\$25.00
14	Harper	Mary	51	\$6.07
15	Hart	Shawn	56	\$36.99
16	Hatfield	Thomas	16	\$34.55
17	Hayden	Ruth	12	\$32.50
18	Hedbert	Floyd	74	\$
19	Henderson	Denise	37	\$
20	Hendricks	Claire	62	\$
21	Henry	Myrtis	41	\$43.98
22	Hernandez	Brenda	44	\$14.99
23	Hoffman	Sharon	27	\$14.70
24	Holloway	Contessa	58	\$43.44
25	Holt	Judy	52	\$29.99
26	Hooper	Virginia	14	\$39.99
27	Hoover	Matthew	42	\$75.11
28	Hopkins	Michael	31	\$27.30
29	Horn	Stephen	58	\$44.99

Details

Description: None [Edit](#)

Scheduled: No [Create Schedules](#)

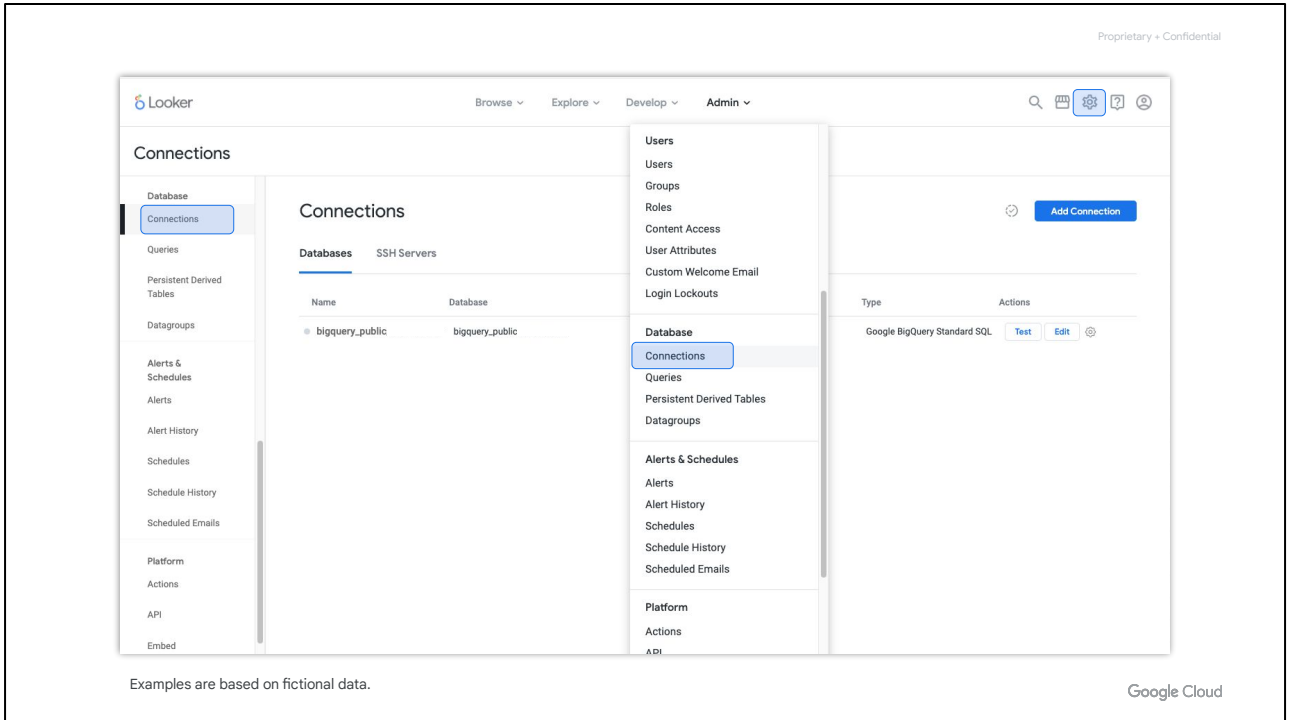
On Dashboards: No [Add To Dashboard](#)

Created by Nick 2021-08-06
Updated by Nick 2021-08-06

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

That was a quick demonstration of the significance and value of LookML for empowering business users to explore and analyze data.



If you're completely new to Looker, there's a fundamental prerequisite to be aware of regarding the underlying data that is used by business users.

A Looker administrator needs to create a connection to a specific data source such as your company's primary database, in order for LookML developers to access and model that data to curate Explores for business users.

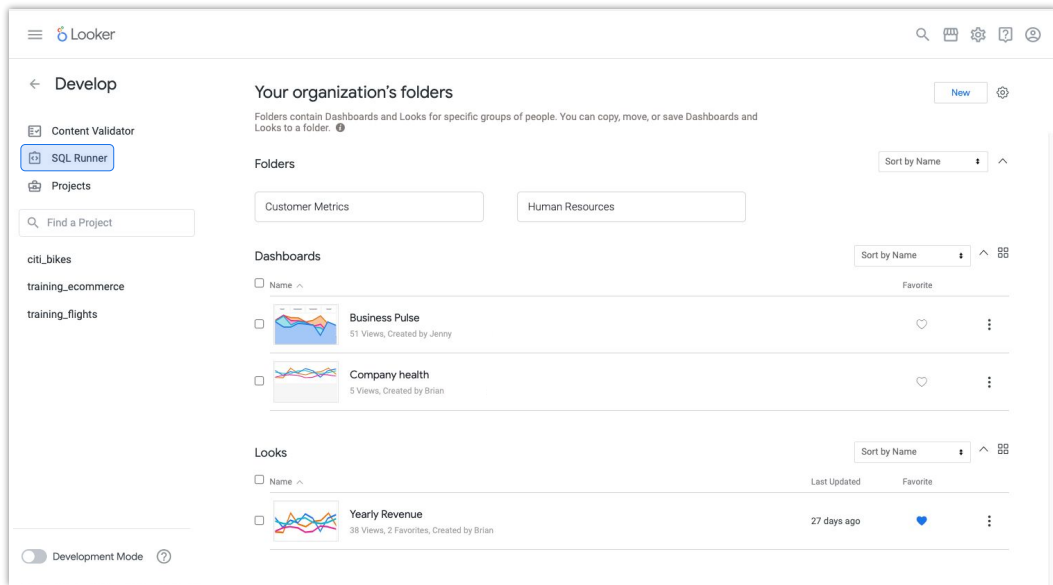
Admins can find setup and configuration details in the [Database configuration details](#) section of Looker's dialects documentation page.

The screenshot shows the Looker interface with the 'Develop' tab selected in the left-hand navigation panel. The main content area is titled 'Your organization's folders' and contains three sections: 'Folders', 'Dashboards', and 'Looks'. Each section has a 'Sort by Name' dropdown menu and a 'New' button. The 'Folders' section shows two folders: 'Customer Metrics' and 'Human Resources'. The 'Dashboards' section shows two dashboards: 'Business Pulse' (42 Views, Created by Jenny) and 'Company health' (3 Views, Created by Brian). The 'Looks' section shows one look: 'Yearly Revenue' (30 Views, 1 Favorite, Created by Brian), with columns for 'Last Updated' (38 hours ago), 'Model' (E-Commerce Training), and 'Explore From Here'. A 'Development Mode' toggle is visible at the bottom left of the interface.

