

Workflow Notes

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Abstract

Notes detailing my workflow using Vim and i3wm. Also details emulation on Windows.

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1

Vim

1.1 Vim Tips and Tricks

Some good references are [15, 61]. A more advanced tutorial that I haven't watched yet is [14]. A document on effective text editing written by the creator of Vim can be found at [46].

1. In Linux based systems, put 'setxkbmap -option "caps:escape' into ~/.bashrc to map the caps lock key to escape.
2. To set Vim as your default text editor, use 'sudo update-alternatives --config editor'.
3. Suppose the cursor is in the middle of a word. Whilst 'cw' and 'dw' will change/delete until the end of the word, 'ciw' and 'diw' to change or delete the whole word, thereby not requiring you to move the cursor to the beginning of the word first.
4. To reformat a paragraph, use 'gq'. Reformatting includes enforcing the wrap limit which can be set in your vimrc with 'set tw=<number>'. Other options can be set such as indentation. Note that this command requires a minimum of two lines, so you'll need to at least use 'gqj' and at most use 'gjG' for the rest of the document under the line currently under the cursor.
5. Use 'm<key>' to set a mark to <key> then <key> to jump to it. Note that if you set it to the capitalized version of <key> then the jumping can occur between buffers. To see your list of marks, use ':mark'.
6. Use '"<key>' then an action like 'y' or 'd' to store text in the *register* <key>. Then use '"<key>p' to paste it. Note that using 'd' will automatically store it in the register at register x and 'p' will automatically paste whatever is in register 'x'. Use ':reg' to see the register list.
7. Use 'f<key>' to forward search for <key>. To backwards search, use 'F<key>'. To repeat the search, use ',,'.
8. The 't' stands for 'til'. For example, 'dt=' will delete up to and not including an = sign.
9. The '*' can be used to search for the word under cursor.
10. 'J' is used to join the line below to the line currently under the cursor. This is useful for reformatting improperly wrapped lines but in general 'gq' is more useful for this purpose.
11. 'zt' or 'zjCRj' will put the line under the cursor to the top of the window. 'z.' will put the line to the center of the window and 'z-' will put it to the bottom of the window.
12. 'z=' will give spelling suggestions for the word under the cursor.
13. '[s' and ']s' to cycle backwards and forwards through misspelled words.

14. Use 'g\$' to go to the end of an unwrapped line.
15. If you type a long line of text in insert mode, this counts as one action. Therefore, if you press undo, the whole line will be deleted. To break the undo chain, use <c-g>u while in insert mode. Alternatively, you could map space to <c-g>u so that the undo chain is broken whenever a space is added in insert mode:
inoremap <Space><Space><c-g>u
16. Use the accent '<shift+6>' in insert mode to move to the first non-white space character in the line.
17. Use '%' while your cursor is over a parenthesis, square or curly bracket to move to the corresponding open/closing parenthesis or bracket.
18. Use ':ls' to see the list of buffers then ':b' and the number to select one. A useful mapping for this process is:
nnoremap <leader>b:ls<cr>:b<space>
19. Use '<number>+<c-6>' to switch to numbered buffer.
20. Use '<c-f>' in command line mode to view the command history in a buffer.
21. In general, all yank, change or delete actions such as 'y, c, d, x' etc will register the text object into the "" register. However, any yank action will also register the text object into the "0 register and any delete or change action will register the text object into the "- register.
22. Use 's' or 'S' to substitute. This is useful when you want to replace one letter with multiple letters.
23. When using search '/<word>', you can use <c-g> and <c-t> to cycle through them without confirming your search with <CR>.
24. Use '<c-r>' in command line mode to paste from the register.
25. Use '<c-r>' in insert mode to paste from the register.
26. Use <c-w>N in a Vim terminal to switch to normal mode, which allows you to navigate as if you were in Vim.
27. Use '<c-z>' to suspend Vim and return to shell. Use 'fg' in shell to resume the suspended program. You can also use

```
stty susp undef
bind '"\C-z","fg\015"'
```

in your bashrc to, overall, set '<c-z>' to toggle a suspended program.

28. Using 'ctags -R' in terminal creates a tag file. Then, in vim, use '<c-] >' while the cursor is over a function name to jump to the code defining the function. You can also add the following shortcut to your vimrc:

```
command! MakeTags !ctags -R .
```

so that tags can be created from the command line within Vim. Note that you need to add

```
set tags=tags;
```

to your vimrc so that ctags will check the current folder for tags file and keep going one directory all the way to root folder. See [7] for more details.

1.2 Plugin Management

The first part of this section follows [47]. First, we work towards turning `/.vim` into a git repository:

1. Move `~/.vimrc` into `~/.vim`.
2. When vim boots, it's still going to look for `.vimrc` in the home directory. To ensure that it looks for `vimrc` in the `~/.vim` directory, we can create a symbolic link to that file using `'ln -s ~/.vim/vimrc ~/.vimrc'`.
3. Make `~/.vim` into a git repository.

An issue now is if you install a plugin that itself is a git repository, you lose the version-control capabilities of that plugin. To circumvent this issue, we use a plugin manager; in this case *Pathogen*.

1.2.1 Pathogen

The pathogen plugin makes it possible to cleanly install plugins as a bundle. Rather than having to place all of your plugins side by side in the same directory, you can keep all of the files for each individual plugin together in one directory (see video from first link for example). This makes installation more straightforward, and also simplifies the tasks of upgrading and even removing a plugin if you decide you no longer need it since they are carefully segregated from each other. For a good tutorial on Pathogen, see [40].

