

REGEX PARTIAL MATCHING

this is a regex feature known as partial matching, its available in several regex engines such as PCRE, Boost, Java, but not in Javascript.

andrew's answer shows a very nice way to overcome this limitation, we just need to automate this.

fortunately, Javascript has a very limited regex feature set with a simple syntax, so i wrote a simple parser and on-the-fly transformation for this task, based on the features listed on ECMAScript.

a couple of points

- this produces a regex which will almost always match the empty string. therefore a failed partial match occurs when the result of exec is null or any arrays or an array whose first element is the empty.
- negative lookaheads are kept as-is. i believe that's the right thing to do. the only ways to fail a match through them (ie put a (?!) in the regex) and anchors (^ and \$)
- the parser assumes a valid input pattern: you can't create a RegExp object from an invalid pattern in the first place.

(got a partial match / full match string example).
(constraints)

• this code won't handle backreferences properly:

$\wedge(w+)|st+|i|f$ won't yield a partial match against
hello hel for instance.

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