

3. Linux CLI – Text Editors

By now, you should be able to navigate your way around the Linux file system and know how to handle files. Lets learn how to edit these files on the command line. There are three text editors that can be used and are included in most Linux distributions. There are more but we will focus just on these for now.

nano

nano is a very easy text editor to use for beginners. It shows you some of the most used commands at the bottom of the screen so you don't have to remember lots of different key combinations. Why don't you try using nano to write a quick document about yourself. You don't have to use touch to create the file first, you can either specify the new filename when you open nano or when you save it from inside nano.

```
>: nano
```

or

```
>: nano aboutme.txt
```

Try and use some of the cut and uncut tools to move text around inside your document. You can also use whereis to find words in your document.

Remember to save your file by using the commands at the bottom of the nano screen when you finish. Then you can show your friends how to open it at the show and tell.

nano is not always found in every linux distribution by default.

vi & vim

vi stands for visual text editor and vim is improved visual text editor. These two tools are found in almost every Linux distribution and are very powerful text editors. Many people use vim for programming as it can perform syntax highlighting on code. They are however quite difficult to use at first and it takes some time to learn all of the commands. This is mainly because there are two different modes in vim, insert mode and control mode. You can easily switch between these modes by using the 'i' key and the 'esc' key. Lets learn a couple of the basic ones.

Make a new file called dojovim.txt

```
>: vim dojovim.txt
```

Press `i` to enter insert mode.

Enter some text. It can be anything you like.

Press '`esc`' then type '`:wq`' (without the quotes) to write out (save) the file and quit. If you want to quit without saving the file you need to type '`:q!`' (again without the quotes) to force quite vim.

Now lets try these!

You might need to use skills you learnt on the files card.

1. In your home directory, make a new folder called texts.
2. Inside your new folder, make a new file with nano called gameslist.txt. Inside the file, list some of your favourite games on different lines.
3. Copy this file to make another one, name it gamesiwant.txt.
4. Using vim, edit your new document listing some of the games you would like to own or play.

Stretch goals!

Although vim is quite difficult to use, it is used lots by linux administrators every day because once some of the simple commands have been mastered it can be used incredibly quickly to edit files.

Do a websearch for 'vim cheatsheet' and try to use some of the commands and keyboard shortcuts you find.