



Lesson 10: Starting and ending

So far, we've been writing regular expressions that partially match pieces across all the text. Sometimes this isn't desirable, imagine for example we wanted to match the word "success" in a log file. We certainly don't want that pattern to match a line that says "Error: unsuccessful operation"! That is why it is often **best practice to write as specific regular expressions as possible** to ensure that we don't get false positives when matching against real world text.

One way to tighten our patterns is to define a pattern that describes both the **start and the end of the line** using the special **^ (hat)** and **\$ (dollar sign)** metacharacters. In the example above, we can use the pattern **^success** to match **only** a line that begins with the word "success", but not the line "Error: unsuccessful operation". And if you combine both the hat and the dollar sign, you create a pattern that matches the whole line completely at the beginning and end.

Note that this is different than the hat used inside a set of bracket **[^...]** for excluding characters, which can be confusing when reading regular expressions.

Try to match each of the strings below using these new special characters.

Exercise 10: Matching Lines

Task	Text
Match	Mission: successful
Skip	Last Mission: unsuccessful
Skip	Next Mission: successful upon capture of target



`^Mission: successful$`

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Solve the above task to continue on to the next problem, or read the Solution.

[Next – Lesson 11: Match groups \(/lesson/capturing_groups\)](#)

[Previous – Lesson 9: All this whitespace \(/lesson/whitespaces\)](#)

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