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# Search Help

## Search Pages

There are two search pages; WebSearch offers basic search features, while WebSearchAdvanced offers more control over searches.

By default searches are keyword based like in a typical search engine:

- Specify word(s) you want to find
- Multiple words form an **AND** search, `intranet web service` returns all pages that have the three words anywhere in the page
- Optionally specify plus signs for **AND** search, like `intranet +web +service`
- Enclose words in double quotes to form a **literal search**, like `"web service"`
- Specify a minus sign to **exclude** a word, like `soap -shampoo`
- Use double quotes if you want to search for a leading minus sign, like `"-nowarn"`
- **Stop words** are excluded from a keyword search:
  - ◆ Stop words are common words and characters such as "how" and "where", defined in the SEARCHSTOPWORDS setting in the TWikiPreferences
  - ◆ If you want to search for a word in the stop word list, prefix the word with a plus sign
- **Example:** To search for all topics that contain "SOAP", "WSDL", a literal "web service", but not "shampoo",  
enter this: `soap +wsdl "web service" -shampoo`

Regular expression search searches for a set of regular expression patterns:

- Patterns are separated by semicolons
- An AND search is performed for the list of patterns
- An exclamation point preceding a pattern indicates an AND NOT search; use it to exclude a pattern, like `!web service`
- If you want to search for a semicolon or an exclamation point, escape them with a leading backslash, like `\!shampoo`
- **Example:** To search for all topics that contain "SOAP", "WSDL", a literal "web service", but not "shampoo",  
enter this: `soap;wsdl;web service;!shampoo`

## Formatted Searches

You can embed a nicely formatted search in a topic by using the `%SEARCH{%}` variable described in VarSEARCH. Searches can be of different types; among others, TWiki offers keyword search, regular expression search and a flexible SQL-like query language.

## Search TWiki Variables

TWiki Variables are text strings - `%VARIABLE%` or `%VARIABLE{ parameter="value" }%` - that expand into content whenever a topic is rendered for viewing. TWiki Variables are useful to create TWiki applications and workflows, but there are also variables for content creation such as `%TOC%` to show a table of content and `%INCLUDE{%}` to include another page.

You can search TWiki Variables.

## Search Preferences

TWikiPreferences defines these search preferences:

- SEARCHDEFAULTTYPE: Default search type for search forms which calls the `search` script
  - ◆ Currently `keyword`
- SEARCHVARDEFAULTTYPE: Default search type for `%SEARCH{}` variable
  - ◆ Currenty `literal`
- SEARCHSTOPWORDS: List of stop words (common words and characters to exclude from a keyword search)
  - ◆ Currently `a, all, am, an, and, any, as, at, b, be, by, c, d, e, for, from, g, h, how, i, i'm, i.e., in, is, isn't, it, it's, its, j, k, l, m, n, o, of, on, or, p, q, r, s, t, that, that's, the, this, to, u, v, w, was, wasn't, what, what's, when, where, who, who's, will, with, x, y, z`

**Related Topics:** [UserDocumentationCategory](#), [WebSearch](#), [WebSearchAdvanced](#), [FormattedSearch](#), [RegularExpression](#), [QuerySearch](#), [TWikiVariablesSearch](#)

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