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

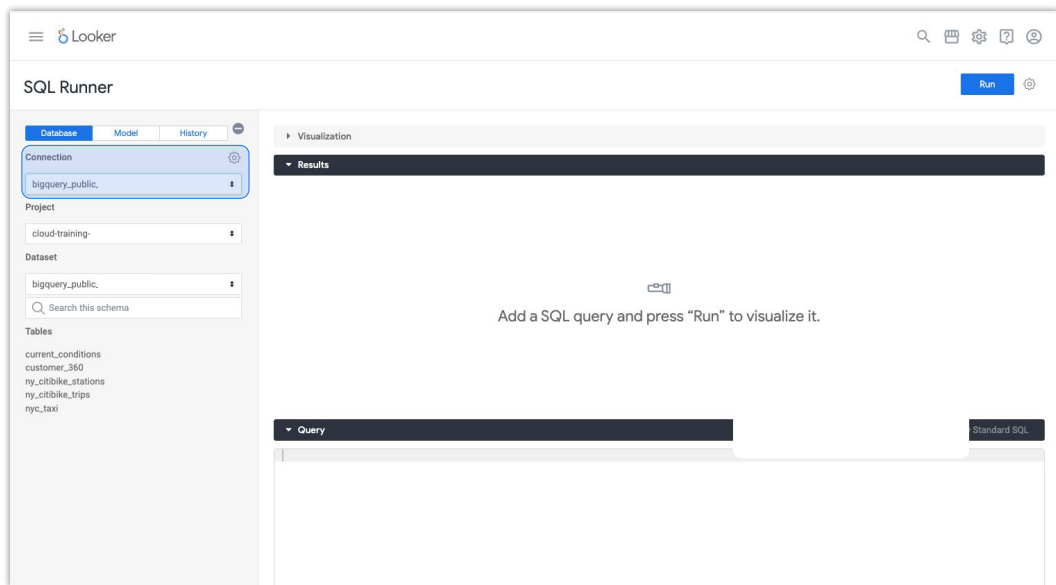
As a LookML developer, you can see available database connections in your organization's Looker instance by clicking on the **Develop** tab in left-side navigation panel of the Looker UI..



Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

... then, selecting **SQL Runner**.



Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

SQL Runner is a console or portal to the databases that have been connected to your organization's Looker instance. You can see all of the database connection options under **Connection**.

Looker

Explore
Develop
Shared folders
Recently Viewed
Favorites
Boards
No boards added yet
Folders
Blocks

Development Mode

Your organization's folders

Folders contain Dashboards and Looks for specific groups of people. You can copy, move, or save Dashboards and Looks to a folder.

Folders

Sort by Name

Customer Metrics Human Resources

Dashboards

Sort by Name Favorite

Name	Last Updated	Model	Favorite
Business Pulse 42 Views, Created by Jenny			
Company health 3 Views, Created by Brian			

Looks

Sort by Name

Name	Last Updated	Model	Favorite
Yearly Revenue 30 Views, 1 Favorite, Created by Brian	38 hours ago	Explore From Here E-Commerce Training	

Examples are based on fictional data.

Google Cloud

Now, after this brief overview of the Looker business user experience, we hope that you are excited to explore Looker further as a LookML developer.

Introduction to Looker and LookML

- 01 Introduction to the Looker Platform
- 02 Understanding your Users' Experience
- 03 [LookML Project Hierarchy](#)
- 04 The Looker Development Environment



To prepare yourself for writing LookML code, there are some key terms and overall project structure that you need to know.

Let's begin with an easy one - what does the "ML" in LookML stand for?

LookML

LookML (Looker Modeling Language) is an abstraction layer for SQL used by developers to tell Looker how to interpret data.

Looker uses the LookML written by developers to generate abstracted SQL queries to the connected database.

```
dimension_group: created {
  type: time
  timeframes: [raw, time, date, week, month, quarter, year]
  sql: ${TABLE}.created_at ;;
}

dimension: status {
  type: string
  sql: ${TABLE}.status ;;
}

dimension: traffic_source {
  type: string
  sql: ${TABLE}.traffic_source ;;
}

dimension: user_id {
  type: number
  sql: ${TABLE}.user_id ;;
}

measure: count {
  type: count
  drill_fields: [id, users.id, users.first_name, users.last_name]
}

measure: count_html {
  type: count
  drill_fields: [id, users.id, users.first_name, users.last_name]
  html:
    {% if value > 400 %}
    <b><p style="color:white; background-color:darkgreen; margin: 0"> {{value}} </p>
    {% elsif vale > 380 %}
    <b><p style="color:white; background-color:goldenrod; margin: 0"> {{value}} </p>
    {% else %}
    <b><p style="color:white; background-color:darkred; margin: 0"> {{value}} </p>
    {% endif %}
  ;;
}
```

Google Cloud

LookML stands for Looker Modeling Language. It is Looker's proprietary language that establishes an abstraction layer for SQL. Developers use LookML to tell Looker what data to use from the connected database and how it should interpret that data.

Specifically, LookML acts as the modeling layer between the connected SQL database and your business users. Looker uses the LookML code written by developers to define how business users interact with a connected database and to construct SQL queries against that particular database.

LookML

Developers use LookML to define:

- Dimensions (data attributes)
- Measures (aggregations)
- Data relationships (e.g. how to join tables)
- Custom tables and fields

```
dimension_group: created {
  type: time
  timeframes: [raw, time, date, week, month, quarter, year]
  sql: ${TABLE}.created_at ;;
}

dimension: status {
  type: string
  sql: ${TABLE}.status ;;
}

dimension: traffic_source {
  type: string
  sql: ${TABLE}.traffic_source ;;
}

dimension: user_id {
  type: number
  sql: ${TABLE}.user_id ;;
}

measure: count {
  type: count
  drill_fields: [id, users.id, users.first_name, users.last_name]
}

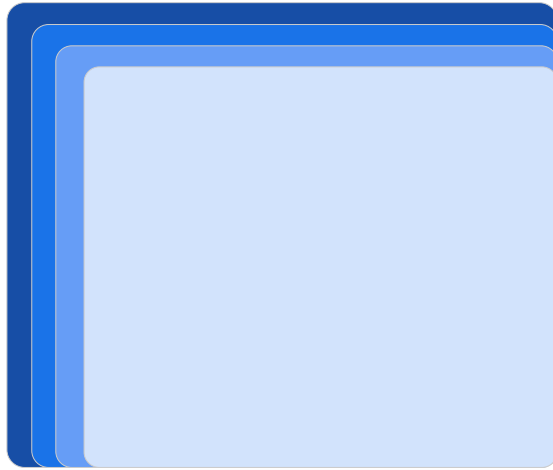
measure: count_html {
  type: count
  drill_fields: [id, users.id, users.first_name, users.last_name]
  html:
    {% if value > 400 %}
    <b><p style="color:white; background-color:darkgreen; margin: 0"> {{value}} </p>
    {% elsif vale > 380 %}
    <b><p style="color:white; background-color:goldenrod; margin: 0"> {{value}} </p>
    {% else %}
    <b><p style="color:white; background-color:darkred; margin: 0"> {{value}} </p>
    {% endif %}
  ;;
}
```

Google Cloud

Developers use LookML to define many items from the connected SQL database including data attributes called dimensions, aggregates of dimensions called measures, data relationships such as how to join tables, and custom tables and fields.

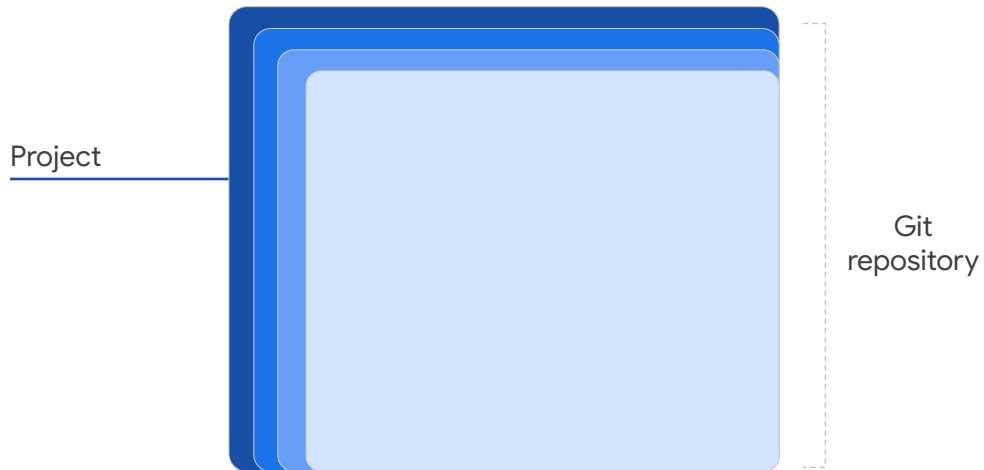
A key concept of LookML to remember is: If it's possible in your SQL dialect, it should be possible in Looker. If you can go to your database console and hand-write a **SELECT** statement that does something in the database, you can also code LookML that Looker can use to accomplish the same task.

