



## VI / VIM Cheat Sheet

*Built for operators. Maintained in the open.*

Essential VI / VIM commands for safely editing files and YAML on any system. Focused on the minimum needed to work confidently in terminals, bastions, and restricted environments.

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### Modes

i → insert mode (start editing)

Esc → command mode (always your escape hatch)

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### Save & Exit

:w # save

:q # quit

:wq # save and quit

:q! # quit without saving

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### Navigation

h # move left

j # move down

k # move up

l # move right

0 # start of line

\$ # end of line

gg # top of file

G # bottom of file

/ # search for text

n # next match

N # previous match

## Editing

dd # delete current line  
yy # copy (yank) current line  
p # paste below cursor  
u # undo  
Ctrl+r # redo

## Visual Mode

v # visual (character selection)  
V # visual line selection

## YAML Survival Rules

- Use spaces only (no tabs)
- Be consistent with indentation (commonly 2 spaces)
- Indentation defines structure
- When in doubt, align with the parent key

## Operator Tips

- If something feels wrong, press Esc repeatedly.
- If you're stuck, :q! is always an option.
- Practice basic movements until they are muscle memory.