

VimConf 2024

Tips for Navigating and Exploring Vim's Help

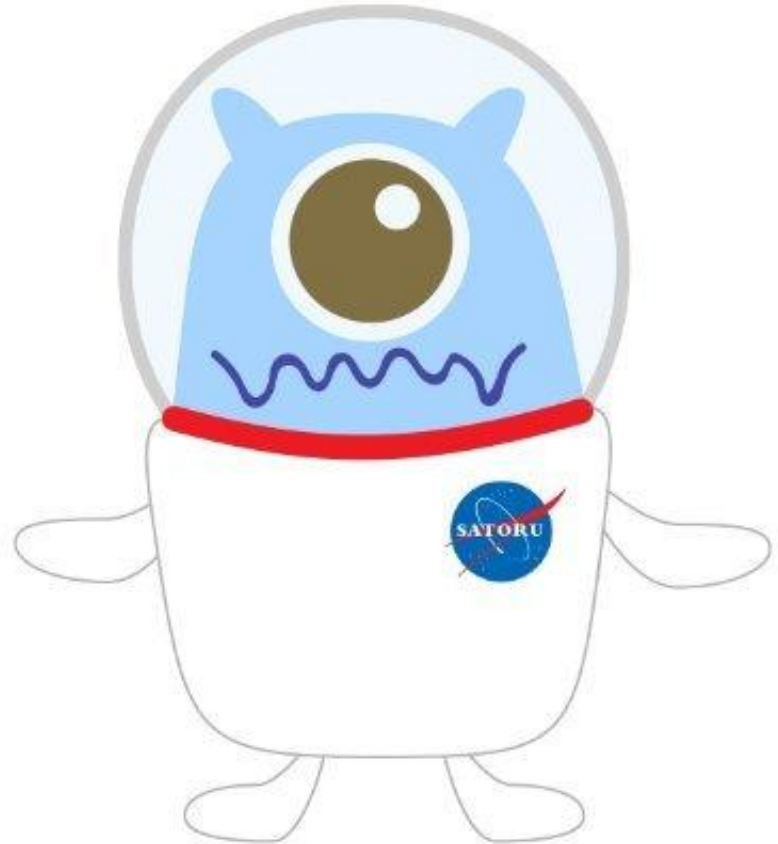
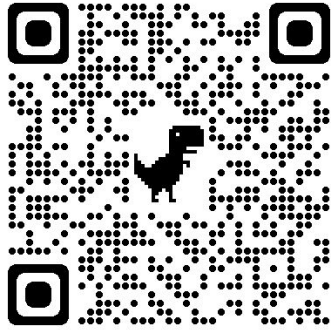
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About Me

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- Vimmer
- Back-end Engineer
 - Gopher
 - at Eureka from 2021
 - Online Dating Service, Pairs



Ever felt lost in Vim and screamed for help?

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A dark navy blue rectangular box containing the text ':help!' in a large, white, monospaced font, representing the Vim command to access the help documentation.

:help!

Ever felt lost in Vim and screamed for help?

E478: Don't panic!

Why we're Here

To inspire curiosity to explore Vim help

What we'll cover

- ★ Getting Started with Vim Help
- ★ Navigation Tricks for Efficient Help Usage
- ★ Discovering Gems in Vim Help
- ★ Contributing to the Vim Community

Getting Started with Vim Help

Getting Started with Vim Help: Install vim-doc-ja

What is [vim-doc-ja](#)?

A Japanese translation of Vim's official help.

Why use it?

Reduces the barrier for beginners and enhances understanding.

How to use it?

Once installed, Japanese help displays automatically.

To switch back to English, use **:help @en**

Getting Started with Vim Help: help-context, a key to navigation

WHAT	PREPEND	EXAMPLE
Normal mode command		<code>:help <u>CTRL</u>-^</code>
Visual mode command	<code>v_</code>	<code>:help <u>CTRL</u>-^</code>
Insert mode command	<code>i_</code>	<code>:help i_<ESC></code>
Ex Command	<code>:</code>	<code>:help :q</code>
Command line editing	<code>c_</code>	<code>:help c_</code>
Vim command argument	<code>-</code>	<code>:help -r</code>
Option	<code>'</code>	<code>:help 'textwidth'</code>
Regular expressions	<code>/</code>	<code>:help /[</code>
debugging	<code>></code>	<code>:help >cont</code>

CTRL is
never shortened



Getting Started with Vim Help: user-manual

:help user-manual

A step-by-step tutorial-style guide.

