Title:
Cisco CCNA Certification:  Five Key Combinations You Should Know

Word Count:
437

Summary:
The sheer number of keystroke combinations on a Cisco router can be quite intimidating for a newcomer!  Chris Bryant, CCIE #12933, shows you the combinations you must know for exam and on-the-job success.

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Article Body:
When you start studying for your CCNA and CCNP exams, many books will present you with a huge list of keystroke shortcuts for use on Cisco routers.  While the 640-801, 811, and 821 exams may ask you about one or two of these, you really have to get hands-on experience with these commands to master them.  Even better, there are some key combinations that Cisco routers mention, but then don't tell you what they are!  Let's take a look at a few of the more helpful key combinations, and conclude with the "secret" way to stop a ping or traceroute.

The up arrow on your keyboard is great for repeating the last command you typed. Let's say you mis-enter an access-list.  Instead of typing it from the beginning, just hit your up arrow to repeat it, then fix the problem.

CTRL-A takes the cursor to the beginning of a typed line.  If you've written an extended ACL, you know that can be a very long command, and one you probably don't want to retype.  If you get a carat indicating there is a problem with the line, use your up arrow to repeat the command. If you see the error is near the beginning, use CTRL-A to move the cursor immediately to the beginning of the line.  CTRL-E  takes the cursor to the end of a typed line.

To move the cursor through a typed line without erasing characters, you've got a couple of options. I personally like to use the left and right arrows, but you can also use CTRL-B to move back and CTRL-F to move forward.

Finally, there's the combination that Cisco mentions to you when you run ping or

traceroute, but they don't tell you what it is!  If you send an extended ping or a traceroute, you could be looking at asterisks for a long time if you don't know this one.  In the following example, a traceroute is obviously failing:

R2#traceroute 10.1.1.1

Type escape sequence to abort.

Tracing the route to 10.1.1.1

1      *   *   *

2  *

The problem is that you're going to get 30 rows of those asterisks, which is frustrating and time-consuming at the same time.  Note the router console message "Type escape sequence to abort".  That's helpful - but what is it?

Here it is:  Just type CTRL-SHIFT-6 twice, once right after the other.   You won't see anything on the router console, but the traceroute will terminate.

R2#traceroute 10.1.1.1

Type escape sequence to abort.

Tracing the route to 10.1.1.1

1      *   *   *

2     *   *   *

3

R2#
The traceroute was successfully terminated.  This combination works for pings as well, both extended and regular.  Of all the keystrokes you can learn, this one is the most valuable!