Following the readme on the repo at [50], to install Pathogen do the following:

1. Run in terminal:

```
mkdir -p ~/.vim/autoload ~/.vim/bundle &&  
curl -LSso ~/.vim/autoload/pathogen.vim https://tpo.pe/pathogen.vim
```
2. Add the following to your vimrc: `execute pathogen#infect()`

Now any plugins you wish to install can be extracted to a subdirectory under `/.vim/bundle`, and they will be added to the `'runtimepath'`. For example, to install "sensible.vim", simply run: `"cd ~/.vim/bundle && git clone https://github.com/tpope/vim-sensible.git"`.

1.2.2 Submodules: Installing Git Repositories Within Git Repositories

This section follows [47]. Now that we can install plugins via Pathogen, let's see how we preserve the version control capabilities of our plugins. As a worked example, let us install the *Vimtex* plugin:

1. `cd ~/.vim`
2. Now to clone a git repository into the bundle directory, use:
`git submodule add https://github.com/lervag/vimtex.git bundle/vimtex`

Now, to upgrade this plugin, use:

1. `cd ~/.vim/bundle/vimtex`
2. `git pull origin master`

To update ALL of your plugins, use:

1. `cd ~/.vim`
2. `git submodule foreach git pull origin master`

1.2.3 Importing Your Vim Configuration and Plugins To a New Machines

One of the main benefits of version controlling your Vim configuration and plugins is the ease of which they can be imported into a new machine. To do so, use the following:

1. `cd ~`
2. `git clone <git repo url> ~/.vim`
3. `ln -s ~/.vim/vimrc ~/.vimrc`
4. `cd ~/.vim`
5. `git submodule init`
6. `git submodule update`

1.2.4 Vim-plug

Whilst Pathogen is the most basic plugin manager, there are limitations when porting your setup to a new machine:

1. When you run `git submodule update`, you'll pull the latest versions of the plugins from their respective repositories. So unless you've noted down somewhere all the commit IDs for your favourite version of each plugin, your overall plugin collection cannot be preserved when porting to a new machine.
2. Suppose one of the plugins is no longer being maintained by the owner and suppose also that you've made your own changes to the plugin. If you were to pull your configuration on a new machine, you will pull the latest version of the plugin; that is your changes will not be ported. Further, on your own repository for your configuration, the directories containing the plugins will be treated as repositories. Unless you manually install the plugins, there is no way to preserve your changes onto Github.

The plugin manager Vim-plug [33] has a solution to the first problem. This plugin manager is extremely simple to use:

1. Run in terminal:
`curl -fLo ~/.vim/autoload/plug.vim -create-dirs https://raw.githubusercontent.com/junegunn/vim-plug/master/plug.vim`
2. In your vimrc, add the line:
`call plug#begin('~/.vim/plugged')`
3. To include a plugin you wish to install under the line above, in your vimrc add the following line:
`Plug 'https://github.com/lervag/vimtex.git'`
4. Under 'Plug <url >' of your last plugin, in your vimrc add the following line:
`call plug#end()`
5. Reload your vimrc and use the command `':PlugInstall'` while in vim. Now all your plugins are installed.

Now to preserve the versions of your plugin:

1. In Vim, run the command `':PlugSnapshot! <filename >.vim'`.
2. To restore the state of your plugins, in vim run the command:
`:source ~/.vim/<filename >.vim`
or, in terminal:
`vim -S ~/.vim/<filename >.vim`

See the bradagys's answer in the reddit post [9]. To port your configuration to a new machine:

1. `cd ~`
2. `git clone <git repo url > ~/.vim`
3. `cd ~/.vim/vimrc`
4. `:PlugInstall`
5. `:source ~/.vim/<filename >.vim`

To uninstall plugins:

1. Delete 'Plug <url >' line from your vimrc
2. `:PlugClean`

1.3 Native Plugin Management

Vim-plug provides a solution to the first of the two issues mentioned in the previous section, but not the second. To address the second issue, we can use Vim's native plugin management system to install a plugin and delete the .git repository. That way, we can track the files and any changes in our own git repository. This section follows [55]. For a more detailed explanation, see [44] or [53].

The package feature of Vim 8 follows a pathogen-like model and adds the plugins found inside a custom-path `~/.vim/pack/` to Vim's runtime path. You can check the version of Vim installed using 'vim --version'. To install using this native feature, we use the following steps:

1. `mkdir -p ~/.vim/pack/plugins/start/`
2. `cd ~/.vim/pack/plugins/start/`
3. `git clone <url> or git submodule add <url >`

and that's it! To remove a plugin, simply remove its directory: `rm -r ~/.vim/pack/plugins/start/<plugin_directory_name >` if the plugin was cloned. Or, if it was added as a submodule, use:

1. `git submodule deinit vim/pack/shapedshed/start/<plugin_directory_name >`
2. `git rm vim/pack/shapedshed/start/<plugin_directory_name >`
3. `rm -Rf .git/modules/vim/pack/shapedshed/start/<plugin_directory_name >`

To import your vim configuration and plugins to your new machine, simply use the same steps as required for Pathogen:

1. `cd ~`
2. `git clone <git repo url> ~/.vim`
3. `ln -s ~/.vim/vimrc ~/.vimrc`
4. `cd ~/.vim`
5. `git submodule init`

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6. git submodule update

and also, to update all your plugins, you again use

1. `cd ~/.vim`
2. `git submodule foreach git pull origin master`

If you have your own plugins that are not cloned from external repositories (i.e. you’ve written your own .vim files), you can simply create a directory `./vim/plugin` and copy your plugins into there.

In conclusion, although Pathogen seems to be the most cumbersome, it could be the case that the servers do not have Vim 8 installed and so the native plugin manager will not work nor do they allow Vim-plug to install plugins. In such a case, Pathogen is your best bet.

1.4 Vimtex

This section discusses the Vimtex [42] plugin. See also the vimways article [63] for a good overview. To install MikTeX into Linux, run “`sudo apt-get install texlive-full`”.

