**Code Editors**

1. **What Is a Code Editor and IDE?**

You might think these are the same thing, but not quite. A code editor is any application that allows you to edit code files. An IDE, or Integrated Development Environment, is a full application that allows you to compile, run, and debug your code while you edit it.

First, let's consider a few popular IDEs. Visual Studio is an integrated development environment by Microsoft that provides a comprehensive suite of tools for building, debugging, and deploying applications across various platforms.

Another IDE is XCode. Xcode is an integrated development environment by Apple designed for creating, coding, and debugging applications for macOS, iOS, watchOS, and tvOS.

And another IDE would be Android Studio. Android Studio is an integrated development environment by Google specifically designed for building, debugging, and testing Android applications.

Visual Studio Code is a lightweight, open-source code editor by Microsoft that supports a wide range of programming languages and provides features like debugging, syntax highlighting, and version control through extensions.

Another popular editor would be Sublime Text. Sublime Text is a fast, versatile text editor known for its sleek interface, powerful features, and support for a wide range of programming languages through customizable syntax highlighting and plugins.

And another one is Notepad++. This is a free, open-source, text and source code editor for Windows that offers syntax highlighting, code folding, and a range of plugins to enhance productivity and customization.

You may have noticed how the code editors focus primarily on the text contents of the file, where the IDEs expose various tools to manage your code.

These examples are all local programs you can run on your computer, but there are also cloud-based editors that you can use.

A cloud-based editor is an online tool that allows users to write, edit, and manage code or text directly through a web browser without needing to install software locally.

Let's take a look at a few cloud-based editors.

Replit is an online platform that provides a collaborative environment for coding, allowing users to write, run, and share code in various programming languages directly from a web browser.

Another popular cloud-based editor is GitHub Codespaces. This is a cloud-based development environment that provides instant access to a fully-configured code editor and development tools directly from GitHub, enabling seamless coding and collaboration.

And another one is Gitpod. Gitpod is a cloud-based development environment that integrates with GitHub and GitLab, offering instant, customizable workspaces for coding, building, and debugging directly from your browser.

And there are many more options. Some options, such as Visual Studio Code, are highly extensible and can work with multiple different project types and languages. Other options might be specifically tailored to a small subset of languages or project types.

The application you use might be different for specific projects. You should explore the options to see what will work best for your needs.

1. **Shortcuts**

You're likely already familiar with some of the basic shortcuts, which are inherited from your operating system. Shortcuts like Ctrl + S to save, Ctrl + C to copy, and Ctrl + V to paste all work in VS Code.

But there's a few that are application specific and can still level up your productivity. It's worth noting that some of these shortcuts may differ by operating system.

For example, Shift + Alt + F will run your configured formatter (such as prettier, for a JavaScript project) on the currently opened file.

Or Ctrl + Shift + F (Windows), or Cmd + Shift + F (Mac), to search the text contents of all the files in your workspace. Then Ctrl + Shift + H (Windows), or Cmd + Shift + H (Mac), if you want to run a find-and-replace.

If you need to remove a line, Ctrl + Shift + K (Windows), or Cmd + Shift + K (Mac), will delete it.

Need some extra room for all your code? Ctrl + B (Windows), or Cmd + B (Mac), will hide the sidebar - which has the file list and extensions menu.

Or maybe you just can't see your code? Ctrl + plus (Windows), or Cmd + plus (Mac), will increase the scaling of the editor, and Ctrl + minus (Windows), or Cmd + minus (Mac), will decrease it.

Finally, if you forget any of these shortcuts, you always have Ctrl + Shift + P (Windows), or Cmd + Shift + P (Mac), which opens the command palette for you to select whatever you may need.

1. **Extensions**

Better Comments is an extension that offers special highlighting for specific code comments. For example, it will call out "TODO" comments, as well as syntax to indicate questions or warnings.

Code Spell Checker offers indication when you have spelled something incorrectly in your code. Because it is designed for code files, it will account for things like camel case.

Error Lens will help you catch any highlighted errors in your code. Rather than having to rely on the underline that VS Code shows by default, this extension highlights the entire line and displays the error message.

Indent Rainbow adds color to your different levels of indentation. In combination with VS Code's native bracket pair colorization, this can dramatically help identify what scope your code is in.

Or maybe you're looking for something a bit more practical? Consider an AI assistant, like GitHub Copilot or Tabnine, to offer you inline suggestions as you are writing your code.

An icon pack, such as VS Code Great Icons, can help make your file tree cleaner and easier to parse at a glance. And an extension like Colorize can help you understand the values in your CSS properties.

You'll also want language-specific extensions for your projects. If you are using JavaScript, you will likely want ESLint and Prettier to lint and format your code. If you are using TypeScript, you might want Pretty Typescript Errors for easier to read messages.

Finally, you can also have a bit of fun with your editor. VS Code Pets offers configurable virtual pets to keep you company while you squash some bugs.

Power Mode will create flashy effects when you achieve a high enough "combo" by writing more code.

Discord Presence will let you show off what you're working on to all of your friends.