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How to tell if a string contains a certain character in javascript?

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I have a page with a textbox where a user is supposed to enter a 24 character (letters and numbers, case insensitive) registration code. I used `maxLength` to limit the user to entering 24 characters.

The registration codes are typically given as groups of characters separated by dashes, but I would like for the user to enter the codes without the dashes.

How can I write my Javascript code without jQuery to check that a given string that the user inputs does not contain dashes, or better yet, only contains alphanumeric characters?

javascript   jquery   string


edited Jan 2 at 19:17



Cœur

6,155   1   44   61

asked Dec 14 '10 at 21:35



Daniel Allen Langdon

12.3k   37   126   242

- 1   The answer found here [stackoverflow.com/questions/3192612](http://stackoverflow.com/questions/3192612) has the information on how to validate on alphanumeric. – JasCav Dec 14 '10 at 21:39
- 1   And to learn regular expressions: [regular-expressions.info](http://regular-expressions.info) – Felix Kling Dec 14 '10 at 21:42
- For you jquery folks you should and could use `inArray` . – JonH Apr 24 '12 at 14:55
- 2   How input is formatted is not a human's problem. It's the computer's problem. Take whatever the user enters and remove all the characters that don't belong (non-alpha), test to see the result is 24 characters long, then validate it. User's really hate formatted input. – tggagne Oct 19 '13 at 16:15

12 Answers

To find "hello" in `your_string`


```
if (your_string.indexOf('hello') > -1)
{
    alert("hello found inside your_string");
}
```

For the alpha numeric you can use a regular expression:

<http://www.regular-expressions.info/javascript.html>

Alpha Numeric Regular Expression


edited Nov 14 '16 at 9:16



Timothy

1,817   3   12   27

answered Dec 14 '10 at 21:38



Kevin

80.7k   17   158   217

- That was quite helpful. Speaking as a python programmer, I am using that to replace the "in" keyword (which may or may not be unorthodox, I am unsure) but it works for more than just a single character. – someone-or-other Dec 29 '14 at 5:43
- I don't understand how this was voted at the answer. I can see that a lot of people come here by Googling. A better way would definitely be using a regular expression. – Spock Oct 13 '15 at 18:32
- 12   You would use a regular expression to check for a single character? That's an excessive amount of overhead to get the exact same thing the built in function does. There are a lot of people who don't understand regex, and generally the simpler answer is the best. – Kevin Oct 13 '15 at 19:19

I would go with `/hello/g.test(your_string)`. While `indexOf` works, I think a regex test tells a better story of what you're trying to accomplish. If I'm trying to find a sequence of characters inside a string, the index is irrelevant. – [Joe Maffei](#) Feb 22 at 21:49

If you have the text in variable `foo`:

```
if (! /^[a-zA-Z0-9]+$/.test(foo)) {
  // Validation failed
}
```

This will test and make sure the user has entered at least one character, and has entered *only* alphanumeric characters.

answered Dec 14 '10 at 21:38



[cdhowie](#)

89k 7 174 208

The correct method to check if string(word,sentence or etc...) contains specific word(character,symbol or etc..)

```
if ( "I purchased bikes".indexOf("purchase") > -1 ) { alert( "found it" ); }
```

edited May 16 '16 at 7:50

answered Apr 11 '13 at 7:02



[T.Todua](#)

16.8k 7 75 72

Does it works on IE?--> [stackoverflow.com/questions/3480771/...](http://stackoverflow.com/questions/3480771/...) – [Ger Soto](#) Apr 11 '13 at 9:27

Use a regular expression to accomplish this.

```
function isAlphanumeric( str ) {
  return /^[0-9a-zA-Z]+$/.test(str);
}
```

edited Dec 14 '10 at 21:51

answered Dec 14 '10 at 21:41



[Gaby aka G. Petrioli](#)

124k 13 161 221

This will check for exactly *one* digit, and will not accept all alphanumeric characters, as the OP desires. – [cdhowie](#) Dec 14 '10 at 21:47

@cdhowie.. forgot a +, but i had misread the question as well.. thanks for pointing out. – [Gaby aka G. Petrioli](#) Dec 14 '10 at 21:54

