Vim, removing blank and commented lines in one regex

Asked 7 years, 4 months ago   Active 2 years, 3 months ago   Viewed 15k times

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I want to remove blank and commented lined at one time. I already found the similar question regarding removing blank lines, so for blank lines I use:

    :g/^$/d

and for commented lines:

    :g/^#/d

I'm curious is there any way to merge these regex in one? Something like

    :g/^[$#]/d

but obviously it doesn't work in vim.

regex   vim

asked Sep 30 '12 at 15:52

evfwcqcg
12.3k   12   48   68

5 Answers

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You can try this command:

    :g/^\(#\|$\)/d

Or

    :g/\v^(#|$)/d

- `$` matches literal '$' inside [...] (type `:help /$` for help)
- `\|` is for alternation

only one thing I would suggest here is to send the deleted lines to the blackhole register by adding an underscore after the `d` operator. Like so: `:g/\v^(#|$)/d_` This will be noticeably faster if the file is huge. Also the deleted comments are not likely needed for subsequent pastes so why keep them – Peter Perháč Jul 9 '17 at 22:44

Another way of solving this is keeping the non-commented lines:

5

```
:g!/^[^#]/d
```

You can combine regex patterns with the "or" operator: `\|` , eg:

3

```
:g/^\(#.*\|$\)/d
```

Though, in this particular case, you actually just need to specify that `#.*` is optional, eg:

```
:g/^\(#.*\)\?$/d
```

Finally, be aware that you can chain together most commands with VIM's (not regex's) "pipe" operator, also `|` , eg:

```
:g /^#/d | /^$/d
```

Try the following :

3

```
:g/^$/d | /^#/d
```

The `|` is there to combine multi command at the same time.

you cannot pipe to `g`, but `g` applies across all commands in a pipeline. So this is better-written as `:g /^$/d | /^#/d` – [Will Palmer](#) Sep 30 '12 at 16:20

Expanding on kevs answer:
If anyone would also like to delete the comments in config files that are tabbed,
for example:

```
server {
    listen 80 default_server;
    listen [::]:80 default_server;

    # SSL configuration
    #
    # listen 443 ssl default_server;
    # listen [::]:443 ssl default_server;
    #
    # Self signed certs generated by the ssl-cert package
    # Don't use them in a production server!
    #
    # include snippets/snakeoil.conf;
    ...
```

You can try this:

```
:g/\v^(#|$|\t#)/d
```

answered Nov 14 '17 at 11:12

[shayan](#)
11   4