

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE VI EDITOR

It's easy to invoke **vi**.

→ At the command line, you type **vi <filename>** to create a new file, or to edit an existing one.

```
[login@cnode0220 ~]$ vi filename.txt
[login@cnode0220 ~]$
```

NODES

vi modes

→ The **vi** editor has two modes: **Command** and **Insert**.

→ When you first open a file with **vi**, you are in **Command mode**. Command mode means you can use keyboard keys to navigate (using the up \uparrow and down \downarrow arrows or the horizontal arrows \leftarrow \rightarrow), delete, copy, paste, and do a number of other tasks—except entering text.

→ To enter **Insert mode**, press **i**. In Insert mode, you can enter text, use the Enter key to go to a new line, use the arrow keys (up \uparrow , down \downarrow , left \leftarrow , and right \rightarrow arrows) to navigate text, and use **vi** as a free-form text editor. To return to Command mode, press the **Esc** key once.

→ In **vi**'s **Command mode**, almost every letter on the keyboard has a function.

→ To save a file, you must first be in Command mode. Press **Esc** to enter **Command mode**, and then type **:wq** to write and quit the file. The other, quicker option is to use the keyboard shortcut **ZZ** to write and quit. In **vi**, write means save, and quit means exit. If you've made mistakes along the way while editing and want to back out (abandon) all non-saved changes, enter **Command mode** by pressing **Esc** and typing **:q!** This command quits without saving any changes and exits **vi**.

👉 Always make a copy of an existing file prior to editing with **vi** or any editor. This is especially critical when editing system and configuration files.

vi shortcuts

→ The best way to learn **vi** is to create a new file and try it out for yourself. Feel free to use the common keyboard shortcut list below to help you learn **vi**'s extensive vocabulary. This list of shortcuts is by no means exhaustive, but they will enable you to edit files and learn **vi** in a short amount of time.

i : Switch to Insert mode.

Esc : Switch back to Command mode.

:w : Save and continue editing.

:wq or **ZZ** : Save and quit/exit **vi**.

:q! : Quit **vi** and do not save changes.

/bgtdf : Search the "bgtdf" string

n for next appearance, **esc** to quit search

yy : Yank (copy) a line of text.

p : Paste a line of yanked text below the current line

o : Open a new line under the current line.

O : Open a new line above the current line.

A : Append to the end of the line.

a : Append after the cursor's current position.

I : Insert text at the beginning of the current line.

b : Go to the beginning of the word.

e : Go to the end of the word.

x : Delete a single character.

dd : Delete an entire line.

xdd : Delete X number of lines.

Xyy : Yank X number of lines.

G : Go to the last line in a file.

XG : Go to line X in a file.

gg : Go to the first line in a file.

:num : Display the current line's number.

h : Move left one character.

j : Move down one line.

k : Move up one line.

l : Move right one character.