

# The Dialog Manual

This is Revision 31 of the Dialog Manual. It describes **version 0m** of the Dialog language, and **version 0.46** of its standard library. Dialog is currently in its *beta* stage, which means that the language may still undergo significant changes.

## Preface

### [Introduction](#)

Overview • Structure of the manual • Acknowledgements

### [Software](#)

The compiler • The interactive debugger • Building from source code

## Part I: The Programming Language

### [Chapter 1: Flow of execution](#)

Predicates and rules • Printing text • Parameters, objects, and wildcards • Success and failure

### [Chapter 2: Manipulating data](#)

Local variables • Values • Unification • Partial lists and recursion

### [Chapter 3: Choice points](#)

Disjunctions • Backtracking • Multi-queries • Visiting all solutions • Collecting values • Collecting words • Accumulating numbers • Just • Infinite loops

### [Chapter 4: More control structures](#)

If-statements • Negation • Selecting among variations • Closures • Stoppable environments

### [Chapter 5: Input and output](#)

Divs, spans, and style classes • Case conversion and inline styles • Status areas • Visualizing progress • Clearing the screen • Input • Hyperlinks • Resources • Debugging • Determining objects from words

### [Chapter 6: Dynamic predicates](#)

Global flags • Per-object flags • Global variables • Per-object variables • Has parent

### [Chapter 7: Syntactic sugar](#)

Access predicates • The current topic • Nested queries in rule heads • Alternatives in rule heads • Automated object generation

### [Chapter 8: More built-in predicates](#)

Checking the type of a value • Numbers and arithmetic • List-related predicates • Manipulating dictionary words • System control

### [Chapter 9: Beyond the program](#)

Story metadata • Interfaces • Runtime errors • Some notes on performance • Limitations and the future of Dialog

### [Appendix: Quick reference](#)

## Part II: The Standard Library

### [Chapter 1: Getting started](#)

Architecture of the library • Running the code examples • A minimal story

### [Chapter 2: Objects and state](#)

Populating the game world • Descriptions, appearances, and synonyms • Defining new predicates • Object locations • Dynamic predicates • Hidden objects

### [Chapter 3: Traits](#)

Custom traits • Linguistic predicates and traits • Full names • Standard traits for categorizing objects

### [Chapter 4: Items](#)

Pristine and handled objects • Plural forms • All about appearances • Pristineness of nested objects • Clothing

### [Chapter 5: Moving around](#)

Rooms and map connections • Floating objects • Regions • Light and darkness • Reachability, visibility, and scope • Doors and locks • Moving the player character • Path finding

### [Chapter 6: Actions](#)

Introduction to actions • How actions are processed • Stopping and ticking • Instead of: Prevent, perform, after • Narration predicates • Diversion • Refuse and before • Group actions

### [Chapter 7: The standard actions](#)

Core actions • Actions that reveal information • Actions that print a message • Diverting actions • Communication • Navigation • Miscellaneous actions • Debugging actions

### [Chapter 8: Ticks, scenes, and progress](#)

Timed code • Cutscenes • The intro • Keeping score • The status bar • Game over • Choice mode

### [Chapter 9: Non-player characters](#)

Movement • Other NPC actions • Taking orders • Ask and tell • Choice-based conversation

### [Chapter 10: Understanding player input](#)

Grammar definitions • Adding actions • Adjusting the likelihood of actions • Links and default actions • Example: Defining a new action • How the parser works • Custom grammar tokens

### [Chapter 11: Miscellaneous features](#)

Pronouns • List manipulation • Object tree manipulation • Directions and numbers • Predicates for debugging • Common checks and complaints • Asking simple questions • Identical objects

### [Appendix: Predicate index](#)