Hierarchy of LookML objects



For full comprehension of the key LookML terms, developers need to understand where each object fits into the overall hierarchy of a LookML project.

Hierarchy of LookML objects: Projects



The highest level is the LookML project itself, which is a library of self-contained LookML code. Because Looker uses Git for version control, a best practice is for each project to map one-to-one with a dedicated Git repository.

Projects

A project is the highest-level LookML object and is essentially a standalone library of code containing one or more data models.

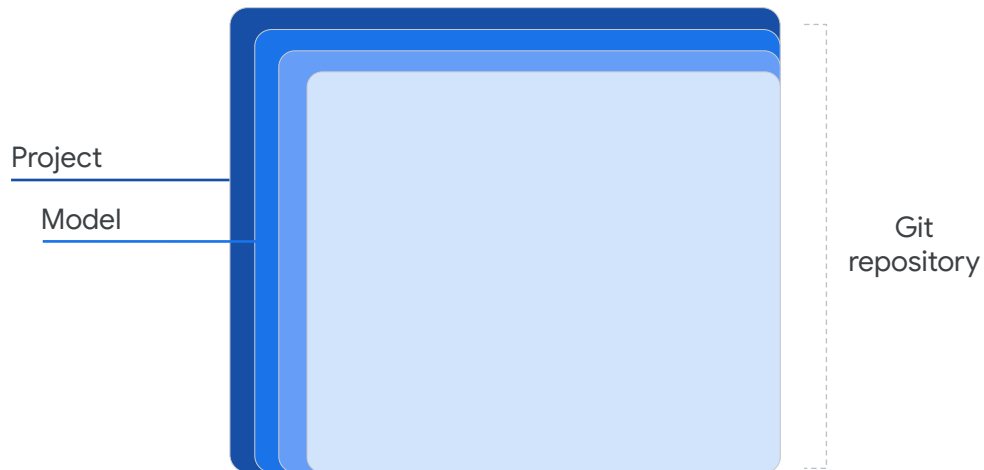
Projects should map 1:1 to a Git repository.

LookML Projects	
Project	Models
qwiklabs-ecommerce	training_ecommerce
qwiklabs-flights	ecommerce faa looker_basics

A project is essentially a library of code for a specific data source or database connection and contains one or more data models. You can think of each project as an semi-independent or mini-instance of Looker, and each project should map one-to-one to a Git repository for version control.

Data that cannot be joined together should be separated into different projects because there is no relation to be made across the data.

Hierarchy of LookML objects: Models



The next level in the hierarchy are models. As previously mentioned, a LookML project is composed of one or more models.

A model specifies a database connection and the data views that utilize that connection.

Models

Model files contain database connections and definitions of Explores (or pre-joined views).

Models can be used to:

- Separate and organize Explores by business area.
- Designate user access to Explores.

```
connection: "events_ecommerce"
include: "*.view"

explore: users {
  label: "Users Backgrounds"
}

explore: inventory_items {
  group_label: "Inventory Analysis"
  join: products {
    type: left_outer
    sql_on: ${inventory_items.product_id} = ${products.id} ;;
    relationship: many_to_one
  }

  join: inventory_facts {
    view_label: "Inventory Items"
    type: left_outer
    sql_on: ${inventory_items.product_id} = ${inventory_facts.product_id} ;;
    relationship: many_to_one
  }

  join: distribution_centers {
    type: left_outer
    sql_on: ${products.distribution_center_id} = ${distribution_centers.id} ;;
    relationship: many_to_one
  }

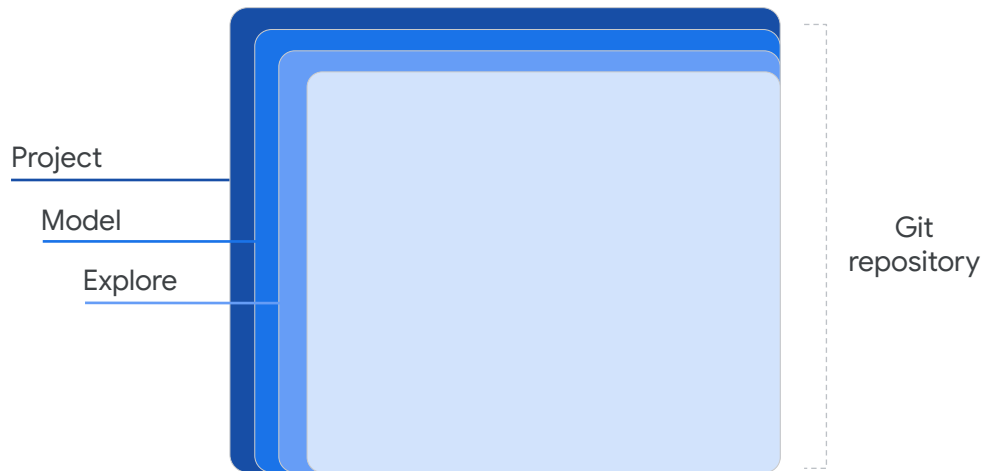
  join: order_items {
    type: left_outer
    sql_on: ${inventory_items.id} = ${order_items.inventory_item_id} ;;
    relationship: one_to_many
  }
}
```

Google Cloud

Specifically, a model file is used to define:

- The database connection.
- The view files that are accessible to this model.
- The Explores (which are pre-joined views) and their join logic.

Hierarchy of LookML objects: Explores



Next on the hierarchy are Explores, which are sets of pre-joined views organized by business area defined within the model files.

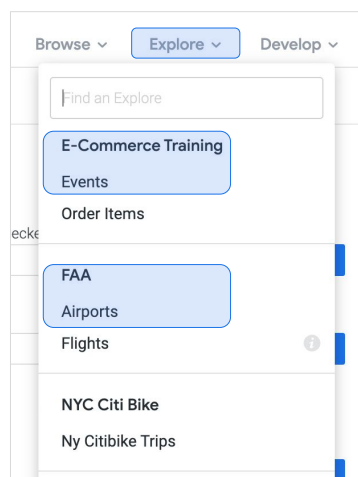
For example, you might create a model file containing multiple Explores pertaining to customer purchases.

Explores

Explores are composed of one or more views joined together to target a specific business question.

Example Explores:

- Events under the E-commerce Training heading
- Airports under the FAA heading

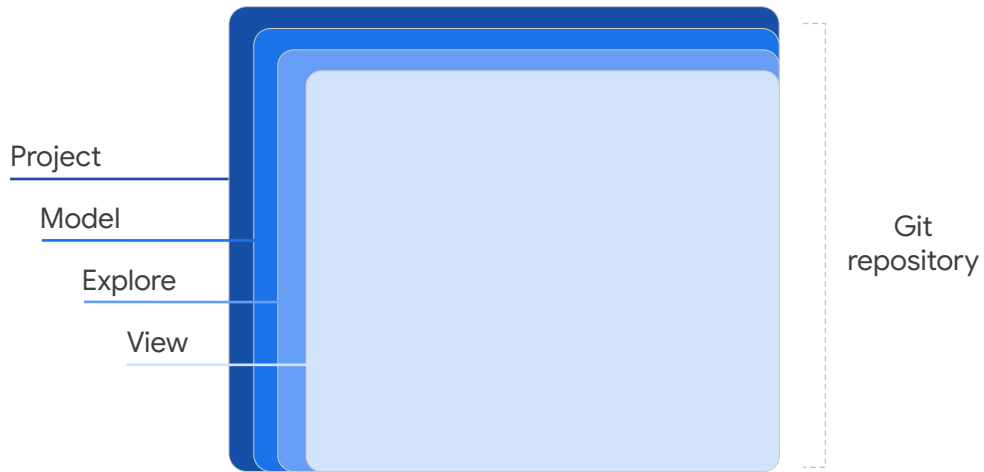


Explores are the central component of Looker that allow business and data analysts to conduct self-serve data exploration, analysis, and visualization.

