





























YAML Data Serialization Support

Operation	Keystroke	Function	Note																								
Editing <u>YAML</u> files o Help & Customization • Syntax check • Highlight Column • Indentation / Text Folding • indent-tools o Smartparens • smart-shift o YAML Reference	Emacs supports YAML via the built-in yaml-ts-mode a Tree Sitter mode that PEL supports on Emacs >= 30.1 only. See also: M CWL You can also use yaml-mode external package with provides a classic major-mode that does not require Tree-Sitter support. • PEL installs and activates it when the PEL user-option below is set.																										
	 yaml-mode	 pel-use-yaml	A classic major mode for YAML files. Set user-option to t to install and activate.																								
	Long YAML files are notoriously difficult to edit properly. The following packages provide useful minor-modes for working with YAML files:																										
	 flycheck	 pel-use-flycheck	Supports checking the syntax of the YAML file. See <u>M SyntaxCheck</u>																								
	 indent-tools	 pel-use-indent-tools	Tools to indent, unindent, navigate across indentation levels See <u>M Indentation</u>																								
	 smartparens	 pel-use-smart-parens	Provide commands to manipulate code in matching pairs. See <u>M Smartparens</u>																								
	 smart-shift	 pel-use-smart-shift	Provide commands to shift (indent/un-indent) block of lines. See <u>M Indentation</u>																								
	 vline.el	 pel-use-vline	A command that display a vertical line: helps with alignment. See <u>M Highlight</u>																								
	 pel-yaml-activates-minor-modes Identify the minor modes to activate automatically inside YAML buffers using classic or Tree-Sitter major mode.																										
Last updated on:	2026-01-12	• PEL associates the following file extensions with yaml-mode : <code>.yaml</code> , <code>.yml</code> , <code>.eyaml</code> , <code>.raml</code> .																									
Open this PDF file. See also: M Help/Info	<div><f11> SPC M-y <f1></div> <div><f12> <f1></div>	(pel-help-pdf &optional OPEN-WEB-PAGE)	Open the D YAML local PDF. If the prefix argument (like C-u or M--) is used, then it opens the remote GitHub hosted raw PDF instead. If the pel-flip-help-pdf-arg user-option is set it's the other way around.																								
M Customize PEL YAML control	<div><f11> SPC M-y <f2></div> <div><f12> <f2></div>	(pel-customize-pel &optional OTHER-WINDOW)	Customize PEL YAML support. • If OTHER-WINDOW is non-nil (use C-u), display in other window.																								
M Customize Emacs YAML control	<div><f11> SPC M-y <f3></div> <div><f12> <f3></div>	(pel-customize-library &optional OTHER-WINDOW)	Customize Emacs YAML support groups: yaml, fly check, indent-tools and smartparens • If OTHER-WINDOW is non-nil (use C-u), display in other window.																								
Show PEL setup information for the major mode.	<f11> ? /	(pel-mode-setup-info &optional APPEND)	Display yaml-mode setup information inside a "pel-mode-info" buffer with buttons providing quick access to the customization buffer of each variable shown. • Use any prefix key (such as C-u) too append information in the buffer instead of clearing it.																								
Toggle between classic and M Tree Sitter major mode	<f11> C-t C-t	(pel-treesit-toggle-mode)	Toggle the major mode between the classic mode and the Tree-Sitter based mode. • If the other major mode is not available the command signals a user error.																								
Flycheck See also: M SyntaxCheck	 The flycheck  activated by PEL pel-use-flycheck is a minor mode for on-the-fly syntax checking..  Aside from the following 2 key bindings that PEL provides to toggle the flycheck mode, flycheck key prefix is C-c ! as set by its flycheck-keymap-prefix user-option. You can change it for a different key prefix.																										
Toggle flycheck mode for current buffer	<f11> ! !	(flycheck-mode &optional ARG)	Toggle flycheck minor-mode for the current buffer.																								
Toggle flycheck mode for all buffers	<f11> ! M-!	(global-flycheck-mode &optional ARG)	Toggle Flycheck mode in all buffers. • Flycheck mode is enabled in all buffers where ‘flycheck-mode-on-safe’ would do it.																								
