GNU Emacs cheat sheet

Files

Ctrl + X then Ctrl + F	Read a file into Emacs
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + S	Save a file back to disk
Ctrl + X then S	Save all files
Ctrl + X then I	Insert contents of another file into this buffer
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + V	Replace this file with another file
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + W	Write buffer to specified file
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + Q	Toggle read only status of buffer

Leaving Emacs

Ctrl + Z	Suspend or iconify Emacs
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + C	Exit Emacs completely

Help

The help system is simple. Type Ctrl + H or F1 and follow the directions. If you are a first time user, type Ctrl + H for a tutorial.

Ctrl + X then 1	Remove help window
Ctrl + Meta + V	Scroll help window
Ctrl + H then A	Show commands matching a string
Ctrl + H then K	Describe the function a key runs
Ctrl + H then F	Describe a function
Ctrl + H then M	Get mode specific information

Error recovery

Ctrl + G	Abort partially typed or executing command
Meta + X	then type recover-session to recover files lost by a system crash
Ctrl + X then U or Ctrl + _ or Ctrl + /	Undo an unwanted change
Meta + X	then type revert-buffer to restore a buffer to its original contents
Ctrl + L	Redraw garbaged screen

Incremental search

Ctrl + S	Search forward
Ctrl + R	Search backward
Ctrl + Meta + S	Regular expression search
Ctrl + Meta + R	Reverse regular expression search
Meta + P	Select previous search string
Meta + N	Select next later search string
Enter	Exit incremental search
Del	Undo effect of last character
Ctrl + G	Abort current search

Use Ctrl + S or Ctrl + R again to repeat the search in either direction. If Emacs is still searching, Ctrl + G cancels only the part not matched.

Motion

Ctrl + B	Character - backward
Ctrl + F	Character - forward
Meta + B	Word - backward
Meta + F	Word - forward
Ctrl + P	Line - backward
Ctrl + N	Line - forward
Ctrl + A	Go to line beginning
Ctrl + E	Go to line ending
Meta + A	Sentence - backward
Meta + E	Sentence - forward
Meta + {	Paragraph - backward
Meta + }	Paragraph - forward
Ctrl + X then [	Page - backward
Ctrl + X then]	Page - forward
Ctrl + Meta + B	sexp - backward
Ctrl + Meta + F	sexp - forward
Ctrl + Meta + A	function - backward
Ctrl + Meta + E	function - forward
Meta + <	Go to beginning of buffer
Meta + >	Go to end of buffer
Ctrl + V	Scroll to next screen
Meta + V	Scroll to previous screen

Ctrl + X then <	Scroll left
Ctrl + X then >	Scroll right
Ctrl + L	Scroll current line to center, top, bottom
Meta + G then G	Go to line
Meta + G then C	Go to character
Meta + M	Back to indentation

Killing and deleting

Del	Character (delete, not kill) - backward
Ctrl + D	Character (delete, not kill) - forward
Meta + Del	Word - backward
Meta + D	Word - forward
Meta + 0 then Ctrl + K	Line (to end of) - backward
Ctrl + K	Line (to end of) - forward
Ctrl + X then Del	Sentence - backward
Meta + K	Sentence - forward
Meta + - then Ctrl + Meta + K	sexp - backward
Ctrl + Meta + K	sexp - forward
Ctrl + W	Kill region
Meta + W	Copy region to kill ring
Meta + Z	then press char to kill through next occurence of char
Ctrl + Y	Yank back last thing killed
Meta + Y	Replace last yank with previous kill

Marking

Ctrl + @ or Ctrl + Space	Set mark here
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + X	Exchange point and mark
Meta + @	Set mark arg words away
Meta + H	Mark paragraph
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + P	Mark page
Ctrl + Meta + @	Mark sexp
Ctrl + Meta + H	Mark function
Ctrl + X then H	Mark entire buffer

Query replace

Meta + % then Meta + X	(then query-replace-regexp) Interactively replace a text string using regular expressions

Valid responses in query-replace mode are replace, skip, back up and exit.

Space or Y	Replace this one, go to next
Del or N	Skip to next without replacing
!	Replace all remaining matches
^	Back up to the previous match
Enter	Exit query-replace
Ctrl + R	Enter recursive edit
Ctrl + Meta + C	Exit recursive edit

Multiple windows

Ctrl + X then 1	Delete all other windows
Ctrl + X then 5 then 1	Delete all other windows (for frame)
Ctrl + X then 2	Split window, above and below
Ctrl + + X then 5 then 2	Split window, above and below (for frame)
Ctrl + X then 0	Delete this window
Ctrl + X then 5 then 0	Delete this window (for frame)
Ctrl + X then 3	Split window, side by side
Ctrl + Meta + V	Scroll other window
Ctrl + X then O	Switch cursor to another window
Ctrl + X then 5 then O	Switch cursor to another window (for frame)
Ctrl + X then 4 then B	Select buffer in other window
Ctrl + X then 5 then B	Select buffer in other window (for frame)
Ctrl + X then 4 then Ctrl + O	Display buffer in other window
Ctrl + X then 5 then Ctrl + O	Display buffer in other window (for frame)
Ctrl + X then 4 then F	Find file in other window
Ctrl + X then 5	Find file in other window (for

then F	frame)
Ctrl + X then 4 then R	Find file read-only in other window
Ctrl + X then 5 then R	Find file read-only in other window (for frame)
Ctrl + X then 4 then D	Run Dired in other window
Ctrl + X then 5 then D	Run Dired in other window (for frame)
Ctrl + X then 4 then .	Find tag in other window
Ctrl + X then 5 then .	Find tag in other window (for frame)
Ctrl + X then ^	Grow window taller
Ctrl + X then {	Shrink window smaller
Ctrl + X then }	Grow window wider

