

Emacs support for Make Files

Description	Keystroke	Function	Note
Make support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emacs natively supports several Make dialect modes as listed below. PEL adds several commands and user-options that add control to the editing behaviour. See: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pel-modes-activating-superword-mode : PEL automatically activates super-word-mode for make files. Use <f11> t <f2> to access the customization group. 		
Open this PDF file. See also: ≡ Help/Info 	<f11> SPC M <f1> <f12> <f1>	(pel-help-pdf &optional OPEN-WEB-PAGE)	Open the ⌘I - Make 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.
 ≡ Customize PEL make support	<f11> SPC M <f2> <f12> <f2>	(pel-customize-pel &optional OTHER-WINDOW)	Customize PEL make support: pel-use-makefile <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pel-make-mode-alist to identify more file regexp and a make file major mode that must be used for those files. pel-makefile-activates-minor-modes lists minor modes to automatically activate in makefile major modes. If OTHER-WINDOW is non-nil (use C-u), display in another window.
⌘I - Make	<f11> SPC M <f3> <f12> <f3>	(pel-customize-library &optional OTHER-WINDOW)	Customize Emacs makefile support: makefile. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If OTHER-WINDOW is non-nil (use C-u), display in another window.
Select Make dialect mode See also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ≡ Customize ≡ File/Directory Variables 	Emacs supports several dialects of make . It automatically selects the dialect when a file is visited using the mode and file specification association identified in the auto-mode-alist variable. The support associates the name and extensions of most make files with the corresponding dialect mode. The following make file dialect modes are supported: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> makefile-mode (the based mode upon which all following modes are derived): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> makefile-automake-mode : .am makefile-bsdmake-mode : [Mm]akefile, .mk, .make makefile-gmake-mode : GNUmakefile makefile-imake-mode : Imakefile makefile-makepp-mode :.makepp makefile-nmake-mode : .mak PEL implements the makefile-nmake-mode to support Microsoft NMAKE syntax. Some projects use the .mak extension for their makefile (the dmd project for example). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With PEL, set up the association using the pel-auto-mode-alist user-option. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can access the relevant customization buffer for this user-option by using PEL <f11> <f2> p key sequence. See ≡ Customize Its also possible to use file variables to explicitly identify the make dialect mode: write something like this on the first line: <code>-*- mode: makefile-gmake; -*-</code> You can also use the following commands to manually activate one of these modes when on of them is already active. 		
Activate automake mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c RET C-a C-c C-m C-a 	(makefile-automake-mode)	Activates the automake mode <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mode-line lighter is : Makefile.am
Activate BSD make mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c RET C-b C-c C-m C-b 	(makefile-bsdmake-mode)	Activates the BSD make mode. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BSD Make is the default make on macOS and BSD OS systems. The mode-line lighter is : BSDmakefile
Activate GNU make mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c RET C-g C-c C-m C-g 	(makefile-gmake-mode)	Activates the GNU make mode. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mode-line lighter is : GNUmakefile ⚠ Because this key sequence ends with C-g, type the Esc key 3 times to escape from the C-c C-m prefix. You can also use a key not in the list.
Activate imake mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c RET <tab> C-c C-m C-i 	(makefile-imake-mode)	Activate the imake mode <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mode-line lighter is : Imakefile
Activate standard make mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c RET RET C-c C-m C-m 	(makefile-mode)	Activates the major mode for editing standard Makefiles. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mode-line lighter is : Makefile
Activate makepp mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c RET C-p C-c C-m C-p 	(makefile-makepp-mode)	Activates the makepp mode. Also called make++ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> makepp is written in Perl. It is mostly useful for writing C++ specific make files, as it expands GNU Make and removes the requirement of using recursive make. The mode-line lighter is : Makeppfile
Activate NMAKE mode	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> C-c RET C-n C-c C-m C-n 	(makefile-nmake-mode)	Activates the nmake mode, supporting Microsoft's NMAKE makefile syntax. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mode-line lighter is: Nmake
Navigate	The standard Emacs make-mode.el package provides the 2 commands to navigate across make target/dependency statements. PEL complements this with commands to navigate across the macro definition statements.		
beginning of next token See also: ≡ Navigation 	C-<right>	(pel-forward-token-start &optional N)	Move to the beginning of next word/symbol. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It handles characters that may be part of symbol in the current major mode, and jumps over them but stops at whitespace and operators. Supports numerical argument for repetition. Negative argument reverses the movement direction. The command support shift-marking. 👉 Useful when the superword-mode is not activated: allows jumping to next symbol while the word commands stop at each word separator character.
beginning of previous token See also: ≡ Navigation 	C-<left>	(pel-backward-token-start &optional N)	Move to the beginning of previous word/symbol. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It handles characters that may be part of symbol in the current major mode (like ' _ ' in C), and jumps over them but stops at whitespace and operators. Supports numerical argument for repetition. Negative argument reverses the movement direction. The command support shift-marking. 👉 Useful when the superword-mode is not activated: allows jumping to previous symbol while the word commands stop at each word separator character.
Move point forward to next target/dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M-n <f12> <down> <M-f12> <down> <f11> SPC M <down>	(makefile-next-dependency)	Move point to the beginning of the next dependency line. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skips comments and macro definitions.
Move point backward to previous target/dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M-p <f12> <up> <M-f12> <up> <f11> SPC M <up>	(makefile-previous-dependency)	Move point to the beginning of the previous dependency line. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skips comments and macro definitions.
Move point forward to next macro definition statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <f12> <M-down> <M-f12> <M-down> <f11> SPC M <M-down>	(pel-make-next-macro &optional N SILENT DONT-PUSH-MARK)	Move to the beginning of next N make file macro definition statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The function skips over comments. If no valid form is found, don't move point, issue an error describing the failure unless SILENT is non-nil, in which case the function returns nil on error and non-nil on success. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The error message states the number of instanced searched, the regexp used and the number of instances found. On success, the function push original position on the mark ring unless DONT-PUSH-MARK is non-nil. The command support shift-marking.
Move point backward to previous macro definition statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <f12> <M-up> <M-f12> <M-up> <f11> SPC M <M-up>	(pel-make-previous-macro &optional N SILENT DONT-PUSH-MARK)	Move to the beginning of previous N make file macro definition statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The function skips over comments. If no valid form is found, don't move point, issue an error describing the failure unless SILENT is non-nil, in which case the function returns nil on error and non-nil on success. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The error message states the number of instanced searched, the regexp used and the number of instances found. On success, the function push original position on the mark ring unless DONT-PUSH-MARK is non-nil. The command support shift-marking.
• If statements	Use the <f6> key prefix followed by <right> , <left> , <up> and <down> to navigate across GNU Make if statements. The first 2 also accept prefix to move to else.		
Move point forward to matching endif • or matching else	<f6> <right>	(pel-make-forward-conditional &optional TO-ELSE)	Move point forward to matching end of make conditional: if point is before a <u>make conditional if statement</u> it moves to the matching endif, or else when prefix arg is used. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With C-u or numerical arg: move backward to matching else. On success, push the original position on the mark ring and return the new position. On error, issue user error on mismatch. Shift marking is available with C-M-<right>
Move point backward to matching if • or matching else	<f6> <left>	(pel-make-backward-conditional &optional TO-ELSE)	Move point backward to matching beginning of make conditional. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With C-u or numerical arg: move backward to matching else. On success, push the original position on the mark ring and return the new position. On error, issue user error on mismatch. Shift marking is available with C-M-<left>

