

## Wild Card Characters

Use this set of wildcard characters when you use the **Find and Replace** dialog box to find and optionally replace data in an Access database or an Access project. You also use these characters when you run select and update queries against an Access database, but you do not use them in queries run against an Access project.

<i>Character</i>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Example</b>
*	Matches any number of characters. You can use the asterisk anywhere in a character string.	<b>wh*</b> finds what, white, and why, but not awhile or watch.
?	Matches any single alphabetic character.	<b>B?ll</b> finds ball, bell, and bill
[ ]	Matches any single character within the brackets.	<b>B[ae]ll</b> finds ball and bell but not bill
!	Matches any character not in the brackets.	<b>b[!ae]ll</b> finds bill and bull but not ball or bell
-	Matches any one of a range of characters. You must specify the range in ascending order (A to Z, not Z to A).	<b>b[a-c]d</b> finds bad, bbd, and bcd
#	Matches any single numeric character.	<b>1#3</b> finds 103, 113, 123

### Notes

- To find wildcard characters that reside in your data, enclose the character that you want to find in brackets, like so: [#]. Follow that rule when searching for asterisks (\*), question marks (?), pound signs (#), opening brackets ([), and hyphens (-). Do not use brackets when searching for exclamation points (!) or closing brackets (]). To find those characters using the **Find and Replace** dialog box, simply enter the character in the **Find What** box with no surrounding brackets. You follow the same approach when finding the characters with a query. For example, this syntax returns all records that contain an exclamation point: **Like "!\*!"**.

If you're searching for a hyphen and other characters simultaneously, place the hyphen before or after all the other characters inside the brackets, like so: [-#\*] or [#\*-]. However, if you have an exclamation point (!) after the opening bracket, place the hyphen after the exclamation point: [!-].

To search for a pair of opening and closing brackets ([ ]), you must enclose both characters in brackets, like so: [ [ ] ]. You must do this because Access interprets a single