CAB: Searching Basics

Operator	Explanation	Example	Westlaw Equivalent
AND	Search results must include each word	burglary AND automobile	&
OR	Search results must include at least one word	automobile OR car OR vehicle	or
NOT	Search results must not include word	involuntary NOT intoxication	%
*	Wildcard character (Document Text and Section)	*effective assistance	* (universal character) ! (root expander)
%	Wildcard (Argument Heading Text only)	%effective assistance	
NEARn	Words within "n" words of each other	crawford NEAR5 testimonial	/n
DNEARn	Words within "n" words of each other, in the specified order	"first degree" DNEAR5 insanity	+n
" "	Searches for exact match of the word or phrase	"traffic stop" or "intoxication"	" "
( )	Allows searches to be grouped together	auto and (robbery or theft)	( )

Automatic Stemming:

Document Text: Search results will include plural forms and common variations of a word or name, as well as any common variations of the root word of the search term.
effective will search for effect, effective, ineffective, effectively, ineffectively
intoxication will search for intoxication, intoxicated, intoxicates, intoxication

Other fields: Search will automatically stem in many other fields.
hoff (in Author field) will retrieve documents by Doug Hoff, Charles Hoffman, and Linda Olthoff
1 in (Court or Office field) will retrieve documents from the 1st District
william (in Defendant Name field) will retrieve defendants whose first name is William and whose last name is Williams or Williamson
PC (in Case Type field) will retrieve PC, PC1, PC2, PC3, and PCS cases

Wildcard:

Asterisk: The * can be used as a wildcard character only in the Document Text and Section fields.
24-6* (in Section field) will search for all subsections within 24-6 (Guilty Pleas – Admonishments)
pregnan* (in Document Text field) will search for pregnant and pregnancy

Percent sign: The Argument Heading Text field uses % as a wildcard character.

Quotation marks: Use when searching for specific words (to turn off stemming), statutes or phrases, especially common or Latin phrases.
Examples: "de novo" or "prima facie" or "first district" or "guilty plea" or "720 ILCS 5/9-1(a)"

Argument Heading Text: Except for the wildcard character (%), operators and connectors do not work in this field. The search of this field is similar to a CTRL + F (or "find") function.

Case-sensitive: Searches will not be case-sensitive unless you use both upper and lower cases in your query. Search operators must be in all-caps for accurate results.

Searching for Cases: Search by citation, using quotes. Example: "2014 IL App (1st) 121087". Or search by case name, using quotes. Example: "People v. Washington"

Dates: To search a range of dates, enter date in both fields (between two dates) or single field (before or after that date).

Avoid extremely broad searches: A broad search (such as a search in the Document Text field for "first degree murder") will run very slowly and give far too many results to be useful. Narrow your search by adding additional terms or using other fields.

See Section 4.9 of the User Guide for additional information.