Description	Keystroke	Function	Note
Move outward forward to matching endif	<f6> <down>	(pel-make-outward-forward-conditional &optional NEST-COUNT)	Move point forward, outward to end of current if statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none">By default move 1 nest level outward. A larger count can be specified with optional NEST-COUNT numeric argument.On success, push the original position on the mark ring and return the new position. On error, issue user error on mismatch.
Move outward backward to matching if	<f6> <up>	(pel-make-outward-backward-conditional &optional NEST-COUNT)	Move point backward, outward to beginning of current if statement. <ul style="list-style-type: none">By default move 1 nest level outward. A larger count can be specified with optional NEST-COUNT numeric argument.On success, push the original position on the mark ring and return the new position. On error, issue user error on mismatch.
Show all Make conditional statements inside an occur buffer	<f6> o	(pel-make-conditionals-occur &optional NLINES)	Show make conditional statements inside an occur buffer. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Each line is shown with NLINES before and after, or -NLINES before if NLINES is negative.NLINES defaults to list-matching-lines-default-context-lines user-option value.If a region is defined the search is restricted to the region. See occur search
• by blocks	Move to the matching pair of character in the following sets: {},[],(),<,>,"",“”.		
block backward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">C-M-bC-M-<left>C-[C-bEsc C-bEsc C-<left>	(backward-sexp &optional ARG)	Move backward across one balanced expression (sexp). <ul style="list-style-type: none">With ARG, do it that many times. Negative arg -N means move forward across N balanced expressions. This command assumes point is not in a string or comment.C-M-b : ➡ Shift marking is available in graphics mode, not in terminal mode.C-M-<left> : ➡ Shift marking works with this command.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⚠ With PEL: if you want to use Esc C-<left> binding you must ensure that pel-windmove-on-esc-cursor user option is set to nil.❖ C-M-<left> does not work on Windows, but H-<left> works.🔊 Several Linux distros map C-M-<left> to desktop workspace operation. In that case you can either use another key binding or change Linux key binding in Systems->settings->keyboard->shortcuts to prevent it from using that key sequence.		
block forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">C-M-fC-M-<right>C-[C-fEsc C-fEsc C-<right>	(forward-sexp &optional ARG)	Move forward across one balanced expression (sexp). <ul style="list-style-type: none">With ARG, do it that many times. Negative arg -N means move backward across N balanced expressions. This command assumes point is not in a string or comment.C-M-f : ➡ Shift marking is available in graphics mode, not in terminal mode.C-M-<right> : ➡ Shift marking works with this command.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⚠ With PEL: if you want to use Esc C-<right> binding you must ensure that pel-windmove-on-esc-cursor user option is set to nil.❖ C-M-<right> does not work on Windows, but H-<right> does.🔊 Several Linux distros map C-M-<right> to desktop workspace operation. In that case you can either use another key binding or change Linux key binding in Systems->settings->keyboard->shortcuts to prevent it from using that key sequence.		
iMenu/Speedbar See also: <ul style="list-style-type: none">🔗 Completion/Input🔗 Menus🔗 Speedbar	You can navigate through makefile macros and targets (identified as <i>dependencies</i>) using Emacs iMenu and Speedbar capabilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Several commands are available to get a list of the various elements and move point to it.<ul style="list-style-type: none">These commands include the following. More are listed in the 🔗 Completion/Input .Several packages extend the completion and how entry is done. PEL allows dynamic selection of several methods and can display the current status with M-g ?You can also use the 🔗 Speedbar to list all items on a vertical side-bar and navigate through them.		
Find definitions using IMenu See also: <ul style="list-style-type: none">🔗 Completion/Input🔗 Menus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><f11> <f10> iM-g iM-g M-i	(imenu INDEX-ITEM)	Lists imenu-detected items from the current buffer (according to its major mode). <ul style="list-style-type: none">For example, in a elisp file, the entry points are the function definitions and may include the variables and other items depending what function does the parsing (it can be semantic which provides more information).Provides one of the following interfaces to let user select entry to jump to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">The default: input completion, using the minibuffer window and tab completion.a pop-up window : available in Graphics mode selected by mouse or in both graphics and terminal (TTY) modes when the imenu-use-popup-menu user-option is turned on.<ul style="list-style-type: none">with PEL you can use pel-imenu-toggle-popup (bound to M-g <f4> p) to toggle the user interface used by imenu.
