

Using Shorthand Metacharacters to Shorten Regular Expressions



Josh Duffney

DEVOPS ENGINEER

@joshduffney <http://duffney.io/>



Shorthand Metacharacters

| Metacharacter | Purpose |
|-----------------|--|
| <code>\w</code> | <code>[a-zA-Z0-9_]</code> word characters |
| <code>\s</code> | whitespace characters |
| <code>\d</code> | <code>[0-9]</code> digit characters |
| <code>\W</code> | <code>[^a-zA-Z0-9_]</code> non-word characters |
| <code>\S</code> | non-whitespace characters |
| <code>\D</code> | <code>[^0-9]</code> non-digit characters |
| <code>.</code> | any character |
| <code>\n</code> | newline characters |
| <code>\t</code> | tab characters |
| <code>\r</code> | carriage-return character |



```
'svc_account' -match '\w\w\w\waccount'
```

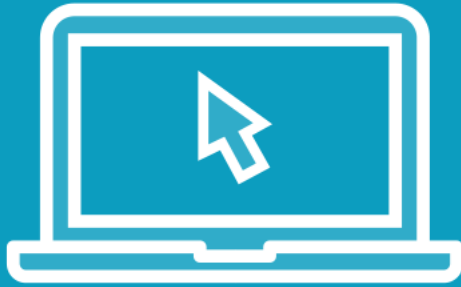
```
'202-555-0107' -match '\d\d\d-\d\d\d-\d\d\d\d'
```

Shorthand Metacharacters . . .

Are regular expression metacharacters that are used to represent more than one character.



Demo



Shorthand metacharacter matching

- Match any character with `.`
- Match any word character with `\w`

Find Active Directory users

- Character class vs. shorthand

Validating an IP address

- Match an IP with `\d`

Matching whitespaces

- Match newlines and spaces with `\s`

Converting an array to a string

- Replacing newlines with `\n`



Summary



Shorthand metacharacter

- Used to represent many different characters

Used Shorthand metacharacters

- Discovered Active Directory users
- Validated an IP address
- Matched and split on spaces
- Converted an array to a string

Escaping metacharacters

- Learned `\` escapes metacharacters

