

Dialog® Search Basics Quick Reference Card

Dialog has been the leader in providing information in electronic format for more than 30 years. Because it was created to meet the needs of professional researchers, Dialog offers unparalleled breadth and depth of content, along with precision commands and sophisticated retrieval features.

COMMAND	FUNCTION	EXAMPLE
begin or b	Specifies the database(s) to be searched. Any combination of database numbers and OneSearch® categories can be used. Begin files using the CURRENT feature to restrict the retrieval to records added this year plus 1 (or CURRENT 2-CURRENT5 to add more years to your search).	b 15 b biotech,2 b medicine not 155 b 9,16,148 current
expand or e	Verifies the spelling or format of a term, shows a list of alphabetically similar entries, and can verify field terms. After using expand , select appropriate e-numbers to create a set. Always expand on company and individuals' names.	e co=air products e au=ellis, b e dt= (i.e., for complete list of document types)
select or s select steps or ss	Creates a set of records that contain the term(s). You can qualify search term(s) to specific fields or publication years. When select steps (ss) is used, each search term is retrieved in a separate set so that it is easier to combine the various parts in subsequent sets. Use select to combine search sets.	s nanotechnology s s1/ab,ti,de,2009 s e4 or e5 ss toxicity or poison? s s1 and s2 and s3
type or t set#/format#/items	Displays the designated search results. If no range is specified, only the first record will display. If no set number is specified, the last set created will be used. Can use words instead of format numbers, or field display codes, such as "au" (author) instead of, or in addition to, format numbers. Use "k," or "KWIC," to display keyword in context.	t s1/free/all t s7/19/1-5 t s3/ti,au,so/1-10,21 t 3/8,k/all
save temp	Saves the search strategy temporarily for seven days at no charge. If desired, give the search a name (1 to 30 characters) for easier recall. If no name is specified, the system assigns a name.	save temp hemo (saves Temp SearchSave "hemo")
execute steps or exs	Executes a saved search in the designated database(s). Default is the last search saved. To execute a prior search, include the search name.	exs exs hemo
idpat	Identifies duplicates in a multifile patent search and provides a menu option to create a subset of primary and non-duplicate records.	idpat (then follow menu)
remove duplicates or rd	Removes duplicate records from a multifile search in non-patent databases.	rd
display sets or ds	Displays the sets previously created. May also be used with the from command to see which files contain hits in a multifile search.	ds ds from each

BOOLEAN OPERATORS	
Connector	Function
and	Use and to retrieve all records that contain all of the search terms. s hdtv and cable s s2 and s5
or	Use or to search for synonyms. s game or toy
not	Use not to eliminate a search concept, or to limit by date. s robotics not automotive s s4 not py<2007

PROXIMITY CONNECTORS	
Connector	Function
(w) ()	Requires that search terms be adjacent to one another and appear in the order designated. (Use (w) to replace embedded punctuation such as hyphens.) <i>Note: () is the same as (w)</i> s solar (w) panel; s non () stick
(n)	Requires that the search terms be adjacent but in any order: s board (n) game
(#w) or (#n)	Allows up to the specified number of words to appear between search terms. Word order is controlled by the (n) or (w) operator. s digital (3w) television; s automotive (5n) innovation?
(s)	Requires that search terms be in the same subfield unit as defined by the database, or in the same paragraph in fulltext files. s infrared (s) satellite

Truncation (?)

- A "?" allows any number of characters following the designated stem: **s toxic?** retrieves *toxic*, *toxicity*, etc.
- To control truncation length, use multiple question marks to specify how many characters may follow the stem: **s electric??** retrieves *electric* or *electrical*, but not *electricity*.
- For plurals use a space between question marks: **s method? ?** retrieves *method* or *methods*, but not *methodology*.
- For internal variations, use a question mark for each character: **s l?mon** retrieves *limon* or *lemon*.