Move to imenu detected symbol definition in current buffer ★★	<ul style="list-style-type: none">M-g hM-g M-h	(pel-goto-symbol)	Prompt using for imenu symbol of the current buffer and move point to it. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Refresh imenu and jump to a place in the buffer using the completion method selected.Modify user interface currently used with M-g <f4> h.The command sets a ref-marker before moving. Return to previous location with M- ,.
Display current setting of commands: <ul style="list-style-type: none">pel-goto-symbolpel-goto-symbol-any-buffer See also: <ul style="list-style-type: none">🔗 Completion/Input	M-g ?	(pel-show-goto-symbol-settings)	Display current settings used by the goto symbol commands in the echo area. For example: <div><pre>-UU-:----F1 makefile Top (1,0) (BSDmakefile WK Anzu F1 pel-goto-symbol UI (M-g <f4> h) is: Ivy pel-goto-symbol-any-buffer UI (M-g <f4> y) is: Ido - iMenu UI is: pop-up menu - Ido requires: Ido Ubiquitous (M-g <f4> M-u) is: off - flx-ido (fuzzy matching) (M-g <f4> M-f) is: off - iMenu lists are hierarchical. - Ido uses: - Ido prompt geometry (<f11> M-c M-g): ido-grid - Ido Ubiquitous mode (<f11> M-c M-u): off - flx-ido mode (<f11> M-c M-f): off - iMenu+ support is: on, which impacts all Ido-based prompts - Semantic mode is: off</pre></div>
Insert & Edit	The following commands help the editing of the makefile contents.		
Insert GNU make function statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">C-c TabC-c C-i	(makefile-insert-gmake-function)	Insert a GNU make function call . <ul style="list-style-type: none">Asks for the name of the function to use (with completion).Then prompts for all required parameters.
Insert target at point	C-c :	(makefile-insert-target-ref TARGET-NAME)	Complete on a list of known targets, then insert TARGET-NAME at point.
Add/remove line continuation trailing backslashes	C-c C-\	(makefile-backslash-region FROM TO DELETE-FLAG)	Insert, align, or delete end-of-line backslashes on the lines in the region. <ul style="list-style-type: none">With no argument, inserts backslashes and aligns existing backslashes.With an argument, deletes the backslashes.
	This function does not modify the last line of the region if the region ends right at the start of the following line; it does not modify blank lines at the start of the region. So you can put the region around an entire macro definition and conveniently use this command.		
Perform completion at point	C-M-i <f12> . <f6> .	(completion-at-point)	Perform completion on the text around point. The completion method is determined by ‘completion-at-point-functions’. ⚠ 🐛 The C-M-i is also often bound to flyspell command. Use <f12> . instead.
Electric Insert	When the makefile-mode makefile-electric-keys user-option is turned on (it is off by default), the characters \$: = and . have special behaviour, described below.		
Insert macro reference	\$	(makefile-insert-macro-ref MACRO-NAME)	Complete on a list of known macros, then insert complete ref at point.
Insert new target	:	(makefile-electric-colon ARG)	Prompt for name of new target. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Only prompts if point is at beginning of line. Anywhere else just self-inserts.
Insert macro defintion	=	(makefile-electric-equal ARG)	Prompt for name of a macro to insert. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Only prompts if point is at beginning of line. Anywhere else just self-inserts.
Insert special target	.	(makefile-electric-dot ARG)	Prompt for the name of a special target to insert. Supports tab completion. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Only does electric insertion at beginning of line. Anywhere else just self-inserts.
Indenting	In make file editing, the tab character is important. The make program distinguish the tab character from multiple space characters. ⚠ The C-M-q key sequence is bound to prog-indent-sexp but it does not work well in makefile. Use the other 3 commands.		
Insert a tab character	<tab>	(indent-for-tab-command &optional ARG)	Inserts a tab character in a makefile.
Indent line(s) rigidly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><f6> <tab><f11> <tab> c	(pel-indent-lines &optional N)	Indent current or marked lines by N indentation levels. Each level uses a tab character. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Works with point anywhere on the line.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A special argument N can specify more than one indentation level. It defaults to 1. If a negative number is specified, ‘pel-unindent-lines’ is used.If a region is marked, the function does not deactivate it to allow repeated execution of the command. It also modifies the region to include all characters in all affected lines. Use C-g to de-activate the region.		