1.4.1 Installing and Running Vimtex

Assuming you are using the Pathogen plugin manager and version controlling your `./vim` directory, follow the steps used in Section 1.2.2. Then use `:Helptags` which is Pathogen’s method for generating help tags. With this, we can use `:h vimtex` to see the manual for Vimtex. To confirm that the plugin works, type `”:VimtexInfo”` to see a summary of the tex file.

1.4.2 Compiling a Tex File

The following commands are useful:

- `:VimtexCompile` # this is a continuous compiler meaning that everytime you save with `”:w”` it will automatically compile
- `:VimtexStop` # this stops the continuous compiler
- `:VimtexCompileSS` # this is a single shot compiler. Note that you have to save your file first
- `:VimtexClean` # Cleans auxiliary files generated in compilation process

I set the following mappings in my vimrc:

```
autocmd FileType tex noremap <F5> :VimtexView<CR>
autocmd FileType tex inoremap <F5> <Esc> :VimtexView<CR>
autocmd FileType tex noremap <F6> :w! <bar> :VimtexCompileSS<CR>
autocmd FileType tex inoremap <F6> <Esc> :w! <bar> :VimtexCompileSS<CR>
```

Here are some useful commands I use in my vimrc:

```
" Avoids opening an empty .tx file only to have vimtex recognize it as plain Tex rather than Latex
let g:tex_flavor = 'latex'

" Use folding. Use zx to unfold and zX to fold all
let g:vimtex_fold_enabled = 1

" Toggle Error Window On and Off
autocmd FileType tex map <F4> \le

" Shortcut for Compiling and Viewing PDF
autocmd FileType tex noremap <F5> :VimtexView<CR>
autocmd FileType tex inoremap <F5> <Esc> :VimtexView<CR>
autocmd FileType tex noremap <F6> :w! <bar> :VimtexCompileSS<CR>
autocmd FileType tex inoremap <F6> <Esc> :w! <bar> :VimtexCompileSS<CR>
```

```

Teleportation!
autocmd FileType tex inoremap <Space><Space> <Esc/<+><CR>"_c4l

" Inline Stuff
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;mm $$<+><Esc>5ha
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;bf \textbf{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;it \textit{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;bfs \boldsymbol{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;ct \cite{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;lb \label{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;rf \ref{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;erf \ref{}<+><Esc>7hf;i

" Environments
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;itm \begin{itemize}<CR><CR>\end{itemize}<CR><+><Esc>2kA\item<Space>
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;enu \begin{enumerate}<CR><CR>\end{enumerate}<CR><+><Esc>2kA\item<Space>
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;aln \begin{align}<CR><CR>\end{align}<CR><+><Esc>2kA

" Math Environments
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;def \begin{definition}<CR><CR>\end{definition}<CR><+><Esc>2kA
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;thm \begin{theorem}<CR><CR>\end{theorem}<CR><+><Esc>2kA
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;lem \begin{lemma}<CR><CR>\end{lemma}<CR><+><Esc>2kA
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;cor \begin{corollary}<CR><CR>\end{corollary}<CR><+><Esc>2kA
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;prp \begin{proposition}<CR><CR>\end{proposition}<CR><+><Esc>2kA
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;prf \begin{proof}<CR><CR>\end{proof}<Esc>1kA

" Math Stuff
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;T ~\mathrm{T}
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;sd _{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;su _{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;frc \frac{}{}<+><Esc>12hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;mbb \mathbb{}<+><Esc>6hf;i
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;lrf \left (right) <+><Esc>12hf;a
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;lrs \left [right] <+><Esc>12hf;a
autocmd FileType tex inoremap ;lrv \left \lVert right \rVert <+><Esc>15hi<Space>

```

This section follows [23]. For this, you will need a Vimtex server which allows you to do forward and backward to navigate between corresponding sections of the tex file and the pdf. You will also need the pdf viewer *Zathura*. To install, simply use ‘`sudo apt-get install zathura`’. Then, in your vimrc, add the following line ‘`let g:vimtex_view_method = ‘zathura’`’.

1. In the directory containing the tex file, use:
`vim -servername <servername><texfile>.tex`
2. While in tex file, to jump to the text on the pdf corresponding to the line under your cursor, use:
`<leader>lv`
3. Move your mouse cursor over some text on the pdf. Then, to jump to corresponding text on the tex file, use:
`Ctrl + left-click`

Note that as of at least July 1st 2021, vim-gnome no longer exists. Instead, use vim-gtk which can be installed with ‘sudo apt-get install vim-gtk’.

1.4.4 Other Useful References

- Good article overviewing Vimtex [63]
- Nice compilation of Vimtex commands [23]
- Quick guide on the basics of Vimtex [30]
- For a comparison with other Vim LaTeX plugins [42]
- Some useful mappings such as the teleportation trick [56, 57].
- Note-taking using Vim and LaTeX for math lectures [13]
- Vim and LaTeX on MacOS [20]

1.5 IPython

The following mapping may prove useful for starting an IPython terminal in Vim:

```
nnoremap <leader>P :botright vertical terminal ipython --no-autoindent<CR><C-w><left>
```

1.5.1 sendtowindow Plugin

When coding in Python with a Vim terminal on the side running IPython, I use the *sendtowindow* plugin [37] to send lines of code to the terminal. See [36] for a Reddit post from the author discussing the plugin. It's a very simple plugin that allows the use of vim motions to move lines of text to terminals left, right, above or below the Vim window. I use the following maps:

```
let g:sendtowindow_use_defaults=0
nmap ,sr <Plug> SendRight
xmap ,srv <Plug> SendRightV
nmap ,sl <Plug> SendLeft
xmap ,slv <Plug> SendLeftV
nmap ,su <Plug> SendUp
xmap ,suv <Plug> SendUpV
nmap ,sd <Plug> SendDown
xmap ,sdv <Plug> SendDownV
```

