Vim Basics: Modes and Moving Around

The text editor that is on almost every Linux machine

Open a file

In a terminal type vim notes.txt. If the file does not exist, Vim creates it when you save.

Modes

Vim starts in Normal mode, where keys are commands. Press i to enter Insert mode and type text. Press Esc to go back to Normal mode.

Move around

In Normal mode use h (left), j (down), k (up) and l (right). The arrow keys work too.

Save and quit

In Normal mode type :w and Enter to save, :q to quit, :wq to save and quit. Use :q! to quit without saving.

Undo

Press u in Normal mode to undo and Ctrl + r to redo.

Lost?

Press Esc a few times. That always returns you to Normal mode.

Tip: Stuck in Vim? Press Esc, then type :q! and Enter.

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