Description	Keystroke	Function	Note
Un-indent line(s) rigidly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <backtab> <f6> <backtab> <f11> <tab> C 	(pel-unindent-lines &optional N)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Un-indent current line or marked lines by N indentation levels. Works with point is anywhere on the line. All lines touched by the region are un-indented. If region was marked, the function does not deactivate it to allow repeated execution of the command. If a region was marked, the function does not deactivate it to allow repeated execution of the command. It also modifies the region to include all characters in all affected lines Use C–g to de-activate the region.
Indent expression	C–M–q	(prog-indent-sexp &optional DEFUN)	Indent the expression after point. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When interactively called with prefix, indent the enclosing defun instead. ⚠ This command does not work well in makefiles.
Comment control	Although the make file modes provide the comment-region command, it's best to use comment-dwim as it works much better: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insert a comment, comment or un-comment a region with M–; 		
Comment/un-comment See also: ⌘ Comments	M–;	(comment-dwim ARG)	Comment or un-comment line or region.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comment or un-comment line or region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When no marked region and no comment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On empty line: insert comment starter at the proper indentation level. Typed again: move it toward end of line. On line with code: insert comment starter after the code for an end-of-line comment With marked un-commented region: Comment region (each line is commented) With marked commented region: Removes the comment. Call the comment command you want (Do What I Mean). If the region is active and 'transient-mark-mode' is on, call 'comment-region' (unless it only consists of comments, in which case it calls 'uncomment-region'). Else, if the current line is empty, call 'comment-insert-comment-function' if it is defined, otherwise insert a comment and indent it. Else if a prefix ARG is specified, call 'comment-kill'. Else, call 'comment-indent'. 		
	C–c C–c	(comment-region BEG END &optional ARG)	Comment or uncomment each line in the region. ⚠ Prefer comment-dwim : it works better.
	Comment or uncomment each line in the region. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With just C-u prefix arg, uncomment each line in region BEG .. END. Numeric prefix ARG means use ARG comment characters. If ARG is negative, delete that many comment characters instead. The strings used as comment starts are built from 'comment-start' and 'comment-padding'; the strings used as comment ends are built from 'comment-end' and 'comment-padding'. By default, the 'comment-start' markers are inserted at the current indentation of the region, and comments are terminated on each line (even for syntaxes in which newline does not end the comment and blank lines do not get comments). This can be changed with 'comment-style'. 		
Toggle display of comments in buffer or active region See also: ⌘ Comments	<f11> ; ;	(hide/show-comments-toggle &optional START END)	Toggle hiding/showing of comments in the active region or whole buffer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the region is active then toggle in the region. Otherwise, in the whole buffer. 📦 This requires the hide-comnt.el package (see ⌘ Comments). 📦 PEL activates it when the pel-use-hide-comnt user option is t.
Analyze	The following commands analyze the content of the make file or the file system.		
Scan current directory files, checking for targets	C–c C–f	(makefile-pickup-filenames-as-targets)	Scan the current directory for filenames to use as targets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checks each filename against 'makefile-ignored-files-in-pickup-regex' and adds all qualifying names to the list of known targets.
Scan current buffer for makefile content	C–c C–p	(makefile-pickup-everything ARG)	Notice names of all macros and targets in Makefile. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prefix arg means force pickups to be redone. Use this to refresh the list of macros and targets located in the makefile before executing another action on those.
Update scan with latest makefile buffer content	C–c C–u	(makefile-create-up-to-date-overview)	Create a buffer containing an overview of the state of all known targets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Known targets are targets that are explicitly defined in that makefile; in other words, all targets that appear on the left hand side of a dependency in the makefile.
List macros and targets in dedicated buffer	C–c C–b	(makefile-switch-to-browser)	Open a "Macros and Target" buffer that only lists them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It operates in Fundamental mode and aside listing the macros and targets provides nothing more.

