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InDesign 2026 GREP and metacharacters in the Find/Change dialog box

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Description Text GREP

Tab	^t	~t
Forced Line Break	^n	~n
End of Paragraph	^p	~r
Any Line End Character		~R

Symbols Text GREP

Bullet Character	^8	~8
Japanese Bullet	^5	~5
Carat Character ^	^	~^
Backslash Character \	^	~\
Copyright Symbol ©	^2	~2
Ellipsis	^e	~e
Tilde	~	~
Paragraph Symbol ¶	^7	~7
Registered Trademark Symbol ®	^r	~r
Section Symbol §	^6	~6
Trademark Symbol ™	^d	~d
Open Parenthesis (	(	~(
Closed Parenthesis)	)	~)
Open Brace Character {	{	~{
Closed Brace Character }	}	~}
Open Bracket Character [	[	~[
Closed Bracket Character]	]	~]

Markers Text GREP

Any Page Number	^#	~#
Current Page Number	^N	~N
Next Page Number	^X	~X
Previous Page Number	^V	~V
Section Marker	^x	~x
Anchored Object Marker	^a	~a
Footnote Reference Marker	^F	~F
Index Reference Marker	^I	~I

Hyphens and Dashes Text GREP

Em Dash	^_	~_
En Dash	^=	~=
Discretionary Hyphen	^~	~~
Nonbreaking Hyphen	^~	~~

White Space Text GREP

Em Space	^m	~m
En Space	^>	~>
Flush Space	^f	~f
Hair Space	^	~
Nonbreaking Space	^S	~S
Nonbreaking Fixed Width Space	^s	~s
Ideographic Space	^()	~()
Thin Space	^<	~<
Figure Space	^/	~/
Punctuation Space	^.	~.
Third Space	^3	~3
Quarter Space	^4	~4
Sixth Space	^%	~%

Quotation Marks Text GREP

Any Double Quotation Mark	"	~"
Any Single Quotation Mark	'	~'
Straight Double Quotation Mark "	"	~"
Double Left Quotation Mark "	^{"	~{"
Double Right Quotation Mark "	^}"	~}"
Straight Single Quotation Mark '	^{'	~{'
Single Left Quotation Mark '	^[	~[
Single Right Quotation Mark '	^]	~]

Break Character Text GREP

Standard Carriage Return	^b	~b
Column Break	^M	~M
Frame Break	^R	~R
Page Break	^P	~P
Odd Page Break	^L	~L
Even Page Break	^E	~E
Discretionary Line Break	^k	~k

Variable Text GREP

Any Variable	^v	~v
Running Header (Paragraph Style)	^Y	~Y
Running Header (Character Style)	^Z	~Z
Custom Text Variable	^u	~u
Last Page Number Variable	^T	~T
Chapter Number Variable	^H	~H
Creation Date Variable	^O	~O
Modification Date Variable	^o	~o
Output Date Variable	^D	~D
File Name Variable	^I	~I
Metadata Caption	^J	~J

Other Text GREP

Right Indent Tab	^y	~y
Indent to Here	^i	~i
End Nested Style Here	^h	~h
Non-Joiner	^j	~j
Clipboard Contents Formatted	^c	~c
Clipboard Contents Unformatted	^C	~C

Wildcards Text GREP

Any Digit	^9	~9
Any Character Not a Digit	^D	~D
Any Letter	^\$	~\$
Any Character	^?	~?
Any White Space	^w	~w
Any Character Not a White Space	^S	~S
Any Vertical Space (hard and soft returns)	^v	~v
Any Horizontal Space (all but hard returns)	^h	~h
Any Word Character	^w	~w
Any Character Not a Word Character	^W	~W
Any Lowercase Letter	^l	~l
Any Character Not a Lowercase Letter	^L	~L
Any Uppercase Letter	^u	~u
Any Character Not Uppercase	^U	~U

Locations GREP

Beginning of Word	^<	~<
End of Word	^>	~>
Word Boundary	^b	~b
Beginning of Paragraph	^	~
End of Paragraph	^\$	~\$
Beginning or End of Story	^A or ^Z	~A or ~Z
Literal-Text Span	^Q ... ^E	~Q ... ~E

Repeat GREP

Zero or One Time	?	~
Zero or More Times	*	~
One or More Times	+	~
Zero or One Time (Shortest Match)	??	~
Zero or More Times (Shortest Match)	*?	~
One or More Times (Shortest Match)	+?	~
Repeat Subexpression 1st–9th in Find	^1 ... ^9	~1 ... ~9
Back-Reference Repeat (Shortest Match)	^1+	~1+

