How can I resolve dash/hyphen keyword search issues?

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There are various types of dashes and hyphens used in text. While these can look very similar, they are actually different characters.

For users using a keyword search in DocBoss, if they are not using the same character used in the data entered into the project, they will not see the results they are expecting.

In the image below, the user has the **em dash** character in the document numbers they entered into DocBoss.

Searching for documents containing em dashes in their document numbers, if using a hyphen to search, will not produce any results. The same applies to other types of visually similar characters.

Types of dashes/hyphens

These are just some dash and hyphen characters which may be used in text:

Symbol	Name	Unicode Character
-	hyphen-minus	U+002D
-	hyphen	U+2010
–	en dash	U+2013
—	em dash	U+2014

The **hyphen-minus** character is used in DocBoss default numbering format. On many keyboards, this is the only character available to use as a hyphen or dash. Using other types of dash/hyphen characters may cause issues with search functionality, as most users will search using the hyphen-minus character.

If unsure which dash/hyphen is used, users can copy the character from DocBoss into external software to check (for example, Microsoft Word will display the Unicode character of a symbol if the user highlights the character and selects ALT + X).

Troubleshooting search issues

If keyword search is not producing the desired card(s), try the following search methods instead:

1. If possible, filter or search using data from another field, or part of the string that does not include the dash.

2. Select any card within the field you wish to search, and copying the dash character. Paste this into the **Keyword** field when searching in place of typing a dash/hyphen.

Correcting Card List data with visually similar characters

The best practice is to ensure the project is set up correctly from the beginning. However, if no cards are yet locked and document numbers need to be updated, users can proceed to change the document numbers:

1. If using auto-generated numbering, update the dash/hyphen character in the auto-numbering format and re-run numbering.

2. If using manual numbering, download card list data, edit in CSV, and upload again with "Overwrite OK" selected.

If cards are locked, document numbers can be manually overwritten, but it will likely be simpler and easier to use the search troubleshooting tips above instead.

Replacement on submittal

When generating submittals in DocBoss, we automatically replace any of the hyphen characters with an underscore to avoid problems with creating zip files and your customers import systems.

If you have trouble making your own zip files - check that you aren't using one of the alternate hyphens. The zip protocol only supported the hyphen-minus for most of its existence. It used the IBM Code Page 437 which only supported that one type of hyphen character.