• Flycheck buffer/file																											
Syntax Check current buffer	C-c ! c	(flycheck-buffer)	Start checking syntax in the current buffer. • Get a syntax checker for the current buffer with ‘flycheck-get-checker-for-buffer’, and start it.																								
Check syntax of current file	C-c ! C-c	(flycheck-compile CHECKER)	Run CHECKER via ‘compile’. • CHECKER must be a valid syntax checker. Interactively, prompt for a syntax checker to run. • Instead of highlighting errors in the buffer, this command pops up a separate buffer with the entire output of the syntax checker tool, just like ‘compile’.																								
Highlight current column	The following command provide a vertical line across the entire window at the cursor location. • Useful when creating tables or checking indentation manually. • vline also provides the vline-global-mode to activate the vertical line in all buffers; PEL has no binding for it because it slows Emacs too much.																										
Toggle Vline Mode See also: M Highlight	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <f11> h • <f11> 9	(vline-mode &optional ARG)  Requires: vline.el  PEL activates it when pel-use-vline user option is t.	Toggle the display of a vertical line spanning the entire window at the cursor column.																								
Indented Text Folding	The following command folds (hide or show) all lines that are indented more than the current line. • You can also use the f key inside the indent-tools Hydra, shown below, to fold indented sections.																										
Toggle hiding lines more indented than current line	<f11> H I	(pel-toggle-hide-indent)	Toggle hiding lines more indented than current line. • Affects the entire buffer. Not syntax sensitive. Can be used anywhere.																								
See also: M Hide/Show	 Do not modify the buffer while lines are hidden, it's allowed but its using selective display and you don't see what you change.																										
Indent-tools  PEL activates it when the pel-use-indent-tools	The indent-tools external package provides a minor-mode with several commands to indent, un-indent, navigate across indented text levels with a key hydra  PEL provide a global key binding to its key hydra and provides the ability to activate the proposed key binding globally and for python mode: • pel-indent-tools-key-bound : activates the C-c > key binding either globally or for python-mode only.																										
Open the indent-tools hydra See also: M Indentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <f11> <tab> <f7>• <f7> <tab>• C-c >	(indent-tools-hydra/body)  With PEL, these key bindings are only available when: globally, when pel-indent-tools-key-bound is set to globally , • in python-mode only when pel-indent-tools-key-bound is set to python . • The actual key is selected by indent-tools indent-tools-keymap-prefix user-option, the default is C-c >	Activate the body in the "indent-tools-hydra" hydra.																								
The indent-tools hydra provide keys you can use to navigate across the indented YAML elements.	The heads for the associated hydra are: <div>>: ‘indent-tools-indent’, <: ‘indent-tools-demote’, E: ‘indent-tools-indent-end-of-defun’, c: ‘indent-tools-comment’, U: ‘indent-tools-uncomment’, P: ‘indent-tools-indent-paragraph’, l: ‘indent-tools-indent-end-of-level’, K: ‘indent-tools-kill-tree’, C: ‘indent-tools-copy-hydra/body’, s: ‘indent-tools-select’, e: ‘indent-tools-goto-end-of-tree’, u: ‘indent-tools-goto-parent’, d: ‘indent-tools-goto-child’, S: ‘indent-tools-select-end-of-tree’, n: ‘indent-tools-goto-next-sibling’, p: ‘indent-tools-goto-previous-sibling’, i: ‘helm-imenu’, j: ‘forward-line’, k: ‘previous-line’, SPC: ‘indent-tools-indent-space’, _: ‘undo-tree-undo’, L: ‘recenter-top-bottom’, f: ‘yafolding-toggle-element’, q: exit</div>																										
See also: M Hide/Show	<table><tr><th>Indent</th><th>Navigation</th><th>Actions</th></tr><tr><td>> indent</td><td>j v</td><td>K kill</td></tr><tr><td>< de-indent</td><td>k A</td><td>i imenu</td></tr><tr><td>l end of level</td><td>n next sibling</td><td>C Copy...</td></tr><tr><td>E end of fn</td><td>p previous sibling</td><td>c comment</td></tr><tr><td>P paragraph</td><td>u up parent</td><td>U uncomment (paragraph)</td></tr><tr><td>SPC space</td><td>d down child</td><td>f fold</td></tr><tr><td>_ undo</td><td>e end of tree</td><td>q quit</td></tr></table>  The f key toggles the element. Press once to hide the sub-tree, press-again to display it back.			Indent	Navigation	Actions	> indent	j v	K kill	< de-indent	k A	i imenu	l end of level	n next sibling	C Copy...	E end of fn	p previous sibling	c comment	P paragraph	u up parent	U uncomment (paragraph)	SPC space	d down child	f fold	_ undo	e end of tree	q quit
Indent	Navigation	Actions																									
> indent	j v	K kill																									
< de-indent	k A	i imenu																									
l end of level	n next sibling	C Copy...																									