Emacs & Makefile— References

Document	Notes
Make tools	See also: GNU Autotools @ Wikipedia , GNU Coding Standard, section 7 , Filesystem Hierarchy Standard (FHS 3.0)
GNU Make Manuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GNU Make Top page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to run make GNU Make - Appendix A - Quick Reference Makefile Conventions Autoconf Portable Make Programming
Makepp home page	Makepp, also called make++ is a GNU Make replacement, written in Perl. It addresses the recursive make problem.
Make generic information	
Recursive Make Considered Harmful - Steve Miller	PDF paper (from the wayback machine archive) written by Steve Miller in 1997 describing the concept of recursive make technique showing why it causes several problems and what can be done to avoid them.
Non-Recursive Make Considered Harmful	A march 2016 PDF paper from Andrey Mokhov, Neil Mitchell, Simon Peyton Jones and Simon Marlow describe how even a non-recursive make based build system can be difficult to maintain and they propose something based on the Shake Haskell library.
Rules of Makefiles	Simple and clear rules to use as a guide for writing good make files.
How Not To Use VPATH	Describe problems to avoid when using VPATH
Multi-Architecture Builds	Describe a proper way to create make files.

GNU Make Rules

Including Other Makefiles			
Include makefiles	include filenames...	-include filenames...	Use the -include so that make ignores a makefile which does not exist or cannot be remade, with no error message.
GNU Make Rules			(See section on implicit rules below)
Topic	Rule syntax format	Description	
Rule Syntax	targets : prerequisites recipe ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Multiple line recipe, the on mostly used.The recipe lines must start with a TAB character (or the string identified by the .RECIPEPREFIX pseudo-variable.	
	targets : prerequisites ; recipe recipe ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">It is also possible to to identify a recipe on the same line as the prerequisites, separated from them by a semicolon.<ul style="list-style-type: none">This allow writing a single-line rule.	
Wildcards	Wildcards can be used in targets and prerequisites. <ul style="list-style-type: none">They are expanded in target and prerequisitesThey are not expanded in variable definitions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">See wildcard examplesBut wildcard functions can be use to expand in variable definition as in: <code>objects := \${wildcard *.o}</code>	*	All files, like *.c'
		?	Expand to characters
		[...]	
		~	At beginning of path name, like ~/bin expands to your home bin directory
		~user	Expands the the home directory of specific user

Searching directories	VPATH	The value of the VPATH make variable specifies a list of directories that make should search. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each directory in the list can be separated by space or : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On MS-DOS, Windows: space or ; 	Example: VPATH = src:../headers
Selective search Use vpath to find sources, not targets.	vpath directive	Same as VPATH but more selective: only applies to a particular class of file names. The path statement format is one of the 3 forms. The last 2 clear search path for the specified scope (file pattern or all): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vpath <i>pattern</i> <i>directories</i> <i>set search of pattern to directories</i> vpath <i>pattern</i> <i>clear search path for specified pattern</i> vpath <i>clear search path for all scopes</i> 	The first form sets the directory search for a specified file name pattern, like the following: vpath %.h ../headers
Directory search for Link Libraries	Note: that make treats prerequisites of the form -lname as library names. The -lname is expanded to the full path of the library name with starts with the 'lib' prefix. For example: <pre>foo : foo.c -lcurses cc \$^ -o \$@</pre> will cause the following command to be executed if needed: <pre>cc foo.c /usr/lib/libcurses.a -o foo</pre> This behaviour is customizable by the .LIBPATTERNS special variable.		
Phony Targets See also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules without Recipes or Prerequisites Empty target files to record events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A phony target is a target that is not really the name of a file, it's just a name for a recipe to be executed when you make an explicit request. Use it to avoid a conflict with the name of a file, and to improve performance: implicit rule search is skipped for .PHONY targets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Example: <pre>.PHONY: clean clean: rm *.o temp</pre> Some older make versions did not support .PHONY , so a <u>FORCE target without receipt or prerequisite</u> was used: <pre>FORCE:</pre> Also useful for recursive makes processing multiple directories with loops, and other case. See the GNU manual 		
Special Built-in Targets	These include: .PHONY .SUFFIXES .DEFAULT .PRECIOUS .INTERMEDIATE .SECONDARY .SECONDEXPANSION .DELETE_ON_ERROR .IGNORE .LOW_RESOLUTION_TIME .SILENT .EXPORT_ALL_VARIABLES .NOTPARALLEL .ONESHELL .POSIX .FEATURES		
Other Special Variables	MAKEFILE_LIST .DEFAULT_GOAL MAKE_RESTART MAKE_TERMOUT MAKE_TERMERR .RECIPEPREFIX .VARIABLES .FEATURES .INCLUDE_DIRS .EXTRA_PREREQ		

