

# Package: rex (via r-universe)

March 7, 2025

**Type** Package

**Title** Friendly Regular Expressions

**Version** 1.2.1.9000

**Description** A friendly interface for the construction of regular expressions.

**License** MIT + file LICENSE

**URL** <https://rex.r-lib.org>, <https://github.com/r-lib/rex>

**BugReports** <https://github.com/r-lib/rex/issues>

**Suggests** covr, dplyr, ggplot2, Hmisc, knitr, magrittr, rmarkdown, roxygen2, rvest, stringr, testthat

**VignetteBuilder** knitr

**Encoding** UTF-8

**RoxygenNote** 7.1.2

**Collate** 'aaa.R' 'utils.R' 'escape.R' 'capture.R' 'character\_class.R' 'counts.R' 'lookarounds.R' 'match.R' 'or.R' 'rex-mode.R' 'rex.R' 'shortcuts.R' 'wildcards.R' 'zzz.R'

**Config/Needs/website** r-lib/pkgdown, tidyverse/tidytemplate

**Imports** withr

**Repository** <https://r-lib.r-universe.dev>

**RemoteUrl** <https://github.com/r-lib/rex>

**RemoteRef** HEAD

**RemoteSha** 7a8fb36a29919c3d447cc823c672af9b5cf1fd68

## Contents

as.character.regex . . . . .	2
as.regex . . . . .	3
capture . . . . .	3
character_class . . . . .	4

character_class_escape . . . . .	6
counts . . . . .	7
escape . . . . .	8
group . . . . .	9
lookarounds . . . . .	9
not . . . . .	10
register_shortcuts . . . . .	11
rex . . . . .	11
rex_mode . . . . .	12
re_matches . . . . .	12
re_substitutes . . . . .	13
shortcuts . . . . .	14
single_shortcuts . . . . .	14
wildcards . . . . .	15
%or% . . . . .	16

## Index 17

---

as.character.regex      *Regular Expression*

---

### Description

Specify an explicit regular expression. This expression must already be escaped.

### Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'regex'
as.character(x, ...)
```

```
## S3 method for class 'regex'
print(x, ...)
```

```
regex(x, ...)
```

### Arguments

x	Object
...	further arguments

### Methods (by generic)

- as.character: coerce regex object to a character
- print: Print regex object

### See Also

[as.regex](#) to coerce to a regex object.

---

as.regex	<i>Coerce objects to a <a href="#">regex</a>.</i>
----------	---

---

**Description**

Coerce objects to a [regex](#).

**Usage**

```
as.regex(x, ...)
```

```
## Default S3 method:
```

```
as.regex(x, ...)
```

**Arguments**

x	Object to coerce to <a href="#">regex</a> .
...	further arguments passed to methods.

**Methods (by class)**

- default: Simply escape the Object.

---

capture	<i>Create a capture group</i>
---------	-------------------------------

---

**Description**

Used to save the matched value within the group for use later in the regular expression or to extract the values captured. Both named and unnamed groups can later be referenced using [capture\\_group](#).

**Usage**

```
capture(..., name = NULL)
```

```
capture_group(name)
```

**Arguments**

...	<a href="#">shortcuts</a> , R variables, text, or other <b>rex</b> functions.
name	of the group. Unnamed capture groups are numbers starting at 1 in the order they appear in the regular expression. If two groups have the same name, the leftmost group is the used in any reference.

**See Also**

[group](https://perldoc.perl.org/perlre#Capture-groups) for grouping without capturing. Perl 5 Capture Groups <https://perldoc.perl.org/perlre#Capture-groups>

Other rex: [%or%\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [counts](#), [group\(\)](#), [lookarounds](#), [not\(\)](#), [rex\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#), [wildcards](#)

**Examples**

```
# Match paired quotation marks
re <- rex(
  # first quotation mark
  capture(quotes),

