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	Use the `pre/n` 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**. You can use all 3 of these connectors interchangeably: ■ +n ■ onear/n ■ pre/n	This search finds documents where the word **overtime** precedes **compensation** within 3 words: `overtime pre/3 compensation`
pre/p	Use the `pre/p` connector to find documents in which the first word precedes the second within approximately 75 words of each other. You can use `+p` in place of `pre/p` if you wish. Both commands function the same way.	This search finds documents where the word **overtime** precedes the word **compensation** within approximately 75 words: `overtime pre/p compensation`
pre/s	Use the `pre/s` connector to find documents in which the first word precedes the second within approximately 25 words of each other. You can use `+s` in place of `pre/s` if you wish. Both commands function the same way.	This search finds documents where the word **overtime** precedes the word **compensation** within approximately 25 words: `overtime pre/s compensation`
w/n or /n	Use the `w/n` connector to find documents in which the first word appears within **n** words of the second one. ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same phrase, use `w/3` up to `w/5` ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same sentence, use `w/25`	The following search finds documents where the word **vicious** occurs within 3 words of **dog**: `vicious w/3 dog`

	■ For search words to appear in approximately the same paragraph, use `w/75` Choosing a number greater than or equal to 100 is likely to retrieve documents in which your search words are used in unrelated contexts. ┌ **Note:** ┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┐ Multiple w/n 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**: `dog w/10 cat w/5 fish` └┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┄┘	

w/p or /p	Use the `w/p` or `/p` (within paragraph) connector to find documents with search words that appear within approximately 75 words of each other.
	You can use all 3 of these connectors interchangeably:
	
	■ `w/para`
	
	■ `/p`
	
	■ `w/p`
		This search finds **retirement** within 75 words of **benefit**:
		`retirement w/p benefit`
		
		This example finds **subcontract** or **sub-contract** within the same paragraph as **architect**:
		
		`subcontract or sub-contract /p architect`

w/s or /s	Use the `w/s` or `/s` (within sentence) connector to find documents with search words that appear within approximately 25 words of each other. You can use all 3 of these connectors interchangeably: ■ `w/sent` ■ `/s` ■ `w/s`	This search finds **earnings** within 25 words of **taxation**: `earnings /s taxation`
w/seg	Use the `w/seg` 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.	This search finds documents where the word **unreported** and **income** appear in the same segment. `unreported w/seg income`
near/n	Use the `near/n` connector to find documents with search words that appear within **n** words of each other. The value of **n** can be any number. Use `near/n` to join words and phrases that express parts of a single idea or to join closely associated ideas. Words or phrases linked by `near/n` must be in the same section (a specific part of a document). Either word may appear first.	This search finds documents in which both words appear in the same section, within three or fewer words of one another: `richard near/3 branson` It retrieves documents containing the words **Richard Charles Nicholas Branson**; **Richard Branson**; and **Branson, Richard**.

	When choosing the value of *n*, these guidelines may prove useful: ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same phrase, use `near/3-near/5` ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same sentence, use `near/25` ■ For search words to appear in approximately the same paragraph, use `near/75` Choosing a number greater than 100 is likely to retrieve documents in which your search words are used in unrelated contexts. Multiple `near/n` 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**: `dog near/10 cat near/5 fish`	
onear/n	Use the `onear/n` connector to find documents in which the first word precedes the second by not more than **n** words. onear/n is especially useful in situations where a different word order significantly alters meaning. For example, **summary judgment** is significantly different from **judgment summary**. You can use all 3 of these connectors interchangeably: ■ `pre/n` ■ `+n` ■ `onear/n`	This search finds documents where the word **overtime** occurs within 3 words of **compensation**: `overtime onear/3 compensation`
atleast	Use the `atleast` command to require that a term or terms appear "at least" so many times in a document. Use `atleast` when you want only documents that contain an in-depth discussion on a topic rather than just a mention. You can use any number with the `atleast` command.	This search requires references to CERCLA (the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act) to appear in every document at least 10 times: `atleast10(cercla)`

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