

Emacs Command Cheat Sheet

- “C-x” means “press and hold the control key and then press and release the ‘x’ key”
- “M-x” means “press and then release the Meta key and then press the ‘x’ key.”

The “Meta key” on a PC is the one marked ESC (Escape); on a Mac, it’s the one that looks like

this: ; on a Unix machine, it’s the one with a solid diamond on it.

Emacs basic commands	
Command	Keystroke
Open a file	C-x C-f
Insert another file at the current cursor position	C-x i
Save current file	C-x C-s
Save current file with another name (similar to “Save as”)	C-x C-w
Open an additional file	C-x C-f

Moving around an Emacs buffer	
Command	Keystroke
Move to the beginning of a buffer	M-<
Move to the end of a buffer	M->
Move forward one character	C-f
Move backward one character	C-b
Move down one line	C-n
Move up one line	C-p
Move forward one word	M-f
Move backward one word	M-b
Move to the end of a line	C-e
Move to the beginning of a line	C-a
Move forward one screen	C-v
Move backward one screen	M-v

Cutting (deleting) text	
Command	Keystroke
Delete character	C-d
Delete previous character	DEL (or BACKSPACE on some keyboards)
Delete word	M-d
Delete previous word	M-DEL (or M-BACKSPACE on some keyboards)
Delete the entire line	C-k

Marking text to delete, move, or copy	
Command	Keystroke
Mark the beginning of a selection	C-@ or C-SPACEBAR
Delete the marked region	C-w
Copy a marked region	M-w or C-INSERT
Paste (Yank) a cut or copied region	C-y

Searching & replacing text	
Command	Keystroke
Incremental search forward	C-s
Incremental search backward	C-r
Exit incremental search	<ENTER> or <RETURN>
Cancel incremental search (or just about any other command)	C-g
Delete incorrect character in search string of incremental search	DEL (or M-BACKSPACE on some keyboards)
Non-incremental search forward	C-s RETURN (or ENTER on some keyboards)
Non-incremental search backward	C-r RETURN (or ENTER on some keyboards)
Start query replace	M-%
Replace current instance and continue on to next instance	SPACEBAR or y
Don't replace current instance, but move on to next instance	DEL (or M-BACKSPACE on some keyboards) or n
Replace the current instance and then quit	. (period key)
Replace the current instance and then pause	, (comma key)
Resume after pausing	SPACEBAR or y
Replace remaining instances without asking	!
Back up to previous instance	^
Exit query replace	RETURN (or ENTER on some keyboards) or q
Search for a group of sequential characters forward	M C-s RETURN (ENTER on some keyboards) FOLLOWED by thisIsMySearchExpressio*
Search for a group of sequential characters backward	M C-r RETURN (ENTER on some keyboards) FOLLOWED by thisIsMySearchExpressio*
Search for a group of sequential characters forward and incrementally	M C-s
Search for a group of sequential characters backward and incrementally	M C-r

Moving among buffers	
Command	Keystroke
Move to the previous buffer	C-x b
Display buffer list	C-x C-b
Delete current buffer	C-x k
Create two windows	C-x 2
Move to the other window	C-x o
Delete the current window	C-x O
Delete all other windows except the current one	C-x 1

Various other commands	
Command	Keystroke
Undoing recent changes	C-x u
Undo all changes since the last save	M-x revert-buffer
Go back to an earlier version of the current file (the file as it appeared when you first opened it)	C-x C-f filename~ RETURN (RETURN ON SOME keyboards) FOLLOWED BY C-x C-w filename
Pop out to your Unix prompt	C-z
Cancel current command	C-g

This document was adapted from a larger document that can be found at <http://cs.iupui.edu/~kweimer/EmacsCheatSheet.pdf>. Unfortunately, I've been unable to figure out who produced the original document.