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| **Metacharacter** | **Description** |
| **\** | Specifies the next character as either a special character, a literal, a back reference, or an octal escape. |
| **^** | Matches the position at the beginning of the input string. |
| **$** | Matches the position at the end of the input string. |
| **\*** | Matches the preceding subexpression zero or more times. |
| **+** | Matches the preceding subexpression one or more times. |
| **?** | Matches the preceding subexpression zero or one time. |
| **{n}** | Matches exactly n times, where n is a non-negative integer. |
| **{n,}** | Matches at least n times, n is a non-negative integer. |
| **{n,m}** | Matches at least n and at most m times, where m and n are non-negative integers and n <= m. |
| **.** | Matches any single character except "\n". |
| **[xyz]** | A character set. Matches any one of the enclosed characters. |
| **x|y** | Matches either x or y. |
| **[^xyz]** | A negative character set. Matches any character not enclosed. |
| **[a-z]** | A range of characters. Matches any character in the specified range. |
| **[^a-z]** | A negative range characters. Matches any character not in the specified range. |
| **\b** | Matches a word boundary, that is, the position between a word and a space. |
| **\B** | Matches a nonword boundary. 'er\B' matches the 'er' in "verb" but not the 'er' in "never". |
| **\d** | Matches a digit character. |
| **\D** | Matches a non-digit character. |
| **\f** | Matches a form-feed character. |
| **\n** | Matches a newline character. |
| **\r** | Matches a carriage return character. |
| **\s** | Matches any whitespace character including space, tab, form-feed, etc. |
| **\S** | Matches any non-whitespace character. |
| **\t** | Matches a tab character. |
| **\v** | Matches a vertical tab character. |
| **\w** | Matches any word character including underscore. |
| **\W** | Matches any non-word character. |
| **\un** | Matches n, where n is a Unicode character expressed as four hexadecimal digits. For example, \u00A9 matches the copyright symbol |