Within a model file, developers define Explores that join one or more views together to target specific questions that business users may have. Business users then use the predefined Explores to run queries and create reports and visualizations to answer their questions.

So you can think of an Explore as a predefined set of tables that would frequently be joined for business inquiries and use cases.

Hierarchy of LookML objects: Views



Next, the views that are joined in the Explores represent the underlying database tables.

Views

Views represent the underlying database tables and are the building blocks of Explores defined in the model file.

View files contain definitions for dimensions and measures.

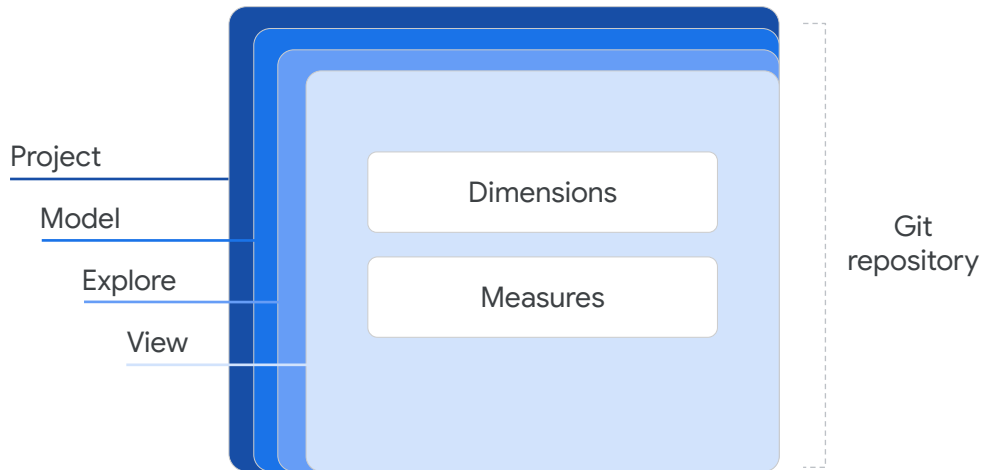
```
users.view
1 view: users {
2   sql_table_name: public.users ;;
3
4   dimension: id {
5     primary_key: yes
6     type: number
7     sql: ${TABLE}.id ;;
8   }
9
10  dimension: age {
11    type: number
12    sql: ${TABLE}.age ;;
13  }
14
15  dimension: city {
16    type: string
17    sql: ${TABLE}.city ;;
18  }
19
20  dimension: country {
21    type: string
22    map_layer_name: countries
23    sql: ${TABLE}.country ;;
24  }
```

Views are the building blocks of Explores used by business users.

Within view files, developers can define the dimensions (or data attributes) and measures (or aggregations of attributes) to provide to business users in the Explore interface.

The view names that are joined to create an Explore are also the headers that business users see in the Explore. For example, in an Explore called **Order Items**, business users may see the **Users** view, which contains dimensions on users, such as their age and city of residence, and measures, such as their total purchases.

Hierarchy of LookML objects: Dimensions and measures

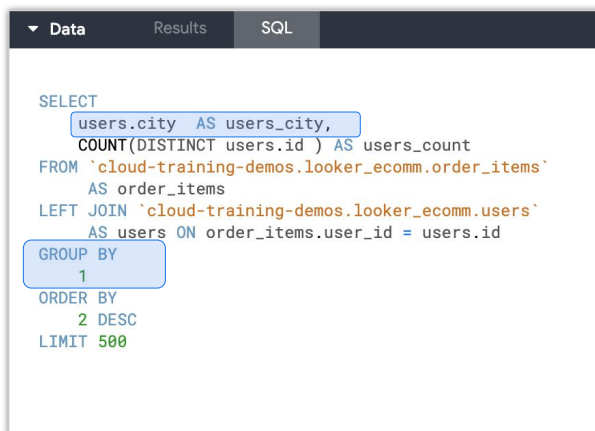


Last, but not least on the hierarchy, are the dimensions and measures defined in the view files.

Dimensions

Dimensions represent the fields or columns of a database table and are defined in view files.

They are always in the **GROUP BY** statement of any SQL query generated by Looker.



```
SELECT
  users.city AS users_city,
  COUNT(DISTINCT users.id ) AS users_count
FROM `cloud-training-demos.looker_ecomm.order_items`
  AS order_items
LEFT JOIN `cloud-training-demos.looker_ecomm.users`
  AS users ON order_items.user_id = users.id
GROUP BY
  1
ORDER BY
  2 DESC
LIMIT 500
```

Dimensions are data attributes and represent the fields or column of a database table.

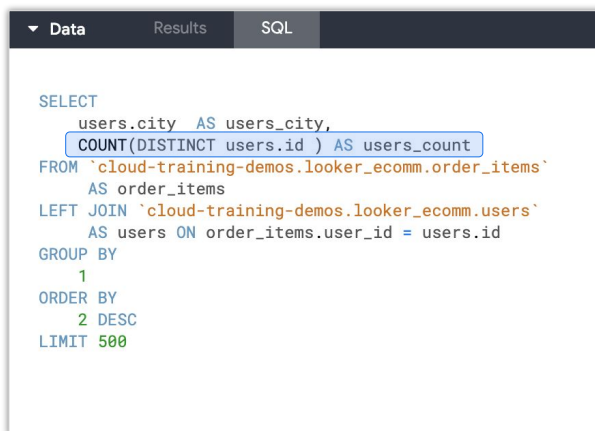
When the view files are generated from a table by Looker, dimensions are automatically created for any columns that already exist within your database tables. You can also create additional dimensions that would serve as logical representations of table columns.

All dimensions appear in the **SELECT** and **GROUP BY** clause of a SQL statement that is generated by Looker based on the business user's selections in the Explore.

Measures

Measures are aggregates of dimensions and are defined in view files.

They appear as aggregate functions in the **SELECT** statement of any SQL query generated by Looker.

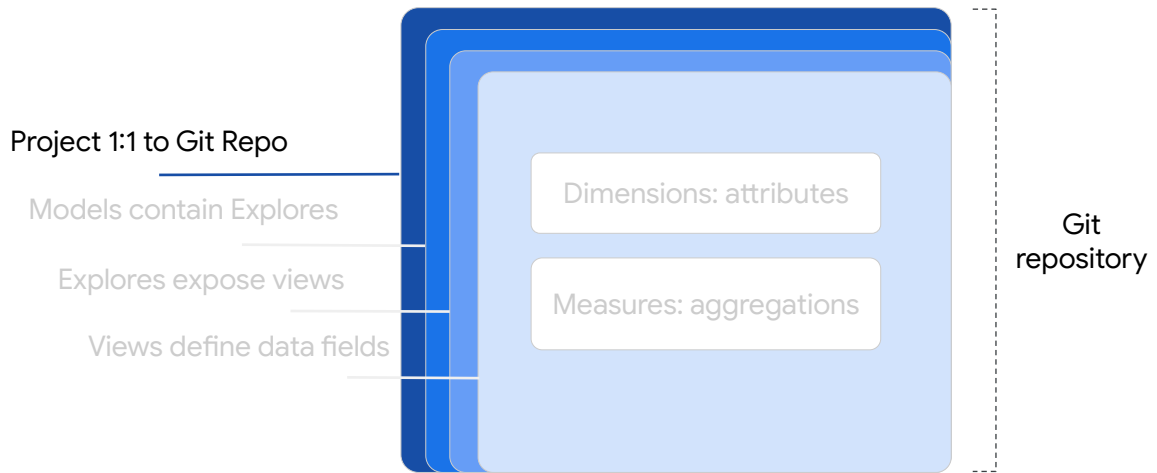


```
SELECT
  users.city AS users_city,
  COUNT(DISTINCT users.id ) AS users_count
FROM `cloud-training-demos.looker_ecomm.order_items`
  AS order_items
LEFT JOIN `cloud-training-demos.looker_ecomm.users`
  AS users ON order_items.user_id = users.id
GROUP BY
  1
ORDER BY
  2 DESC
LIMIT 500
```

Measures are aggregates of dimensions and do not live explicitly in your database tables. They must be created using LookML. They aggregate dimensions into values like sums or counts.