  # match all non-matching quotation marks
  zero_or_more(except(capture_group(1))),

  # end quotation mark (matches first)
  capture_group(1)
)

#named capture - don't match apples to oranges
re <- rex(
  capture(name = "fruit", or("apple", "orange")),
  "=",
  capture_group("fruit")
)
```

---

character_class	<i>Create character classes</i>
-----------------	---------------------------------

---

**Description**

There are multiple ways you can define a character class.

**Usage**

```
character_class(x)

one_of(...)

any_of(..., type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))

some_of(..., type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))

none_of(...)

except_any_of(..., type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

```

except_some_of(..., type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
range(start, end)
`:`(start, end)
exclude_range(start, end)

```

### Arguments

x	text to include in the character class (must be escaped manually)
...	<a href="#">shortcuts</a> , R variables, text, or other <b>rex</b> functions.
type	the type of match to perform. There are three match types <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. greedy: match the longest string. This is the default matching type.</li> <li>2. lazy: match the shortest string. This matches the shortest string from the same anchor point, not necessarily the shortest global string.</li> <li>3. possessive: match and don't allow backtracking</li> </ol>
start	beginning of character class
end	end of character class

### Functions

- `character_class`: explicitly define a character class
- `one_of`: matches one of the specified characters.
- `any_of`: matches zero or more of the specified characters.
- `some_of`: matches one or more of the specified characters.
- `none_of`: matches anything but one of the specified characters.
- `except_any_of`: matches zero or more of anything but the specified characters.
- `except_some_of`: matches one or more of anything but the specified characters.
- `range`: matches one of any of the characters in the range.
- `::`: matches one of any of the characters in the range.
- `exclude_range`: matches one of any of the characters except those in the range.

### See Also

Other rex: [%or%\(\)](#), [capture\(\)](#), [counts](#), [group\(\)](#), [lookarounds](#), [not\(\)](#), [rex\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#), [wildcards](#)

### Examples

```

# grey = gray
re <- rex("gr", one_of("a", "e"), "y")
grepl(re, c("grey", "gray")) # TRUE TRUE

# Match non-vowels

```

```

re <- rex(none_of("a", "e", "i", "o", "u"))
# They can also be in the same string
re <- rex(none_of("aeiou"))
grepl(re, c("k", "l", "e")) # TRUE TRUE FALSE

# Match range
re <- rex(range("a", "e"))
grepl(re, c("b", "d", "f")) # TRUE TRUE FALSE

# Explicit creation
re <- rex(character_class("abcd\\["))
grepl(re, c("a", "d", "[", "]")) # TRUE TRUE TRUE FALSE

```

---

character\_class\_escape

*Character class escapes*

---

## Description

Character class escapes

## Usage

```

character_class_escape(x)

## S3 method for class 'regex'
character_class_escape(x)

## S3 method for class 'character_class'
character_class_escape(x)

## S3 method for class 'character'
character_class_escape(x)

## S3 method for class 'list'
character_class_escape(x)

## Default S3 method:
character_class_escape(x)

```

## Arguments

x                    Object to escape.

## Methods (by class)

- regex: objects are passed through unchanged.
- character\_class: objects are passed through unchanged.

- `character`: objects properly escaped for character classes.
- `list`: call `character_class_escape` on all elements of the list.
- `default`: coerce to character and `character_class_escape`.

---

 counts

*Counts*


---

## Description

Functions to restrict a regex to a specific number

## Usage

```
n_times(x, n, type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

```
between(x, low, high, type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

```
at_least(x, n, type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

```
at_most(x, n, type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

## Arguments

<code>x</code>	A regex pattern.
<code>n</code>	An integer number
<code>type</code>	the type of match to perform. There are three match types <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <code>greedy</code>: match the longest string. This is the default matching type.</li> <li>2. <code>lazy</code>: match the shortest string. This matches the shortest string from the same anchor point, not necessarily the shortest global string.</li> <li>3. <code>possessive</code>: match and don't allow backtracking</li> </ol>
<code>low</code>	An integer number for the lower limit.
<code>high</code>	An integer number for the upper limit.

