

# Help

R·I·T

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## What is HELP?

The HELP command lets you use the help system to display information about a command or topic.

## Why use HELP?

The help system provides you with information on how to use all the features of the many commands available on the computer.

## How to get Help?

To learn more about HELP before you begin using it, type HELP INSTRUCTIONS at the OpenVMS prompt or select HELP from the menu and type INSTRUCTIONS at the Topic? prompt. On-line hints for using help are available while using the HELP program. For personal help, see the footnote at the bottom of this document.

## How to use HELP?

From the menu, select Help on computer commands (HELP). From the OpenVMS prompt, type HELP. On your screen is displayed some instructions for using HELP. To continue with the instructions and to get a list of topics, press the <Return> key.

HELP

The HELP command invokes the OpenVMS HELP Facility to display information about a VMS command or topic. In response to the "Topic?" prompt, you can:

- Type the name of the command or topic for which you need help.
- Type INSTRUCTIONS for more detailed instructions on how to use HELP.
- Type HINTS if you are not sure of the name of the command or topic for which you need help.
- Type a question mark (?) to redisplay the most recently requested text.
- Press the RETURN key one or more times to exit from HELP.

At the Topic? prompt, type in the command for which you want information. For example, to get HELP on the command DIFFERENCES, type:

```
Topic? differences  
DIFFERENCES
```

```
Compares the contents of two disk files and displays a listing of the records that  
do not match.
```

```
Format
```

DIFFERENCES input1-filespec [input2-filespec]

Additional information available:

PARAMETERS QUALIFIERS

/CHANGE\_BAR /COMMENT\_DELIMITER /IGNORE /MATCH  
/MAXIMUM\_DIFFERENCES /MERGED /MODE /NUMBER /OUTPUT  
/PARALLEL /SEPARATED /SLP /WIDTH /WINDOW

Examples

DIFFERENCES Subtopic?

Many command require or offer the option of supplying a parameter to the command. At the subtopic prompt, you may type in PARAMETER for an explanation of the parameters given in the format statement. For example, DIFFERENCES Help includes the parameters input1-filespec and input2-filespec. By requesting help on the parameters for the differences command, help displays:

DIFFERENCES Subtopic? parameters

PARAMETERS

input1-filespec

Specifies the first file to be compared. The file specification must include a file name and a file type. Wildcard characters are not allowed.

input2-filespec

Specifies the second file to be compared. Unspecified field default to the corresponding fields in the input1-filespec parameter. Wildcard characters are not allowed.

If you do not specify a secondary input file, the DIFFERENCES command uses the next lower version of the primary input file.

Most commands provide qualifiers. To get help on a specific qualifier, type the / followed by the qualifier you are interested in. For example:

DIFFERENCES Subtopic? /output

If you do not wish to have more information, press the <Return> key. Press the <Return > key repeatedly to back up through HELP. From any level in HELP, you

may return to the OpenVMS prompt (\$) by pressing the Control and the Z keys at the same time.

## General Information on HELP files

The OpenVMS HELP information originates from a number of sources. The base system defines commands which are part of VMS. The OpenVMS systems at RIT also have hundreds of additional products available to users. The HELP information includes vendor supplied help, vendor supplied help that is modified for RIT's use and help on commands written and documented at RIT.

HELP files are structured so that additional information can be created and stored in a HELP library. If you are exploring a command that is not in the main help library, the Subtopic? prompt displays a @ followed by the name of the library and then the command. For example, if you request HELP on DISSPLA, the Subtopic? prompt displayed is:

```
@ACCLIB DISSPLA Subtopic?
```

HELP provides for putting information into a file. By using the /OUTPUT qualifier and supplying a filename, the information is stored in the file specified. For example, to send the information from DISSPLA Help to a file called dissspla.info, type:

```
HELP/OUTPUT=dissspla.info dissspla
```

The file created can be used with any file management command. For example, edit, copy, and print.

### Contacting the ITS HelpDesk

**Phone Support:** (585) 475-HELP or 475-2810 (TTY)

**Email:** [helpdesk@rit.edu](mailto:helpdesk@rit.edu)

**Web Address:** <https://www.rit.edu/its/help/>

**In Person:** Gannett Building, Room 7B-1113

### Contacting the Resnet (Residential Computing) HelpDesk

**Phone Support:** (585) 475-2600 or 475-4927 (TTY)

**Email:** [resnet@rit.edu](mailto:resnet@rit.edu)

**Web Address:** <https://www.rit.edu/its/services/resnet/>

**In Person:** Nathaniel Rochester Hall (Building 43), Room 1034

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