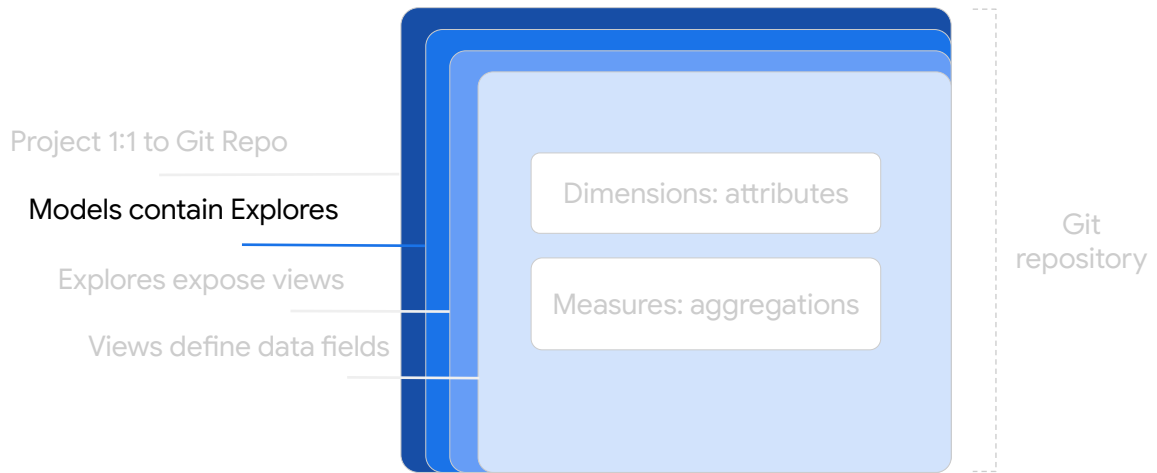
Note that they do not appear in the **GROUP BY** statement of the SQL generated by Looker. Instead, they depend on dimensions to determine that grouping, so they appear as aggregate functions in the **SELECT** statement of the SQL query.

Hierarchy of LookML objects



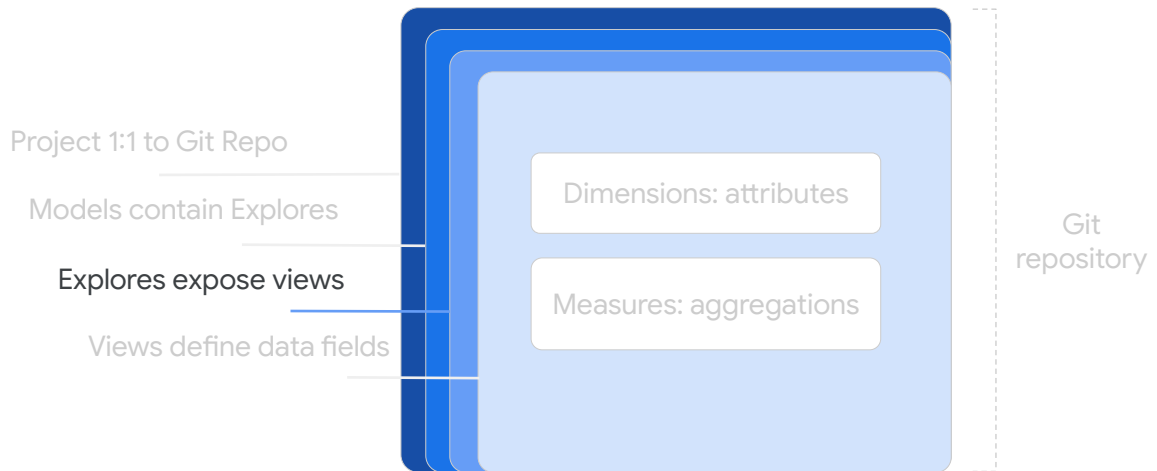
To recap, a LookML project is a library of code that models a data source and should map 1:1 to a Git repository for version control.

Hierarchy of LookML objects



Projects contain model files, which define the Explores that should be packaged together, how those Explores work, and which views are joined in which Explores.

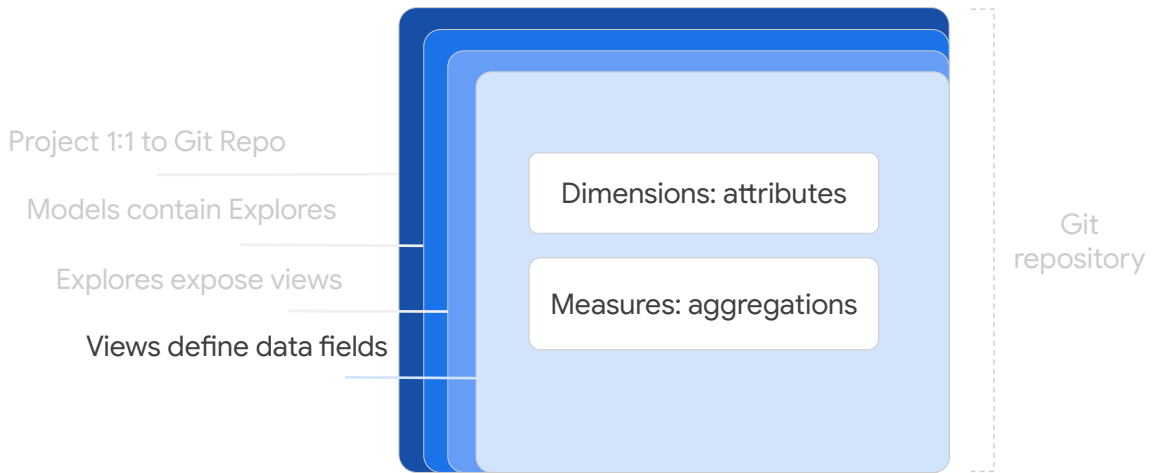
Hierarchy of LookML objects



View files describe database tables or logical representations of them and are joined together to define Explores in the model files.

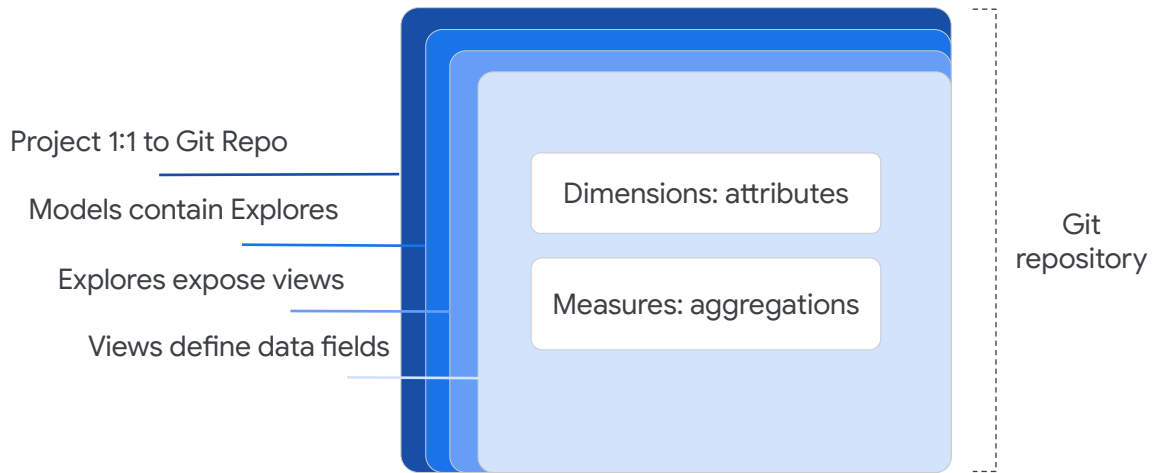
Views are then accessed by business users through the Explore to query data and create reports and visualizations.

