

## VI BASICS (FOR THE NOVICE)

### Start vi:

**vi file** Start vi and edit file

### Moving around:

- h** Move the cursor left one character
- j** Move the cursor down one line
- k** Move the cursor up one line
- l** Move the cursor right one character
- ^ f** Move the cursor forward one page
- ^ b** Move the cursor backward one page
- G** Move the cursor to the last line

### Deleting text:

- x** Delete character cursor is at
- dd** Delete whole line
- 3dd** Delete next 3 lines
- D** Delete line after cursor
- d\$** delete to end of line number of characters
- dw** delete word

### Entering input mode:

- a** Insert text after cursor
- i** Insert text before cursor
- A** Insert text at end of line
- I** Insert text at beginning of line
- o** Insert new line and edit after current line
- O** Insert new line and edit before current line

### Exit input mode:

**<Esc>** Exit input mode and go to command mode

### Exit vi:

- ZZ** Save and exit file
- :wq** Save and exit file (equivalent)
- :wq!** Force save and exit
- :q** Exit without saving
- :q!** Force exit without saving

### MODES:

There are two modes, command and text entry.

**Command:** Any keys you hit will be interpreted as a command rather than as text. vi is initially in command mode. Hit ESC to return to command mode from text entry mode. If in doubt where you are, hit ESC until terminal beeps; you are then in command mode.

**Text entry:** There are several commands which put you into text entry mode:

- i** insert before cursor
- a** append after cursor
- o** open new line below cursor line
- O** Open new line above cursor line

*(There are also text entry commands for change and replace given below. You can correct errors using text entry by backspacing without leaving text entry mode. For more complicated corrections you should return to command mode.)*

### CURSOR MOVEMENT:

The cursor moves only within the bounds of existing text.

- H** Home cursor (first line of screen)

- M** Middle line of screen
- L** Last line of screen
- nG** Go to line n of file, where n is a numeric argument. (defaults to last line of file if no argument is given.)
- n|** move to column n of current line
- 0** beginning of line
- \$** end of line
- ^** first nonwhite on current line
- +** first nonwhite on next line (<cr> does same thing)
- first nonwhite on previous line
- e or E** end of word
- b or B** backward word
- )** forward sentence
- (** backward sentence
- }** forward paragraph
- {** backward paragraph

### SCREEN MOVEMENT:

- ^D** scroll Down
- ^U** scroll Up
- ^F** page Forward
- ^B** page Backward
- ^E** one line forward
- ^Y** one line backward

### TEXT ALTERATION:

- r** replace character under cursor with next character typed
- R** Replace text with new text

**s** substitute text for character

**cw** change word to new text

#### TEXT MOVING:

**yy** yank copy of line into buffer

**p** put after cursor last item yanked or deleted

**P** Put before cursor last item yanked or deleted

#### SEARCHING:

**/pattern** search for next occurrence of "pattern"

**?pattern** search for preceding occurrence of "pattern"

**n** repeat the last search command ("/" or "?") for next occurrence

**fx** find "x" on current line, where "x" is any single character

**Fx** same as "f" except searches backward

#### SHELL AND LINE EDITOR COMMANDS:

**:** execute line editor command

**!** execute shell command

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

**J** Join current line and next line into one line

**u** undo effect of previous command

**%** find parenthesis or brace matching one under cursor

**^L** redraw screen

**^V** in text entry mode, next character to be typed is a control (non-printing) character

**^D** in text entry mode, backs up over autoindent whitespace

#### CUSTOMISATION

When vi starts it initializes like this:

- If env. var. EXINIT is set, the commands in EXINIT will be run.
- Otherwise \$HOME/.exrc will be run.
- If the exrc option has been set, ./exrc will be run.

Option settings and commands are placed in the .exrc file with the options commands below.

#### OPTIONS

**:set option** Turn option on

**:set nooption** Turn option off

**:set option=value** Set option to value

**:set all** View all available options and their values

**:set** View options set by user

**:set option?** Display value of option

**autoindent | ai** Autoindent lines as previous line [off]

**showmode** Show current mode in editor, command, input or other [off]

**showopen** Prevent screen updates during input [off]