Note that these mappings must not be noremaps (mappings that are non-recursive). For an explanation on why this is the case, please see [34]. Any one of these mappings will specify to either send some text in normal mode or in visual mode. When in normal mode, to specify which text to send, use the usual Vim movements. For example, ‘,sr\$’ will send from the cursor to the end of the line to the window on the right. However, if you are in the middle of a line, it may become tedious having to first go to the beginning of the line and having to type ‘\$’. Therefore, we can define line objects using the following maps:

```
onoremap <silent> <expr> - v:count==0 ? " :<c-u>normal! 0vg_<CR>" : " :<c-u>normal! V" . (v:count) . "jk<CR>"
onoremap <silent> <expr> i- v:count==0 ? " :<c-u>normal! ^vg_<CR>" : " :<c-u>normal! ^v" . (v:count) . "jkg_<CR>"
```

With ‘-’ alone the indentation is left intact and ‘i-’ is without indentation. So, for example, ‘,sr-’ will send the line under the cursor to the window on the right with indentation and ‘,sr8-’ will send four lines under the cursor to the window on the right with indentation. Note that this is important for Python as if you try send a for loop with ‘i-’ and leave out the indentation, then it may not run.

I have extended the plugin with `SendTextToTerminalRight` command and `SendVariableRight()` and `SendMarkedSectionRight()` functions (I’ve also coded for the other three directions as well). Using these, we can send clear, %reset and run code commands as well as variable and marked sections of code to the IPython terminal.

```
" sendtwindow for IPython in Vim Terminal: clear, reset, run code, run variable, run marked section
noremap ,sL :SendTextToTerminalRight clear<CR>
noremap ,sD :SendTextToTerminalRight %reset -f<CR>
noremap ,sR :w!<CR>:SendTextToTerminalRight run <c-r>%<CR>
nmap ,sV <Plug>SendVariableRight
nmap ,sM <Plug>SendMarkedSectionRight
```

For the map that runs the Python code, we leverage the fact that ‘<c-r>’ in command mode will prime pasting from the register and % in the register stores the file name.

The SendMarkedSectionRight() function has been coded such that the section must be marked with ‘x’ on the top of the section and ‘z’ on the bottom. The plugin vim-signature [39] may come in handy for manipulating the marks. In particular, the plugin displays marks and the command ‘dm<mark name>’ deletes the mark; so ‘dmq’ above deletes the mark called ‘q’.

1.5.2 Slimux plugin

There are many plugins that allow interaction between Vim and tmux. For example, there is Vim-Slime [31] and Vimux [8]. The one I use is Slimux [21]. There is a blog post about it here [60]. As discussed in the blog post, Slimux differs from Vimux in that it is more disjoint from tmux. In particular, Vimux will create a pane on which you must run your commands whereas Slimux allows you to select the pane you wish to use. Also, unlike Vim-Slime, you do not need to manually type in the pane to select it; in Slimux an interactive prompt is given. It’s also worth noting that Vim-Slime supports many terminal multiplexers such as GNU Screen, kitty and Vim’s native terminal.

However, with Slimux, there is an issue with sending commands to IPython where the indentation is constantly carried over [38]. There are three proposed fixes [43, 35, 64]. The first modifies python.vim, the second modifies both slimux.vim and python.vim by implementing IPython’s cpaste function and the third modifies a single line of slimux.vim. Since the repo owner hasn’t pulled any of these fixes, I opted for the third fix which requires changing line 328 of slimux.vim in the SlimuxSendCode() function:

```
let b:code_packet["text"] = a:text
```

to:

```
b:code_packet["text"] = "\e[200" . a:text . "\e[201"\r\r.
```

There is also an issue with the SlimuxSendKeys() function. This function sends keys to the terminal using the ‘tmux send-keys’ syntax. A simple fix is to change line 228 of slimux.vim from

```
call system(g:slimux_tmux_path . " send-keys -t " . target . " " . keys)
```

to

```
call system(g:slimux_tmux_path . " send-keys -t " . target . " " . keys)
```

It’s surprising that this small typo went unnoticed. Note that this repository has not been updated in years and so all pull requests have not been fulfilled. Therefore, if you wish to track the fixes you’ve made, you may want to install the plugin manually so that it does not follow the original repository. This was discussed in Section 1.3.

I use the following mappings:

```
" Primer for Vim motions to select text to be sent
nmap ,t <Plug>SlimuxREPLSendWithMotion

" Send text selected in visual mode
vnoremap ,t :SlimuxREPLSendSelection<CR>

" Send terminal commands
nnoremap ,tX :SlimuxShellPrompt<CR>
nnoremap ,tT :SlimuxShellRun<Space>
nnoremap ,tE :SlimuxShellRun exit<CR>
```

```
" Send keys using the 'tmux send-keys' syntax
nnoremap ,tK :SlimuxSendKeys<Space>
nnoremap ,tC :SlimuxSendKeys<Space>c-c<CR>

" Slimux for IPython in tmux terminal : IPython, clear, reset, run code, run variable, run marked section
nnoremap ,tP :SlimuxShellRun ipython<CR>
nnoremap ,tL :SlimuxShellRun clear<CR>
nnoremap ,tD :SlimuxShellRun %reset -f<CR>
nnoremap ,tR :w!<CR>:SlimuxShellRun run <c-r>%<CR>
nmap ,tV <Plug>SlimuxREPLSendVariable
nmap ,tM <Plug>SlimuxREPLSendMarkedSection
```

