Regular expression that uses an "OR" conditional

Asked 16 years, 2 months ago Modified 15 years, 5 months ago Viewed 12k times



I could use some help writing a regular expression. In my Django application, users can hit the following URL:



http://www.example.com/A1/B2/C3



I'd like to create a regular expression that allows accepts any of the following as a valid URL:



http://www.example.com/A1 http://www.example.com/A1/B2 http://www.example.com/A1/B2/C3

I'm guessing I need to use the "OR" conditional, but I'm having trouble getting my regex to validate. Any thoughts?

UPDATE: Here is the regex so far. Note that I have not included the "http://www.example.com" portion -- Django handles that for me. I'm just concerned with validating 1,2, or 3 subdirectories.

```
^{(\w{1,20})|((\w{1,20})/(\w{1,20}))|((\w{1,20})/(\w{1,20}))/(\w{1,20}))}
```

regex

django

django-urls

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edited Oct 10, 2008 at 15:10



Tanktalus

22.3k • 5 • 43 • 70

asked Oct 9, 2008 at 13:48



Huuuze

16.3k • 26 • 75 • 91

Just to clarify: You want it to accept the three examples but reject anything else? I.E. somewebsite.com/A1/B1 would be unacceptable? – Dave Costa Oct 9, 2008 at 13:50

<u>somewebsite.com/A1/B1</u> would be fine. I'm just looking for something that will validate three different sub-directories. – Huuuze Oct 9, 2008 at 13:52

Can you post the regex you have so far? – ine Oct 9, 2008 at 13:56



Skip the | , use the ? and ()



http://www\.example\.com/A1(/B2(/C3)?)?



And if you replace the A1-C3 with a pattern:



http://www\.example\.com/ $[^/]*(/[^/]*(/[^/]*)?)?$



Explanation:



- it matches every string that starts with http://www.example.com/A1
- it can match an additional /B2 and even an additional /C3, but /C3 is only matched, when there is a /B2
- [^/]* (as many non slashes as possible)
- if you need the A1-C3 in special capture groups, you can use this:

```
http://www\.example\.com/([^/]^*)(/([^/]^*)()?)?
```

Will give (groupnumber: content):

```
matches: 0: (http://www.example.com/dir1/dir2/dir3)
1: (dir1)
2: (/dir2/dir3)
3: (dir2)
4: (/dir3)
5: (dir3)
```

You can check it out online here or get this tool (yes it's free, and it's even written in Lisp...).

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edited Oct 9, 2008 at 14:15

answered Oct 9, 2008 at 14:02



Andre Bossard **6,281** • 37 • 53

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Out of curiosity, if you wanted to test whether a URL ends with .html or .pdf, but didn't care about what it began with, what would the regex expression look like? - GobiasKoffi Feb 13, 2011 at 18:13



There's a much more Django way to do this:



urlpatterns = patterns('', url(r'^(?P<object_slug1>\w{2}/(?P<object_slug2>\w{2}/(? P<object_slug3>\w{2})\$', direct_to_template, {"template": "two_levels_deep.html"}, name="two_deep"), $url(r'^(?P<object_slug1>\w{2}/(?P<object_slug2>\w{2})$',$

```
direct_to_template, {"template": "one_level_deep.html"}, name="one_deep"),
    url(r'^(?P<object_slug1>\w{2})$', direct_to_template, {"template":
"homepage.html"}, name="home"),
)
```

The other methods don't take advantage of Django's power to pass variables.

Edit: I switched the order of the urlpattern to be more obvious for the parser (i.e. bottom up is more defined than top down).

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answered Jul 22, 2009 at 19:52





http://www\.example\.com/A1(/B2(/C3)?)?

1

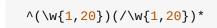
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1

this is for as many subdirectories as you like if you only want 2:



```
^(\w{1,20})(/\w{1,20}){0,2}
```





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answered Oct 9, 2008 at 14:03



39k • 59 • 162 • 246



If I'm understanding, I think you just need another set of parens around the whole OR statement:

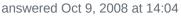




 $^{((\w\{1,20\})|((\w\{1,20\})/(\w\{1,20\}))|((\w\{1,20\})/(\w\{1,20\})/(\w\{1,20\})))}$



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1

Be aware that Django's <u>reverse URL matching</u> (permalinks, <u>reverse()</u> and {% url %}) can handle a limited subset of regular expressions. To be able to use them, it's sometimes necessary to split complex regexes into separate URL dispatcher rules.



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answered Oct 15, 2008 at 19:39





