

GNU Emacs Reference Card

(for version 20)

Starting Emacs

To enter GNU Emacs 20, just type its name: `emacs`

To read in a file to edit, see Files, below.

Leaving Emacs

suspend Emacs (or iconify it under X) `C-z`
exit Emacs permanently `C-x C-c`

Files

read a file into Emacs `C-x C-f`
save a file back to disk `C-x C-s`
save all files `C-x s`
insert contents of another file into this buffer `C-x i`
replace this file with the file you really want `C-x C-v`
write buffer to a specified file `C-x C-w`
version control checkin/checkout `C-x C-q`

Getting Help

The help system is simple. Type `C-h` (or `F1`) and follow the directions. If you are a first-time user, type `C-h t` for a **tutorial**.

remove help window `C-x 1`
scroll help window `C-M-v`
apropos: show commands matching a string `C-h a`
show the function a key runs `C-h c`
describe a function `C-h f`
get mode-specific information `C-h m`

Error Recovery

abort partially typed or executing command `C-g`
recover a file lost by a system crash `M-x recover-file`
undo an unwanted change `C-x u` or `C-_`
restore a buffer to its original contents `M-x revert-buffer`
redraw garbaged screen `C-l`

Incremental Search

search forward `C-s`
search backward `C-r`
regular expression search `C-M-s`
reverse regular expression search `C-M-r`
select previous search string `M-p`
select next later search string `M-n`
exit incremental search `RET`
undo effect of last character `DEL`
abort current search `C-g`

Use `C-s` or `C-r` again to repeat the search in either direction.
If Emacs is still searching, `C-g` cancels only the part not done.

Motion

entity to move over	backward	forward
character	<code>C-b</code>	<code>C-f</code>
word	<code>M-b</code>	<code>M-f</code>
line	<code>C-p</code>	<code>C-n</code>
go to line beginning (or end)	<code>C-a</code>	<code>C-e</code>
sentence	<code>M-a</code>	<code>M-e</code>
paragraph	<code>M-{</code>	<code>M-}</code>
page	<code>C-x [</code>	<code>C-x]</code>
sexp	<code>C-M-b</code>	<code>C-M-f</code>
function	<code>C-M-a</code>	<code>C-M-e</code>
go to buffer beginning (or end)	<code>M-<</code>	<code>M-></code>
scroll to next screen		<code>C-v</code>
scroll to previous screen		<code>M-v</code>
scroll left		<code>C-x <</code>
scroll right		<code>C-x ></code>
scroll current line to center of screen		<code>C-u C-l</code>

Killing and Deleting

entity to kill	backward	forward
character (delete, not kill)	<code>DEL</code>	<code>C-d</code>
word	<code>M-DEL</code>	<code>M-d</code>
line (to end of)	<code>M-O C-k</code>	<code>C-k</code>
sentence	<code>C-x DEL</code>	<code>M-k</code>
sexp	<code>M-- C-M-k</code>	<code>C-M-k</code>
kill region		<code>C-w</code>
copy region to kill ring		<code>M-w</code>
kill through next occurrence of <i>char</i>		<code>M-z char</code>
yank back last thing killed		<code>C-y</code>
replace last yank with previous kill		<code>M-y</code>

Marking

set mark here	<code>C-@</code> or <code>C-SPC</code>
exchange point and mark	<code>C-x C-x</code>
set mark <i>arg</i> words away	<code>M-@</code>
mark paragraph	<code>M-h</code>
mark page	<code>C-x C-p</code>
mark sexp	<code>C-M-@</code>
mark function	<code>C-M-h</code>
mark entire buffer	<code>C-x h</code>

Query Replace

interactively replace a text string	<code>M-%</code>
using regular expressions	<code>M-x query-replace-regexp</code>
Valid responses in query-replace mode are	
replace this one, go on to next	<code>SPC</code>
replace this one, don't move	<code>,</code>
skip to next without replacing	<code>DEL</code>
replace all remaining matches	<code>!</code>
back up to the previous match	<code>^</code>
exit query-replace	<code>RET</code>
enter recursive edit (<code>C-M-c</code> to exit)	<code>C-r</code>

Multiple Windows

When two commands are shown, the second is for “other frame.”

delete all other windows	<code>C-x 1</code>
split window, above and below	<code>C-x 2</code> <code>C-x 5 2</code>
delete this window	<code>C-x 0</code> <code>C-x 5 0</code>
split window, side by side	<code>C-x 3</code>
scroll other window	<code>C-M-v</code>
switch cursor to another window	<code>C-x o</code> <code>C-x 5 o</code>
select buffer in other window	<code>C-x 4 b</code> <code>C-x 5 b</code>
display buffer in other window	<code>C-x 4 C-o</code> <code>C-x 5 C-o</code>
find file in other window	<code>C-x 4 f</code> <code>C-x 5 f</code>
find file read-only in other window	<code>C-x 4 r</code> <code>C-x 5 r</code>
run Dired in other window	<code>C-x 4 d</code> <code>C-x 5 d</code>
find tag in other window	<code>C-x 4 .</code> <code>C-x 5 .</code>
grow window taller	<code>C-x ^</code>
shrink window narrower	<code>C-x {</code>
grow window wider	<code>C-x }</code>

