

GNU Emacs Reference Card

(for version 21)

Starting Emacs

To enter GNU Emacs 21, just type its name: **emacs**

To read in a file to edit, see Files, below.

Leaving Emacs

suspend Emacs (or iconify it under X) C-z
exit Emacs permanently C-x C-c

Files

read a file into Emacs C-x C-f
save a file back to disk C-x C-s
save all files C-x s
insert contents of another file into this buffer C-x i
replace this file with the file you really want C-x C-v
write buffer to a specified file C-x C-w
version control checkin/checkout C-x C-q

Getting Help

The help system is simple. Type C-h (or F1) and follow the directions. If you are a first-time user, type C-h t for a **tutorial**.

remove help window C-x 1
scroll help window C-M-v
apropos: show commands matching a string C-h a
show the function a key runs C-h c
describe a function C-h f
get mode-specific information C-h m

Error Recovery

abort partially typed or executing command C-g
recover a file lost by a system crash M-x recover-file
undo an unwanted change C-x u or C-_
restore a buffer to its original contents M-x revert-buffer
redraw garbaged screen C-l

Incremental Search

search forward C-s
search backward C-r
regular expression search C-M-s
reverse regular expression search C-M-r
select previous search string M-p
select next later search string M-n
exit incremental search RET
undo effect of last character DEL
abort current search C-g

Use C-s or C-r again to repeat the search in either direction. If Emacs is still searching, C-g cancels only the part not done.

Motion

entity to move over
character C-b
word M-b
line C-p
go to line beginning (or end) C-a
sentence M-a
paragraph M-{
page C-x [
sexp C-M-b
function C-M-a
go to buffer beginning (or end) M-<

scroll to next screen C-v
scroll to previous screen M-v
scroll left C-x <
scroll right C-x >
scroll current line to center of screen C-u C-l

Killing and Deleting

entity to kill
character (delete, not kill) DEL
word M-DEL
line (to end of) M-O C-k
sentence C-x DEL
sexp M-- C-M-k

backward forward
C-d
M-d
C-k
M-k
C-M-k
C-w
M-w
M-z
C-y
M-y

Marking

set mark here C-@ or C-SPC
exchange point and mark C-x C-x

set mark *arg* words away M-@
mark **paragraph** M-h
mark **page** C-x C-p
mark **sexp** C-M-@
mark **function** C-M-h
mark entire **buffer** C-x h

Query Replace

interactively replace a text string M-%
using regular expressions M-x query-replace-regex

Valid responses in query-replace mode are

replace this one, go on to next SPC
replace this one, don't move ,
skip to next without replacing DEL
replace all remaining matches !
back up to the previous match ~
exit query-replace RET
enter recursive edit (C-M-c to exit) C-r

Multiple Windows

When two commands are shown, the second is for "other frame."

delete all other windows C-x 1
split window, above and below C-x 2 C-x 5 2
delete this window C-x 0 C-x 5 0
split window, side by side C-x 3
scroll other window C-M-v
switch cursor to another window C-x o C-x 5 o
select buffer in other window C-x 4 b C-x 5 b
display buffer in other window C-x 4 C-o C-x 5 C-o
find file in other window C-x 4 f C-x 5 f
find file read-only in other window C-x 4 r C-x 5 r
run Dired in other window C-x 4 d C-x 5 d
find tag in other window C-x 4 . C-x 5 .
grow window taller C-x ^
shrink window narrower C-x {
grow window wider C-x }

Formatting

indent current **line** (mode-dependent) TAB
indent **region** (mode-dependent) C-M-\
indent **sexp** (mode-dependent) C-M-q
indent region rigidly *arg* columns C-x TAB
insert newline after point C-o
move rest of line vertically down C-M-o
delete blank lines around point C-x C-o
join line with previous (with *arg*, next) M-~
delete all white space around point M-\
put exactly one space at point M-SPC
fill paragraph M-q
set fill column C-x f
set prefix each line starts with C-x .
set face M-g

Case Change

uppercase word M-u
lowercase word M-l
capitalize word M-c
uppercase region C-x C-u
lowercase region C-x C-l

The Minibuffer

The following keys are defined in the minibuffer.

complete as much as possible TAB
complete up to one word SPC
complete and execute RET
show possible completions ?
fetch previous minibuffer input M-p
fetch later minibuffer input or default M-n
regexp search backward through history M-r
regexp search forward through history M-s
abort command C-g