GNU Make Recipes				
Recipe line 1st char	suppress echoing with: @	Ignore recipe line error with: -	Prevent “ instead of execution ”, marks the line as “ recursive ” ensure the line is executed even when make is invoked with the -n -t or -q command line option, with: +	
Recipe execution	By default: each recipe line is executed in a new sub-shell	Use one shell for all lines with: .ONESHELL:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Select a shell with: SHELLShell arguments with: SHELLFLAGS	
Recursive make <ul style="list-style-type: none">export and unexport directives.	Variable CURDIR : pathname of current directory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use variable MAKE to recurse make.Variable MAKEFLAGS pass make flags to the sub-make.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Variable MAKEFILES is exported if set to anything: set to space-separated names of make files.It's also possible to export or un-export a specific variable with the export and unexport directives.	
Communicating options to sub-make	This section describe the use of the following variables: MAKEFLAGS, MAKEOVERRIDES, MFLAGS and GNUMAKEFLAGS,			
Canned Recipes	Define “canned” recipe with the define statement:	<pre>define run-yacc = yacc \$(firstword \$^) mv y.tab.c \$@ endef</pre>	It can then be used later as in:	<pre>foo.c : foo.y \$(run-yacc)</pre>
Empty Recipes	A recipe that does nothing. For example:	<pre>target: ;</pre>	Used to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Prevent a target from getting implicit recipesAvoid errors for targets that will be created as side-effect of another recipe

GNU Make Conditionals					
Conditional syntax See also: conditional example	ifeq (arg1, arg2) ifeq 'arg1' 'arg2' ifeq "arg1" "arg2" ifeq "arg1" 'arg2' ifeq 'arg1' "arg2"	ifneq (arg1, arg2) ifneq 'arg1' 'arg2' ifneq "arg1" "arg2" ifneq "arg1" 'arg2' ifneq 'arg1' "arg2"	ifdef variable-name	ifndef variable-name	else else conditional endif

GNU Make Text Transforming Functions				
Function Call Syntax	Format	Arguments		Style
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">\$(function arguments)\${function arguments}	<ul style="list-style-type: none">separated from the function name by 1 or more spaces or tabsarguments are separated by commas		Use the same style of delimited () or {} inside the entire expression.
Text Functions	\$(subst from,to,text) \$(patsubst pattern,replacement,text)	\$(strip string) \$(findstring find,in) \$(filter pattern...,text) \$(filter-out pattern...,text) \$(sort list)		\$(word n,text) \$(wordlist s,e,text) \$(words text) \$(firstword names...) \$(lastword names...)
	Alternative to patsubst is Substitution References of the form: <ul style="list-style-type: none">\$(var:a=b)\${var:a=b}			
File Name Functions	For each of these functions the argument is regarded as a series of file names, separated by whitespace. Each file name in the series is transformed the same way and the results are concatenated with single spaces between them.			
	\$(dir names...) \$(notdir names...) \$(suffix names...)	\$(basename names...) \$(addsuffix suffix,names...) \$(addprefix prefix,names...)	\$(join list1,list2) \$(wildcard pattern) \$(realpath names...) \$(abspath names...)	
Conditional Functions	\$(if condition,then-part[,else-part])	\$(or condition1[,condition2[,condition3...]])	\$(and condition1[,condition2[,condition3...]])	
The foreach Function	\$(foreach var,list,text)	An example of this is show next:	dirs := a b c d files := \$(foreach dir,\$(dirs),\$(wildcard \$(dir)/*))	
The file Function	\$(file op filename[,text])	Used to read or write from a file. For example, the following write commands to execute in a temporary command file that it executes then deletes:	program: \$(OBJECTS) \$(file >\${.in},\${^}) \$(CMD) \$(CMDFLAGS) @\$\${.in} @rm \${.in}	
The call Function	\$(call variable,param,param,...)	The following example reverses the arguments:	reverse = \$(2) \$(1) foo = \$(call reverse,a,b)	
		This sets variable LS to the path of the ls program, something like /bin/ls	pathsearch = \$(firstword \$(wildcard \$(addsuffix /\$(1), \$(subst :, ,\$(PATH))))) LS := \$(call pathsearch,ls)	
The value Function	\$(value variable)	Provides a way to use the value of a variable without having it expanded.		
The eval Function	\$(eval expression)			
The origin Function	\$(origin variable)	Returns how the variable was defined. It can return one of the following: undefined, default, environment, environment override, file, command line, override, automatic.		
The flavour Function	\$(flavor variable)	Returns the flavour of the variable. It can be one of the following: undefined, recursive, simple.		

