

File and Path Selection

-a, --text Process all files as text. Beware of binary output interpreted as commands.

--exclude=GLOB Skip files whose base names match glob.

--exclude-from=FILE Same as `--exclude` but get list of globs from file

--exclude-dir=DIR Skip directories that match. Directories will also *not* be recursed.

-I Don't match binary files

--include=GLOB Search *only* for files matching glob.

-R, -r Recurse directories

Globs can use `*`, `?`, and `[...]` as wildcards. Use `\` as escape. Enclose multiples in curly braces, e.g. `--exclude={*.xml,*.xsf}` or `--exclude-dir={.git,.vs,my\ dir}`.

Other Options

--line-buffered Use line buffering on output. Can reduce performance.

-U Treat file(s) as binary.

-z Treat lines as zero byte terminated instead of newline

Exit Status

0 - Selected lines are found

1 - Selected lines are *not* found

2 - Error occurred (unless a match is found and errors are ignored with the `-q` option)

Other

`ls -rt * | xargs grep -e 'searchtext'`
Searches through files in chronological order.

Matching Control

-e PATTERN Used to specify multiple patterns or protect patterns starting with `"-`

-f FILE Input file for patterns, one per line

-i Ignore case

-v Invert match

-w Whole word matches only

-x Match whole line only

Matcher Selection

-E Extended regular expressions (ERE)

-F Fixed strings

-G Basic regular expressions (BRE)

-P Perl regular expression (experimental?)

Regular Expressions

`.` Match any character

`[...]` Match character list.
Use `^` to invert match.
Specify ranges with hyphen (`-`).

Ranges can also be specified using a character class, e.g. `number[[:digit:]]`. Valid character classes are:

`[:alnum:]`, `[:alpha:]`, `[:cntrl:]`,
`[:digit:]`, `[:graph:]`, `[:lower:]`,
`[:print:]`, `[:punct:]`, `[:space:]`,
`[:upper:]`, and `[:xdigit:]`

`?`, `*`, `+` Repetition operators indicating at most once, zero or more, or at least once, respectively.

`{n}` Match exactly `n` times.

`{n,}` Match at least `n` times.

`{,m}` Match 0 to `m` times.

`{n,m}` Match `n` to `m` times.

`\<`, `\>` Match beginning or end of a word, respectively.

`\b` Match both beginning and end of the word. `\B` matches the opposite.

`\w` Match word character, aka `[[:alnum:]]`. `\W` matches the opposite.

`\n` Backreference to previously matched group where `n` is a single digit.

The above represents extended regular expression syntax. For basic syntax, you must escape `?`, `+`, `{`, `|`, `(`, and `)`.



By **njones**
cheatography.com/njones/

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Output Prefix

- b Print 0-based byte offset of match within file
- H Print the file name for each match (default)
- h Hide filename from output
- n Prefix output with line number
- T Ensure first line of content is tab-aligned for readability
- Z Output a zero byte after file names

Output Options

- c Count number of lines
- color With no WHEN it will show colors when it's the final command in the pipe. WHEN is never, always, or auto.
- L Show only names of files that do NOT match
- l Show only names of matching files
- m Max number of lines to read from any file
- o Output only the matching text
- q Quiet, no output
- s Suppress error messages for missing or unreadable files

Context Lines

- A NUM Print NUM lines of trailing context after match
- B NUM Print NUM lines of lead context before match
- C NUM Print NUM lines of context



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