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How to find elements with indexOf in javascript

Posted on [February 24, 2019](#) | by [Prashant Yadav](#)

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Learn how to check if elements or characters are present in [Arrays](#) or [Strings](#) with the indexOf method in javascript.

Arrays

[indexOf](#) method finds the index of the first matching element in the array and returns it. If element is not present then `-1` is returned. It searches the element with strict equality `===`.

```
const list = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7];
const index = list.indexOf(1);
console.log(index);
//0

const index = list.indexOf(11);
// -1
```

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Note: Arrays are zero index based in javascript.

The [indexOf](#) method takes two parameters as input.

`Array.indexOf(element, startFrom)`

`element`

- Required. Element whose index you are looking for.

`startFrom`

- Optional. Index from where the search of the element should start from.
- If `startFrom` is greater than Array's length then `-1` is returned.

Search element after the startFrom index

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```
const list = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7];
const index = list.indexOf(4, 5);
console.log(index);
// -1
```

Search element before the startFrom index

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```
const index = list.indexOf(5, 4);
console.log(index);
// 4
```

Search element when startFrom index is greater than Array's length

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```
const index = list.indexOf(5, 9);
console.log(index);
// -1
```

String

We can only search for the position of characters with String's [indexOf](#) method. It works same as the Array's [indexOf](#) method.

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```
const str = 'I am Prashant Yadav';
const index = str.indexOf('a');
console.log(index);
// 2
```

Note: Strings are zero index based just like Array in javascript..

String.indexOf(characters, startFrom)

characters

- Required. Character whose position you want to find.

startFrom

- Optional. A numeric value from where you want the search to start from.

- If `startFrom` is less than `0` then the search will start from `0` and if it is greater than String's length then the search will begin at `String.length`.

You can search the index of white space as well.

```
const str = 'I am Prashant Yadav';
const index = str.indexOf(' ');
console.log(index);
//1
```

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Search the index after the fourth character.

```
const str = 'I am Prashant Yadav';
const index = str.indexOf('a', 4);
console.log(index);
//7
```

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Searching with the negative index

```
const str = 'I am Prashant Yadav';
const index = str.indexOf('a', -1);
console.log(index);
//2
```

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Searching with the index greater than string's length

```
const str = 'I am Prashant Yadav';
const index = str.indexOf('a', str.length+1);
console.log(index);
//-1
```

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