UNIX vi EDITOR COMMAND SUMMARY

This page can be folded on the line and propped on your keyboard as a handy reference when using the vi (visual) text editor. Hash in square brackets [#] indicates an optional numerical value. If omitted, the default is 1 (one). [m,n] indicates optional line numbers. $ may be used in place of m or n inside square brackets to indicate the last line of the file.

SAVING/QUITTING

ZZ       save changes and quit
:x<CR>   save changes and quit
:wq [file]<CR> save changes to file and quit
:wq! [file]<CR> overwrite file with changes and quit
:[m,n]w [file]<CR> save lines m thru n to file w/o quit
:[m,n]w! [file]<CR> overwrite file with changes w/o quit
:x<CR>   quit w/o saving changes
:q<CR>   quit after no changes
:q=file]  edit file
:e[en]   reread the current file
:e       edit next file

MARK COMMANDS

mc       mark position with c
'c       return to marked position c
d'c      delete partial lines from mark c to cursor
d'c      delete whole lines from mark c to cursor
y'c      yank partial lines from mark c to cursor
y'c      yank whole lines from mark c to cursor
c'c      change partial lines from mark c to cursor
c'c      change whole lines from mark c to cursor

MISCELLANEOUS COMMANDS

:set nu<CR> number the lines
:set nomu<CR> un-number the lines
u       undo the last command
!command<CR>run command
!!command<CR>replace the current line with command’s output
.       repeat the last change/delete/yank
&       repeat the last [m,n]s string
 substitution on current line only
J       join the next line to end of this line
:nu     display current line number

INSERTING TEXT

i       insert text before cursor until <esc>
i<ESC>  insert text before first non-blank until <esc>
a       insert text after cursor until <esc>
A       insert text after last non-blank until <esc>
o       open a line below the current one until <esc>
o<ESC>  open a line above the current one until <esc>
:x<CR>  insert text from file after the current line
p       insert buffer contents after cursor
P       insert buffer contents before cursor

CHANGEING TEXT

[^[C]c    change # whole lines until <esc> into buffer
[^[C]w    change # words until <esc> into buffer
r        change this character to another
s string change this character to string until <esc>
,s<s1><s2> change first occurrence of s1 to s2
,s<s1><s2>g<CR> change all occurrences of s1 to s2

ADJUSTING THE SCREEN

z<CR>    move current line to top of screen
z.      move current line to middle of screen
z.      move current line to bottom of screen
<CTRL-E> move forward one line
<CTRL-F> move forward one screen
<CTRL-B> move backward one screen
<CTRL-D> move forward 1/2 screen
<CTRL-U> move backward 1/2 screen
<CTRL-L> refresh the screen
<CTRL-R> refresh the screen
<CTRL-G> show file status

MOVING THE CURSOR

/string<CR> move cursor forward to string
?string<CR> move cursor backward to string
n       move cursor to next instance of string
[^[H or -< move cursor left # characters
[^[I or -> move cursor right # characters
[^[J or + move cursor down # characters
[^[K or ↑ move cursor up # characters
w       move cursor to beginning of next word
b       move cursor back one word
e       move cursor to end of word
[^[G    move cursor to line #
G       move cursor to last line of file
H       move cursor to home line of screen
M       move cursor to middle of screen
L       move cursor to last line of screen
0       move cursor to left margin
^       move cursor to first non-blank character
$       move cursor to last non-blank character
%       move cursor to matching parenthesis