E end of fn	p previous sibling	c comment																									
P paragraph	u up parent	U uncomment (paragraph)																									
SPC space	d down child	f fold																									
_ undo	e end of tree	q quit																									

Operation	Keystroke	Function	Note
Smartparens Mode • Smartparens manual See also: ☞ Smartparens	Simplify insertion of matching pairs with the smartparens minor mode. PEL binds a set of keys, described below, to toggle activation of that mode.  This uses the smartparens external package.  PEL activates it when pel-use-smartparens is set to t . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mode line lighter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> smartparens-mode: SP smartparens-strict-mode: SP/s 		
Help on smartparens	<f11> (?	(sp-cheat-sheet &optional ARG)	Generate a cheat sheet of all the smartparens interactive functions. Shows inside Emacs buffer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without a prefix argument, print only the short documentation and examples. With non-nil prefix argument ARG, show the full documentation for each function. You can follow the links to the function or variable help page. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To get back to the full list, use M-x help-go-back. You can use ‘beginning-of-defun’ and ‘end-of-defun’ to jump to the previous/next entry. Examples are fontified using the ‘font-lock-string-face’ for better orientation.
Describe user system	<f11> (M-?	(sp-describe-system STARTERKIT)	Describe user’s system. Prompt for starter kit: Evil, Spacemacs, Vanilla. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The output of this function can be used in bug reports.
Toggle smartparens mode	<f11> (((smartparens-mode &optional ARG)	Toggle smartparens mode.
Toggle smartparens-strict mode	<f11> ()	(smartparens-strict-mode &optional ARG)	Toggle the strict smartparens mode. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When strict mode is active, ‘delete-char’, ‘kill-word’ and their backward variants will skip over the pair delimiters in order to keep the structure always valid (the same way as ‘paredit-mode’ does). This is accomplished by remapping them to ‘sp-delete-char’ and ‘sp-kill-word’. There is also function ‘sp-kill-symbol’ that deletes symbols instead of words, otherwise working exactly the same (it is not bound to any key by default). When strict mode is active, this is indicated with “/s” after the smartparens indicator in the mode list
Toggle smartparens mode	<f11> (M-((smartparens-global-mode &optional ARG)	Toggle Smartparens mode in all buffers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With prefix ARG, enable Smartparens-Global mode if ARG is positive; otherwise, disable it. Smartparens mode is enabled in all buffers where ‘turn-on-smartparens-mode’ would do it.
Toggle smartparens-strict mode	<f11> (M-)	(smartparens-global-strict-mode &optional ARG)	Toggle Smartparens-Strict mode in all buffers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With prefix ARG, enable Smartparens-Global-Strict mode if ARG is positive; otherwise, disable it. Smartparens-Strict mode is enabled in all buffers where ‘turn-on-smartparens-strict-mode’ would do it.
Smart-shift See also: ☞ Indentation	The smart-shift external package simplifies shifting a complete line or region of lines right or left but also up or down. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is implemented as a minor or global minor mode that must be enabled first. You can identify the smart-shift-mode inside one of the pel-<mode>-activates-minor-modes user-options to activate it automatically. You can also use the commands manually or through the key bindings provided by PEL to activate the smart-shift-mode in the current buffer or globally for all buffers. PEL controls it through customization user-options: <ul style="list-style-type: none">  The smart-shift external package  PEL activates it when the pel-use-smart-shift user-option is turned on (set to t).  PEL also provides the pel-smart-shift-keybinding user-option that allows you to select additional alternative key bindings for the smart-shift commands that shift line(s). By default the key bindings are using C-c as a key prefix. With PEL you can also use a control key for the cursor or change the prefix key to use the <f9> key. The 3 possible key bindings are shown below but only one of them will be available at any given time. The one available is the one selected by the user-option value. 		