where SlimuxShellRun awaits a command to send to shell and SlimuxSendKeys sends key inputs using the 'tmux send-keys' syntax. The SlimuxREPLSendWithMotion was not part of the original slimux plugin. My code is as follows:

```
function! s:GetTextWithMotion(type)
    let s:saved_registert = @t

    " Obtain wanted text
    if a:type ==# "char"
        keepjumps normal! '[v]'ty
        call setpos(".", getpos(""))
    elseif a:type ==# "line"
        keepjumps normal! '[V]%'ty
        call setpos(".", getpos(""))
    endif
    let text = @t

    " Restore register
    let @t = s:saved_registert

    return text
endfunction

function! s:SlimuxREPLSendWithMotion(type)
    let text = s:GetTextWithMotion(a:type)
    call SlimuxSendCode(text)
endfunction

nnoremap <silent> <Plug>SlimuxREPLSendWithMotion :<C-U> set operatorfunc=<SID>SlimuxREPLSendWithMotion<CR>g@
```

The 'g@' sets the mark '[' at the beginning of the motion and ']' at the end of the motion. This can then be leveraged in functions. The '@' in the context of functions refers to the register.

1.5.3 Other Useful References

- A good Reddit thread on workflow with Vim and IPython can be found at [1]. Note that the majority of the responses indicate that they use vim-slime and tmux.
- The vim-tmux-runner plugin [16] may be worth checking out.
- The vim-ipython-cell plugin [24] may be worth checking out. There is a reddit post [25] by the author on this plugin. Note that this plugin leverages vim-slime. According to the author, the main contribution of this plugin is that it provides many ways to define and run cells, even using Vim marks.
- Another lightweight workflow can be found in [26]. For this, you will need three plugins: Vimux [8], vim-pyShell [27] and vim-cellmode [32]. However, I have trouble getting this to work. Starting and stopping a pyShell session works fine as well as sending one line of code, but I have issues sending over cells.

2

i3wm

i3wm is a tiling windows manager for Linux. The benefits of using tiling windows managers in general is maximization of your screen real estate. Additionally, i3wm uses Vim-like keybindings to enable you to navigate your machine almost entirely using your keyboard. Here are some basic tips:

- The official user guide can be found at [58]
- Good Youtube Video on Configuring i3: [12]
- To install: `sudo apt-get install i3`
- Use `mod+d` (where `mod` is set by default to be your Windows key) to open a search bar for your programs. For example, to run file explorer: `mod+d` then type "nautilus"
- To open Ubuntu settings, use "`env XDG_CURRENT_DESKTOP=GNOME gnome-control-center`". You'll find that you may need to Google many basic commands for navigating Ubuntu as many of the default icons are not available.

2.1 Standard Configuration

2.1.1 Generate Default Config File and Symlink

1. You should be prompted to do so immediately upon first run of i3. However, you can also do so by using "i3-config-wizard" in the terminal.
2. The config file is located in `~/.config/i3/config`
3. To create a symlink, CUT, paste and rename `~/.config/i3/config` to your desired folder (say `~/.vim/i3_config`) then use "`ln -s ~/.vim/i3_config ~/.config/i3/config`"
4. After making edits, use "`mod+shift+r`" to restart i3

2.1.2 Configure i3 for Dual Monitors

1. In terminal, use "`xrandr`" to see your connected monitors
2. Then use "`xrandr -output HDMI-1 -auto -left-of eDP-1`" to set your HDMI-1 monitor to the left of your eDP-1 monitor
3. To set it so that it starts up in this way, put "`exec -no-startup-id xrandr -output HDMI-1 -left-of eDP-1 -auto`" in the config file

2.1.3 Wallpaper

1. `sudo apt-get install feh`
2. Add to config: `"exec --no-startup-id feh --bg-fill ~/.vim/Wallpapers/my_wallpaper.jpg"`

2.1.4 Remove Title and Borders

Add the following to config file:

1. `new_window pixel 0`
2. `new_float pixel 0`

2.1.5 Volume and Brightness Controls for Laptop

From [52]:

1. `sudo apt-get install xbacklight alsa-utils pulseaudio`
2. Add the following to config:

```
# Pulse Audio Controls
bindsym XF86AudioRaiseVolume exec --no-startup-id pactl set-sink-volume 0 +5% # increase volume
bindsym XF86AudioLowerVolume exec --no-startup-id pactl set-sink-volume 0 -5% # decrease volume
bindsym XF86AudioMute exec --no-startup-id pactl set-sink-mute 0 toggle # mute volume

# Screen brightness controls
bindsym XF86MonBrightnessUp exec xbacklight -inc 20 # increase screen brightness
bindsym XF86MonBrightnessDown exec xbacklight -dec 20 # decrease screen brightness
```

2.1.6 Screenshots

From [10]:

1. `sudo apt-get install scrot`
2. `sudo apt-get install xclip`
3. Add this to config file:
 - `bindsym --release Print exec scrot 'screenshot_%Y%m%d_%H%M%S.png' -e 'mkdir -p ~/Downloads && mv $f ~/Downloads && xclip -selection clipboard -t image/png -i ~/Downloads/'ls -l -t ~/Downloads/ — head -1'`
 - `bindsym --release Shift+Print exec scrot -s 'screenshot_%Y%m%d_%H%M%S.png' -e 'mkdir -p ~/Downloads && mv $f ~/Downloads && xclip -selection clipboard -t image/png -i ~/Downloads/'ls -l -t ~/Downloads/screenshots — head -1'`

Note that there is some strange issue on my machine where xclip takes up 99% CPU usage. Therefore, after each screenshot, you'll need to terminate xclip via the `gnome-system-manager`.

