

# Ed text editor cheat sheet

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STATUS: Work in progress.

## NOTE

The cheat sheet is for GNU version of **ed**. All values in [] are optional. **ed** fully supports Unicode.

Table 1. Command mode

Command	Description
<b>[n]a</b>	Append - append a new line after the current , or, if <i>n</i> is given, after the <i>nth</i> line, then enter input mode. Use 0 (zero) for <i>n</i> to append at the top of the buffer.
<b>[n]i</b>	Insert - insert a new line before the current or the <i>nth</i> line, if given, then enter the input mode. Use 0 as <i>n</i> to insert at the top of the buffer
<b>[n]c</b>	Change - change the current, or the <i>nth</i> line if given, then enter the input mode. The current (or specified) line gets deleted before you start typing a new one.
<b>[start,end]m[dest]</b>	Move lines, including, from <i>start</i> up to the <i>end</i> after the <i>dest</i> destination line.
<b>[start,end]t[dest]</b>	Transfer - copy lines <i>start</i> through <i>end</i> after the <i>dest</i> line. If no line numbers are given, copies the current line and pastes underneath.
<b>e [filename]</b>	Edit a file - <i>filename</i> if given, default if not. WARNING: Current buffer and all of its changes is discarded.
<b>[start,end]w [filename]</b>	Write the current buffer (whole or just lines between <i>start</i> and <i>end</i> ) to a <i>filename</i> if given or the currently set with the <b>file</b> command. The contents of the <i>filename</i> is overwritten! Ed reports number of characters written on success.
<b>[start, end]W [filename]</b>	Write by appending the buffer to the file <i>filename</i> , the current contents of the <i>filename</i> are not overwritten. Ed reports number of characters written on success.
<b>[.]=</b>	Show number of lines in the buffer, or, if <b>.</b> (dot) is given <b>.=</b> , show the line number of the current line.

Command	Description
<b>P</b>	Show/hide prompt, * (asterisk) is the default.
<b>H</b>	Turn on/off verbose error indication mode. With this mode off, <b>ed</b> only outputs <b>?</b> for any error without additional info.
<b>! shell command(s)</b>	Run the given <i>shell command(s)</i> displaying their output without leaving the <b>ed</b> . Hitting <Enter> returns to the <b>ed</b> buffer. The shell's output is not kept or redirected to the buffer in any way.
<b>r</b>	Read
<b>r !shell command(s)</b>	Run the shell command
<b>[start,end]p</b>	Print lines from <i>start</i> to <i>end</i> or current if not set. Sets current line to the last line printed.
<b>q</b>	Quit the <b>ed</b> , warns if there are unsaved changes, if repeated 2nd time, quits discarding any unsaved changes.
<b>Q</b>	Quit <b>ed</b> unconditionally, discarding any unsaved changes.
<b>u</b>	Undo the last change. <b>ed</b> has only one level of undo, entering <b>u</b> the second time redoes the change undone before.
<b>n</b>	Go to the line <i>n</i> .
<b>[starting_address]z[lines-to-scroll]</b>	Scroll default 24 lines down, if <i>lines-to-scroll</i> is not given. Optionally, start scrolling not from the current line (default), but from the line number <i>starting_address</i> . Resets current line to the last line after scrolling position.
<b>[start,end]n</b>	Print <i>start,end</i> lines prefixed by their line number, analog of <b>p</b> but prints line numbers as well. Use <b>,n</b> to print the whole buffer with line numbers.
<b>[start, end]s/regex/replacement/[g]</b>	Substitute - on lines <i>start</i> to <i>end</i> , find 1st occurrence of <i>regex</i> from the left (or all the occurrences if <b>g</b> for Global prefix is added) and replace with the <i>replacement</i> .

Table 2. Input mode

Command	Description
<b>.</b> (dot on a line by itself)	Switch from input to the command mode. The <b>.</b> (dot) should be entered on a new line by itself, then <Enter>.

Command	Description
CTRL + C	Discard the changes done in the current input mode sequence, and return to the command mode. Only changes since entering last input mode are discarded, not the whole session.