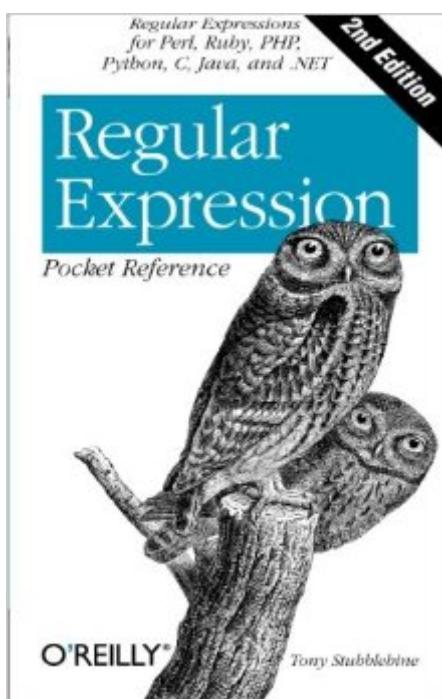


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Regular Expression Pocket Reference: Regular Expressions For Perl, Ruby, PHP, Python, C, Java And .NET (Pocket Reference (O'Reilly))



Synopsis

This handy little book offers programmers a complete overview of the syntax and semantics of regular expressions that are at the heart of every text-processing application. Ideal as a quick reference, Regular Expression Pocket Reference covers the regular expression APIs for Perl 5.8, Ruby (including some upcoming 1.9 features), Java, PHP, .NET and C#, Python, vi, JavaScript, and the PCRE regular expression libraries. This concise and easy-to-use reference puts a very powerful tool for manipulating text and data right at your fingertips. Composed of a mixture of symbols and text, regular expressions can be an outlet for creativity, for brilliant programming, and for the elegant solution. Regular Expression Pocket Reference offers an introduction to regular expressions, pattern matching, metacharacters, modes and constructs, and then provides separate sections for each of the language APIs, with complete regex listings including:

- Supported metacharacters for each language API
- Regular expression classes and interfaces for Ruby, Java, .NET, and C#
- Regular expression operators for Perl 5.8
- Regular expression module objects and functions for Python
- Pattern-matching functions for PHP and the vi editor
- Pattern-matching methods and objects for JavaScript
- Unicode Support for each of the languages

With plenty of examples and other resources, Regular Expression Pocket Reference summarizes the complex rules for performing this critical text-processing function, and presents this often-confusing topic in a friendly and well-organized format. This guide makes an ideal on-the-job companion.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

One of the most difficult things when working with regular expressoins -- at least for me -- is dealing with different implementations (i.e., Perl, Java, Python, PHP, UNIX tools, etc.) The basics of regexes and pattern matching don't vary all that much, but each implementation is just different enough that the smae line of code can yield different results. If you work with more than one of these implementations, keeping track of differences in metacharacters and metasequences can be nearly impossible. This is especially true when -- as is the case with me -- you deal with regexes somewhat intermittently. This is one of the main reasons why the "Regular Expression Pocket Reference" was written and this is why I keep it close at hand. This book will not really teach you how to use regexes, nor will it tell you how to use, say, Perl. If, however, you use Perl and you know how to use regexes but just can't remember whether you can disallow backtracking for text matched by a subpattern, then this book will save you quite a bit of time and effort. If you're wondering what it means to "disallow backtracking for text matched by a subpattern," or when you would want to use it, buy "Mastering Regular Expressions" or a similar title. The "Regular Expression Pocket Reference" is designed to be a quick reference tool, and it serves this purpose very well. I would recommend it especially for those who work with regular expressions intermittently or who work with several different implementations.

I love this series of books (the C#, C++ and STL pocket refs are my favorite), but the Regular Expression pocket ref tries to cover too many implementations. You only get about 10 pages for each language so, unless you use multiple implementations (e.g. C#/.NET, Perl, JavaScript, etc), this just isn't good value for money. I returned my copy and printed out a quick reference from one of the many Internet programming sites.

The editorial blurb on this book suggests that it can be used as a tutorial by those new to regular expressions. That's not the case. This book is strictly a reference, albeit a very good one. I bought O'Reilly's "Mastering Regular Expressions" to learn the area, and I use this book as a quick reference. It serves that purpose very well.

It's nearly impossible to memorize all the minutiae of regular expressions, especially over multiple language implementations. Tony Stubblebine's book Regular Expression Pocket Reference by O'Reilly is a nice way to help you out without digging through endless pages. Chapter List: About This Book; Introduction To Regexes And Pattern Matching; Perl 5.8; Java (java.util.regex); .NET

And C#; Python; PCRE Lib; PHP; vi Editor; JavaScript; Shell Tools; IndexLike most pocket references, this book is small (93 pages), but there's a lot of information packed into a small space. Each implementation chapter covers the metacharacters and metasequences that are supported in the language's implementation of regular expressions. This is followed by the language functions, examples of regular expressions, and a list of additional resources the reader can use to learn more about regular expressions in that language. If you don't know anything about the subject, this book (in my opinion) isn't going to help you out much. It assumes that you already understand the material and you're looking for a reference guide to find quick answers. And that's fine. This book has a definite purpose and target audience, and I think it does a very nice job of hitting the mark. For me, this would be a perfect companion book to *Mastering Regular Expressions* (also by O'Reilly). *Mastering* is considered one of the definitive volumes on the subject, and having this pocket guide on hand to jog your memory on lesser-used points would be perfect.

If you've ever picked up a copy of O'Reilly's *Mastering Regular Expressions*, then you'll feel right at home with this book. The Pocket Reference is all about usability, and this book is no exception. If you've never seen *Mastering Regular Expressions*, then this book takes the most important aspects of that book into about 80 pages. This book is basically divided into various languages (Perl, C, Java, C#) with examples on how to use regular expressions with each language. In addition to discussing the built-in language specific functions that you should use, there is discussion on the differences and nuances to using regular expressions in the specific language. If you need a desktop quick reference on regular expressions, then I would highly recommend this book. I have it next to my desk with the .NET section bookmarked. If you need something with a little more depth and explanation, then I would suggest picking up a copy of O'Reilly's *Mastering Regular Expressions*.

I recommend getting this book if you feel comfortable with regular expressions and regular expressions are important to you. As one expects from an O'Reilly Pocket Reference, this book is compact but still covers a lot of ground. For a whole bunch of applications, it provides:^{*} tables of various groupings of regex metacharacters, summarizing their syntax and meaning; ^{*} summaries of other regex related features, but not in tabular form; ^{*} examples; ^{*} a few references in case you need to go deeper. The information is concise and well chosen. This is a reference, but in applications where you use regular expressions less, it may also be useful for expanding your knowledge significantly. It was for me. If you wish, take a look at my more detailed review on Oakland Perl Mongers.

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