gentoo linux™　　(/)　**Wiki**

Nano/Basics Guide

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This guide covers basic operations in nano, and is meant to be very concise. For more information about nano check out: https://www.nano-editor.org (https://www.nano-editor.org).

Contents

Nano basics

Opening and creating files

For opening and creating files type:

```
root # nano filename
```

Nano is a modeless editor so you can start typing immediately to insert text. If you are editing a configuration file like /etc/fstab use the -w switch to disable wrapping on long lines as it might render the configuration file unparseable by whatever tools depend on it. For example:

```
root # nano -w /etc/fstab
```

> ⚠ **Warning**
> It is very, very important that you use the -w switch when opening a config file. Failure to do so may keep your system from booting or cause other bad things.

Saving and exiting

If you want to save the changes you've made, press `Ctrl` + `O`. To exit nano, type `Ctrl` + `X`. If you ask nano to exit from a modified file, it will ask you if you want to save it. Just press `N` in case you don't, or `Y` in case you do. It will then ask you for a filename. Just type it in and press `Enter`.

If you accidentally confirmed that you want to save the file but you actually don't, you can always cancel by pressing `Ctrl` + `C` when you're prompted for a filename.

Cutting and pasting

To cut a single line, you use `Ctrl` + `K` (hold down `Ctrl` and then press `K`). The line disappears. To paste it, you simply move the cursor to where you want to paste it and punch `Ctrl` + `U`. The line reappears. To move multiple lines, simply cut them with several `Ctrl` + `K` in a row, then paste them with a

single `Ctrl` + `U` . The whole paragraph appears wherever you want it.

If you need a little more fine-grained control, then you have to mark the text. Move the cursor to the beginning of the text you want to cut. Hit `Ctrl` + `6` (or `Alt` + `A`). Now move your cursor to the end of the text you want to cut: the marked text gets highlighted. If you need to cancel your text marking, simply hit `Ctrl` + `6` again. Press `Ctrl` + `K` to cut the marked text. Use `Ctrl` + `U` to paste it.

Searching for text

Searching for a string is easy as long as you think *"WhereIs"* instead of *"Search"*. Simply hit `Ctrl` + `W` , type in your search string, and press `Enter` . To search for the same string again, hit `Alt` + `W` .

> 🗋 **Note**
> In nano's help texts the `Ctrl` is represented by a caret (`^`), so `Ctrl` + `W` is shown as `^W` , and so on. The `Alt` key is represented by an `M` (from "Meta"), so `Alt` + `W` is shown as `M-W` .

More options

If you're interested in tweaking nano, be sure to read `/etc/nanorc`.

Wrap up

Thanks to kiyose and quazion from `#gentoo (irc://irc.gentoo.org/gentoo)`.

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