Precision Search Tips – Using Database Fields

(**Expand** is recommended on those fields that are bolded)

<i>Prefix</i>	<i>Field Name</i>	<i>Example</i>
/ti	Title	s purine(w)nucleoside/ti
/de	Descriptor	s artificial(w)intelligence/de
/ab	Abstract	s acid(w)fume?/ab
co=, /co	Company Name (phrase indexed co= or word indexed /co depending on database). Always expand on co=.	e co=dow chemical s sunoco/co
au=	Author	e au=hettinger, b
dt=	Document Type (expand dt= to get a complete list of search options)	s dt=article
py=	Publication Year (The colon acts as OR for a range of years.)	s py=2007:2009 s s1/2009 s s3 and py=2009
pd=	Publication Date (YYYYMMDD)	s pd=20060101:20091231

Use Database Limit Features

(Check Bluesheets for database-specific limits for more precise searching)

<i>Suffix</i>	<i>Field Name</i>	<i>Example</i>
/eng	Restrict to English-language articles	s s3/eng
/fulltext	In fulltext databases, restrict to only fulltext records	s s5/fulltext
/long	In fulltext databases, restrict to word count of 1,000 or more	s s3/long
/abs	In scientific literature, limits to records with abstracts present	s s1/abs
/conf	In scientific literature, limits to records containing conference information	s s4/conf
/yyyy	Limit to publication year or range of years	s s3/2009 s s3/2007:2009
/maj	Limits descriptor terms to major focus of the article	s asthma/maj
/usa	Limits to articles focused on the United States	s s1/usa
/ultimate	Limits to company ultimate locations in D&B databases	s s1/ultimate
/sales	Limits to records with sales data in D&B databases	s s4/sales
/active	Limits to active trademarks	s s7/active
/image	Restricts to records with images present	s s5/image

Basic Output Options

(Always verify formats on the Bluesheets or enter help fmt nnn)

<i># (Format)</i>	<i>Record Content</i>
3 (Medium)	Bibliographic citation
6 (Free)	Title and publication year or date
8 (Short)	Title and indexing
7 (Long)	Bibliographic citation and abstract or text
9 (Full*)	Full record
19 (Full + image)	Full record plus an image where available (e.g. some patent and trademark files; drug pipeline databases)
K (KWIC)	Key Word in Context

*In files with images, the Full format is usually the full record plus the image, e.g., Format 19.

For brief summaries of the most common Dialog commands, see the *Dialog Command Language Pocket Guide* at <http://support.dialog.com/searchaids/dialog/pocketguide/>.

For descriptions and examples of all of the commands available for use on Dialog, see *Successful Searching with Dialog Command Language* at <http://support.dialog.com/searchaids/success/>.

Power Commands

Command	Function	Example
rank	Performs statistical analysis of retrieval on any phrase-indexed field in an existing search set. Shows eight line items at a time. Use rank <field> cont to view a continuous display.	rank co rank de rank au cont
sort	Rearranges the records in a set on a field of your choosing; defaults to ascending order. Typical sortable fields include sales, publication dates, authors, titles, journal names (e.g., sort all the records in Set 5 by publication date in descending order).	sort s5/all/pd,d sort s1/all/ti sort s4/all/hits
map	Extracts data in a field and creates a SearchSave that you can execute in any file; defaults to the last set and creates a SearchSave. For example, map patent numbers in a search in <i>Derwent World Patents Index</i> ® (File 351) that you can then execute in U.S. Patents Fulltext (File 654).	map pn temp map anpr t map syrn t
add	Add another database(s) and repeat the search without beginning again.	add 16,148
repeat	After adding files, execute the search again, now including data from the new files.	repeat

Online Help Commands (nnn is database number)

help fmt nnn	Lists available formats by database number.	help field nnn	Lists available index fields for searching.
help rates nnn	Shows a list of the rates for each format.	help map nnn	Lists available fields for map in a file.

DIALINDEX®

(Use DIALINDEX to scan one or more clusters of databases to determine which databases contain information on your topic.)