Match GREP

Marking Subexpression	()	~
Non-Marking Subexpression	(?)	~
Character Set	[]	~
Negated Character Set	[^]	~
Or		~
Positive Lookbehind	(?<=)	~
Negative Lookbehind	(?<!)	~
Positive Lookahead	(?=)	~
Negative Lookahead	(?!)	~
Lookbehind (keep text found out of match)	^K	~K

Modifiers GREP

Case-Insensitive On	(?)	~
Case-Insensitive Off	(?i)	~
Multiline On or Multiline Off	(?m) or (?-m)	~
Single-Line On or Single-Line Off	(?s) or (?-s)	~
Ignore Whitespace On	(?w)	~
Ignore Whitespace Off	(?w)	~

Posix GREP

Any alphanumeric character	[[[:alnum:]]	~
Any alphabetic character	[[[:alpha:]]	~
Only digits 0 to 9	[[[:digit:]]	~
Any lowercase character a to z	[[[:lower:]]	~
Any punctuation and symbols	[[[:punct:]]	~
Any whitespace and break	[[[:space:]]	~
Any uppercase character A to Z	[[[:upper:]]	~
Any letter, number, and underscore	[[[:word:]]	~
Any hexadecimal 0-9, a-f, and A-F	[[[:xdigit:]]	~
Any character of a glyph set (à, á, â, ã, ä)	[[[:a=]]	~
Any blank character, ie space or tab	[[[:blank:]]	~
Any control character	[[[:control:]]	~
Any visible character	[[[:graph:]]	~
Any visible characters and spaces	[[[:print:]]	~
Any character code > 255	[[[:unicode:]]	~

Found (Change Field)

Found Text	...	\$0
Found 1	...	\$1
Found 2	...	\$2
Found 3	...	\$3
Found 4	...	\$4
Found 5	...	\$5
Found 6	...	\$6
Found 7	...	\$7
Found 8	...	\$8
Found 9	...	\$9
Clipboard Contents Formatted	^c	~c
Clipboard Contents Unformatted	^C	~C

Undocumented GREP

Value or Range (example: 2 to 5 times)	{2,5}	~
Letter	^p{letter}	~
Lowercase letter	^p{lowercase_letter}	~
Uppercase letter	^p{uppercase_letter}	~
Titlecase letter	^p{titlecase_letter}	~
Spacing modifier letter	^p{modifier_letter}	~
Non-case non-modifier letters	^p{letter_other}	~
Marks	^p{mark}	~
Diacritical and tone marks	^p{non_spacing_mark}	~
Vowels SE Asian lang	^p{spacing_combining_mark}	~
Circles, squares, keycaps	^p{enclosing_mark}	~
Spaces, returns, 2028, 2029	^p{separator}	~
All spaces except tab & return	^p{space_separator}	~
Line separator character 2028	^p{line_separator}	~
Paragraph separator 2029	^p{paragraph_separator}	~
Math and Windings	^p{symbol}	~
Math symbols	^p{math_symbol}	~
Currency symbols	^p{currency_symbol}	~
Modifier symbols	^p{modifier_symbol}	~
Windings, dingbats	^p{other_symbol}	~
Numbers	^p{number}	~
Digits 0 to 9	^p{decimal_digit_number}	~
Roman numerals	^p{letter_number}	~
Other numbers	^p{other_number}	~
Punctuation	^p{punctuation}	~
Hyphens and dashes	^p{dash_punctuation}	~
Opening parentheses, braces	^p{open_punctuation}	~
Closing parentheses, brackets	^p{close_punctuation}	~
Opening quotes	^p{initial_punctuation}	~
Closing quotes	^p{final_punctuation}	~
Underscore, 203F, 2040, 2054	^p{connector_punctuation}	~
Other punctuation	^p{other_punctuation}	~
Other	^p{other}	~
Control characters	^p{control}	~
Formatting character markers	^p{format}	~
E000–F8FF	^p{private_use}	~
Unassigned Unicode range	^p{unassigned}	~



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InDesign 2026 GREP some useful GREP examples

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1. Find ALL CAPS paragraphs

Find: \u\u+(\.|\?|\r)?\$

Change with formatting: paragraph style

Note: When your untagged text has occasional paragraphs typed in all caps, this script finds two or more uppercase letters followed by a period and a hard return. This is enough to find such paragraphs and tag them. Step 2, run ChangeCaseofSelectedStyle.jsx, a script by Dave Saunders of PDSAssoc.com. This converts case.

2. Find ALL CAPS words

Find: \<[A-Z]{2,}\>

Change: with formatting: OpenType All Caps

Note: The minimal length {2,} is to prevent it picking up all single capitals (remove if you want those as well). Ideally, you search full caps with this regular expression and replace them with OpenType All Caps. Any other way will need handwork or a script. For international text, you should search for \<\u{2,}\> (the \u uppercase wildcard also finds capital "Ü")

3. Find capital letters like acronyms

Find: \u\u+ or Find: >\<\u\u+\>

Change: with formatting: such as AllSmallCaps

Note: This finds 2 or more uppercase letters. The \< and \> are word delimiters, so it won't alter anything else than caps words. If the Replace field is empty and it has formatting, it applies the formatting to the found text. Only if there is also no formatting, it replaces with nothing.

