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| **Character** | **Meaning** | **Example** |
| . | Matches any single character | c.t will match cat, cot, cut, etc |
| + | Repeats the previous match one or more times | a+ matches a, aa, aaa, etc |
| \* | Repeats the previous match zero or more times | a\* matches all the same things a+ matches, but will also match an empty string |
| ? | Makes the match optional | colou?r will match color and colour |
| \ | Escape the next character | \. will match . (dot) and not *any single character* as explain above |
| ^ | Called an anchor, matches the beginning of the string | ^a matches a string that begins with a |
| $ | The other anchor, this matches the end of the string | a$ matches a string that ends with a |
| ( ) | Groups several characters into a single unit, and captures a match for use in a backreference | (ab)+ matches ababab - that is, the + applies to the group. For more on backreferences see [below](https://httpd.apache.org/docs/2.4/rewrite/intro.html#InternalBackRefs) |
| [ ] | A character class - matches one of the characters | c[uoa]t matches cut, cot or cat |
| [^ ] | Negative character class - matches any character not specified | c[^/]t matches cat or c=t but not c/t |