Toggle smart-shift mode in current buffer	<f11> <tab> s	(smart-shift-mode &optional ARG)	Activate/de-activate the smart-shift mode in the current buffer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activate the line-shift key bindings listed below, in the current buffer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With PEL, the actual key binding selected for the line shift commands depend on the value of the pel-smart-shift-keybinding user-option.
Toggle smart-shift mode globally	<f11> <tab> S	(global-smart-shift-mode &optional ARG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toggle Smart-Shift mode in all buffers. With prefix ARG, enable Global Smart-Shift mode if ARG is positive; otherwise, disable it. Smart-Shift mode is enabled in all buffers where ‘smart-shift-mode-on’ would do it.
Shift line or region right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c <right> C-c C-<right> <f9> <right> 	(smart-shift-right &optional ARG)	Shift the line or region to the ARG times to the right. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 With PEL one of the extra key bindings can be enabled via the pel-smart-shift-keybinding user-option. So unlike other cells only one of the last 2 key bindings is available in the smart-shift minor mode.
Shift line or region left	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c <left> C-c C-<left> <f9> <left> 	(smart-shift-left &optional ARG)	Shift the line or region to the ARG times to the left. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 With PEL one of the extra key bindings can be enabled via the pel-smart-shift-keybinding user-option. So unlike other cells only one of the last 2 key bindings is available in the smart-shift minor mode.
Shift line or region up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c <up> C-c C-<up> <f9> <up> 	(smart-shift-up &optional ARG)	Shift the line or region to the ARG times to the upwards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 With PEL one of the extra key bindings can be enabled via the pel-smart-shift-keybinding user-option. So unlike other cells only one of the last 2 key bindings is available in the smart-shift minor mode.
Shift line or region down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c <down> C-c C-<down> <f9> <down> 	(smart-shift-down &optional ARG)	Shift the line or region to the ARG times to the downwards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 With PEL one of the extra key bindings can be enabled via the pel-smart-shift-keybinding user-option. So unlike other cells only one of the last 2 key bindings is available in the smart-shift minor mode.

YAML & Emacs — References

Description & URL	Notes
YAML	
YAML @ Wikipedia	Overview, syntax, criticisms
YAML official home page	Links to YAML specification, links to various resources and projects. <ul style="list-style-type: none">YAML 1.2 SpecsYAML 1.1 SpecsYAML 1.0 Specs
YAML Resource sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Learn YAML in Y MinutesOnline YAML validator (runs yamlint.py) ⚠️ No link as the site is not using https. Instead install yamlint.py locally and use it on the command line or via Emacs.
StrictYAML	A stricter, type-safe YAML
StrictYAML @ Github	
StrictYAML @ hitchdev (Python libraries)	
RAML	RESTful API Modeling Language : RAML files have the .raml file extension.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">RAML @ WikipediaRAML.orgRAML Spec @ GitHub
Common Workflow Language	Common Workflow Language (CWL) uses a <u>subset of YAML</u> and provides YAML supporting tools.
See also: M CWL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">CWL home page<ul style="list-style-type: none">CWL User GuideCWL YAML Guide
Emacs support for YAML	
yaml-mode (major mode for YAML)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">yaml-mode @ GitHubYaml Mode @ Emacs Wiki
indent-tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">indent-tools @ GitLabindent-tools @ Melpa
smartparens	The smartparens mode can help deal with data that is within matching pair of characters. <ul style="list-style-type: none">smartparens @ GitHubsmartparens documentation
Emacs/YAML Support Articles	
Blogs about YAML editing on Emacs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The best ways to work with yaml files in Emacs, from Chmouel Boudjnah's blog, 2016-09-07Editing ansible files in Emacs, from Enis Özgen, 2017-12-29
General blogs about YAML	<ul style="list-style-type: none">10 YAML tips for people who hate YAML<ul style="list-style-type: none">BTW, the last tip is: use something else... well... S-expressions are very flexible and powerful.
Using YAML on Github	YAML is used to control the actions of several Continuous Integration/Development systems. Github is one of them. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Workflow syntax for GitHub ActionsGithub Actions Runner Images : select the os environmentSetup Emacs for Github Actions : select the Emacs version