

Connector Order and Priority

Nexis Uni® uses the following order of operations for connector searches:

1. or
2. proximity connectors¹, such as near/n, onear/n, /seg, w/n, pre/n, NOT/n, NOT/seg, /s, /p, w/sent, w/para
3. and
4. and not

Example: bankrupt! w/25 discharg! and student or college or education! w/5 loan

This search query is processed in this way:

1. or has the highest priority, so it operates first. In this example, student or college or education! is processed as a unit, which is created by the or connector.
2. w/5 ties together the term loan and the student or college or education! unit.
3. w/25 operates next and creates a unit of the bankrupt! w/25 discharg! terms.
4. and operates last and links the units formed in the second and third items above.

¹ Proximity connectors are processed from the smallest to the largest.

Proximity Connectors

The following proximity connectors help you define the relationships between terms you are searching on.

For information on connecting your search terms, see [Search Term Connectors](#). Additionally, for information on using wildcard characters in your search terms, see [Search Connector Wildcards](#).

Note:

To view all search connectors (term and proximity) and wildcard characters on a single page so you can print a single document, see [Search Connectors Quick Reference Card](#).

Connector	Description	Examples
pre/n	<p>Use the <code>pre/n</code> connector to find documents in which the first word precedes the second by not more than n words. This connector is especially useful in situations where a different word order significantly alters meaning. For example, summary judgment is significantly different from judgment summary.</p> <p>You can use all 3 of these connectors interchangeably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <code>+n</code> ■ <code>onear/n</code> ■ <code>pre/n</code> 	<p>This search finds documents where the word overtime precedes compensation within 3 words:</p> <p><code>overtime pre/3 compensation</code></p>
pre/p	<p>Use the <code>pre/p</code> connector to find documents in which the first word precedes the second within approximately 75 words of each other.</p> <p>You can use <code>+p</code> in place of <code>pre/p</code> if you wish. Both commands function the same way.</p>	<p>This search finds documents where the word overtime precedes the word compensation within approximately 75 words:</p> <p><code>overtime pre/p compensation</code></p>
pre/s	<p>Use the <code>pre/s</code> connector to find documents in which the first word precedes the second within approximately 25 words of each other.</p> <p>You can use <code>+s</code> in place of <code>pre/s</code> if you wish. Both commands function the same way.</p>	<p>This search finds documents where the word overtime precedes the word compensation within approximately 25 words:</p> <p><code>overtime pre/s compensation</code></p>
w/n or /n	<p>Use the <code>w/n</code> connector to find documents in which the first word appears within n words of the second one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same phrase, use <code>w/3</code> up to <code>w/5</code> ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same sentence, use <code>w/25</code> 	<p>The following search finds documents where the word vicious occurs within 3 words of dog:</p> <p><code>vicious w/3 dog</code></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same paragraph, use <code>w/75</code> <p>Choosing a number greater than or equal to 100 is likely to retrieve documents in which your search words are used in unrelated contexts.</p> <p>Note: Multiple <code>w/n</code> connectors operate from left to right, regardless of the value of n. This search finds dog within 10 words of cat, and then fish within 5 words of either dog or cat: <code>dog w/10 cat w/5 fish</code></p>	
<code>w/p</code> or <code>/p</code>	<p>Use the <code>w/p</code> or <code>/p</code> (within paragraph) connector to find documents with search words that appear within approximately 75 words of each other.</p> <p>You can use all 3 of these connectors interchangeably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <code>w/para</code> ■ <code>/p</code> ■ <code>w/p</code> 	<p>This search finds retirement within 75 words of benefit: <code>retirement w/p benefit</code></p> <p>This example finds subcontract or sub-contract within the same paragraph as architect: <code>subcontract or sub-contract /p architect</code></p>
<code>w/s</code> or <code>/s</code>	<p>Use the <code>w/s</code> or <code>/s</code> (within sentence) connector to find documents with search words that appear within approximately 25 words of each other.</p> <p>You can use all 3 of these connectors interchangeably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <code>w/sent</code> ■ <code>/s</code> ■ <code>w/s</code> 	<p>This search finds earnings within 25 words of taxation: <code>earnings /s taxation</code></p>
<code>w/seg</code>	<p>Use the <code>w/seg</code> connector to find documents in which your search terms appear in the same segment (headline, body, etc.), or within approximately 100 words of each other.</p>	<p>This search finds documents where the word unreported and income appear in the same segment. <code>unreported w/seg income</code></p>
<code>near/n</code>	<p>Use the <code>near/n</code> connector to find documents with search words that appear within n words of each other. The value of n can be any number. Use <code>near/n</code> to join words and phrases that express parts of a single idea or to join closely associated ideas.</p> <p>Words or phrases linked by <code>near/n</code> must be in the same section (a specific part of a document). Either word may appear first.</p>	<p>This search finds documents in which both words appear in the same section, within three or fewer words of one another: <code>richard near/3 branson</code></p> <p>It retrieves documents containing the words Richard Charles Nicholas Branson; Richard Branson; and Branson, Richard.</p>

