Search Console regex cheat sheet

Where the filter is, its rules, the symbols, six things to know before you paste, then 50 filters to copy.

01 Where the filter is

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Performance	+ Add filter	Query	Custom (regex)	Matches regex	Paste	Apply

Keep **Search type: Web** on Text-based (Multimodal has no queries). For URLs choose Page at step 3. To exclude, choose Doesn't match regex at step 5.

The box is labelled Enter regular expression (regex). Once applied, the chip reads **Query: Custom (regex)**.

Labels as shown in Search Console on 21 October 2026. Search type note: Google Search Console Help, answer 17011259.

02 The three rules

1. It uses RE2

Google's regex engine. No lookahead `(?=` `(?!`, lookbehind or back-references.

2. It matches anywhere

`boiler` matches "combi boiler service". Add ^ for "starts with" and $ for "ends with".

3. Capitals are ignored

No need for `(?i)`. Start with `(?-i)` when capitals matter, as in some URLs.

Source: Search Console Help, "Advanced filtering and comparison", support.google.com/webmasters/answer/17011165, read 21 October 2026.

03 The symbols you need

SYMBOL	MEANS	EXAMPLE	MATCHES	DOES NOT MATCH
`|`	or	`boiler|radiator`	radiator cold at the bottom	plumber rochester
`( )`	group the choices	`(red|blue) shoes`	blue shoes size 6	shoes in red
`^`	starts with	`^how`	how long does a boiler last	know how boilers work
`$`	ends with	`kent$`	plumber gillingham kent	kent plumber
`\b`	whole word (A to Z, 0 to 9 and _ only)	`\bhire\b`	hire a plumber for a day	sapphire bathroom taps
`.`	any one character	`e.mail`	e-mail marketing	email marketing
`.*`	anything, or nothing	`boiler.*kent`	boiler service in kent	kent boiler
`?`	the character before is optional	`colou?r`	color printing	colr
`[ ]`	any one of these	`optimi[sz]e`	optimize my site	optimum
`\d +`	a digit (+ means one or more)	`top \d+`	top 10 plumbers	top plumbers
`{n,m}`	n to m times	`\bme\d{1,2}\b`	plumber me15	plumber near me
`\`	treat the next symbol as text	`\.pdf`	brochure.pdf	pdf tips
`(?-i)`	capitals matter (put it first)	`(?-i)SEO`	SEO kent	seo kent

`\s` a space, `\S` anything but a space. Both words in any order: `a.*b|b.*a`. No spaces either side of `|`. Example data, tested in RE2.

04 Six things to know before you paste

Spaces around | count as characters

Google's help template has spaces around the bar. As written, it finds nothing.

`(boiler service rochester|emergency plumber chatham)` 2 rows

`(boiler service rochester | emergency plumber chatham)` 0 rows

A broken pattern fails silently

A lookahead such as `boiler(?!cover)` is accepted with no warning. After Apply: 0 clicks, 0 impressions, "No data" and no error. A zero can mean a pattern Search Console cannot use, so test first.

One Query filter at a time

With a Query regex applied, Add filter > Query reopens the same filter. Put every choice in one pattern with `|`. A Query and a Page filter can run together.

The box takes up to 4,096 characters

The regex box in Search Console accepts up to 4,096 characters. Split a longer list of towns or URLs into two patterns and run each as its own view.

Page values are full URLs

`^/blog/` returns No data. `/blog/` returns every blog page, because each page value starts with https:// and the domain.

Filtered totals look low

"Chart totals and table results might be partial when filters are applied." Filtered views leave out anonymised queries, so they will not add up to the unfiltered total.

Behaviour checked live in Search Console on 21 October 2026. Row counts are example data: Anytown Plumbing (example.co.uk), an invented Kent firm, 28 days.

50 filters to copy

Query filters with Matches regex unless marked PAGE or DOESN'T MATCH. B1 to B3 and P3 use our brand and domain, G2 to G4 use Kent: swap in your own. All 50 passed their sample checks in google-re2 1.1.20251105 and re2js 2.8.8 on 21 October 2026. Copy from the CSV (britbunch.co.uk/downloads/search-console-regex-library.csv): text copied from a PDF can pick up line breaks.

Q Questions

Q1	**Starts with a question word** Find the questions people already find you for.	`^(who|what|what's|whats|when|where|why|which|how)\b`
Q2	**Yes/no questions** Catch yes/no questions that Q1 misses.	`^(can|could|should|do|does|did|is|are|will|would) (i|you|we|my|it|a|an|the|they|your|our|there|this|that|google)\b`
Q3	**How-to (task) questions** Find task searches for step-by-step guides.	`^how (to|do i|do you|can i|can you|should i)\b`
Q4	**Cost and time questions** Find price and timing worries.	`^how (much|long|many|often|soon)\b`
Q5	**Definitions ("what is", "meaning")** Find definition searches for a glossary.	`^what (is|are|does)\b|\b(meaning|definition|define|explained|stand for|stands for)\b`
Q6	**Decision questions** Find people weighing up whether to buy.	`\b(worth it|is it worth|should i|do i need|pros and cons|good idea)\b`