Command	Description	Example
begin 411	Connects to File 411 (DIALINDEX)	b 411
set files or sf*	Specifies the databases to be scanned for your search terms. The file list can be pre-defined categories, file numbers, or a combination.	sf all sf prodinfo sf papersmj sf allcommon
select or s	You may have only one select statement in DIALINDEX, so place parentheses around ORed terms when using OR and AND in the search statement. You can expand to view indexing, but you cannot select from the expand in File 411.	s trauma? and vertebra?(10n)(bulge? or soft(tissue()injur?)
save temp	You may name the search; otherwise the system assigns a name.	save temp save temp zorbas
rank files or rf*	Displays a list of databases ranked by number of records identified.	rf
begin or b <files> separated by commas	Begins the file(s) you wish to search up to the maximum of 60 files. To search all files in which records were retrieved in File 411: b hits .	b 9,148 b n1:n5 b hits
execute steps or exs or execute or ex	Executes the search that was saved in File 411. While still online, the default search is the last one saved. If executing a prior search, or after logging off and logging back on, include the name: exs zorbas .	exs (recreates sets based on the original search) ex (creates a single set for all of the saved search terms)
remove duplicates or rd	Removes the duplicate records from the set. Always use when searching multiple non-patent databases.	rd
display sets or ds	Displays the search history since the last begin command.	ds
type or t	Displays records from each database in a multiple-file search.	t s2/8,k/1-2 from each

*Command available only in DIALINDEX

Six Steps to Successful Searching on Dialog:

> STEP 1: Analyze your search objective and plan an effective strategy.

- Decide what your topic is and what results you expect to obtain.
- Determine what individual concepts are within the topic's description.
- For each concept, think of alternative words or synonyms.

> STEP 2: Choose the appropriate database(s) or categories and log on to Dialog.

- Consult the *Dialog-DataStar Database Catalog* and the *Dialog Database Selection Guide* both at <http://support.dialog.com/publications/dbcat/>, or the Dialog Bluesheets at <http://library.dialog.com/bluesheets/> for database details, subject groupings and comprehensive lists of databases by OneSearch subject categories.
- Test your search using DIALINDEX (File 411).

> STEP 3: BEGIN in the appropriate database(s).

- After evaluating the results from the DIALINDEX search, BEGIN a database or group of databases. You may BEGIN up to 60 databases at one time.

> STEP 4: Enter the search strategy using the SELECT command.

- Enter one SELECT command for each concept.
- Use the truncation symbol (?) where appropriate to retrieve different word endings.
- To retrieve specific phrases, put (W) or (N) between the words; insert a number with the operator as needed, e.g., s market(5N)share.
- Use the OR operator between alternate terms.
- Use the AND operator to combine set numbers and create a new set of unique records.

> STEP 5: Display the records retrieved using the TYPE command.

- Use TYPE followed by **set#/format/items**, e.g., **TYPE S4/5/1-3**.
- For help choosing a format, enter **HELP FORMAT nnn** (where nnn is the file number) online.

> STEP 6: Refine the search.

- Review search results for relevance in Formats 6 or 8.
- Increase results by finding other terms that are synonyms for your initial keyword and re-enter the search using the OR operator.
- Narrow results by re-entering the search using the AND operator.
- Save or print results.

Dialog on the Internet

www.dialogclassic.com: **Command language DialogLink on the web**; cut/paste functionality and buffer zone. Ability to download records in XML and export results into Microsoft® Word and Excel templates, access the Bluesheets for the files currently in use, and conduct powerful chemical image searches.

www.dialogweb.com: **Command language Dialog**: Easy database selection, Bluesheets online, formats, fields and other information fields available in a browser format; **Guided search**: Fill-in-the-blanks, and no knowledge of command language necessary

<http://support.dialog.com/downloads/dialoglink/> to download **DialogLink 5**. Command language; superior functionality allows users to export results into Microsoft® Word and Excel templates, access related materials and maximize search efficiency, conduct powerful chemical queries using structure searching.

www.dialog.com: Training Library, How Do I...?, free training passwords, online tutorials; Bluesheets.

Contact the Dialog Knowledge Center

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