Formatting

Tab	Indent current line (mode-dependent)
Ctrl + Meta + \	Indent region (mode-dependent)
Ctrl + Meta + Q	Indent sexp (mode-dependent)
Ctrl + X then Tab	Indent region rigidly arg columns
Meta + ;	Indent for comment
Ctrl + O	Insert newline after point
Ctrl + Meta + O	Move rest of line vertically down
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + O	Delete blank lines around point
Meta + ^	Join line with previous (with arg, next)
Meta + \	Delete all white space around point
Meta + Space	Put exactly one space at point
Meta + Q	Fill paragraph
Ctrl + X then F	Set fill column to arg
Ctrl + X then .	Prefix each line starts with
Meta + O	Set face

Case change

Meta + U	Uppercase word
Meta + L	Lowercase word
Meta + C	Capitalize word
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + U	Uppercase region
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + L	Lowercase region

The minibuffer

The following keys are defined in the minibuffer.

Tab	Complete as much as possible
Space	Complete up to one word
Enter	Complete and execute
?	Show possible completions
Meta + P	Fetch previous minibuffer input
Meta + N	Fetch later minibuffer input or default
Meta + R	Regexp search backward through history
Meta + S	Regexp search forward through history
Ctrl + G	Abort command
Ctrl + X then Esc then Esc	Edit and repeat the last command that used the minibuffer
F10	Activate menu bar items in text terminals

Buffers

Ctrl + X then B	Select another buffer
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + B	List all buffers
Ctrl + X then K	Kill a buffer

Transposing

Ctrl + T	Transpose characters
Meta + T	Transpose words
Ctrl + X then Ctrl + T	Transpose lines
Ctrl + Meta + T	Transpose sexps

Spelling check

Meta + $	Check spelling of current word
Meta + X	(then ispell-region) Check spelling of all words in region

Meta + X	(then ispell-buffer) Check spelling of entire buffer
Meta + X	(then flyspell-mode) Toggle on-the-fly spell checking

Tags

Meta + .	Find a tag (a definition)
Ctrl + U then Meta + .	Find next occurence of a tag
Meta + X	(then visit-tags-table) Specify new tags file
Meta + X	(then tags-search) Regexp search on all files in tags table
Meta + X	(then tags-query-replace) Run query-replace on all the files
Meta + ,	Continue last tags search on query-replace

Shells

Meta + !	Execute a shell command
Meta + &	Execute a shell command asynchronously
Meta + |	Run a shell command on the region
Meta + X	(then type shell) Start a shell window *shell*

Rectangles

Ctrl + X then R then R	Copy rectangle to register
Ctrl + X then R then K	Kill rectangle
Ctrl + X then R then Y	Yank rectangle
Ctrl + X then R then O	Open rectangle, shifting text right
Ctrl + X then R then C	Black out rectangle
Ctrl + X then R then T	Prefix each line with string

Abbrevs

Ctrl + X then A	Add global abbrev
then G	
Ctrl + X then A then L	Add mode-local abbrev
Ctrl + X then A then I then G	Add global expansion for this abbrev
Ctrl + X then A then I then L	Add mode-local expansion for this abbrev
Ctrl + X then A then E	Explicitly expand abbrev
Meta + /	Expand previous word dynamically

Miscellaneous

Ctrl + U then [Num 0 - 9]	Numeric argument
Meta + -	Negative argument
Ctrl + Q	then char: Quoted insert

International character sets

Ctrl + \	Enable or disable input method

Info

Ctrl + H then I	Enter the Info documentation reader
Ctrl + H then S	Find specified function or variable in Info
Space	Scroll forward
Del	Scroll reverse
B	Beginning of node
N	Go to next node
P	Go to previous node
U	Move up
M	Select menu item by name
[Num 1 - 9]	Select menu item by number
F	Follow cross reference (return with 1)
L	Return to last node you saw
D	Return to directory node
T	Go to top node of Info file
G	Go to any node by name
H	Run info tutorial

I	Look up a subject in the indices
S	Search nodes for regexp
Q	Quit Info

Registers

Ctrl + X then R then S	Save region in register
Ctrl + X then R then I	Insert register contents into buffer
Ctrl + X then R then Space	Save value of point in register
Ctrl + X then R then J	Jump to point saved in register

Keyboard macros

Ctrl + X then (	Start defining a keyboard macro
Ctrl + X then)	End keyboard macro definition
Ctrl + X then E	Eappend to last keyboard macro
Meta + X	(then name-last-kbd-macro) name last keyboard macro
Meta + X	(then insert-kbd-macro) Instert Lisp definition in buffer

Dealing with Emacs Lisp

Ctrl + X then Ctrl + E	Eval sexp before point
Ctrl + Meta + X	Eval current defun
Meta + X	(then eval-region) Eval region
Meta + :	Read and eval minibuffer
Meta + X	(then load-library) load a Lisp library from load-path

Simple customization

Meta + X	(then customize) Customize variables and faces

Source: GNU Emacs refcard

Last modification: 11/11/2019 8:10:24 PM

More information: *defkey.com/gnu-emacs-shortcuts*

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