Hierarchy of LookML objects



Dimensions and measures are defined within view files. Dimensions are attributes of data and represent fields or columns in the database tables, while measures are aggregates of dimensions such as a count or sum.

Hierarchy of LookML objects



After this introduction to the LookML key terms and hierarchy, you are now ready to start exploring your organization's Looker instance as a LookML developer.

Introduction to Looker and LookML

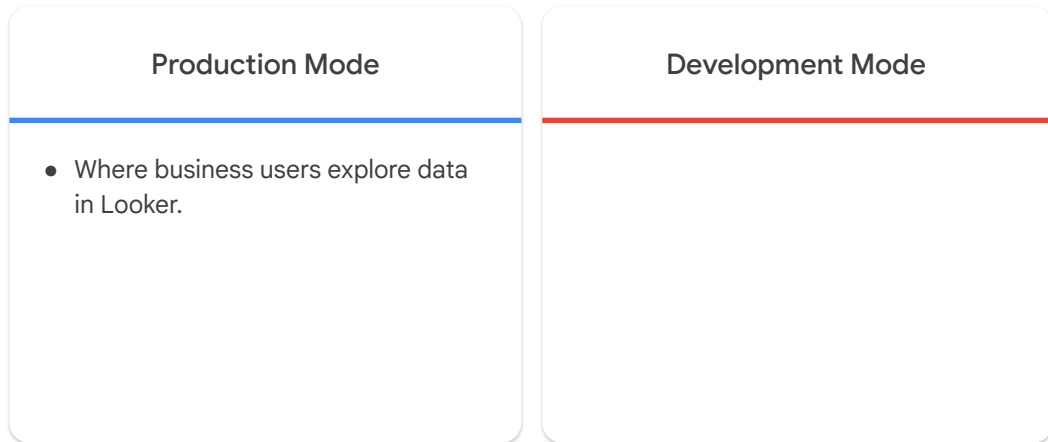
- 01 Introduction to the Looker Platform
- 02 Understanding your Users' Experience
- 03 LookML Project Hierarchy
- 04 **The Looker Development Environment**



Looker provides an integrated development environment (IDE) that developers can use to modify existing and to model new dimensions, measures and Explores for business users to employ in their data analysis approaches.

In this section, we will explore the overall Looker development environment and review the key components for your workflow as a LookML developer.

Production Mode vs. Development Mode



In Looker, business users interact with and experience the Looker instance in production mode...

Production Mode vs. Development Mode

Production Mode

- Where business users explore data in Looker.

Development Mode

- Where developers make and test changes.

... while developers make changes and test new features through development mode.

Production Mode vs. Development Mode

Production Mode

- Where business users explore data in Looker.
- The latest production version of the data model is accessed by all users; LookML files are read-only.

Development Mode

- Where developers make and test changes.

Production mode uses the latest production version of Looker. Everyone using a Looker instance in production mode accesses its projects, Explores, and content in the same state.

LookML project files are read-only in this mode.

Production Mode vs. Development Mode

Production Mode

- Where business users explore data in Looker.
- The latest production version of the data model is accessed by all users; LookML files are read-only.

Development Mode

- Where developers make and test changes.
- A separate version of the data model that only the developer can see and edit.

As a LookML developer, you can use development mode to make changes to projects without affecting anyone else.

Development mode accesses a completely separate version of your project files that only you can see and edit.

Production Mode vs. Development Mode

Production Mode

- Where business users explore data in Looker.
- The latest production version of the data model is accessed by all users; LookML files are read-only.
- In Git terms, production is the main branch.

Development Mode

- Where developers make and test changes.
- A separate version of the data model that only the developer can see and edit.

If you are familiar with Git, production mode uses the main branch of the Git repository of the LookML project...

Production Mode vs. Development Mode

Production Mode

- Where business users explore data in Looker.
- The latest production version of the data model is accessed by all users; LookML files are read-only.
- In Git terms, production is the main branch.

Development Mode

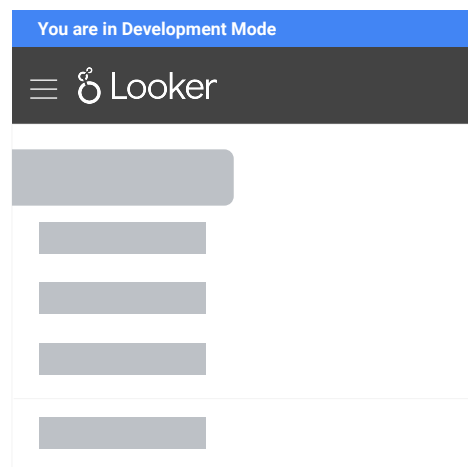
- Where developers make and test changes.
- A separate version of the data model that only the developer can see and edit.
- In Git terms, development is handled by a separate branch.

... while development mode uses a separate branch created from the main branch.

After testing, changes made by LookML developers in the separate branch can be merged into production, so that all users of the Looker instance can access the updates.

Development Mode

Development Mode allows developers to make and test LookML changes without affecting other users.



By default, LookML projects open in Production Mode. This means that they show the latest version of the project that has been merged to production.

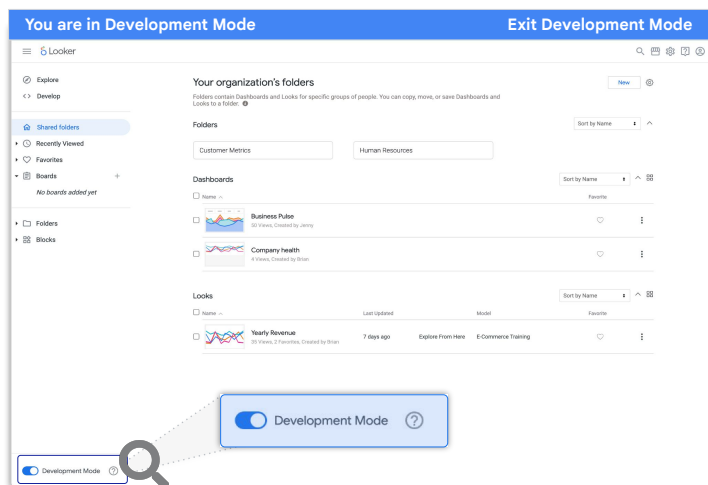
To make changes in your LookML projects, you need to enable Development Mode, which is frequently referred to as “dev mode.”

When you are working in development mode, Looker will display a blue banner at top of the Looker User Interface (or UI) with a message that you are in development mode.

Enter Development Mode

Developers can use the toggle button at the bottom left-side of the Looker User Interface to enter Development Mode.

Keyboard shortcut:
Control+Shift+D



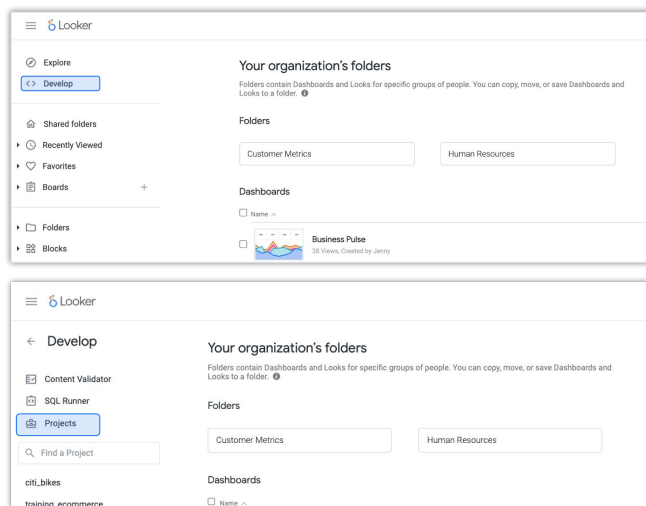
As a LookML developer, you have several options to enter development mode.