2.1.7 Shutdown Options:

From [29]:

1. Add the following to your config file:

```
# Set shut down, restart and locking features
bindsym $mod+0 mode "$mode_system"
set $mode_system (l)ock, (e)xit, switch_(u)ser, (s)uspend, (h)ibernate, (r)eboot, (Shift+s)hutdown
mode "$mode_system" {
bindsym l exec --no-startup-id ~/.vim/i3_exit.sh lock, mode "default"
bindsym s exec --no-startup-id ~/.vim/i3_exit.sh suspend, mode "default"
bindsym u exec --no-startup-id ~/.vim/i3_exit.sh switch_user, mode "default"
bindsym e exec --no-startup-id ~/.vim/i3_exit.sh logout, mode "default"
bindsym h exec --no-startup-id ~/.vim/i3_exit.sh hibernate, mode "default"
bindsym r exec --no-startup-id ~/.vim/i3_exit.sh reboot, mode "default"
bindsym Shift+s exec --no-startup-id ~/.vim/i3_exit.sh shutdown, mode "default"
# exit system mode: "Enter" or "Escape"
bindsym Return mode "default"
bindsym Escape mode "default"
}
```

2. Create and make executable `~/i3_exit.sh` with the following contents:

```
#!/bin/sh
lock() {
    i3lock
}
case "$1" in
    lock)
        lock
        ;;
    logout)
        i3-msg exit
        ;;
    suspend)
        lock && systemctl suspend
        ;;
    hibernate)
        lock && systemctl hibernate
        ;;
    reboot)
        systemctl reboot
        ;;
    shutdown)
        systemctl poweroff
        ;;
    *)
        echo "Usage: $0 {lock|logout|suspend|hibernate|reboot|shutdown}"
        exit 2
esac
exit 0
```

2.1.8 Assigning Programs to Specific Windows

From [12] at around 25:27. To check the class of an application:

1. Open terminal
2. Use "xprop"
3. With cursor now as a cross-hair, click on application
4. WM_CLASS should display on the terminal as the second value
5. Add to config: `assign [class="google-chrome"] $workspace1`

2.1.9 i3 Status Bar

I think by default, installing i3 on Ubuntu gives version 2.11. To check version, use "i3status --version" in terminal. If not installed at all, use "sudo apt-get install i3status".

Note that the sample config file in the man pages uses stuff that doesn't exist in version 2.11. I followed the config file [54] from [18] which also uses some options that do not exist in version 2.11. I couldn't figure out how to upgrade but since I only want the bare minimum, I didn't bother and just wrote a very minimal config file.

Following [59]:

- create the directory `/.config/i3status`

- in your i3 config file add:

```
bar {  
    status_command i3status --config ~/.config/i3status/config  
}
```

- create i3status.conf somewhere (suppose in .vim folder)
- `ln -s ~/.vim/i3status.conf ~/.config/i3status/config`
- Edit the config then refresh i3 using `mod+SHIFT+r`
- If there is an error, type `"i3status -c"` in terminal and the error will be displayed

2.1.10 Setting Mouse Speed

Setting Mouse speed:

1. `"xinput list"` in terminal to get list of connected devices. Find the id for mouse
2. `"xinput list-props <id>"` to get list of settings for the device.
3. Find the bracketed number for `"libinput Accel Speed (<number>)"`
4. `"xinput -set-prop <id> <number> <value>"` for value in `[-1.0, 1.0]`. This reduces the mouse speed

2.1.11 Floats

To ensure that matplotlib opens as float, to your `i3.config`, add:

```
for_window [class="matplotlib"] floating enable
```

2.2 i3 in Windows

There are quite a few AutoHotkey repos for binding keys to switch between desktops. However, many of them do not seem to work due to perhaps updates to the OS. The one I found to work best can be found here: [49].

However, it doesn't seem to be the best idea to emulate i3 by switching between desktops. The key difference I found is that you cannot assign separate monitors a separate desktop; each desktop takes into account all monitors. For that reason, I have simply opted to keep the default Win keybindings which correspond to the task bar order. Instead, I have elected to implement the other i3wm bindings such as Win-f to toggle maximize and Win-m to toggle moving windows between screens.

2.2.1 Disabling Win+l

Since this is not exactly a windows tiling manager, I have also opted to use the Win+arrow key functionality to organize my windows. However, I would like to do so using the sacred Vim keys. A major issue is that Win+l locks the computer. It's a bit of a hassle to disable this as you have to disable the whole computer lock function, but it can be done using the following steps [22]:

1. Use Win+r to open the run app
2. Type `"regedit"` and open

3. Navigate to "HKEY_CURRENT_USER/SOFTWARE/Microsoft/Windows/CurrentVersion/Policies/"
4. Right-click the "Policies" key and choose "New >Key". Name the new key "System". Note that this may already be there. If so, this step can be skipped Right-click the "System" key and choose "New >DWORD (32-bit) Value". Name this "DisableLockWorkstation"
5. Double-click DisableLockWorkstation. Change the value from 0 to 1

These changes should take place immediately without needing to restart. Now anything bound to Win+l can be used. I should mention that in general this is inadvisable as you are not only disabling the Win+l binding but your computer's ability to lock itself (even after waking sleep mode).

2.2.2 Modifier Subtleties

Modifier keys refer to the control, alt, shift and windows keys. The effect of these modifiers persist through remappings. For example, the remap a::b would be imply typing the capital A by either holding shift or having capslock on would print the capital B. Further, holding control and pressing the 'a' key would output holding control and pressing the 'b' key [4]. Under the hood, the "::" remapping command uses the *Blind* mode which avoids releasing the modifier keys [5]. That is, if the user continues to hold down the modified key, the remapping program will not logically register it as released. For example, the following remapping

```
+s::Send {Blind}abc
```

would send ABC rather than abc because the user is holding down Shift symbolized by the + symbol. Another example is the remapping

```
~space::Send {Ctrl up}
```

automatically pushes control back down if the user is sill physically holding control whereas

```
~space::Send {Blind}{Ctrl up}
```

allows control to be logically up even though it is physically down.

