Writing Queries: Rules of Thumb

- Start with the FROM clause. Which table(s) do you need?
- If you need more than one table, determine the necessary join conditions.
  - for N tables, you typically need N – 1 join conditions
  - is an outer join needed? – i.e., do you want unmatched tuples?
- Determine if a GROUP BY clause is needed.
  - are you performing computations involving subgroups?
- Determine any other conditions that are needed.
  - if they rely on aggregate functions, put in a HAVING clause
  - otherwise, add to the WHERE clause
  - is a subquery needed?
- Fill in the rest of the query: SELECT, ORDER BY?
  - is DISTINCT needed?