## Functions

- `n_times`: `x` must occur exactly `n` times.
- `between`: `x` must occur between `low` and `high` times.
- `at_least`: `x` must occur at least `n` times.
- `at_most`: `x` must occur at most `n` times.

## See Also

Other rex: [%or%](#)(), [capture\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [group\(\)](#), [lookarounds](#), [not\(\)](#), [rex\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#), [wildcards](#)

---

escape	<i>Escape characters for a regex</i>
--------	--------------------------------------

---

### Description

Escape characters for a regex

### Usage

```
escape(x)

## S3 method for class 'regex'
escape(x)

## S3 method for class 'character_class'
escape(x)

## S3 method for class 'character'
escape(x)

## Default S3 method:
escape(x)

## S3 method for class 'list'
escape(x)
```

### Arguments

x                    Object to escape.

### Methods (by class)

- `regex`: Objects are simply passed through unchanged.
- `character_class`: Objects are surrounded by braces.
- `character`: Objects are properly escaped for regular expressions.
- `default`: default escape coerces to `character` and escapes.
- `list`: simply call `escape` on all elements of the list.



---

group	<i>Create a grouped expression</i>
-------	------------------------------------

---

### Description

This is similar to [capture](#) except that it does not store the value of the group. Best used when you want to combine several parts together and do not reference or extract the grouped value later.

### Usage

```
group(...)
```

### Arguments

... [shortcuts](#), R variables, text, or other **rex** functions.

### See Also

[capture](#) for grouping with capturing. Perl 5 Extended Patterns <https://perldoc.perl.org/perlre#Extended-Patterns>

Other rex: [%or%\(\)](#), [capture\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [counts](#), [lookarounds](#), [not\(\)](#), [rex\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#), [wildcards](#)

---

lookarounds	<i>Lookarounds</i>
-------------	--------------------

---

### Description

Lookarounds

### Usage

```
x %if_next_is% y
```

```
x %if_next_isnt% y
```

```
x %if_prev_is% y
```

```
x %if_prev_isnt% y
```

### Arguments

x A regex pattern.

y A regex pattern.

## Details

These functions provide an interface to perl lookarounds.

Special binary functions are used to infer an ordering, since often you might wish to match a word / set of characters conditional on the start and end of that word.

- `%if_next_is%`: TRUE if x follows y
- `%if_next_isnt%`: TRUE if x does not follow y
- `%if_prev_is%`: TRUE if y comes before x
- `%if_prev_isnt%`: TRUE if y does not come before x

## See Also

Perl 5 Documentation <https://perldoc.perl.org/perlre#Extended-Patterns>

Other rex: [%or%\(\)](#), [capture\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [counts](#), [group\(\)](#), [not\(\)](#), [rex\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#), [wildcards](#)

## Examples

```
stopifnot(grepl(rex("crab" %if_next_is% "apple"), "crabapple", perl = TRUE))
stopifnot(grepl(rex("crab" %if_prev_is% "apple"), "applecrab", perl = TRUE))
stopifnot(grepl(rex(range("a", "e") %if_next_isnt% range("f", "g")),
  "ah", perl = TRUE))
stopifnot(grepl(rex(range("a", "e") %if_next_is% range("f", "i")),
  "ah", perl = TRUE))
```

---

not

*Do not match*

---

## Description

Do not match

## Usage

```
not(..., type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

## Arguments

... [shortcuts](#), R variables, text, or other **rex** functions.

type the type of match to perform.

There are three match types

1. greedy: match the longest string. This is the default matching type.
2. lazy: match the shortest string. This matches the shortest string from the same anchor point, not necessarily the shortest global string.
3. possessive: match and don't allow backtracking

**See Also**

Other rex: [%or%\(\)](#), [capture\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [counts](#), [group\(\)](#), [lookarounds](#), [rex\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#), [wildcards](#)

---

register_shortcuts	<i>Register the Rex shortcuts</i>
--------------------	-----------------------------------

---

**Description**

If you are using rex in another package you need to call this function to register all of the rex shortcuts so that spurious NOTEs about global variables being generated during R CMD check.

**Usage**

