Dialog® Search Tips
Quick Reference Card

The *Dialog* command language gives the researcher control over the retrieval process. Honed over the past 30 years to meet the needs of information professionals, the command language offers a suite of powerful tools to yield comprehensive results with pinpoint precision. The following tips will help you identify the right tool for your basic search tasks.

When you need to:	Use this command:	Example:	Notes:
Specify the file(s) to be searched	BEGIN B	**BEGIN 47** **B47,8**	To search more than one file, separate file numbers with a comma
Verify the spelling of a term and to view similarly-spelled terms	EXPAND E	**EXPAND** **AU=ADAMS,ANN** **E CO=FORD MOTOR**	From the EXPAND list, SELECT appropriate E numbers to create a set: **SELECT E4 OR E6:E9**
Determine the number of records meeting specified criteria	SELECT S	**s digital(w)tv**	Use the question mark to retrieve variant endings. **DIET?** delivers *diet, diets, dieting,* etc.
Display records retrieved by the SELECT command	TYPE T	**TYPE S3/3/1-4** **T S3/5/ALL** **T S3/CO,PD/ALL**	**TYPE** is followed by **set#/format/items#**
Deliver search results to email, fax or print delivery	PRINT PR	**PRINT S2/FULL/ALL ADDR ACMYMAIL** **PR S2/SHORT/1-10 ADDR ADMYFAX** **PR S2/9/ALL**	**PRINT** is also followed by **set#/format/items#** plus any special instructions
When you need to:	**Use this operator:**	**Example:**	**Search Notes:**
Request that search terms be adjacent and in the order entered	(W)	**s digital(w)tv**	Insert a number to allow intervening words. **s digital(2w)tv** retrieves digital tv, digital interactive tv, digital high definition tv
Request that search terms be adjacent, but in any order	(N)	**s digital(n)tv**	Insert a number to allow intervening words. **s digital(5n)tv** retrieves digital tv, tv that employs digital, tv programming using digital
Request that both terms be present in a record	AND	**cat AND dog**	Use NOT to eliminate a term, e.g., **s cat NOT dog**
Request that either term be present in a record	OR	**cat OR dog**	Use parentheses to control which operators execute first, e.g., **s (cat or dog) and food**

Refer to the *Dialog Pocket Guide* for additional information on these and other commands and features. Go to **support.dialog.com/searchaids/dialog/pocketguide/**.

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> ### 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.
- 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 in the operator as needed, e.g., s market(5N)share.
- Use the AND operator to connect concepts or terms when all must be present.
- Use the OR operator between terms when at least one must be present.

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

- Consult the *Dialog Database Catalog* (**support.dialog.com/publications/dbcat/**) or *Dialog Bluesheets* (**library.dialog.com/bluesheets/**) for assistance in choosing a database, or use the *Dialog®Web* Databases Finding Tool.
- Test your search using DIALINDEX (File 411). Enter HELP DIALINDX online for more information.

> ### 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 terms using the SELECT command or click the DISPLAY button on *DialogWeb*.
- Enter one SELECT command for each concept.
- 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 online, or on *DialogWeb*, click the FORMATS button.

> ### STEP 6: Refine the search.

- Review search results for relevance.
- 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.

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