

# VI Editor

There are two main modes to the vi editor: text insertion mode and vi command mode. Unlike most other editors, the vi editor does not start you out in text insertion mode; you start in the vi command mode. You can move back and forth between the two using the escape key.

**vi command mode** will allow you to move around in your text, enter the text insertion mode, replace text, move/copy blocks of text, etc. There is also a large group of commands that can be entered from the colon (:) prompt, such as: leaving the vi editor (with or without saving your text), searching for text strings, copying blocks to text, etc. **Please note:** You do not hit the return key after you enter a vi command.

**text insertion mode** will only allow you to insert text. There are several ways to get into text insertion mode from the vi editor, depending on where you want to start inserting text. The only way to get out of text insertion mode and back into command mode is by use of the “esc” key.

**Please note:** While you are in text insertion mode you cannot move up/down lines to insert text. If you need to add text to another location than you cursor is located, you must leave text insertion mode (“esc”), move to the new location, and re-enter text insertion mode.

## Moving the Cursor

	by character
h	one character to the left
l	one character to the right
n	moves to n column of line
	by word
w	forward to start of word
e	forward to end of word
b	backward to start of word
	by line
0 or ^	forward to start of line
\$	forward to end of line
j	down one line
k	up one line
ENTER	forward to start of next line
	by line number
lG	goto line 1
nG	goto line n
G	goto last line of file
	by screen
H	top of screen
M	middle of screen
L	last line of screen
^d	down half screen
^u	up half screen
^f	forward one screen
^b	backward one screen
^e	screen up one line
^y	screen down one line

## Deleting Text

x	delete character
dd	delete line
dw	delete word
D	delete rest of line
d)	delete rest of sentence
xp	transpose 2 characters

## Inserting Text

a	append text after cursor
A	append text at end of line
I	insert text before cursor
I	insert text at beginning of line
o	open a blank line below the cursor
O	open a blank line above the cursor

## Replacing Text

r	replace single character
R	Replace multiple characters
c	(c followed by a space) change character
cw	change word
cc	change line
C	change rest of line
c)	change rest of sentence from cursor
s	substitute character
S	substitute line

## Line Move and Copy Commands

yy	yank line to buffer
yw	yank word to buffer
dd	delete line to buffer
dw	delete word to buffer
p	put buffer below cursor
P	put buffer above cursor
“cy	yank buffer to c
“cp	put buffer c

## Searching for a Character String

/string	forward search for string
?string	backward search for string
n repeat	last search in same direction
N repeat	last search in reverse direction

## Global search and replace

:g/string1/s//string2/g  
replaces all occurrences  
of string1 with string2

## Miscellaneous Commands

J	join the line below the cursor to the current line
:!	execute a shell command and stay in vi
:set	auto-indent
:csh	open a shell
^d	close shell and return to vi
:r	read results of UNIX command into the buffer

## Leading Command Counts

All commands that do not begin with a colon (: ) can be preceded by a number to perform multiple repetitions of the command. For example, 22y will yank 22 lines into the buffer and 7cw will change 7 words.

## Repeating a Command

Press the period (.) to repeat the last command.

## Undoing Edits

u	undo last change
U	undo all changes on the same line

## Displaying Line Numbers

:set nu	display line numbers
:set nonu	remove line numbers

## Saving Text and/or Leaving vi

:w	write
:wq	write and quit
:x	write and quit
:q	quit
:q!	quit and ignore changes
ZZ	write if changed and quit
:r filename	read in file filename
:w filename	write to file filename
:n,m w filename	write lines n through m to filename

## Moving a Section of Text: Cut and Paste

- a: Move the cursor to the beginning of the block to be moved
- b: Use ndd to delete n lines.
- c: Move the cursor to the place you want to insert the cut text.
- d: Use p to paste below the cursor or P to paste above the cursor.