Type C-x ESC ESC to edit and repeat the last command that used the minibuffer. Type F10 to activate the menu bar using

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Buffers

select another buffer C-x b
 list all buffers C-x C-b
 kill a buffer C-x k

Transposing

transpose **characters** C-t
 transpose **words** M-t
 transpose **lines** C-x C-t
 transpose **sexps** C-M-t

Spelling Check

check spelling of current word M-\$
 check spelling of all words in region M-x ispell-region
 check spelling of entire buffer M-x ispell-buffer

Tags

find a tag (a definition) M-.
 find next occurrence of tag C-u M-.
 specify a new tags file M-x visit-tags-table
 regexp search on all files in tags table M-x tags-search
 run query-replace on all the files M-x tags-query-replace
 continue last tags search or query-replace M-,

Shells

execute a shell command M-!
 run a shell command on the region M-|
 filter region through a shell command C-u M-|
 start a shell in window *shell* M-x shell

Rectangles

copy rectangle to register C-x r r
 kill rectangle C-x r k
 yank rectangle C-x r y
 open rectangle, shifting text right C-x r o
 blank out rectangle C-x r c
 prefix each line with a string C-x r t

Abbrevs

add global abbrev C-x a g
 add mode-local abbrev C-x a l
 add global expansion for this abbrev C-x a i g
 add mode-local expansion for this abbrev C-x a i l
 explicitly expand abbrev C-x a e
 expand previous word dynamically M-/

Regular Expressions

any single character except a newline . (dot)
 zero or more repeats *
 one or more repeats +
 zero or one repeat ?
 quote regular expression special character c \
 alternative ("or") \|
 grouping \(\ ... \)
 same text as *n*th group \|n
 at word break \|b
 not at word break \|B

entity	match start	match end
line	^	\$
word	\<	\>
buffer	\‘	\’
class of characters	match these	match others
explicit set	[...]	[^ ...]
word-syntax character	\w	\W
character with syntax <i>c</i>	\sc	\Sc

International Character Sets

specify principal language M-x set-language-environment
 show all input methods M-x list-input-methods
 enable or disable input method C-\
 set coding system for next command C-x RET c
 show all coding systems M-x list-coding-systems
 choose preferred coding system M-x prefer-coding-system

Info

enter the Info documentation reader C-h i
 find specified function or variable in Info C-h C-i

Moving within a node:

scroll forward SPC
 scroll reverse DEL
 beginning of node . (dot)

Moving between nodes:

next node n
previous node P
 move **up** u
 select menu item by name m
 select *n*th menu item by number (1-9) n
 follow cross reference (return with 1) f
 return to last node you saw l
 return to directory node d
 go to any node by name g

Other:

run Info **tutorial** h
quit Info q
 search nodes for regexp M-s

Registers

save region in register C-x r s
 insert register contents into buffer C-x r i
 save value of point in register C-x r SPC
 jump to point saved in register C-x r j

Keyboard Macros

start defining a keyboard macro C-x (
end keyboard macro definition C-x)
execute last-defined keyboard macro C-x e
 append to last keyboard macro C-u C-x (
 name last keyboard macro M-x name-last-kbd-macro
 insert Lisp definition in buffer M-x insert-kbd-macro

Commands Dealing with Emacs Lisp

eval **sexp** before point C-x C-e
 eval current **defun** C-M-x
 eval **region** M-x eval-region
 read and eval minibuffer M-:
 load from standard system directory M-x load-library

Simple Customization

customize variables and faces M-x customize

Making global key bindings in Emacs Lisp (examples):

(global-set-key "\C-cg" 'goto-line)
 (global-set-key "\M-#" 'query-replace-regexp)

Writing Commands

```
(defun command-name (args)
  "documentation" (interactive "template")
  body)
```

An example:

```
(defun this-line-to-top-of-window (line)
  "Reposition line point is on to top of window.
With ARG, put point on line ARG."
  (interactive "P")
  (recenter (if (null line)
                0
                (prefix-numeric-value line))))
```

The **interactive** spec says how to read arguments interactively. Type C-h f **interactive** for more details.

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 v2.2 for GNU Emacs version 21, 1997
 designed by Stephen Gildea

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