

# Chapter 1. About this guide

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Welcome to the WIMS User's Guide. This guide contains information about how to access and use the Weather Information Management System (WIMS). The guide is organized to help you locate and perform specific WIMS functions quickly and easily.

## Before you begin

This guide assumes you have knowledge of the following areas before you begin using WIMS:

- If you are accessing WIMS using a personal computer, you are familiar with the personal computer keyboard, understand WIMS-related concepts, and are familiar with using the Internet to access WIMS.

## How to use this guide

Each chapter explains a specific functional area of the WIMS system. You will find an overview of each menu option and the functions that you can perform.

The Contents is organized according to the WIMS Main Menu.

Chapter 1, “About this guide” introduces the WIMS User's Guide, conventions, and update guidelines.

Chapter 2, “About WIMS” introduces WIMS and explains WIMS system components and information flow.

Chapter 3, “Getting started” outlines what you need to access WIMS via the Internet. Chapter 3 also explains WIMS access levels and lists agency information contacts.

Chapter 4, “WIMS basics” explains the WIMS menu hierarchy, how to log on and off the WIMS system, how to use FastPaths and how to perform basic queries.

Chapter 5, “Beyond the basics” explains how to perform wildcard queries, capture data, use query blocks, and recalculate NFDRS indices.

Chapter 6, “Working with Station Information” explains how to create, edit, and display manual and RAWs station information. Chapter 6 also explains how to create, edit, and display Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and Access Control Lists (ACLs).

Chapter 7, “Working with Observations” explains how to create, edit, delete, and display weather observations.

Chapter 8, “Working with Forecasts” explains how to create, edit, delete, and display weather forecasts.

Chapter 9, “Working with NFDRS,” explains National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) components and indices, NFDRS reports, and how to create and edit NFDRS components.

Chapter 10, “Working with WIMS Utilities” explains how to set up your WIMS profile, how to use mail, how to use the Shared and Private File Directories, how to list WIMS users, and how to submit billing information.

Appendices are located in the back of this guide to help you locate specific FastPath commands, function keys, acronyms, and NFDRS parameters. The WIMS/ NIFMID Access Request Form is also included. The Glossary lists terms and definitions used in this guide. References are arranged alphabetically and contain sources of information used to complete this guide. The Index lists functions, topics, and corresponding page numbers.

## Conventions

This guide uses the following conventions:

- Required input that does not have any set value appears in lower case in bold italic type. For example, to enter a station ID you are instructed to “type the *number* of the station you want to create and click return.”
- The WIMS FastPath that relates to the current procedure, if available, is located in the heading of every page in upper case. For example, on page xxxx in Chapter 7, “Working with Observations,” the text “FastPath: OBS” appears in the heading.
- Fields located in the query block of a WIMS form are highlighted in the form's field definitions. For more information, see Chapter 5, “Beyond the basics.”
- Topics of special interest or hints that will help you perform a specific task are shown within horizontal rules.

## Update guidelines

Updates to this guide will be issued with accompanying instructions to add, replace, or remove the affected material. The revision date is located at the bottom of each page.