Functions that control Make	These functions control the way Make runs and are used to provide information to the user.	<code>\$(error text...)</code>	<code>\$(warning text...)</code>	<code>\$(info text...)</code>
The shell Function	The shell function performs command expansion similar to what backquote does in the shell. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After the <code>\$(shell ...)</code> execution, the exit status is placed inside the <code>.SHELLSTATUS</code> variable. See the following examples: 		To set the contents variable with a space separating each line: <code>contents := \$(shell cat foo)</code>	Set files to a space separated list of C file names: <code>files := \$(shell echo *.c)</code>
The guile Function	If GNU Make is built with Guile support the <code>.FEATURES</code> variable includes the word <i>guile</i> . The guile function is then available. Make expands its argument then it is passed to Guile for evaluation. See GNU Guile Integration .			

GNU Make Implicit Rules		
Implicit Rule Topic	Description	
<u>Using Implicit Rules</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use them refrain from writing the recipe for a kind of target. Each implicit rule has a target and prerequisite patterns. Write a rule to identify extra prerequisites like header files prerequisites to an object file. There may be several implicit rules for the same target (for example a rule to generate object file from C files, another rule to generate object file from C++ files). See the catalogue of built-in-rules. It is possible to cancel an implicit rule. Make searches for implicit rules for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> each target that has no recipe, each double-colon rule that has no recipe, a file that is only mentioned as a prerequisite. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Implicit Rule Search Algorithm describes how the search for an implicit rule is done. A chain of implicit rules can be used to make the target from a prerequisite. But only one instance of an implicit rule can only be used in the chain. It's possible to define last-resort default rules to override part of another makefile. To prevent an implicit rule to apply to a specific target create an empty recipe for that target. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pattern Rules 	Example: <pre>%o : %c recipe</pre>	The example pattern rule says how to make <i>stem.o</i> from another file <i>stem.c</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansions using '%' in pattern occurs after any variable and function expansion. More than one pattern rule may match a target: make will choose the “best fit” rule. See How Pattern Match.

Special GNU Make Variables		
Make Goals	MAKECMDGOALS	This variable is set to the list of targets (goals) specified in the command line. If there were none, the variable is empty.

Variables used in Implicit Rules					
Variable Name	Description	Default value	Flag Variable		Description and default value (if any)
AR	Archive-maintaining program	ar	ARFLAGS	Flags to give the archive-maintaining program; default 'rv'	
AS	Program for compiling assembly files	as	ASFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the assembler (when explicitly invoked on a '.s' or '.S' file)	
CC	Program for compiling C files	cc	CFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the C compiler.	
CXX	Program for compiling C++ files	g++	CXXFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the C++ compiler.	
CPP	Program for running the C preprocessor, with results to standard output	\$(CC) -E	CPPFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the C preprocessor and programs that use it (the C and Fortran compilers).	
FC	Program for compiling or preprocessing Fortran and Ratfor files	f77	FFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the Fortran compiler.	
			RFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the Fortran compiler for Ratfor files.	
M2C	Program to compile Modula-2 files	m2c			
PC	Program to compile Pascal files	pc	PFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the Pascal compiler.	
CO	Program for extracting a file from RCS	co	COFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the RCS co program.	
GET	Program for extracting a file from SCCS	get	GFLAGS	Extra flags to give to the SCCS get program.	
LEX	Program to use to turn Lex grammars into source code	lex	LFLAGS	Extra flags to give to Lex.	
YACC	Program to use to turn Yacc grammars into source code	yacc	YFLAGS	Extra flags to give to Yacc.	
LINT	Program to use to run lint on source code	lint	LINTFLAGS	Extra flags to give to lint.	
MAKEINFO	Program to convert a Texinfo source file into an Info file	makeinfo			
TEX	Program to make TeX DVI files from TeX source	tex			
TEXI2DVI	Program to make TeX DVI files from Texinfo source	texi2dvi			
WEAVE	Program to translate Web into TeX	weave			
CWEAVE	Program to translate C Web into TeX	weave			
TANGLE	Program to translate Web into Pascal	tangle			
CTANGLE	Program to translate C Web into C	tangle			
RM	Command to remove a file	rm -f			
			LDFLAGS	Extra flags to give to compilers when they are supposed to invoke the linker, 'ld', such as -L. Libraries (-lfoo) should be added to the LDLIBS variable instead.	
			LDLIBS	Library flags or names given to compilers when they are supposed to invoke the linker, 'ld'. Non-library linker flags, such as -L, should go in the LDFLAGS variable.	
			LOADLIBES	Deprecated (but still supported) alternative to LDLIBS.	

