

Nu

Modern keybinding for Emacs

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This manual is for Nu (version 0.1 of 2014-07-15), a modern keybinding for Emacs. Copyright © 2014 Pierre-Yves Luyten.

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1 Overview

“Nu “ is a modern keybinding for Emacs.

nu-mode is a global minor mode, its keymap, and the commands which are not provided in raw Emacs.

Modern, means respecting conventions like

1. *Control-f* to find
2. *Control-r* to replace
3. *Control-s* to save
4. *Control-x*, *Control-c*, *Control-v* to cut, copy, paste.

To allow user to leverage large panel of functions, nu-mode relies on prompts. For example, *Control-f* raises a prompt precisig which key - actually, which sequence - to press in order to execute desired function : once *Control-f* has been pressed and the “Find-prompt” appears, pressing *f* will start a regexp search, while *g* will execute goto-line, or *s* will move point to previous selection.

Inverse is sometimes true : since *Control+s* invoking a prompt would be irritating, this sequence directly saves buffer, while *Alt+s* runs the “save prompt”.

nu-emacs does not only provides nu-mode. There are also two independant parts

1. nu-alias is a simple mechanism to define aliases into org-mode file(s). This way its easier to maintain aliases to be invoked from Mx. See its REAME.
2. dhammacakka is a light set of customization. See its README.

1.1 Dependencies

Nu depends on several libraries, both native or external ones :

1. help-fns+
2. undo-tree
3. ace-jump
4. recentf
5. cua-selection-mode

1.2 Help

Use *Control-q* to quit a sequence or a command in progress. Use *Alt+z* to undo last command. Use *Control+h* to gain access to help functions. This includes the usual shortcuts to describe what a key does, or what a function does.

Prompts are usually triggered using a *Control* modifier and advertise a function using the same key, but with *Alt* modifier. For example, *Control-f* will pop-up a find-prompt, while *Alt-f* will directly allow you to ‘ace-jump’ to a char.

These prompts offer you to quickly learn where functions are.

2 NU for the power user

If you are not used to Emacs, reading this chapter is not necessary. But Emacs veteran should probably start here. emacs-nu redefines many keys, however two points make learning curve shorter

1. For any user, knowing CUA keybinds will make emacs-nu discoverable.
2. For veteran Emacs user, two important sequences remain:

M-x is still there. This means, you can probably obtain what you want. Also, *Control+h* for help-prefix is still there.

Now, three things should probably be kept in mind while trying nu-mode

1. To repeat a command, use *Alt+Space*.
2. To trigger a major mode sequence, start with *Control+Space*. This will invoke vanilla emacs *Control+c*. For example, into org-mode, use *Control+Space Control+n* to navigate to next node. If you already defined you own keys starting with *Control+c*, do not amend this definition.

```
(define-key mykeymap kbd("\C-c h") myfunction)
```

To invoke above myfunction example, press *Control-SPC h*.

3. You should not rely on *Control+x*, or at least no regularly. However to trigger x prefix, use *Control+Alt+Space*.

Note that ‘where-is’ function, which sometimes advertises shortcuts, will not really work, since a prompt is not a keymap : where is do not know how to invoke *Control-f* then *k* to reach end of buffer.

Two features make this drawback acceptable :

1. From the help prompt (*Control-h*), run *h* to invoke nu-help. This function will present you all prompts, and will offer you to describe their keymaps - that is, all the functions you can access from these prompts.
2. For each function accessible from a prompt, an additional shortcut is created, accessible from *menu* plus the same *key* than the prompt, in order to make where-is advertise. Hence, if you read ‘You can run this command with <menu> f k’, please understand, despite it is true, that you can run the command with *Control-f-k*.

3 View and Edit

3.1 Navigate

While arrows still work, Nu uses **Alt** key to navigate. Hence, the thumb often presses **Alt** key, while pinky finger remains safe. Navigate up left right down using **Alt** and :

```
I
J K L
```

Additionally, use **Alt u** and **Alt o** to move to previous, next word.

```
U I O
J K L
```

Use **Alt+t+\$** to go to end of line.

To reach a line, beginning of buffer, end of buffer, use **Control+f** then the appropriate key. Just read the prompt.

3.2 Selections and Deletions

Several alternatives offer to delete (cut) text.

1. Use **Control-x** to cut the current line.
2. Use **Control + j,l** to delete backward, forward char.
3. Use **Control + u** to delete previous word.
4. Use **Control + \$** to delete up to end of line.
1. Use **Alt+d** to trigger a prompt. This will offer you to delete what you want.
2. Alternatively, first mark (select) text you want to select then use **Control+x**.

Several alternatives offer to select text

1. The paddle allow to directly select (“mark”) text : keep shift pressed, then move. While other ways are possible, using **Alt-Shift-U**, for example, will select previous word (or extend current selection to previous word).
2. An alternative in order to select text is to press **Alt+a** to set a mark, then move to extend selection.
3. An alternative is to press **Control+a** to invoke “a-” prompt, allowing to select “a-” word, “a-” sentence, and so on, or to set the mark.
4. To start a rectangular selection, use **Control+Return**.

3.3 Cut Copy Paste

When no selection is active, use **Control + x** to cut current line, or a deletion command since deletions actually cut text.

Use **Control + c** to copy current line, or, while a selection is active, copy this selection.

Use **Control + v** to paste the current clipboard. Following **Control + v** will replace this paste with last clipboard item. However, if you need to paste several times, you can use **Alt + v** to invoke and advanced “Paste” prompt.

3.4 Undo or Redo

Use Alt+z to undo. Or, use Control+z to invoke undo-tree visualizer to play with discard changes in an advanced way.

3.5 Advanced Edition

Most advanced editon features rely on Control-r, which will invoke replace prompt, allowing you to replace-regexp, merge-lines, delete spaces, or invoke other functions.

1. Alt+y will copy to current line char under point (on the below line).
2. Alt+e will copy to current line char above point (on the above line).

Control+g global prompt will also propose goal-column feature.

4 Files Buffers Windows

Use Control + s to save current file, Alt + s to invoke a prompt to rename it. Control+g “global” prompt will allow you to manipulate frames.

² will invoke buffers list.Â

1. Use Control+o to open a file, a window, a buffer, or use bookmarks,...
2. Use Control+w to close this frame. Or Alt+w to make this frame the only visible one.
3. Use Control+n to open a sracth buffer (blank untitled buffer).
4. Use Control+t to open another tab.

5 NU & other libraries

How does NU integrate with other libraries?

5.1 evil-mode

While nu-mode is not a modal editor, and aims at being the most efficient keymap, sometimes using lot of modifiers might still be harassing. Using vim keymap is feasible : you can activate evil-mode, then switch from evil-state to emacs-state as you want.

Even while in evil-state, you will enjoy a few nu-mode keys, like Alt+v, Alt+f, and probably many others. However vim paddle (hjkl for left down up right) and nu-mode paddle (ijkl for up left down right) disagree on three of these four keys! If you want to have evil with nu-mode paddle, I recommend you to make vim paddle similar to nu-mode. Since i will not be available anymore to insert, use h for this purpose. Simply put below lines on your .emacs:

```
(define-key evil-normal-state-map (kbd "h") 'evil-insert)
(define-key evil-normal-state-map (kbd "j") 'evil-backward-char)
(define-key evil-normal-state-map (kbd "i") 'evil-previous-line)
(define-key evil-normal-state-map (kbd "k") 'evil-next-line)
```

Obviously this only fixes the basic paddle. Backward and Forward word are different, but fixing the paddle is fine.

5.2 magit

Use Alt+s, ie save-prompt, to gain access to magit-status.

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