

# Formating Rules for Connection Strings

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There are no built in checks or constraints on how to format a connection string. This walk-through shows the basic rules for creating a connection string that will work.

Written by: Mark Lurade

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This is general rules adopted by most drivers and providers. However, keep in mind that these rules is not 100% accurate for every driver and every situation. Never the less, following and knowing about these basic rules will keep some common problems out of the way.

## The rules

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- All blank characters, except those placed within a value or within quotation marks, are ignored
- Blank characters will though affect [connection pooling](#) mechanism, pooled connections must have the **exact** same connection string
- If a semicolon (;) is part of a value it must be delimited by quotation marks (")
- Use a single-quote (') if the value begins with a double-quote (")
- Conversely, use the double quote (") if the value begins with a single quote (')
- No escape sequences are supported
- The value type is **not** relevant
- Names are case iNsEnSiTiVe
- If a KEYWORD=VALUE pair occurs more than once in the connection string, the value associated with the **last** occurrence is used
- However, if the **provider** keyword occurs multiple times in the string, the **first** occurrence is used.
- If a keyword contains an equal sign (=), it must be preceded by an additional equal sign to indicate that it is part of the keyword.
- If a value has preceding or trailing spaces it must be enclosed in single- or double quotes, ie Keyword=" value ", else the spaces are removed.

## Summary

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Knowing about these basic rules will keep hard to track errors away from you. Take some time understanding these rules and a couple of minutes choosing what parameters to specify when connecting your application to the data source.