

# VI/VIM Essential Command Reference

[https://github.com/hbc/NGS\\_Data\\_Analysis\\_Course/blob/master/VI\\_CommandReference.pdf](https://github.com/hbc/NGS_Data_Analysis_Course/blob/master/VI_CommandReference.pdf)

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## Basic Controls & Commands

**Esc** - Basic command mode (Default mode)  
**i** - Insert mode (for inserting text)  
**gg/G** - Move to top/bottom of file  
**0/\$** - Move to begin/end of line  
**w/b** - Move to next/previous word  
**dw/dd** - Delete word/line  
**u/Ctrl + r** - Undo/Redo  
**:set number/set nonumber - add/remove line #s**  
**:w file** - Write *file*  
**:wq** - Write and quit (:wq! to enforce)  
**:q!** - Quit without saving

## Navigation and Searching

**:n** - Move cursor to line *n*  
**Ctrl + u/d** - Move down/up half page  
**Ctrl + f/b** - Move down/up a full page  
**e** - Move to end of word  
**h/j/k/l** - Move cursor left/down/up/right  
**H/M/L** - Jump to top/middle/bottom of page  
**:n** - Move cursor to line *n*  
**fn** - Search forward for next *n*  
**/pattern ?pattern** - Search *pattern* forward/back  
**n/N** - Next/previous occurrence of search pattern  
**#** - Search for word under cursor  
**:help topic** - Show documentation for *topic*

## Buffers & Windows

**:ls** or **:files** - Display list of opened files  
**:b n** - Open file *n* in current window  
**:bdn** - Delete file *#n* from buffer  
**:next/previous** - Move to next/previous file  
**:first/last** - Switch to first/last file  
**:e!** - Reload current file  
**Ctrl + wn** or **:new** - New empty window  
**Ctrl + ws** or **:sp** - Split window horizontally  
**Ctrl + wv** or **:vsp** - Split window vertically  
**Ctrl + wc** or **:close** - Close window  
**Ctrl + wo** or **:only** - Close all but current window  
**Ctrl + ww** - Jump to next window  
**Ctrl + w[hjkl]** - Move window focus  
**Ctrl + w[HJKL]** - Move window  
**:resize/vertical resize +n** - Resize window (Hor/ver)

## Editing and Saving Files

**:e filename** - Edit a new file (add to buffer)  
**:enew** - New empty file  
**:read !command** - Insert *command* output  
**:x** or **ZZ** - Save and quit if file was changed  
**:w >> file2** - Append contents of file to *file2*  
**.** - Repeat last command  
**V/v** - Visual mode for selecting lines/char  
**:%s/search/replace/gc** - Search and replace  
**:f newname** - Change file name to *newname*  
**i/a** - Insert text before/after char  
**I/A** - Insert text at start/end of line  
**O/o** - Insert new line above/below cursor  
**r** - Replace char  
**cw/cc** - Replace word/line  
**R** - Replace text (typeover)  
**s/S** - Delete char/line and insert text  
**~/g~~** - Reverse case of char/line

## Deleting and Copying Text

**x/X** - Delete current/previous char  
**nd** - Delete line *#n*  
**D** or **d\$** - Delete rest of line  
**d0** - Delete from here to beginning of line  
**Y** or **yy** - Copy to register  
**y0/y\$** - Copy to beginning/end of line  
**p/P** - Paste register after/before cursor

## Other Useful Commands

**view file** - Open *file* in read-only mode  
**:sh** - open shell (exit to re-enter vi)  
**: !command** - Run system *command* in VI  
**:e .** - Browse a directory and display file explorer  
**:command** - Execute *command* in vi  
**:cd path/to/dir** - Change directory  
**:noh** - Disable search highlighting  
**:Sex** - Split window and show file explorer (Hor)  
**:Sex!** - Split window and show file explorer (Ver)  
**vimdiff file1 file2** - Compare two files  
**nl** - Move cursor to column *n*  
**\*** - Go to next occurrence of word under cursor  
**nG** - Go to line *n*