Returning to the emulation of i3, suppose we want to map Win+Shift+h to Win+Left which moves a window left. Since shift is held down, it will instead logically register as move the window to the monitor to the left. Therefore, we require the following mapping:

```
#+h::
Send {Blind}{Shift up}{Left}{Shift down}
return
```

where the # symbolizes the Win key and the + symbolizes the shift key. The last {Shift down} allows for the use of Win+Shift+h,..h,h,h to continuously move the windows without needed to repress Win+Shift each time.

2.2.3 Autostart AutoHotKey Script

There are two methods to setting your configuration to open on start up. I found that on different machines, at least one of the two methods will work.

The first method is the simplest. Simply create a shortcut to your .ahk file and place it in the "C:/Users/Username/AppData/Roaming/Microsoft/Windows/Start Menu/Programs/Startup" directory.

The second method is more complicated but, in general, more versatile. This requires the use of the Task Scheduler [6]:

1. Open the start menu and search "Task Scheduler"

2. On the right panel, select "Create Basic Task" option
3. Name the task anything you like and click next
4. Select "When I log on" option and click next
5. Select "Start a program" option and click next
6. In the "Program/script" text box, enter your path to AutoHotkey.exe (i.e. "C:/Program Files/AutoHotkey/AutoHotkey.exe") with the quotation marks
7. In the "Add arguments" text box, add the path to your .ahk file without the quotation marks
8. Click Next then Finish
9. To check if it works, find your newly added task in the "Task Scheduler Library" and click "Run"

3

WSL2

In this section, we utilize the Windows Subsystem for Linux. This creates an extremely lightweight virtual machine in within your Windows OS that emulates the Linux kernel with a home drive.

3.1 Installing WSL2

To get i3 on Windows without a virtual machine (but technically a very lightweight one is used), use WSL2. On the site [45] , follow the "Manual Installation Steps" for when you are not using the Windows Insiders build.

1. Open PowerShell as Administrator. If you use the Windows Terminal which can be obtained from the Microsoft Store, you can pin it to taskbar then press "shift+right-click" on the icon and click "Run as administrator".
2. To enable the Windows Subsystem for Linux, in PowerShell, run

```
dism.exe /online /enable- feature /featurename:Microsoft-Windows-Subsystem-Linux /all /norestart
```

3. Update your windows version if necessary
4. To enable the Virtual Machine feature, in PowerShell, run

```
dism.exe /online /enable- feature /featurename:VirtualMachinePlatform /all /norestart
```

5. Restart your machine
6. To obtain WSL2, download the Linux kernel update package. The link for the download is available on step 4 of the website.
7. Before installing a new Linux distribution, set WSL2 as the default version. To do this, in PowerShell, run

```
wsl --set-default-version 2
```

8. Go to the Microsoft Store and install your favourite Linux distribution. If the "Install" button does not seem to work after you click "Get", you can go to your library and click "Install" there.
9. Open Ubuntu and select your username and password. Username need not match your Windows OS user name
10. To check that you have the correct version of WSL, in PowerShell run

```
wsl -l -v
```

11. Run ‘sudo apt update’, ‘sudo apt upgrade’ and ‘sudo apt-get install build-essential’ so that you have access to the standard operations.

From here, your home directory can be found at “//wsl\$/Ubuntu/home/username” (with backslashes instead of forward slashes as its a Windows directory address)

3.1.1 Errors

Here are some errors you might encounter and how to resolve them:

- If you have an older machine, you may encounter “WslRegisterDistribution failed with error: 0x80370102 and error 0x80070002”. To remedy this, you may need to do two modifications to your BIOS. First, disable “Limit CPUID Maximum”, then enable “Virtualization Technology”.
- For the error “ WslRegisterDistribution failed with error 0xc03a001a”, you may need to disable compression in a specific folder. Following runner-ed’s answer in <https://github.com/microsoft/WSL/issues/4299>: Find the package under C:/Users/<your user name>/AppData/Local/Packages and right click the folder, check advanced options and disable compression. Run the launch again.

3.1.2 Basic Operations and Config

Now to run Ubuntu in the Windows terminal. With your Windows Terminal pinned to the start bar, simply right-click and select Ubuntu. To set Ubuntu as the default, open Windows Terminal (can be opened to PowerShell or anything) and press “ctrl+,”. Then simply change “Default profile” to Ubuntu.

Now that you’re operating in the Linux kernel, Vim should also be ready to go! However note that, by default, you should be in your mounted Windows C drive. Simply type ‘cd ~’ to change to the home directory. From here, you can git clone your Linux .vim config and continue exactly as if you’re on a Linux machine!

To map the capslock key to escape, I recommend the following AutoHotKeys command:

```
SetCapsLockState, alwaysoff  
CapsLock::Esc
```

3.2 VcXsrv

Unix systems use the X Window System as their standard GUI environment. Under X, the “server” is the program that runs on your system to draw windows while a “client” is a graphical program. The naming convention is a little confusing to most computer users but, trust me, it makes sense. While the Windows Subsystem for Linux is a very well done method for running Linux software on a Windows system, it lacks an X server so it is unable to run GUI applications by itself. VcXsrv is an X server for Windows that’s written to compile as a native Windows application using Microsoft’s Visual C++ (hence the name, Visual C++ X Server).

The main motivation for using VcXsrv is so that we can utilize Vimtex+Zathura+Synctex for forward and backwards searching while writing PDF documents as discussed in Section 1.4.3. The initial idea to incorporate VcXsrv for this was obtained from [19]. However, the installation process is quite involved and not fully captured in the aforementioned medium post. We detail the installation process now.

