

GNU Emacs Reference Card

(for version 18)

Starting Emacs

To enter Emacs, just type its name: `emacs`
To read in a file to edit, see Files, below.

Leaving Emacs

suspend Emacs (the usual way of leaving it) `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`
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`
run Dired, the directory editor `C-x d`

Getting Help

The Help system is simple. Type `C-h` and follow the directions.
If you are a first-time user, type `C-h t` for a tutorial. (This card assumes you know the tutorial.)

get rid of Help window `C-x 1`
scroll Help window `ESC C-v`
abbrev: 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 garbagged screen `C-l`

Incremental Search

search forward `C-s`
search backward `C-r`
regular expression search `C-M-s`

Use `C-s` or `C-r` again to repeat the search in either direction.
exit incremental search `ESC`
undo effect of last character `DEL`
abort current search `C-g`
If Emacs is still searching, `C-g` will cancel the part of the search not done, otherwise it aborts the entire search.

Motion

Cursor motion:

entity to move over `backward`
character `C-b` `C-f`
word `M-b` `M-f`
line `C-p` `C-n`
go to line beginning (or end) `C-a` `C-e`
sentence `M-a` `M-e`
paragraph `M-l` `M-]`
page `C-x [` `C-x]`
sexp `C-M-b` `C-M-f`
function `C-M-a` `C-M-e`
go to buffer beginning (or end) `M-<` `M->`

Screen motion:
scroll to next screen `C-v`
scroll to previous screen `M-v`
scroll left `C-x <`
scroll right `C-x >`

Killing and Deleting

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

kill region `C-w`
kill to next occurrence of *char* `M-z char`
yank back last thing killed `C-y`
replace last yank with previous kill `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-regexp`
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 `ESC`
enter recursive edit (`C-M-c` to exit) `C-r`

Multiple Windows

delete all other windows `C-x 1`
delete this window `C-x 0`
split window in 2 vertically `C-x 2`
split window in 2 horizontally `C-x 5`
scroll other window `C-M-v`
switch cursor to another window `C-x o`
shrink window shorter `M-x shrink-window`
grow window taller `C-x -`
shrink window narrower `C-x {`
grow window wider `C-x }`
select a buffer in other window `C-x 4 b`
find file in other window `C-x 4 f`
compose mail in other window `C-x 4 m`
run Dired in other window `C-x 4 d`
find tag in other window `C-x 4 .`

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`
delete all whitespace around point `M-\`
put exactly one space at point `M-SPC`
fill paragraph `M-q`
fill region `M-g`
set fill column `C-x f`
set prefix each line starts with `C-x .`

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`
capitalize region `M-x capitalize-region`

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 `?`
abort command `C-g`
Type `C-x ESC` to edit and repeat the last command that used the minibuffer. The following keys are then defined.
previous minibuffer command `M-p`
next minibuffer command `M-n`

