Linux File Editor (vi)

The most well-known and traditional text editor for Linux is the VI editor. Here are some factors that contribute to its popularity as an editor:

1) Almost all Linux Distributions offer it.

2) It functions the same way on all platforms and Distributions.

3) It is easy to use. Consequently, it is adored and used for editing by millions of Linux users. **e.**

What is the vi Editor in Linux?

The default editor that comes with the **UNIX** operating system is called **vi**. VI in the vi editor stands for **Visual Editor**. It is a **user-friendly** and very **powerful** application that is available in all Linux distros. An improved version of vi editors is **vim**. These are the following reasons why VI editor is popular:

- It is available in almost all Linux Distributions.
- It is user-friendly.
- It works the same across different platforms and distributions.

There are two **modes of operation** of VI editor:

- **Command Mode**: In command mode, actions are taken on the file.

- **Insert Mode:** In insert mode, the text will be inserted into the file.

By default, the vi editor starts in the command mode. You have to be present in the insert mode in order to enter the text. For that, just type **'i'** and you'll be in insert mode.
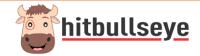
vi Command mode:

When vi starts up, it is in Command Mode. These are the following features of Command Mode:

- This mode can only **understand commands.**
- It allows you to **move the cursor**.
- It allows you to **cut**, **copy**, **paste**, or **delete** a piece of text.
- These commands are **case-sensitive**.
- It **saves** the changes you have made to the file.

vi Editor Insert mode:

This mode allows you to insert text into the file. These are the following features of the insert mode:

- To come in insert mode you simply **press I on the keyboard.**
- Now, whatever you type in this mode is interpreted as input and finally, it is put in the file.
- Press the **Esc key**, to get out of the insert mode and back to command mode.

How to Use vi Editor in Linux?

These are the following steps that are to be followed in order to create a new file:

- Create a new file. Use the below syntax to do the same.

`vi <filename_NEW>`

- Now the vi editor will open in the command mode.
- Press **i** to enter into the insert mode.
- Add content in the insert mode.
- Press **ESC** to enter command mode.
- Press**:wq** to save and quit.
- Now, the content files can be checked.

Basic VI Editing Commands

These are the following VI Editing commands along with their description:

Command	Description
i	Insert at cursor (goes into insert mode)
a	Write after the cursor (goes into insert mode)
A	Write at the end of the line (goes into insert mode)
ESC	Terminate insert mode
u	Undo last change

U	Undo all changes to the entire line
o	Open a new line (goes into insert mode)
dd	Delete line
3dd	Delete 3 lines.
D	Delete contents of the line after the cursor
C	Delete contents of a line after the cursor and insert new text. Press ESC key to end insertion.
dw	Delete word
4dw	Delete 4 words
cw	Change word
x	Delete the character at the cursor
r	Replace character
R	Overwrite characters from cursor onward
s	Substitute one character under cursor continue to insert
S	Substitute the entire line and begin to insert at the beginning of the line
~	Change case of individual character

Note: Commands in the VI editor are **case-sensitive,** so it is important to use the commands in the right letter case.

Moving within a file

It is important to be in the command mode in order to move within a file.

These are the following default keys for navigation:

- **k** - Move cursor up
- **j** - Move cursor down
- **h** - Move cursor left
- **l** - Move cursor right

Or the arrow keys on the keyboard can also be used for navigation.

Saving and Closing the file

It is important to be in the command mode in order to exit the editor and save changes to the file. These are the following ways to save a file:

- **Shift+zz** - Save the file and quit
- **:w** - Save the file but keep it open
- **:q** - Quit without saving
- **:wq** - Save the file and quit

Summary

Let us summarize the above-discussed points for our better understanding:

- The vi in VI editor stands for **Visual Editor**.
- It is installed in every Unix system.
- It is available in all Linux Distributions.

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- There are two modes of operation in the vi editor: Command Mode and Insert Mode.

- When vi starts up, it is in Command Mode.

- Command mode is responsible for taking users' commands.

- Now, to enter into the insert mode press i.

- The insert mode is responsible to take the entered text.