B Brand

B1	**Brand searches with misspellings** See searches for your business name, including typos.	`\b(anytown[ -]?plumbing|any ?town ?plumbing|anytown ?plumbers|anytown ?heating)\b`
B2	**Non-brand searches** DOESN'T MATCH Measure SEO growth without your brand inflating it.	`\b(anytown[ -]?plumbing|any ?town ?plumbing|anytown ?plumbers|anytown ?heating)\b`
B3	**Reputation checks on your brand** Spot reputation searches about your business.	`\b(anytown[ -]?plumbing)\b.*\b(reviews?|complaints?|scam|legit|trustpilot|any good)\b|\b(reviews?|complaints?|scam|legit|trustpilot)\b.*\b(anytown[ -]?plumbing)\b`

I Intent

I1	**Price and cost intent** Find people checking prices.	`\b(price|prices|pricing|cost|costs|how much|fee|fees|cheap|cheapest|affordable|budget|quote|quotes)\b|£`
I2	**"Best" and "top" shortlists** Find shortlist searches.	`\b(best|top \d+|top rated|top-rated|recommended)\b`
I3	**Hire a provider** Find people looking to hire.	`\b(agency|agencies|company|companies|consultant|consultancy|freelancer|specialist|expert|hire|services?)\b`
I4	**Quote, booking and enquiry** Find enquiry-ready searches.	`\b(quote|quotes|quotation|book|booking|appointment|consultation|call ?back|enquiry|enquire)\b`
I5	**Free and DIY** Separate free and DIY searchers.	`\b(free|diy|yourself|myself|for nothing)\b`
I6	**Problems and fixes** Find problems your service fixes.	`\b(not working|stopped working|not showing|broken|error|problem|issue|fix|dropped|drop|why is|why isn.?t|why does)\b`

C Comparisons

C1	**"vs" and compare** Find comparison searches.	`\b(vs|versus|compare|compared|comparison|difference between)\b`
C2	**Alternatives and switching** Find people switching from something.	`\b(alternatives?|instead of|similar to|replacement for|switch from|better than)\b`

L Length and AI-style searches

L1	**Short searches (1 to 2 words)** See your short, broad searches.	`^\S+(\s+\S+)?$`

50 filters to copy, continued

L2	**Long-tail (5 or more words)** See your long-tail searches.	`^\S+(\s+\S+){4,}$`
L3	**Prompt-length searches (10 or more words)** See prompt-length searches.	`^\S+(\s+\S+){9,}$`
L4	**AI-tool fingerprint (location suffix, "?.", 3+ commas)** Spot rows that look machine-made.	`my location is|\?\.|(,[^,]*){3,}`

G Local

G1	**"Near me" and proximity** Find "near me" searches.	`near me|nearby|near by|nearest|close to me|close by|around me|in my area|open now`
G2	**Kent towns (safer list)** Find searches naming your area.	`\b(kent|gravesend|northfleet|dartford|swanscombe|greenhithe|ebbsfleet|maidstone|medway|rochester|chatham|gillingham|strood|sittingbourne|faversham|sheerness|canterbury|whitstable|herne bay|margate|ramsgate|broadstairs|dover|folkestone|ashford|tenterden|tonbridge|tunbridge wells|sevenoaks|swanley|westerham|edenbridge|west malling|snodland|aylesford|cranbrook|paddock wood|bluewater)\b|\b(deal|sandwich|hythe|rainham),?kent\b`
G3	**Service + town, either order (the RE2 "AND")** Find service + place searches in any order.	`\b(plumber|plumbers|plumbing|boiler|heating|bathroom)\b.*\b(rochester|chatham|gillingham|strood|medway|kent)\b|\b(rochester|chatham|gillingham|strood|medway|kent)\b.*\b(plumber|plumbers|plumbing|boiler|heating|bathroom)\b`
G4	**Kent-area postcode districts** Find postcode searches.	`\b(da1[0-3]|me[0-9]{1,2}|ct[0-9]{1,2}|tn[0-9]{1,2})\b`
G5	**UK and nation qualifiers** Find searches that say UK or a nation.	`\b(uk|united kingdom|britain|british|england|scotland|wales|northern ireland)\b`
G6	**Same-name places elsewhere (exclude)** DOESN'T MATCH Remove other places with the same name.	`\b(kent state|clark kent|kent (ohio|wa)|rochester (ny|new york|mn|minnesota)|gillingham dorset|ashford (surrey|middlesex)|dover (de|delaware|nh)|canterbury (nz|new zealand|bankstown)|rainham (essex|london)|chatham (nj|ontario|house))\b`

U Spelling

U1	**UK or US spelling (either)** Catch British and American spellings together.	`optimi[sz]|colou?r|cent(re|er)\b|organi[sz]|analy[sz]|licen[cs]e|jewel(le)?ry|catalog(ue)?|favou?rite`

