Cheatsheet for SuperCollider

Run code
To run code in SuperCollider, do one of the following things.

- Select one or more lines of code and press cmd+return (Mac) or ctrl+return (PC).
- Enclose a block of code within parentheses, place the cursor somewhere inside them and press cmd+return (Mac) or ctrl+return (PC).
- Press shift+return to run the currently selected code or the line the marker currently is on.

Stop everything (sound and running processes) at the same time

- Press cmd/ctrl + .

Start sound engine
Boot the sound engine in SuperCollider (called Server and scsynth) by doing one of the following:

- Run the line s.boot;
- Select ”Boot Server” from the Language menu.
- Press cmd+b

Please note that when the Server is running (i.e. sound is *on*), the values in the lower right corner turn green!

Key commands
Different types of parenthesis and symbols are frequently used in SuperCollider code. Some denotes fixed things while others can change meaning depending on context.

Parenthesis/symbol	Use in SuperCollider
Parenthesis: ( )	Selecting several lines of code (most common use). Shortcuts (e.g. (1..100), create an Event, etc)
Brackets: [ ]	Arrays (lists, collections) of other things. Example: [0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5]
Curly brackets: { }	Functions and Routines
Double qoutes: ” ”	String. An array of letters, numbers or other characters. Example: ”Is this a String? Yes!”
Single quotes: ’ ’	Symbol. Commonly used as a unique name for something. Example: ’pauline’
Backslash: \	Another way of writing a symbol. Example: \pauline
Tilde: ~	Environment variables, i.e. variables globally accessible within the current environment. Example: ~yourVariableName

Other useful things to know

- All statements and commands should terminate with a semicolon! Otherwise there is no way for SuperCollider to know where one command ends and another begins.
- To avoid syntax errors with parenthesis (i.e. a [not terminated by a]) – write them both directly and fill them with content. Or turn on auto-completion in Preferences —> Editor —> Behavior.
- Be careful with your ears! Listen at low levels, especially when you're experimenting with values, testing different filters etc. It’s easy to accidentally tweak the amplitude instead of the intended frequency…
- Try to sit down and do some programming exercises every day. Practice makes perfect!
- Try to identify and solve one problem at a time. Ask on scsynth.org if you’re completely stuck!
- It takes time to learn new things. That’s ok!