

VIM CHEAT SHEET

Comprehensive reference for Vim commands and configuration

Vim operates in different modes: Normal (default, press Esc), Insert (typing text, press i/a/o), Visual (selecting text, press v), and Command (executing commands, press :)

Tips for Beginners

- Start with **vimtutor** - run this command in your terminal for an interactive tutorial
- Use **h j k l** for movement instead of arrow keys to build muscle memory
- Stay in normal mode as much as possible - only enter insert mode when actively typing
- Learn one new command per day rather than trying to memorize everything at once
- Practice the most common operations: navigation, insertion, deletion, and saving
- Use **:help** extensively - Vim's built-in documentation is excellent

Configuration

Add these common settings to your `~/.vimrc` file:

DISPLAY SETTINGS <table><tr><td>set number</td><td>Show line numbers</td></tr><tr><td>set relativenumber</td><td>Show relative line numbers</td></tr><tr><td>syntax on</td><td>Enable syntax highlighting</td></tr></table>	set number	Show line numbers	set relativenumber	Show relative line numbers	syntax on	Enable syntax highlighting	BUFFER SETTINGS <table><tr><td>set hidden</td><td>Allow unsaved buffer switching</td></tr><tr><td>set autowrite</td><td>Auto-save when switching buffers</td></tr><tr><td>set confirm</td><td>Ask before discarding changes</td></tr><tr><td>set switchbuf=useopen</td><td>Jump to existing window if open</td></tr></table>	set hidden	Allow unsaved buffer switching	set autowrite	Auto-save when switching buffers	set confirm	Ask before discarding changes	set switchbuf=useopen	Jump to existing window if open								
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MODES

MODE SWITCHING	
normal mode	Esc
visual mode	v
visual line mode	V
visual block mode	Ctrl+v
ENTERING INSERT MODE FROM NORMAL MODE	
insert mode	i
insert at line start	I
append after cursor	a
append at line end	A
new line below	o
new line above	O
delete char and insert	s
delete line and insert	S
insert at last position	gi

NAVIGATION

BASIC MOVEMENT	
left, down, up, right	h j k l
WORD MOVEMENT	
word forward	w
word backward	b
end of word	e
WORD forward	W
WORD backward	B
end of WORD	E
LINE MOVEMENT	
line start	0
first non-blank char	^
line end	\$
SCREEN MOVEMENT	
top of screen	H
middle of screen	M
bottom of screen	L
FILE NAVIGATION	
go to top	gg
go to bottom	G
go to line number	:N
page down	Ctrl+f
page up	Ctrl+b
half page down	Ctrl+d
half page up	Ctrl+u
JUMP NAVIGATION	
jump back	Ctrl+o
jump forward	Ctrl+i
previous change	g;
next change	g,
CHARACTER MOTIONS	
find character forward	f{char}
find character backward	F{char}
to character forward	t{char}
to character backward	T{char}
repeat character motion	;
reverse character motion	,

EDITING

DELETE & CHANGE	
delete character	x
delete char before cursor	X
delete line	dd
delete word	dw
delete to end of line	d\$
delete to start of line	d0
delete to end of line	D
change word	cw
change line	cc
replace character	r
COPY & PASTE	
copy line	yy
copy word	yw
copy to end of line	y\$
copy to start of line	y0
paste after	P
paste before	p
UNDO & REDO	
undo	u
redo	Ctrl+z
undo line changes	U

TEXT OBJECTS	
WORD & PARAGRAPH	
inner word	iw
a word (with space)	aw
inner sentence	is
a sentence	as
inner paragraph	ip
a paragraph	ap
BRACKETS & QUOTES	
inner block	i(
a block	a(
inner block	ib
a block	ab
inside quotes	i"
around quotes	a"
USEFUL COMBINATIONS	
change inner word	ciw
delete inside quotes	di"
yank around block	ya(
indent paragraph	>ip
auto-indent to end	=G

GLOBAL COMMANDS	
PATTERN MATCHING	
execute on matching lines	:g/pattern/cmd
execute on non-matching lines	:v/pattern/cmd
COMMON EXAMPLES	
delete lines containing pattern	:g/pattern/d
delete empty lines	:g/^\$/d
copy matching lines to end	:g/pattern/t\$
move matching lines to end	:g/pattern/m\$
print matching lines	:g/pattern/p
print with line numbers	:g/pattern/#

VISUAL MODE	
VISUAL SELECTION	
character-wise selection	v
line-wise selection	V
block-wise selection	Ctrl+v
go to other end	o
reselect last selection	gv
OPERATIONS ON SELECTION	
delete selection	d
copy selection	y
change selection	c
uppercase	U
lowercase	u
indent right	>
indent left	<
auto-indent	=

WINDOWS	
WINDOW SPLITS	
split horizontal	:split
split vertical	:vsplit
split horizontal	Ctrl+w s
split vertical	Ctrl+w v
WINDOW NAVIGATION	
switch windows	Ctrl+w w
move to left window	Ctrl+w h
move to bottom window	Ctrl+w j
move to top window	Ctrl+w k
move to right window	Ctrl+w l
close window	Ctrl+w c
close all other windows	Ctrl+w o
equalize window sizes	Ctrl+w =
WINDOW RESIZING	
increase height	Ctrl+w +
decrease height	Ctrl+w -
increase width	Ctrl+w >
decrease width	Ctrl+w <

REGISTERS	
NAMED REGISTERS	
yank to register a	"ay
paste from register a	"ap
append to register a	"Ay
SPECIAL REGISTERS	
system clipboard	"+
selection clipboard	"*
last yank	"0
last delete	"1
black hole register	"_
show all registers	:reg

FILE OPERATIONS	
save file	:w
save as	:w filename
quit	:q
force quit	:q!
save and quit	:wq
save and quit	:x
open file	:e filename
insert file contents	:r filename
horizontal split open	:sp filename
vertical split open	:vsp filename

FOLDING	
CREATE & TOGGLE	
create fold	zf
toggle fold	za
open fold	zo
close fold	zc
delete fold	zd
FOLD LEVELS	
open all folds	zR
close all folds	zM
open one level	zR
close one level	zM
fold on indent	:set fdm=indent

ADVANCED	
MARKS	
set local mark	m[a-z]
set global mark	M[A-Z]
go to line of mark	'[mark]
go to exact position	`[mark]
go to previous position	``
go to last edit	.'
MACROS	
record macro	q[a-z]
stop recording	q
execute macro	@[a-z]
repeat last macro	@@
REPEAT & HELP	
repeat last command	.
show line numbers	:set nu
get help	:help [cmd]

SEARCH & REPLACE	
SEARCHING	
search forward	/pattern
search backward	?pattern
next match	n
previous match	N
search word under cursor	*
search word under cursor (back)	#
REPLACING	
replace first on line	:s/old/new/
replace all on line	:s/old/new/g
replace all in file	:%s/old/new/g
replace all with confirm	:%s/old/new/gc

SHELL COMMANDS	
EXECUTE COMMANDS	
run shell command	:!command
insert command output	:r!command
filter through command	:%!command
open shell	:shell
COMMON EXAMPLES	
insert date	:r!date
sort lines	:%!sort
format JSON	:%!jq .
word count	!wc %

BUFFERS	
list buffers	:ls
switch to buffer	:b N
next buffer	:bn
previous buffer	:bp
delete buffer	:bd

EMERGENCY	
return to normal mode	Esc
return to normal mode	Ctrl+c
quit without saving	:q!
undo mistake	u
get help	:help