4. Swap List of First Names and Last Names

Find: (+) (+)

Change: \$2, \$1

Note: This finds something to the left and right of a space; and puts them back in reversed with a comma and space

5. Thin spaces around em dashes

Find: (?<!~<)(~)(?!~<)

Change: ~<\$0~<

This finds em dashes without thin spaces and puts them in.

6. Find and delete soft return line breaks

Find: \s?\n

Change: with single spacebar space

Note: Soft returns replaced by spacebar space

7. Find quoted words and change to italic

Find: (~){(\u*\[!*\s*[w*d*](~))}

Change: \$2 and italic character style formatting

Note: This finds the quotes but leaves them out since it only changes to found group 2; not 1 and 3.

8. Find all email addresses

Find: [\u\d_%-]+@[u\d_%-]+

Change: with formatting

Note: The _, %, and hyphen were added because those characters are not included in the wildcard codes. The square brackets group the codes together. The + indicates that these characters can appear any number of times, or not at all. The @ sign is outside the group to appear only once. The group is then repeated for the rest of the address.

9. Capitalize first letter of word after bullet

Find: (.)\t(\l)

Change: \$1\$2\$3

Note: In the Replace formatting set text to uppercase

10. Search for words with brackets

Find: \[w{4,20}\]

Change: with formatting

Note: This finds with brackets (could be parentheses)

11. Search for words within brackets

Find: (?<=\[)w{4,20}(?=])

Change: with formatting

Note: This finds within but not including brackets

12. Search for 3 of the same letters; reduce to 2

Find: (w)\1\1

Change: \$1\$1

13. Search for phone numbers to regularize

Find: \d[-.]?\1(\d{3})\1[-.]?\1(\d{3})\1[-.]?\1(\d{4})

Change: \$1.\$2.\$3

Or Change: \$1-\$2-\$3 or Change: (\$1) \$2-\$3

Note: This finds a sequence of 3, 3, and 4 digits. The ? symbol indicates that the element can exist zero or one time in the string, so the code [-.]? means that a hyphen, dot, or space may or may not exist between the digits. Replace can use periods, parentheses, or hyphens, as you wish.

14. Search for dates to format

Find: \d\d?\d\d?-(\d\d)?\d\d

Change: with formatting from the character styles panel

Notes: This sequence finds dates formatted like 09-04-2008 as well as 9-4-08, and allows you to apply a character style.

15. Replace multiple terms with one term

Find: illustration | graph | map | chart

Change: figure

Note: The list of alternative words must be separated by the vertical bar, and each alternative is replaced with the replace term. GREP is case sensitive by default; so to replace case-insensitively, add (?) before the expression.

16. Find or remove trailing characters after numbers, as in 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th

Find:

(?<=\\d)+st(?<=\\d)+th(?<=\\d)+nd(?<=\\d)+rd

Change: leave blank, to strip out; or apply formatting of superscript character style

Note: We are looking for the two-letter trailing characters to strip off. The pipe = OR. The search repeats itself four times, saying if the characters occur where there is a digit, then the characters will be removed. If you surround the text with parentheses, you could superscript the text instead of stripping it out.

17. Search for duplicates; reduce to 1 word

Find: ((\\b\\w+))((\\1)\\b)

Change: \$1

18. TitleCase applied except small words

Find: \\s\\l[-\\s]\\l(?:\\f\\h\\e\\n\\d?\\o\\l\\r\\o\\m\\o\\r\\u\\t)?\\b)

Change: formatting to All Caps styling

Note: Search the selection. Leave the Change what field blank. This won't work on all-uppercase text! This also converts to uppercase any word that follows a colon or a hyphen.

19. Undocumented negation in Wildcards

Not documented in the Wildcards flyout is that the uppercase version of the wildcards negates them.

Note: Thus, \\D finds everything that is not a digit;

\\U finds everything that is not an uppercase letter, and \\L finds everything that is not a lowercase letter, etc.

20. Find underlining and replace with italics

Find Formatting: Underline

Change Formatting: Italic character style

This uses Text; not GREP, and is good because character styles control better than direct formatting. Note: Have pre-built character styles for bold, italic, and bold italic. Also, have

superscript, smallcaps, and other character styles defining swatch colors pre-built for use in Find/Change as well as nested styles.

21. Interpret GREP into English

RegexBuddy (<http://www.regexbuddy.com/>)

Notes: To see the translation, click the Create tab after entering a regular expression. You will see that the program has listed your expression as a sequence of icons/explanations. Windows-only.

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