

Basic Search Operators

Basic search searches over full text and metadata of all content on govinfo. However, searches can be narrowed by using field operators and search queries. Learn more about search operators at govinfo.gov/help/search-operators.

Citations

Operator	Function	Examples
citation:	Searches for exact document only	citation:"h.r. 3163" citation:"public law 107-56"
refcitation:	Searches for publications that cite that document. Will not retrieve the cited document itself.	refcitation:"44 USC 1911"

Search Operators

Search Operator	Results Will...	Examples
and	Include only publications that have both terms	water quality water and quality <i>if no other operators are present, a space is interpreted as and</i>
or	Include publications that have either term	water or quality
not (or -)	Exclude any publications with the term	water not quality water -quality
Quotes "..."	Include only publications that have the exact terms in that order	"water quality"
Proximity: near/#	Include publications where the terms are within # of words apart	mars near/2 rover <i>will find 'mars rover' and 'mars exploration rover'</i>
Ordered proximity: before/#	Include publications where the second term is before # words of the first term	apollo before/2 soyuz <i>will retrieve primarily publications related to the Apollo-Soyuz mission, and only a few publications that happen to mention the word 'Apollo' 2 words before the word 'Soyuz'</i>
*	Include variations to the term	congress* <i>results will include congressional or congressmen</i>
?	Include variations with that are a single character	?sama <i>will retrieve Osama or Usama</i> ?addafi <i>will retrieve Qaddafi or Kaddafi</i>
Parentheses (...)	Combine operators	("space shuttle" or rocket) and mars <i>will find publications using either space shuttle or rocket, as well as mars</i>