How do I replace all line breaks in a string with <br /> tags?

Asked 10 years, 4 months ago   Active 1 month ago   Viewed 408k times

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487

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How can I read the line break from a value with JavaScript and replace all the line breaks with `<br />` tags?

Example:

★

86

A variable passed from PHP as below:

```
"This is man.

    Man like dog.
    Man like to drink.

    Man is the king."
```

I would like my result to look something like this after the JavaScript converts it:

```
"This is man<br /><br />Man like dog.<br />Man like to drink.<br /><br />Man is the
king."
```

javascript

	edited Jul 15 at 19:24	asked Apr 24 '09 at 4:38
	Kamil Kiełczewski	Jin Yong
	20.5k 8 97 115	**16.9k** 64 125 171

1	Something wrong with your original question? [stackoverflow.com/questions/784313/…](stackoverflow.com/questions/784313/...) – harto Apr 24 '09 at 4:42
1	You could also do nl2br($string) in PHP before you send it to JavaScript. – alex Apr 24 '09 at 4:44
1	I'm going to vote to close the earlier question, as this has a better example. – eyelidlessness Apr 24 '09 at 4:48
2	He should edit the initial question then – nickf Apr 24 '09 at 4:48

13 Answers

This will turn all returns into HTML

1085

```
str = str.replace(/(?:\r\n|\r|\n)/g, '<br>');
```

In case you wonder what ?: means. It is called a non-capturing group. It means that group of regex within the parentheses won't be saved in memory to be referenced later. You can check out these threads for more information:
https://stackoverflow.com/a/11530881/5042169 https://stackoverflow.com/a/36524555/5042169

edited Dec 8 '18 at 0:47	answered Apr 24 '09 at 4:43
Jun711	eyelidlessness
1,061 3 11 31	**52.6k** 11 83 91

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73   Just additional note: `str.replace("\n", '<br />')` (first argument is a regular string) will replace only first occurrence. – Serge S. Apr 15 '13 at 20:49

16   Another version (to replace multiple line-breaks): str.replace(/(\n)+/g, '<br />'); – Ritesh Apr 16 '13 at 16:30

4   @SergeS. Thanks for that extra comment. Just saved me a TONNE of time! jsfiddle – EleventyOne Aug 11 '13 at 3:37

4   @SergeS., `String#replace` coerces its first argument from `String` to an escaped `RegExp` instance, with no flags. `str.replace('\n', '<br />');` is equivalent to `str.replace(new RegExp('\n'), '<br />');` – eyelidlessness Jan 19 '14 at 7:37 ✏

1   @Conexion, `\r?\n` is not correct either. Some other systems use `\r` alone. I'll update for all cases. – eyelidlessness May 19 '14 at 19:59

If your concern is just displaying linebreaks, you could do this with CSS.

338   HTML

```
<div class="white-space-pre">Some test
with linebreaks</div>
```

```
.white-space-pre {
    white-space: pre-wrap;
}
```

jsfiddle https://jsfiddle.net/yk1angkz/125/

Note: Pay attention to code formatting and indenting, since `white-space: pre-wrap` will display **all** whitespaces (except for the last newline after the text, see fiddle).

edited Nov 10 '17 at 11:03
Bastien
423 4 14

answered Sep 2 '15 at 10:57
bersling
7,113 3 26 34

54　Great answer... needs more upboats! – Ian Quigley Sep 3 '15 at 8:37

11　I came here looking for the regex and left with this. In lots of occasions this is what people are looking for. We use linebreaks for emails and need to display what the email looked line in html, sometimes. Perfecto. Thanks for looking at the question in a different light – Mutmatt Mar 1 '16 at 19:01

1　This might work for actual line breaks, but what if I have "\n"s like in the question? Can I solve this by CSS, too? – Froxx May 24 '16 at 10:13

15　Instead of `white-space: pre-wrap;` I prefer use `white-space: pre-line;` (to not add a final break line after all) – jpmottin Aug 9 '16 at 17:54 ✎

4　looks good but what about a giant space before the first line? weird – Toolkit Feb 4 '17 at 11:12

Without regex:

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70

```
str = str.split("\n").join("<br />");
```

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answered Dec 7 '11 at 9:23
paulslater19
5,103 1 20 23