One option is to use the toggle button at the bottom left-side of the Looker UI to enter **Development Mode**. You can also use the same toggle button to exit **Development Mode** and return to production mode.

There is also a keyboard shortcut: Control+Shift+D.

Enter Development Mode

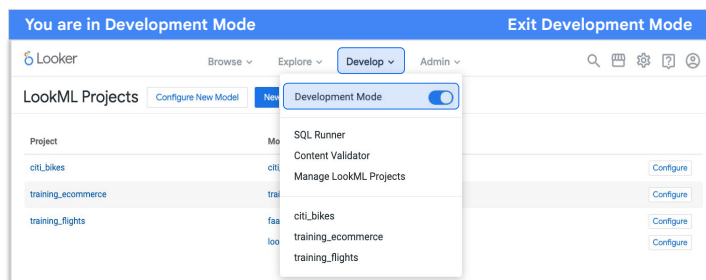
On the top left-side of the Looker User Interface, click on Develop, and then select Projects.



Alternatively, at the top left-side of the Looker User Interface, you can click on **Develop** menu to see the options, and then select **Projects**.

Enter Development Mode

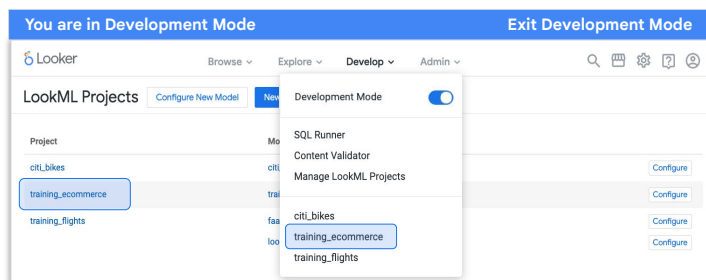
On the Projects page, click on Develop from the top menu and use the toggle button for Development Mode.



Then, once you are on the **Projects** page, you can turn on Development Mode by clicking on the **Develop** option from the top menu bar and using the toggle button for **Development Mode**.

Integrated development environment (IDE)

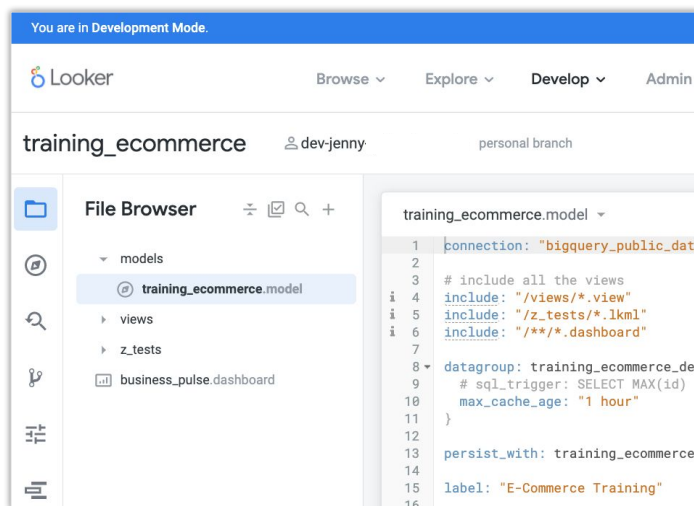
On the Projects page, you can also click on a project name to open it within the Looker Integrated development environment (IDE).



From the **Projects** page, you can also click on a specific project name such as **training_ecommerce** to open it within the Looker Integrated development environment (IDE).

Integrated development environment (IDE)

Development in Looker takes place inside the integrated development environment (IDE).



Google Cloud

An IDE is an industry term for an application in which software engineers or developers can write and test their code.

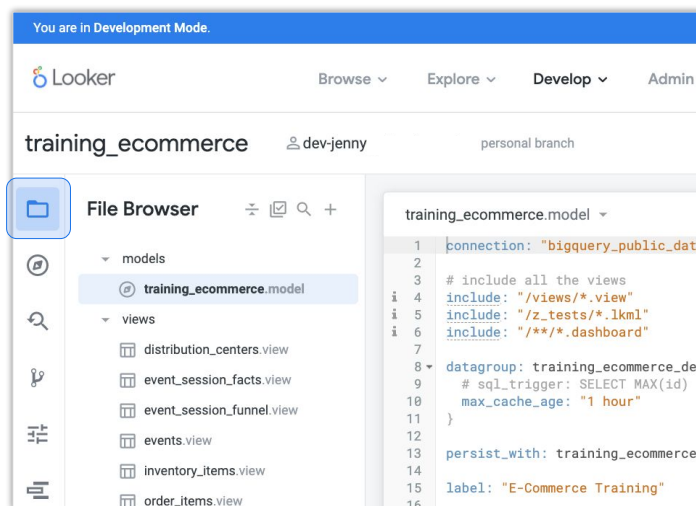
Looker has its own built-in IDE in which developers can write LookML.

The Looker IDE displays six navigation options on the left-side panel. We'll walk through each option to understand the functionality that it provides for LookML developers.

Integrated development environment (IDE):

File browser

The file browser lists the project files in the folder hierarchy and can be used to navigate to a specific file.



Google Cloud

The first option, represented by the folder icon, is the file browser. This displays all the LookML project files in the folder hierarchy.

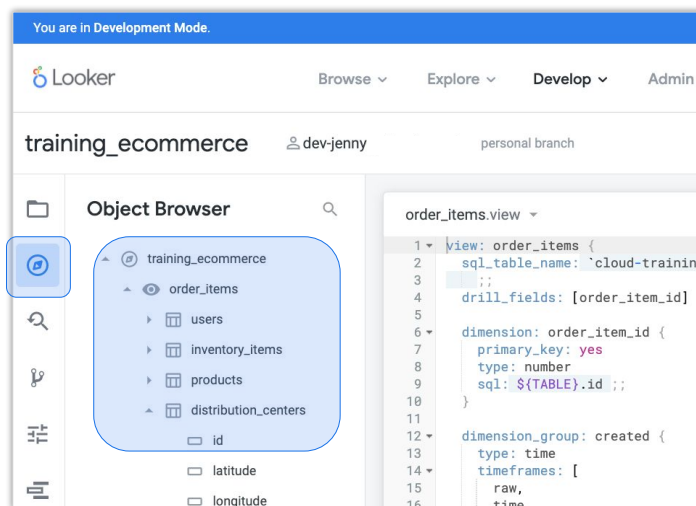
Depending on the complexity of the project, you could see dozens or even hundreds of files, within many folders and levels of subfolders.

At your company, with your own development team, you can decide on any kind of folder structure that would be the most intuitive for your workflows.

Integrated development environment (IDE):

Object browser

The object browser displays all of the objects in the project and can be used to navigate to the LookML for a specific object.



Google Cloud

The second option, represented by the compass icon, is the object browser. The object browser organizes project files by LookML object type in the project.

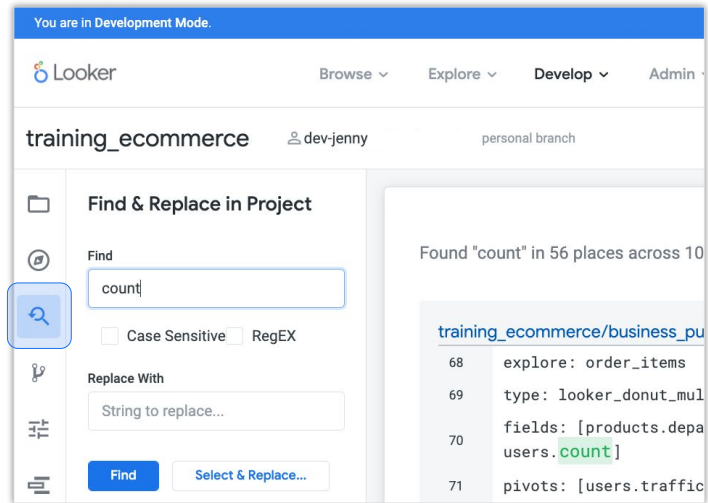
Each model can be expanded to show the Explores within. Furthermore, each Explore can be expanded to reveal the views that are joined together, and each view can be expanded to display the dimensions and measures.