Why Start Here

Build a solid foundation.

How to Use it

Read sequentially or jump to what interests you.

Table Of Contents	
user-manual	
=====	
Overview	
Getting Started	
usr_01.txt	About the manuals
usr_02.txt	The first steps in Vim
usr_03.txt	Moving around
usr_04.txt	Making small changes
usr_05.txt	Set your settings
usr_06.txt	Using syntax highlighting
usr_07.txt	Editing more than one file
usr_08.txt	Splitting windows
usr_09.txt	Using the GUI
usr_10.txt	Making big changes
usr_11.txt	Recovering from a crash
usr_12.txt	Clever tricks
Editing Effectively	
usr_20.txt	Typing command-line commands quickly
usr_21.txt	Go away and come back

Getting Started with Vim Help: index

:help index

An alphabetical list of commands of all modes.

Best For

Fast lookups for specific terms without context.

```

index
This file contains a list of all commands for each mode,
with a tag and a short description.
The lists are sorted on ASCII value.

Tip: When looking for certain functionality, use a search
command.
E.g., to look for deleting something, use: "/delete".

1. Insert mode                insert-index
2. Normal mode                normal-index
    2.1. Text objects          objects
    2.2. Window commands      CTRL-W
    2.3. Square bracket commands [
    2.4. Commands starting with 'g' g
    2.5. Commands starting with 'z' z
    2.6. Operator-pending mode operator-pending-index
3. Visual mode                visual-index
4. Command-line editing       ex-edit-index
    
```

Getting Started with Vim Help: reference_toc

:help reference_toc

A structured TOC for all reference manuals.

Best for

Topic-specific lookups and browsing.

REFERENCE MANUAL: These files explain every detail of Vim.
reference_toc

General subjects

intro.txt	general introduction to Vim; notation used in help files
help.txt	overview and quick reference (this file)
helphelp.txt	about using the help files
index.txt	alphabetical index of all commands
help-tags	all the tags you can jump to (index of tags)
howto.txt	how to do the most common editing tasks
tips.txt	various tips on using Vim
message.txt	(error) messages and explanations
quotes.txt	remarks from users of Vim
todo.txt	known problems and desired extensions
develop.txt	development of Vim
debug.txt	debugging Vim itself
uganda.txt	Vim distribution conditions and what to do with your money

Basic editing

starting.txt	starting Vim, Vim command arguments, initialisation
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Getting Started with Vim Help: quickref

:help quickref

A compact, quick-reference guide
organized by category.

Best for

Browse to find and refresh commands.

Quick reference guide			
Contents		quickref	
tag	subject	tag	subject
Q_ct	list of help files	Q_re	Repeating commands
Q_lr	motion: Left-right	Q_km	Key mapping
Q_ud	motion: Up-down	Q_ab	Abbreviations
Q_tm	motion: Text object	Q_op	Options
Q_pa	motion: Pattern searches	Q_ur	Undo/Redo commands
Q_ma	motion: Marks	Q_et	External commands
Q_vm	motion: Various	Q_qf	Quickfix commands
Q_ta	motion: Using tags	Q_vc	Various commands
Q_sc	Scrolling	Q_ce	Ex: Command-line editing
Q_in	insert: Inserting text	Q_ra	Ex: Ranges
Q_ai	insert: Keys	Q_ex	Ex: Special characters
Q_ss	insert: Special keys	Q_st	Starting Vim
Q_di	insert: Digraphs	Q_ed	Editing a file
Q_si	insert: Special inserts	Q_fl	Using the argument list
Q_de	change: Deleting text	Q_wq	Writing and quitting
Q_cm	change: Copying and moving	Q_ac	Automatic commands

Getting Started with Vim Help: function-list

:help function-list

A list of all built-in functions.

Best For

Exploring functions for scripting.

FUNCTIONS

function-list

There are many functions. We will mention them here, grouped by what they are used for. You can find an alphabetical list here: [builtin-function-list](#). Use **CTRL-J** on the function name to jump to detailed help on it.

String manipulation:

string-functions

nr2char()	get a character by its number value
list2str()	get a character string from a list of numbers
char2nr()	get number value of a character
str2list()	get list of numbers from a string
str2nr()	convert a string to a Number
str2float()	convert a string to a Float
printf()	format a string according to % items
escape()	escape characters in a string with a '\'
shellescape()	escape a string for use with a shell command
fnamescape()	escape a file name for use with a Vim command
tr()	translate characters from one set to another
strtrans()	translate a string to make it printable
keytrans()	translate internal keycodes to a form that can be used by :map
tolower()	turn a string to lowercase

Getting Started with Vim Help: vim-variable

:help vim-variable

A list of special **v:** variables.