3.2.1 Installation

1. Go to the VcXsrv repo at [3] and follow the “Releases” link.

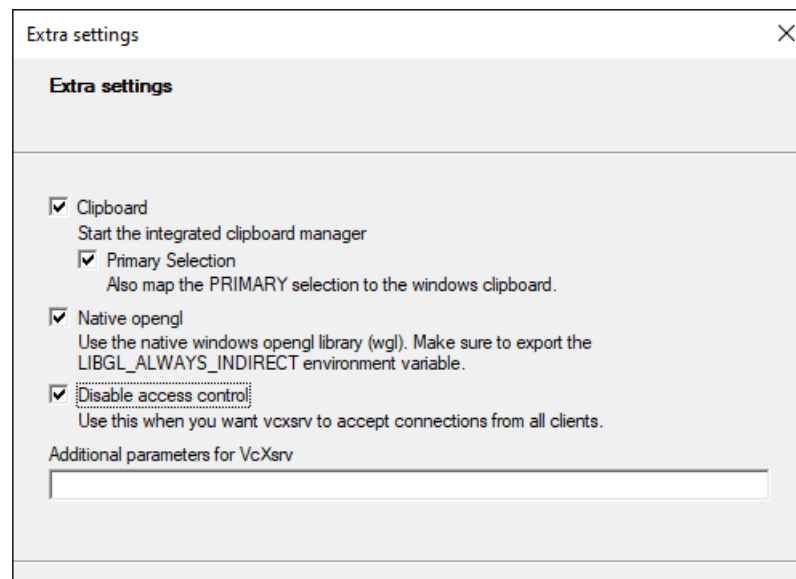
2. Download the “vcxsrv.1.17.0.0-3.x2go.arctica.installer.exe” whichever the latest release version is
3. Run the installer

Since WSL2 is a lightweight virtual machine, you’ll need to do a couple of things to ensure that your FireWall does not obstruct the connection.

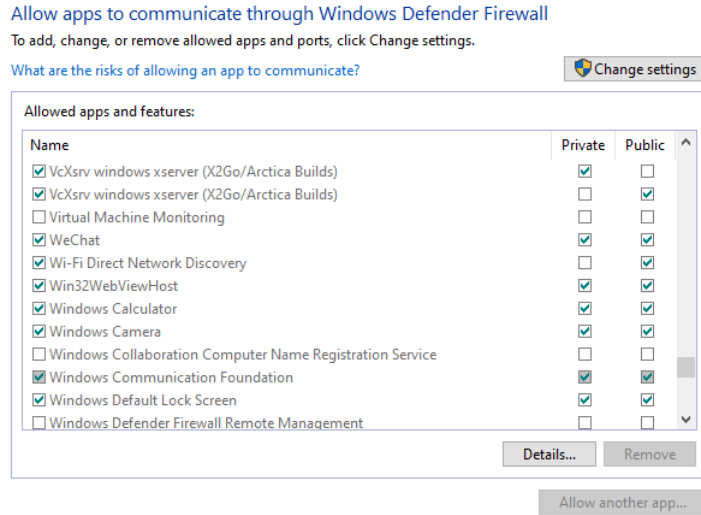
1. Following whme’s TLDR answer from [62], in your .bashrc, add the following line:

```
export DISPLAY=$(awk '/nameserver / {print $2; exit}' /etc/resolv.conf 2>/dev/null):0
export LIBGL_ALWAYS_INDIRECT=1
```

2. Following whme’s TLDR answer from [62], you need to disable Access Control on the Extra Settings. You can achieve this by first navigating to C:/Program Files (x86)/VcXsrv and opening “xlaunch.exe”. This allows you to modify the settings. Navigate until you reach the “Extra Settings” page and check “Disable access control” as seen in the screenshot below:



3. Following [2], go to Settings -> Windows Defender Firewall -> “Allow an app or feature through Windows Defender Firewall” and enable BOTH “VcXsrv windows xserver (X2Go/Arctica Builds)” as seen in the screenshot below:



4. To test that VcXsrv now works, with Zathura installed, run "zathura name.pdf" and see if it opens.

Note that the settings in Step 2 will revert itself. To accommodate for this, you will be prompted in the next window to save the file "config.xlaunch". From here, simply follow the instructions in Section 2.2.3 so that the configuration is set after logging in.

3.2.2 Vimtex+Zathura+Synctex

Now you're almost ready to run Vimtex+Zathura+Synctex! You'll need to also install xdotool by using "sudo apt-get install xdotool". To test whether this works with VcXsrv following the suggestion in [48] from lervag himself, run "xdotool search -class Zathura" and some numbers should appear. From here, you should be good to go! Simply follow the steps laid out in Section 1.4.3.

If this fails and you've given up on Zathura, you can alternatively use the Sumatra PDF viewer. Once installed, simply add the following lines to your vimrc:

```
let g:vimtex_view_general_viewer = '/mnt/c/Users/Hwan/AppData/Local/SumatraPDF/SumatraPDF.exe'
let g:vimtex_view_general_options = '-reuse-instance -forward-search @tex @line @pdf'
let g:vimtex_view_general_options_latexmk = '-reuse-instance'
```

However, with this, you won't have access to forward and backward search via synctex.

4

Miscellaneous

4.1 Ranger

Following [17]:

1. `git clone https://github.com/hut/ranger.git`
2. `cd ranger`
3. `sudo make install`

To start ranger use "ranger".

4.1.1 Configuration

After the configuration directory has been created by the Ranger, you can now copy its configuration files by running the following commands in terminal:

- `"ranger -copy-config=all"`. Now you can run `"cd ~/.config/ranger"` to see the configuration files.

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