This is really useful when you need to find a specific field or view being used within an Explore, especially if you have many similarly named objects in the model. You may also need to “visualize,” in a sense, in how many Explores the same view is being used, or which models have the same or similar Explores.

Integrated development environment (IDE):

Find & replace

Use the find-and-replace function to search for or replace text in all of your project files.

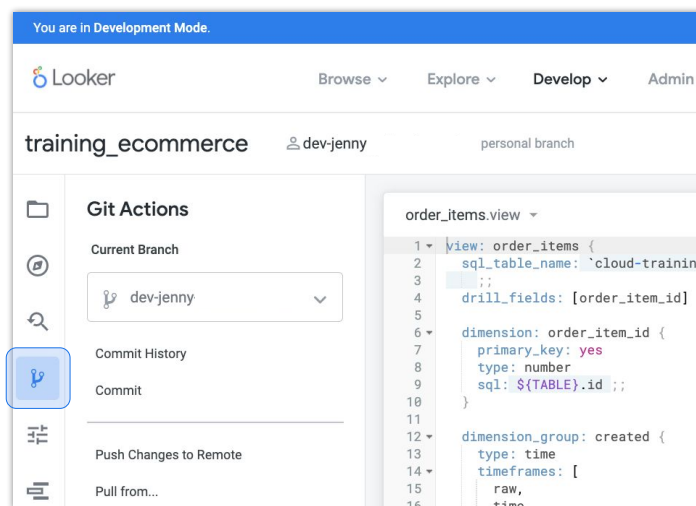


Next is the find-and-replace option. You can search for a specific word like “count” and see where and how many times this term appears throughout all the files in your entire project.

You can also batch-replace all instances of a text string with something else.

Integrated development environment (IDE): Git actions

All Git actions available to you within a project are listed under Git Actions.



Google Cloud

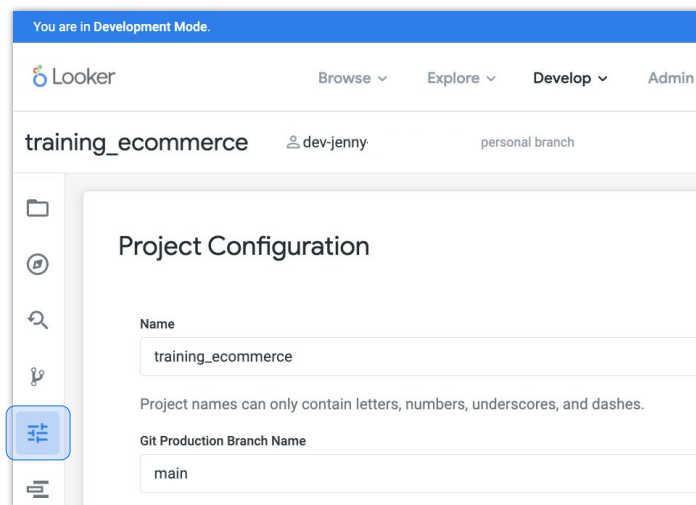
The fourth option in the IDE shows the available Git actions.

These options allow you to switch between Git branches, view past commits by yourself and fellow developers, view the project on GitHub, or whichever Git provider you use at your company, and more.

Integrated development environment (IDE):

Project settings

Under Project settings, you can view the configuration of a project. Only Looker admins can change these settings.

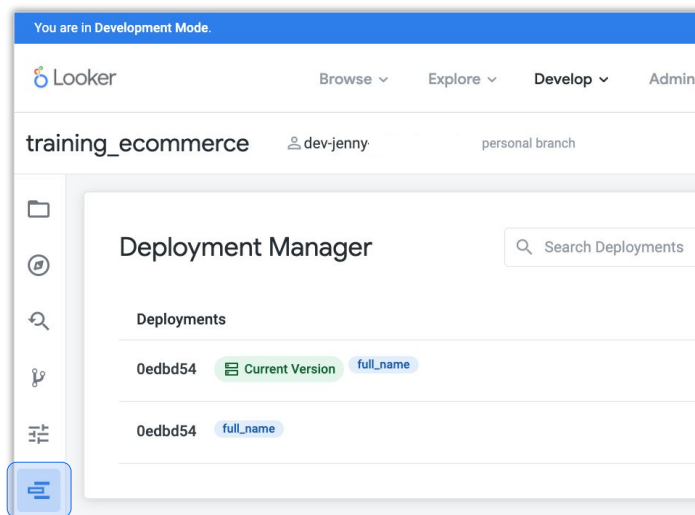


The next option displays the project settings. As a LookML developer, you can see the configurations, but only a Looker admin can change them.

For example, admins can specify what is or isn't required to commit code, enable pull requests if your team prefers to do code reviews before deploying to production, change the Git connection, and more.

Integrated development environment (IDE): Deployment manager

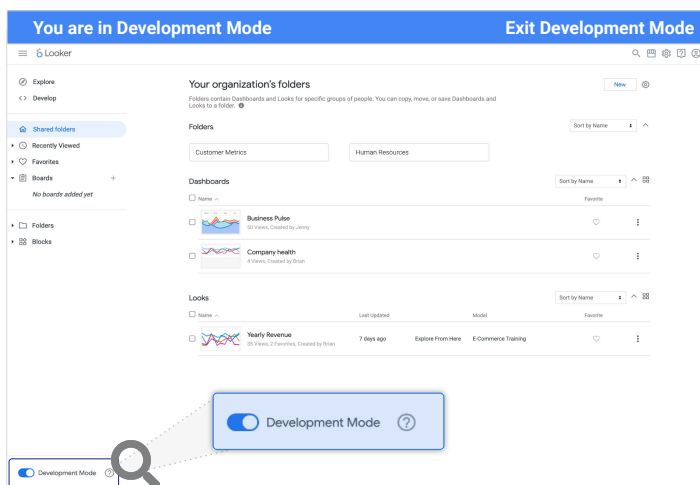
Recent changes that have been deployed to the production environment are listed under Deployment manager.



The last option is the deployment manager.

This page lets you see the recent changes that have been deployed to the production environment. Additional details about the changes, such as the user and date associated with the change, are also available on this page.

Production Mode vs. Development Mode



In summary, as a LookML developer, you can make and test changes in your organization's Looker instance in development mode, without impacting the production environment.

When working in your organization's Looker instance, be mindful of whether you are currently in production mode or development mode. The Looker IDE and Explore menus will offer a few different features and options in production vs. development mode. Depending on your permissions and local code differences, you may even see different lists of projects, project files, and Explores.

With this understanding of the differences between production and development mode, we hope that you have fun exploring the LookML projects in your organization's Looker instance!

Summary

Introduction to the Looker Platform

Understanding your users' experience

LookML project hierarchy

The Looker development environment

In this module, we started with an overview of the Looker platform and architecture to understand how Looker can play a key role in your organization's data workflows.

Summary

Introduction to the Looker Platform

[Understanding your users' experience](#)

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Then, we completed a walkthrough of the Looker User Interface to help you understand how your business users leverage Looker to explore and analyze data.

Summary

Introduction to the Looker Platform

Understanding your users' experience

[LookML project hierarchy](#)

The Looker development environment

Next, we reviewed the LookML project hierarchy and discussed the role that each key component plays in the overall LookML structure.

Summary

Introduction to the Looker Platform

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LookML project hierarchy

[The Looker development environment](#)

Last, we explored the Looker development environment and reviewed its key features for your workflow as a LookML developer.



In the next module, we will expand on these concepts to begin writing LookML code to model dimensions and measures, the key data components used by business users to analyze and visualize data.

See you there!