

way of the hax0r
n00b to console punk

Appendix D

Vim Survival Keys

Enough Vim to edit a file, save it, and get out. Chapter 5 introduces the modes; vimtutor teaches the rest in half an hour. [1]

Modes

Mode	You are here when	Get here with	Leave with
Normal	Vim starts; keys are commands	Esc	i, a, o, v, :
Insert	Bottom line shows -- INSERT --; typing inserts	i, a, o	Esc
Visual	Text is highlighted for a command	v, V	Esc
Command-line	Bottom line shows :	:	Enter runs, Esc cancels

When in doubt, press Esc twice and start over.

Get In and Out

Keys	Effect
vim file	Open a file, creating it on save if it does not exist
:w	Save
:q	Quit; refuses if there are unsaved changes
:wq or ZZ	Save and quit
:q!	Quit and discard changes
:e file	Open another file
:help topic	Read help; :q closes the help window

Insert Text

Keys	Insert
i, a	Before or after the cursor
I, A	At the start or end of the line
o, O	On a new line below or above

Move

Keys	Move
h, j, k, l	Left, down, up, right; arrow keys work too
w, b	Next word, previous word
0, \$	Start and end of line
gg, G, 42G	First line, last line, line 42
Ctrl+D, Ctrl+U	Half a page down or up
/text Enter, n, N	Search forward; next and previous match
%	Matching bracket

Change Text

Keys	Effect
x	Delete the character under the cursor
dd, 3dd	Delete one line, three lines
dw, d\$	Delete to the end of the word, to the end of the line
yy, p, P	Copy a line; paste below or above
u, Ctrl+R	Undo, redo
.	Repeat the last change
r, ~	Replace one character; toggle case
>>, <<	Indent, unindent
:%s/old/new/g	Replace everywhere in the file; add c to confirm each

A count before a command repeats it: 5j moves down five lines, 2dw deletes two words.

Visual Mode

Press v for characters, V for lines, or Ctrl+V for a block, move to extend the selection, then d to delete, y to copy, or > to indent.

Useful Settings

Type these on the command line, or put them in `~/ .vimrc` without the colon:

Setting	Effect
<code>:set number</code>	Show line numbers
<code>:set paste</code>	Paste from the terminal without auto-indent; <code>:set nopaste</code> afterward
<code>:syntax on</code>	Color code by language
<code>:set hlsearch</code>	Highlight matches; <code>:noh</code> clears
<code>:set fileformat=unix</code>	Write LF line endings on save

References

- [1] Bram Moolenaar and the Vim Project, “Vim user manual: The first steps in vim.” Available: https://vimhelp.org/usr_02.txt.html