Y Dates and seasons

Y1	**Any year in the search** Find searches that include a year.	`\b20[0-9]{2}\b`
Y2	**UK seasons and retail dates** Find seasonal searches.	`\b(christmas|xmas|black friday|cyber monday|boxing day|new year|january sales|valentines?|easter|mother.?s day|mothering sunday|father.?s day|bonfire night|halloween|half term|bank holiday|back to school|small business saturday|summer|winter|spring|autumn)\b`

CT Content gaps

CT1	**Audience and industry modifiers** Find who is searching.	`\bfor (beginners|small business(es)?|startups?|trades(men|people)?|plumbers|builders|electricians|dentists|restaurants|cafes|salons|charities|accountants|solicitors)\b`
CT2	**Templates, tools and checklists** Find demand for templates and tools.	`\b(templates?|checklists?|calculator|generator|tools?|spreadsheet|pdf|examples?|samples?)\b`
CT3	**AI search topics** Track AI-search topics.	`\b(ai overviews?|ai mode|chatgpt|gemini|perplexity|llms?|geo|aeo|generative engine)\b`

50 filters to copy, continued

K Topics and cannibalisation

K1 **One topic, either word order (cannibalisation check)**
Check one topic across pages (cannibalisation).

```
\bboiler\b.*\b(cost|costs|price|prices|pricing)\b|\b(cost|costs|price|prices|pricing)\b.*\bboiler\b
```

K2 **Topic cluster: boiler problems (worked example)**
Measure a topic cluster (the worked example).

```
\b(boiler|combi|radiator)s?\b.*\b(pressure|leak(ing)?|noise|banging|cutting out|not (working|heating|getting hot)|no (hot water|heating)|fault|pilot light|cold at the bottom|bleed(ing)?)\b|\b(pressure|leak(ing)?|no hot water|repressuri[sz]e|bleed)\b.*\b(boiler|combi|radiator)s?\b
```

N Noise to exclude

N1 **Jobs, courses and careers (exclude)** DOESN'T MATCH
Remove job seekers and students.

```
\b(jobs?|careers?|salary|salaries|vacanc(y|ies)|apprenticeships?|internships?|courses?|training|qualifications?|hiring|how to become)\b
```

N2 **Existing-customer searches (exclude, shops)** DOESN'T MATCH
Remove existing-customer searches (shops).

```
track(ing)?\b|where is my order|returns?\b|refund|exchange|size guide|sizing|customer service|contact|phone number|cancel|\blog ?in\b|\baccount\b|card balance
```

P Page filters (full URLs)

P1 **Blog posts only** PAGE
See blog posts only.

```
/blog/.+
```

P2 **Service pages (not the hub)** PAGE
See individual service pages.

```
/services/[^/]+/$
```

P3 **Homepage only** PAGE
See the homepage only.

```
^https?://(www\.)?example\.co\.uk/?$
```

P4 **Money pages (several sections at once)** PAGE
Group the pages that make money.

```
/(services|quote|contact)/
```

P5 **Blog cluster by URL words** PAGE
Group posts on one topic by their URL words.

```
/blog/[^/]*(boiler|radiator|heating)[^/]*/$
```

P6 **URLs with parameters** PAGE
Find addresses with parameters.

```
\?
```

P7 **PDFs and documents** PAGE
Find documents that rank.

```
\.(pdf|docx?|xlsx?)($|\?)
```

V Sector packs

V1 **Trades: urgent jobs**
Trades: find urgent jobs.

```
emergency|urgent|24 ?(hours?|hrs?)|24/7|24-7|same day|out of hours|tonight|asap|burst|leak(s|ed|ing|y)?\b|no (heating|hot water|power|electric)|tripping|locked out
```

V2 **Salons: booking intent**
Salons and barbers: find booking searches.

```
\bbook|appointment|availab|walk[ -]?ins?\b|open (today|now|late|sunday|on sunday)|opening (hours|times)|last minute|same day
```

V3 **Restaurants and takeaways: open now**
Restaurants and takeaways: find "open now" searches.

```
open (now|today|late|tonight|on sunday|sunday|christmas day|boxing day|bank holiday)|opening (hours|times)|what time (does|do|is)|late night|24 ?hours?
```

V4 **Shops: ready to buy**
Shops: find ready-to-buy searches.

```
\bbuy\b|\border\b|\bshops?\b|for sale|in stock|stockists?|where to (buy|get)|next day|same day|free (delivery|shipping|returns)|uk delivery|click (and|&) collect
```

V5 **Accountants and solicitors: UK tax and compliance**
Accountants and solicitors: find UK compliance searches.

```
self assessment|tax return|hmrc|making tax digital|\bmtd\b|vat return|companies house|confirmation statement|year end|stamp duty|\bsdlt\b|ir35|payroll|auto[ -]?enrol|\bp60\b|\bp11d\b
```

V6 **Gyms and studios: membership and price**
Gyms and studios: find membership and price searches.

```
membership|\bjoin|joining fee|day pass|pay as you go|\bpayg\b|no contract|\bprices?\b|\bcosts?\b|how much|cheap|£|student discount|free trial|\btrial\b|offer
```