	<p>When choosing the value of <i>n</i>, these guidelines may prove useful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same phrase, use <code>near/3-near/5</code> ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same sentence, use <code>near/25</code> ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same paragraph, use <code>near/75</code> <p>Choosing a number greater than 100 is likely to retrieve documents in which your search words are used in unrelated contexts.</p> <p>Multiple <code>near/n</code> connectors operate from left to right, regardless of the value of <i>n</i>. This search finds dog within 10 words of cat, and then fish within 5 words of either dog or cat:</p> <pre>dog near/10 cat near/5 fish</pre>	
<code>onear/n</code>	<p>Use the <code>onear/n</code> connector to find documents in which the first word precedes the second by not more than <i>n</i> words. <code>onear/n</code> is especially useful in situations where a different word order significantly alters meaning. For example, summary judgment is significantly different from judgment summary.</p> <p>You can use all 3 of these connectors interchangeably:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <code>pre/n</code> ■ <code>+n</code> ■ <code>onear/n</code> 	<p>This search finds documents where the word overtime occurs within 3 words of compensation:</p> <pre>overtime onear/3 compensation</pre>
<code>atleast</code>	<p>Use the <code>atleast</code> command to require that a term or terms appear "at least" so many times in a document. Use <code>atleast</code> when you want only documents that contain an in-depth discussion on a topic rather than just a mention.</p> <p>You can use any number with the <code>atleast</code> command.</p>	<p>This search requires references to CERCLA (the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act) to appear in every document at least 10 times:</p> <pre>atleast10(cercla)</pre>

Additional Resources

In addition to the information provided above, please review these important help topics:

- [Connector Order and Priority](#)
- [Searching for Symbols or Other Special Characters](#)
- [Searching for Common Legal Phrases](#)
- [Using Quotation Marks to Find Exact Matches](#)
- [Words Ignored During a Natural Language Search](#)
- [Using not with proximity connectors](#)

Search Connector Wildcards

The following wildcard characters help you search for variant spellings of words.

For information on connecting your search terms, see [Search Term Connectors](#). For information on defining the proximity between your search terms, see [Proximity Connectors](#).

Note:

To view all search connectors (term and proximity) and wildcard characters on a single page so you can print a single document, see [Search Connectors Quick Reference Card](#).

Wildcard	Description	Examples
!	<p>Use an exclamation mark (!) to find a root word plus all the words made by adding letters to the end of it.</p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There must be at least 3 characters prior to the ! or you may receive unexpected results. Use ! only to find unique roots; <code>fir!</code> will find fired, firing, and fires, but will also find first, which you may not want. 	<code>Employ!</code> would find variations on the term employ such as employee , employer , employment , and their plurals.
*	<p>Use an asterisk (*) to find a root word plus all the words made by adding letters to the end of it.</p> <p>Tip:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use * only to find unique roots; <code>fir*</code> will find fired, firing, and fires, but will also find first, which you may not want. You can use an exclamation mark (!) in place of the * if you wish. Both function in the same way, but there must be at least 3 characters in front of the ! or you might receive unexpected results. 	<code>Employ*</code> would find variations on the term employ such as employee , employer , employment , and their plurals.
?	<p>Use a single question mark (?) to find different spellings of a word by replacing a character anywhere within the word. For the most effective search, please keep these rules in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The character cannot replace any of the first three characters of the word. Do not use the character at the end of a search term. (Instead, use either * or !.) 	<code>wom?n</code> would find woman and women

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Use only a single ? in your search term.	
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The *Shepard's* Signal™ indicators

The *Shepard's* Signal™ indicators are integrated into case law documents and provide an immediate indication of the subsequent history and treatment of a particular case. When these codes are present, Nexis Uni® displays one of these signals.

Note:

Not every case will have a *Shepard's* Signal indicator.

When a signal is generated from the Subsequent Appellate History, the system looks at the Subsequent Appellate History as a chain of interconnected events. Thus, the phrase generating the signal may be assigned to a decision in that chain that does not apply directly to your case, but may be several links in the chain away from your case.

Indicator	Description
	Warning: Negative treatment is indicated The red <i>Shepard's</i> Signal indicator indicates that citing references in the <i>Shepard's</i> ® Citations Service contain strong negative history or treatment of your case (for example, overruled by or reversed).
	Warning: Negative treatment is indicated for statute The red exclamation point <i>Shepard's</i> Signal indicator indicates that citing references in the <i>Shepard's</i> Citations Service contain <i>strong negative treatment of the Shepardized™</i> section (for example, the section may have been found to be unconstitutional or void).
	Questioned: Validity questioned by citing references The orange <i>Shepard's</i> Signal indicator indicates that the citing references in the <i>Shepard's</i> Citations Service contain treatment that questions the continuing validity or precedential value of your case because of intervening circumstances, including judicial or legislative overruling.
	Caution: Possible negative treatment indicated The yellow <i>Shepard's</i> Signal indicator indicates that citing references in the <i>Shepard's</i> Citations Service contain history or treatment that may have a significant negative impact on your case (for example, limited or criticized by).
	Positive treatment indicated The green <i>Shepard's</i> Signal indicator indicates that citing references in the <i>Shepard's</i> Citations Service contain history or treatment that has a positive impact on your case (for example, affirmed or followed by).
	Citing references with analysis available The blue "A" <i>Shepard's</i> Signal indicator indicates that citing references in the <i>Shepard's</i> Citations Service contain treatment of your case that is neither positive nor negative (for example, explained).
	Citation information available The blue "I" <i>Shepard's</i> Signal indicator indicates that citing references are available in the <i>Shepard's</i> Citations Service for your case, but the references do not have history or treatment analysis (for example, the references are law review citations).