You're all thinking too hard. Just use a simple Regular Expression, it's your best friend.

```
var string1 = "Hi Stack Overflow. I like to eat pizza."
var string2 = "Damn, I fail."

var regex = /(pizza)/g // Insert whatever phrase or character you want to find

string1.test(regex); // => true
string2.test(regex); // => false
```

[Learn Regex in 5 minutes?](#)

answered Oct 3 '14 at 14:44



[Adam McArthur](#)

516 8 22

So to do something practical with this, you'd simply run it in a selection: `if ( string1.test(regex) ) { alert("He likes pizza!"); }`  – [Adam McArthur](#) Oct 3 '14 at 14:48

And your alphanumeric test would be... `var regex = /^[a-z0-9]+$/i` – [Adam McArthur](#) Oct 3 '14 at 14:57

1 This is backwards. See [developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/JavaScript/Reference/...](http://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/JavaScript/Reference/...) `regexObj.test(str)` – [Ralph Yozzo](#) Dec 2 '15 at 18:39

To test for alphanumeric characters only:

```
if (/^[0-9A-Za-z]+$/.test(yourString))
{
  //there are only alphanumeric characters
}
else
{
}
```

```
//it contains other characters
}
```

The regex is testing for 1 or more (+) of the set of characters 0-9, A-Z, and a-z, starting with the beginning of input (^) and stopping with the end of input (\$).

answered Dec 14 '10 at 21:45



fairfield

161 1 1 10

Try this:

```
if ('Hello, World!'.indexOf('orl') !== -1)
    alert("The string 'Hello World' contains the substring 'orl!'");
else
    alert("The string 'Hello World' does not contain the substring 'orl!'");
```

Here is an example: <http://jsfiddle.net/oliverni/cb8xw/>

answered Nov 28 '13 at 21:01



Oiler V

544 3 11 24

String's search function is useful too. It searches for a character as well as a sub\_string in a given string.

```
'apple'.search('pl') returns 2
```

```
'apple'.search('x') return -1
```

answered May 4 '15 at 14:32



learner010

87 9

```
var inputString = "this is home";
var findme = "home";

if ( inputString.indexOf(findme) > -1 ) {
    alert( "found it" );
} else {
    alert( "not found" );
}
```

edited Jan 22 '15 at 12:55

community wiki  
2 revs  
aman

Working perfectly.This exmple will help alot.

```
<script>
function check()
{
    var val = frm1.username.value;
    //alert(val);
    if (val.indexOf("@") > 0)
    {
        alert ("email");
        document.getElementById('isEmail1').value = true;
        //alert( document.getElementById('isEmail1').value);
    }else {
        alert("username");
        document.getElementById('isEmail1').value = false;
        //alert( document.getElementById('isEmail1').value);
    }
}
</script>

<body>
<h1>My form </h1>
<form action="v1.0/user/login" method="post" id = "frm1">
    <p>
        UserName : <input type="text" id = "username" name="username" />
    </p>
    <p>
        Password : <input type="text" name="password" />
    </p>
    <p>
        <input type="hidden" class="email" id = "isEmail1" name = "isEmail"/>
    </p>
    <input type="submit" id = "submit" value="Add User" onclick="return check();"/>
</form>
</body>
```

edited Apr 10 '14 at 10:50

| chriz

answered Aug 7 '13 at 11:56

MankitaP



1,108 2 12 27



12 1 1 7

Kevins answer is correct but it requires a "magic" number as follows: `var containsChar = s.indexOf(somechar) !== -1`; In that case you need to know that `-1` stands for *not found*. I think that a bit better version would be: `var containsChar = s.indexOf(somechar) >= 0`;

answered Nov 9 '15 at 9:43



Mika Karjunen

59 4

Well according to the [original](#), [current](#), and [draft](#) standards, `indexOf()` will return `-1` if the string is not found. So it's hardly more *magic* than using `0`. – [cpburnz](#) Mar 30 '16 at 18:25

```
var emailID=document.getElementById("emailField").value;
if(!emailID.contains("@"))
{
    alert("Wrong EmailID");
}
```

answered Mar 30 '16 at 17:16



Chetan

1

Strings do not have a `contains()` method. – [cpburnz](#) Mar 30 '16 at 18:16