1　If you do "\\n" you'll avoid issues with splitting on just the "n". – CrowderSoup Aug 2 '12 at 19:19

9　@CrowderSoup hmm? I just tried it and `\\n` doesn't match on a new line, because it's looking for `backslash + n` . – paulslater19 Aug 3 '12 at 8:04

I found this answer did not work unless the slash was escaped. For example: str = str.split("\n").join("<br />"); – ACOMIT001 Oct 29 '15 at 8:15 ✏

This works for input coming from a textarea

36

```
str.replace(new RegExp('\r?\n','g'), '<br />');
```

answered Nov 21 '13 at 19:12

WSkinner
1,521 16 21

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1   It's the best answer for me because you didn't forget the \r, which is used on some systems – Barth Zalewski Jan 17 '14 at 14:47

1   This is the best answer for this question. But I will just go with <br> not <br />. See this one stackoverflow.com/questions/1946426/html-5-is-it-br-br-or-br
– kheya Mar 12 '14 at 19:26 ✏

If the accepted answer isn't working right for you then you might try.

7

```
str.replace(new RegExp('\n','g'), '<br />')
```

It worked for me.

answered Jan 16 '13 at 23:12

Jethro Larson
1,844 20 22

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1   `new RegExp('\n', 'g')` is identical to `/\n/g` (except for some minutiae about using primitive literals versus their constructors). – eyelidlessness Mar 10 '13 at 9:37

2   whatever the reason, this worked for me but the accepted answer didn't – nick Mar 13 '13 at 9:08

1   Ah, same here... but my mistake was attempting to specify `/\n/g` as a string! – Daniel Fortunov Mar 15 '13 at 15:26 ✏

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Regardless of the system:

```
my_multiline_text.replace(/$/mg,'<br>');
```

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Michele Ongaro

56   1   3

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It is also important to encode the rest of the text in order to protect from possible script injection attacks

```javascript
function insertTextWithLineBreaks(text, targetElement) {
    var textWithNormalizedLineBreaks = text.replace('\r\n', '\n');
    var textParts = textWithNormalizedLineBreaks.split('\n');

    for (var i = 0; i < textParts.length; i++) {
        targetElement.appendChild(document.createTextNode(textParts[i]));
        if (i < textParts.length - 1) {
            targetElement.appendChild(document.createElement('br'));
        }
    }
}
```

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Dmitry Dzygin

1,033   11   21

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This worked for me when value came from a TextBox:

```
string.replace(/\n|\r\n|\r/g, '<br/>');
```

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Dr. Aaron Dishno

1,181   1   19   22

For those of you who just want to allow max. 2 `<br>` in a row, you can use this:

2

```
let text = text.replace(/(\r?\n){2,}/g, '<br><br>');
text = text.replace(/(\r?\n)/g, '<br>');
```

First line: Search for `\n` OR `\r\n` where at least 2 of them are in a row, e.g. `\n\n\n\n` . Then replace it with 2 `br`

Second line: Search for all single `\r\n` or `\n` and replace them with `<br>`

answered Mar 3 '17 at 17:47

Max
433   4   12

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if you send the variable from PHP, you can obtain it with this before sending:

1

```
$string=nl2br($string);
```

answered May 10 '17 at 15:57

ethicsoft.it   Luca C.
4,516   44   49

It will replace all new line with break

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```
str = str.replace(/\n/g, '<br>')
```

If you want to replace all new line with single break line

```
str = str.replace(/\n*\n/g, '<br>')
```

Read more about Regex : https://dl.icewarp.com/online_help/203030104.htm this will help you everytime.

It is also possible to use a regex like this `str = str.replace(/\n+/g, '<br>')` for the second case – [Matteo Basso](#) May 23 at 21:19 ✎

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Not answering the specific question, but I am sure this will help *someone*...

If you have output from PHP that you want to render on a web page using JavaScript (perhaps the result of an Ajax request), and you just want to retain white space and line breaks, consider just enclosing the text inside a `<pre></pre>` block:

```
var text_with_line_breaks = retrieve_some_text_from_php();
var element = document.querySelectorAll('#output');
element.innerHTML = '<pre>' + text_with_line_breaks + '</pre>';
```

answered Jun 6 at 14:02

osullic
189   1   14

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Try

```
let s=`This is man.

    Man like dog.
    Man like to drink.

    Man is the king.`;

msg.innerHTML = s.replace(/\n/g,"<br />");


<div id="msg"></div>
```

Run code snippet	Expand snippet