Best For

Handling internal state and events.

PREDEFINED VIM VARIABLES

vim-variable v:var v:
E963 E1063

Some variables can be set by the user, but the type cannot be changed.

v:argv **v:argv** argv-variable
The command line arguments Vim was invoked with.
This is a list of strings. The first item is the Vim command.
See **v:progp** for the command with full path.

v:beval_col **v:beval_col** beval_col-variable
The number of the column, over which the mouse pointer is.
This is the byte index in the **v:beval_lnum** line.
Only valid while evaluating the 'balloonexpr' option.

v:beval_bufnr **v:beval_bufnr** beval_bufnr-variable
The number of the buffer, over which the mouse pointer is.
Only valid while evaluating the 'balloonexpr' option.

Navigation Tricks for Efficient Help Usage

Navigating Vim Help with Command-Line Tricks

CTRL-D / <Tab>

After typing a topic and let Vim show all available topics.

:help some<Tab>

Setting ***options*** of command-line completion

- **wildmenu:** Displays completion options as a menu.
- **wildmode:** Controls the behavior.
- **wildoptions:** Customizes the display.

Jumping Between Topics

Getting Started

Read this from start to end to learn the essential commands.

`usr_01.txt` About the manuals

CTRL-T



CTRL-]

`usr_01.txt` For Vim version 9.1. Last change: 2023 May 12

VIM USER MANUAL - by Bram Moolenaar

About the manuals

helptags: The Backbone of Help Navigation

What Does **:helptags** Do?

- Generates the tags file like **:ctags** for code.
- Enables links (**|topic|**) in help files to let you jump between topics.

How it Works

:helptags scans help files for tags (marked with ***tagname***) and links (marked with **|topic|**) to create a navigation index.

To see what tags file looks like, type **:help help-tags**.

helpgrep: Finding Help Made Easy

What **:helpgrep** Does?

Searches for relevant topics, options, and features

Best For

Exploring topics across multiple help files when unsure of the exact section.

How to Use It

1. Run **:helpgrep <keyword>** to search for it in all help files.
2. Open the quickfix window with **:copen** to view results.
3. Navigate results using **:cnext** ↔ **:cprev**

Navigation Tricks for Efficient Help Usage

Launch Vim Directly in Help Mode

vim -c help -c only

Open Help in a New Tab

:tabnew help <keyword>

Open Multiple Help Topics Side-by-Side

:vsplit | help <keyword>

Use Temporary marks to return a spot

ma / 'a

Discovering Gems in Vim Help

Discovering Gems in Vim Help

:help design-not	Explains Vim's design principles and what it's meant to do (and not do).
:help develop	A guide for contributing to Vim's development. Covers coding standards, patch creation, and submitting contributions.
:help todo	A list of planned improvements and issues for Vim's ongoing development.
:help uganda	Explains Vim's Charityware philosophy.
:help quotes	Collected full of humorous and insightful quotes about Vim.

Discovering Humors in Vim Help

A previous girlfriend of mine switched to emacs .
Needless to say, the relationship went nowhere.
(Geoffrey Mann)

Quoted from [quotes.txt](#)

Discovering Humors in Vim Help

|You can't! (yet)| do dishes using Vim

Quoted from **howto.txt**

* you can order pizza via Vim though...

<https://github.com/arithran/vim-pizza>

Discovering Easter eggs in Vim Help

:help 42	Reference to Douglas Adams' The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy.
:help holy-grail	Quotes from Monty Python and the Holy Grail.
:help map-modes	See below figure.
:help spoon	Check it by yourself.
:help UserGettingBored	Check it by yourself.
:help showmatch	See notes.
:help bar	Check it by yourself.

Contributing to the Community

Can We Contribute to Vim's Japanese Help?

Yes, You Can!

Anyone can help improve and maintain Vim's Japanese documentation.

How to Get Involved:

Check out the repository: github.com/vim-jp/vimdoc-ja-working

The community welcomes contributions, no matter how small!

Other languages: Refer to Vim's official community pages for links.

<https://www.vim.org/translations.php>

Closing

Closing

Whenever I reread the Vim documentation
I'm overcome with excitement at the power of the editor.
(William Edward Webber, Australia)

Quoted from [quotes.txt](#)