```
register_shortcuts(pkg_name)
```

**Arguments**

pkg\_name            the package to register the shortcuts in

---

rex	<i>Generate a regular expression.</i>
-----	---------------------------------------

---

**Description**

Generate a regular expression.

**Usage**

```
rex(..., env = parent.frame())
```

**Arguments**

...                    [shortcuts](#), R variables, text, or other **rex** functions.  
 env                    environment to evaluate the rex expression in.

**See Also**

Other rex: [%or%\(\)](#), [capture\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [counts](#), [group\(\)](#), [lookarounds](#), [not\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#), [wildcards](#)

---

rex_mode	<i>Toggles <b>rex</b> mode.</i>
----------	---------------------------------

---

**Description**

While within rex mode, functions used within the `rex` function are attached, so one can get e.g. auto-completion within editors.

**Usage**

```
rex_mode()
```

---

re_matches	<i>Match function</i>
------------	-----------------------

---

**Description**

Match function

**Usage**

```
re_matches(
  data,
  pattern,
  global = FALSE,
  options = NULL,
  locations = FALSE,
  ...
)
```

**Arguments**

data	character vector to match against
pattern	regular expression to use for matching
global	use global matching
options	regular expression options
locations	rather than returning the values of the matched (or captured) string, return a <code>data.frame</code> of the match locations in the string.
...	options passed to <code>regexpr</code> or <code>gregexpr</code>

**Value**

if no captures, returns a logical vector the same length as the input character vector specifying if the relevant value matched or not. If there are captures in the regular expression, returns a `data.frame` with a column for each capture group. If `global` is `TRUE`, returns a list of `data.frames`.

**See Also**

[regexp](#) Section "Perl-like Regular Expressions" for a discussion of the supported options

**Examples**

```
string <- c("this is a", "test string")
re_matches(string, rex("test")) # FALSE FALSE

# named capture
re_matches(string, rex(capture(alphas, name = "first_word"), space,
  capture(alphas, name = "second_word")))
#   first_word second_word
# 1      this         is
# 2      test        string

# capture returns NA when it fails to match
re_matches(string, rex(capture("test")))
#      1
# 1 test
# 2 <NA>
```

---

re\_substitutes

*Substitute regular expressions in a string with another string.*


---

**Description**

Substitute regular expressions in a string with another string.

**Usage**

```
re_substitutes(data, pattern, replacement, global = FALSE, options = NULL, ...)
```

**Arguments**

data	character vector to substitute
pattern	regular expression to match
replacement	replacement text to use
global	substitute all occurrences
options	option flags
...	options passed to sub or gsub

**See Also**

[regexp](#) Section "Perl-like Regular Expressions" for a discussion of the supported options

**Examples**

```
string <- c("this is a Test", "string")
re_substitutes(string, "test", "not a test", options = "insensitive")
re_substitutes(string, "i", "x", global = TRUE)
re_substitutes(string, "(test)", "not a \\1", options = "insensitive")
```

---

shortcuts

*Shortcuts*


---

**Description**

Commonly used character classes and regular expressions. These shortcuts are substituted inside rex calls.

**Usage**

```
shortcuts
```

**Format**

An object of class shortcut of length 116.

**Details**

names(shortcuts) will give you the full list of available shortcuts.

**See Also**

Other rex: [%or%\(\)](#), [capture\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [counts](#), [group\(\)](#), [lookarounds](#), [not\(\)](#), [rex\(\)](#), [wildcards](#)

---

single\_shortcuts

*Single shortcuts*


---

**Description**

Each of these shortcuts has both a plural (-s) and inverse (non\_) form.

**Usage**