Formatting

indent current line (mode-dependent)	<code>TAB</code>
indent region (mode-dependent)	<code>C-M-\</code>
indent sexp (mode-dependent)	<code>C-M-q</code>
indent region rigidly <i>arg</i> columns	<code>C-x TAB</code>
insert newline after point	<code>C-o</code>
move rest of line vertically down	<code>C-M-o</code>
delete blank lines around point	<code>C-x C-o</code>
join line with previous (with arg, next)	<code>M-~</code>
delete all white space around point	<code>M-\</code>
put exactly one space at point	<code>M-SPC</code>
fill paragraph	<code>M-q</code>
set fill column	<code>C-x f</code>
set prefix each line starts with	<code>C-x .</code>
set face	<code>M-g</code>

Case Change

uppercase word	<code>M-u</code>
lowercase word	<code>M-l</code>
capitalize word	<code>M-c</code>
uppercase region	<code>C-x C-u</code>
lowercase region	<code>C-x C-l</code>

The Minibuffer

The following keys are defined in the minibuffer.

complete as much as possible	<code>TAB</code>
complete up to one word	<code>SPC</code>
complete and execute	<code>RET</code>
show possible completions	<code>?</code>
fetch previous minibuffer input	<code>M-p</code>
fetch later minibuffer input or default	<code>M-n</code>
regexp search backward through history	<code>M-r</code>
regexp search forward through history	<code>M-s</code>
abort command	<code>C-g</code>

Type `C-x ESC ESC` to edit and repeat the last command that used the minibuffer. Type `F10` to activate the menu bar using the minibuffer.

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Buffers

select another buffer
list all buffers
kill a buffer

C-x b
C-x C-b
C-x k

Transposing

transpose characters
transpose words
transpose lines
transpose sexps

C-t
M-t
C-x C-t
C-M-t

Spelling Check

check spelling of current word
check spelling of all words in region
check spelling of entire buffer

M-\$
M-x ispell-region
M-x ispell-buffer

Tags

find a tag (a definition)
find next occurrence of tag
specify a new tags file
regexp search on all files in tags table
run query-replace on all the files
continue last tags search or query-replace

M-.
C-u M-.
M-x visit-tags-table
M-x tags-search
M-x tags-query-replace
M-,

Shells

execute a shell command
run a shell command on the region
filter region through a shell command
start a shell in window *shell*

M-!
M-|
C-u M-|
M-x shell

Rectangles

copy rectangle to register
kill rectangle
yank rectangle
open rectangle, shifting text right
blank out rectangle
prefix each line with a string

C-x r r
C-x r k
C-x r y
C-x r o
C-x r c
C-x r t

Abbrevs

add global abbrev
add mode-local abbrev
add global expansion for this abbrev
add mode-local expansion for this abbrev
explicitly expand abbrev
expand previous word dynamically

C-x a g
C-x a l
C-x a i g
C-x a i l
C-x a e
M-/

Regular Expressions

any single character except a newline	.	(dot)
zero or more repeats	*	
one or more repeats	+	
zero or one repeat	?	
quote regular expression special character <i>c</i>	\c	
alternative ("or")	\	
grouping	\(... \)	
same text as <i>n</i> th group	\n	
at word break	\b	
not at word break	\B	
entity	match start	match end
line	^	\$
word	\<	\>
buffer	\`	\'
class of characters	match these	match others
explicit set	[...]	[^ ...]
word-syntax character	\w	\W
character with syntax <i>c</i>	\sc	\Sc

International Character Sets

specify principal language	M-x set-language-environment
show all input methods	M-x list-input-methods
enable or disable input method	C-\
set coding system for next command	C-x RET c
show all coding systems	M-x list-coding-systems
choose preferred coding system	M-x prefer-coding-system

Info

enter the Info documentation reader	C-h i
find specified function or variable in Info	C-h C-i
Moving within a node:	
scroll forward	SPC
scroll reverse	DEL
beginning of node	. (dot)
Moving between nodes:	
next node	n
previous node	p
move up	u
select menu item by name	m
select <i>n</i> th menu item by number (1-9)	n
follow cross reference (return with 1)	f
return to last node you saw	l
return to directory node	d
go to any node by name	g
Other:	
run Info tutorial	h
quit Info	q
search nodes for regexp	M-s

Registers

save region in register	C-x r s
insert register contents into buffer	C-x r i
save value of point in register	C-x r SPC
jump to point saved in register	C-x r j

Keyboard Macros

start defining a keyboard macro	C-x (
end keyboard macro definition	C-x)
execute last-defined keyboard macro	C-x e
append to last keyboard macro	C-u C-x (
name last keyboard macro	M-x name-last-kbd-macro
insert Lisp definition in buffer	M-x insert-kbd-macro

Commands Dealing with Emacs Lisp

eval sexp before point	C-x C-e
eval current defun	C-M-x
eval region	M-x eval-region
read and eval minibuffer	M-:
load from standard system directory	M-x load-library

Simple Customization

customize variables and faces	M-x customize
Making global key bindings in Emacs Lisp (examples):	
(global-set-key "\C-cg" 'goto-line)	
(global-set-key "\M-#" 'query-replace-regexp)	

Writing Commands

(defun <i>command-name</i> (<i>args</i>)	
"documentation"	(interactive "template")
body)	
An example:	
(defun this-line-to-top-of-window (line)	
"Reposition line point is on to top of window.	
With ARG, put point on line ARG."	
(interactive "P")	
(recenter (if (null line)	
0	
(prefix-numeric-value line))))	

The **interactive** spec says how to read arguments interactively. Type C-h f **interactive** for more details.

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v2.2 for GNU Emacs version 20, June 1997
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