Automatic Variable	Expands to	Notes and examples
\$@	File name of the target . For archive(member): name or archive .	
\$(@D)	The directory part of the target	If the target is just a file name, then the value of <code>\$(@D)</code> is .
\$(@F)	The file name (with extension) of the target	
\$\$	File name of target archive member	
\$(%D)	The directory part of the target archive member	
\$(%F)	The file name (with extension) of the target archive member	
\$<	Name of the first prerequisite	
\$(<D)	The directory part of the prerequisite	
\$(<F)	The file name (with extension) of the prerequisite	
\$\$?	Names of all prerequisites newer than target with spaces between them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For archive(member), only contain the member. 	Also useful in explicit rules when the receipt must operate on only the prerequisites that have changed.
\$(?D)	List of the directory part of all prerequisites newer than target	
\$(?F)	List of the file name (with extension) of all prerequisites newer than target	
\$\$^	The names of all prerequisites with spaces between them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For archive(member), only contain the member. No duplicates in the list 	Does not contain order-only prerequisites.
\$(^D)	List of the directory part of all prerequisites (no duplicates)	
\$(^F)	Lis of the file name (with extension) of all prerequisites (no duplicates)	

\$+	The names of all prerequisites with spaces between them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For archive(member), only contain the member. Duplicates are allowed in the list in the same order as received 	Useful when linking where it might be required to repeat the name of a library
\$(+D)	List of the directory part of all prerequisites (with duplicates)	
\$(+F)	List of the file name (with extension) of all prerequisites (with duplicates)	
\$	The names of all order-only prerequisites with spaces between them.	
\$*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For implicit rule: the stem which an implicit rule matches. For explicit rule, there is no <i>stem</i> : expands to the target name minus the suffix. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implicit rule: if target is <i>dir/a.foo.b</i> and the target pattern is <i>a.%b</i> then the stem is <i>dir/foo</i> Explicit rule: If target is <i>foo.c</i>, then <i>\$*</i> expands to <i>foo</i>.
\$(*D)	The directory part of the stem	
\$(*F)	The file name (with extension) of the stem	

Suffix Rules - Obsolete Old-fashioned Suffix Rules

Kinds of old-fashioned suffix rule	Example of suffix rule	Corresponding pattern rule	Description
double-suffix	.c.o	<code>%o : %c</code>	Matches any file whose name ends with the target suffix.
single-suffix	.c	<code>% : %c</code>	Matches any file name, and the corresponding implicit prerequisite name is made by appending the source suffix
	The old-fashioned suffix rules are obsolete because the pattern rules are more general and clearer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suffix rules cannot have any prerequisites of their own. Suffix sure without recipe are meaningless. 		

Assignment operators

OP	Description	Example
	Rules	
:		non-terminal
::	Makes the rule terminal: it's prerequisite may not be an intermediate file.	
	Using Variables	
=	Non-terminal recursively expanded variable assignment. See: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two-flavours of Variables Setting Variables 	The following will echo Huh?: <pre> foo = \$(bar) bar = \$(ugh) ugh = Huh? all:;echo \$(foo)</pre>
:=	Simply expanded variables See: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two-flavours of Variables 	The following: <pre> x := foo y := \$(x) bar x := later</pre> is equivalent to: <pre> y := foo bar x := later</pre>
::=	Simply expanded variables - 2012 POSIX standard compliant. See: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The two-flavours of Variables 	The following: <pre> x ::= foo y ::= \$(x) bar x ::= later</pre> is equivalent to: <pre> y ::= foo bar x ::= later</pre>
?=	Set variable if it is not already set. See: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting Variables 	The following: <pre> FOO ?= bar</pre> is equivalent to: <pre> ifeq (\$(origin FOO), undefined) FOO = bar endif</pre>
!=	Shell assignment operator: used to execute a shell script and set a variable to its output. See: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting Variables <p>Note that after the != execution, the exit status is placed inside the .SHELLSTATUS variable.</p>	For example, if you don't expect a \$ character to be part of the output string: <pre> hash != printf '\043' file_list != find . -name '*.c'</pre> If you expect \$ character(s) to be part of the output, then it's better to use another form: <pre> hash := \$(shell printf '\043') var := \$(shell find . -name "*.c")</pre>
+=	Append text to a variable The text append operation is affected by the flavour of the original variable assignment (by = or := operators.)	The following: <pre> objects = main.o foo.o bar.o utils.o objects += another.o</pre> is equivalent to: <pre> objects = main.o foo.o bar.o utils.o objects := \$(objects) another.o</pre>
	The Override Directive : how to set a variable in the make file even if the user has set it with a command argument. Appending More Text To Variables Defining Multi-Line Variables	To override a variable that might have been set in the command line: <pre> override variable = value</pre> or <pre> override variable := value</pre> To append more text to a variable defined on the command line: <pre> override variable += more text</pre> It's also possible to override directives with define directive: <pre> override define foo = bar endef</pre>