```
single_shortcuts
```

**Format**

An object of class shortcut of length 18.

---

wildcards

*Wildcards*


---

## Description

Wildcards

## Usage

```
zero_or_more(..., type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

```
one_or_more(..., type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

```
maybe(..., type = c("greedy", "lazy", "possessive"))
```

## Arguments

... [shortcuts](#), R variables, text, or other **rex** functions.

type the type of match to perform.

There are three match types

1. greedy: match the longest string. This is the default matching type.
2. lazy: match the shortest string. This matches the shortest string from the same anchor point, not necessarily the shortest global string.
3. possessive: match and don't allow backtracking

## Functions

- `zero_or_more`: match ... zero or more times.
- `one_or_more`: match ... one or more times.
- `maybe`: match ... zero or one times.

## See Also

Other rex: [%or%\(\)](#), [capture\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [counts](#), [group\(\)](#), [lookarounds](#), [not\(\)](#), [rex\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#)

---

`%or%`*Or*

---

**Description**

The special binary function `%or%` can be used to specify a set of optional matches.

**Usage**

```
x %or% y
```

```
or(...)
```

**Arguments**

`x`            A string.

`y`            A string.

`...`        [shortcuts](#), R variables, text, or other **rex** functions.

**See Also**

Other rex: [capture\(\)](#), [character\\_class\(\)](#), [counts](#), [group\(\)](#), [lookarounds](#), [not\(\)](#), [rex\(\)](#), [shortcuts](#), [wildcards](#)



# Index

- \* **datasets**
  - shortcuts, 14
  - single\_shortcuts, 14
- \* **rex**
  - %or%, 16
  - capture, 3
  - character\_class, 4
  - counts, 7
  - group, 9
  - lookarounds, 9
  - not, 10
  - rex, 11
  - shortcuts, 14
  - wildcards, 15
- . (capture), 3
- : (character\_class), 4
- %if\_next\_is%(lookarounds), 9
- %if\_next\_isnt%(lookarounds), 9
- %if\_prev\_is%(lookarounds), 9
- %if\_prev\_isnt%(lookarounds), 9
- %or%, 4, 5, 7, 9–11, 14, 15, 16
- any\_of (character\_class), 4
- as.character.regex, 2
- as.regex, 2, 3
- at\_least (counts), 7
- at\_most (counts), 7
- between (counts), 7
- capture, 3, 5, 7, 9–11, 14–16
- capture\_group, 3
- capture\_group (capture), 3
- character\_class, 4, 4, 7, 9–11, 14–16
- character\_class\_escape, 6
- counts, 4, 5, 7, 9–11, 14–16
- escape, 8
- except (character\_class), 4
- except\_any\_of (character\_class), 4
- except\_some\_of (character\_class), 4
- exclude\_range (character\_class), 4
- group, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14–16
- lookarounds, 4, 5, 7, 9, 9, 11, 14–16
- m (re\_matches), 12
- matches (re\_matches), 12
- maybe (wildcards), 15
- n (counts), 7
- n\_times (counts), 7
- none\_of (character\_class), 4
- not, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 10, 11, 14–16
- one\_of (character\_class), 4
- one\_or\_more (wildcards), 15
- or (%or%), 16
- print.regex (as.character.regex), 2
- range (character\_class), 4
- re\_matches, 12
- re\_substitutes, 13
- regex, 3
- regex (as.character.regex), 2
- regexp, 13
- register\_shortcuts, 11
- rex, 4, 5, 7, 9–11, 11, 12, 14–16
- rex\_ (rex), 11
- rex\_mode, 12
- s (re\_substitutes), 13
- shortcuts, 3–5, 7, 9–11, 14, 15, 16
- single\_shortcuts, 14
- some\_of (character\_class), 4
- substitutes (re\_substitutes), 13
- wildcards, 4, 5, 7, 9–11, 14, 15, 16
- zero\_or\_more (wildcards), 15
- zero\_or\_one (wildcards), 15