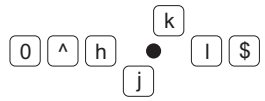
vi is Your Friend

by Douglas Wilhelm Harder

Simple Movement



0	Move to the start of the line
^	Move to the first non-ws character
h l	Move one character to the left/right
j k	Move one line down/up
$	Move to the end of the line

{ }	Move to the previous/next paragraph
( )	Move to the previous/next sentence
b e w	Move to the beginning/end/next word
B E W	Move to the beginning/end/next whitespace-delimited word

Each of **hjkl{}()bewBEW** may be preceded by a number *n* to indicate *n* repetitions of that movement

Transfers to Insert Mode

Insert ...

i	... before the current character
*n***i**	... before the current character (×*n*)
I	... at the start of the line
*n***I**	... at the start of the line (×*n*)

Append ...

a	... after the current character
*n***a**	... after the current character (×*n*)
A	... at the end of the line
*n***A**	... at the end of the line (×*n*)

Open the...

o	... the following line
*n***o**	... the following line and repeat (×*n*)
O	... the previous line
*n***O**	... the previous line and repeat (×*n*)

Text Modifications

Delete everything up to ...

d<*mv*>	... the move
*n***d**<*mv*>	... *n* repetitions of the move
D	... the end of the line
*n***D**	... the end of *n* lines
dd	Delete the entire line
*n***dd**	Delete *n* lines

"*x*" (delete) the ...

x	... current character
*n***x**	... next *n* characters (inclusive)
X	... previous character
*n***X**	... previous *n* characters

Replace ...

r*x*	... the current character with *x*
*n***r***x*	... the next *n* characters with *x*
R	... from the current character on
*n***R**	... from the current character on (×*n*)

Change everything up to ...

c<*mv*>	... the move
*n***c**<*mv*>	... *n* repetitions of the move
C	... the end of *n* lines
*n***C**	... the end of the line
cc	Change the entire line
*n***cc**	Change *n* lines

Substitute the ...

s	... current character
*n***s**	... next *n* characters
S	... entire line
*n***S**	... next *n* lines

Indent/Unindent ...

>>	... the current line
><*mv*>	... all lines up to the end of the move
<<	... the current line
<<*mv*>	... next *n* lines

Miscellaneous Useful Commands

.	Repeat the last command
u	Undo the last change
^R	Redo the last undo
U	Undo all changes to current line
%	Find a matching delimiter **{[( )]}**
^G	Print the current line and column
^L	Refresh the screen
~	Change the case of a letter

Character Searches

Find (in the current line) the ...

f*x*	... next occurrence of *x*
*n***f***x*	... *n*th occurrence of *x*
t*x*	... character before **f***x*
*n***t***x*	... character before *n***f***x*
T*x*	... character after **F***x*
*n***T***x*	... character after *n***F***x*
F*x*	... previous occurrence of *x*
*n***F***x*	... *n*th prior occurrence of *x*
;	Repeat the previous find
,	Repeat in the opposite direction

Regular Expression Searches

Search for the ...

/<*re*>	... next occurrence of <*re*>
*n***/**<*re*>	... *n*th occurrence of <*re*>
?<*re*>	... previous occurrence of <*re*>
*n***?**<*re*>	... *n*th prior occurrence of <*re*>
n	Repeat the previous search
N	Repeat in the opposite direction

Default Buffer Modifications

Yank to the buffer everything up to ...

y<*mv*>	... the move
*n***y**<*mv*>	... *n* repetitions of the move
Y	... the end of the line
*n***Y**	... the end of *n* lines
yy	Yank to the buffer the entire line
*n***yy**	Yank to the buffer *n* lines

Any **dDxX** operation also copies the deleted text into the default buffer.

Put the contents of the default buffer ...

p	... after the cursor/line
*n***p**	... after the cursor/line (×*n*)
P	... before the cursor/line
*n***P**	... before the cursor/line (×*n*)

Named Buffer Modifications

There are 26 named buffers labeled **a-z**

Precede any **dDyYxX** with ...

"a	... to copy into the named buffer
"A	... to append to the named buffer

Put the contents of a named buffer ...

*"a***p**	... after the cursor/line
*n"a***p**	... after the cursor/line (×*n*)
*"a***P**	... before the cursor/line
*n"a***P**	... before the cursor/line (×*n*)

Marking Positions

There are 26 named markers labeled **a-z**

Mark a position with

m*a*	... to copy into the named buffer

Move to ...

`` `a ``	... the mark *a*
'a	... the start of the line with mark *a*
``` `` ```	... the last mark
''	... the start of the line with the last mark

Movement Commands

-	Move to the start of the previous line
*n***-**	Move to the start of the *n*th previous line
+	Move to the start of the following line
*n***+**	Move to the start of the *n*th following line
H	Move to the top of the screen
*n***H**	Move to the *n*th line from the top
L	Move to the bottom (lower) of the screen
*n***L**	Move to the *n*th line from the bottom
G	Move to the end of the file
*n***G**	Move to the *n*th line
*n***|**	Move to the *n*th column

Scrolling Commands

^B	Scroll back one screen
*n***^B**	Scroll back *n* screens
^U	Scroll up (up to) one-half a screen
*n***^U**	Scroll up *n* lines (and remember *n*)
^Y	Shift screen down by one line
*n***^Y**	Shift screen down by *n* line
z ↵	Move cursor to top of the screen
z.	Move cursor to the middle of the screen
z-	Move cursor to the bottom of the screen
^E	Shift screen up by one line
*n***^E**	Shift screen up by *n* line
^D	Scroll down (up to) one-half a screen
*n***^D**	Scroll down *n* lines (and remember *n*)
^F	Scroll forward one screen
*n***^F**	Scroll forward *n* screens

Regular Expressions

a	A letter or number matches itself
.	The period matches anything
[*xyz***]**	Matches any one character inside **[ ]**
[^*xyz***]**	Matches any character not in **[ ]**
[a-z]	Short cut for **[abcde...xyz]**
[^0-9]	Short cut for **[^0123456789]**
<*r1*><*r2*>	Matches <*r1*> followed by <*r2*>
<*re*>*****	Matches any number (also 0) of <*re*>
<*re*><*re*>*****	Matches at least one of <*re*>
\<<*re*>	Matches <*re*> at the start of a word
<*re*>**\>**	Matches <*re*> at the end of a word
^ $	Matches the start and end of a line

Search and Replace

Replace the first instance of **dog** with **cat** on the current line **:s/dog/cat**

Replace all instances of **dog** with **cat** on the current line **:s/dog/cat/g**

Replace all instances of **1/2** with **1/3** on the current line **:s-1/2-1/3-g**
:s/1\/2/1\/3/g

Extend the scope beyond the current line:
:<*scope*>**s/dog/cat**

where <*scope*> is one of

%	All lines in the file
.,$	All lines after and including the current
.,.+*n*	The current line and the next *n* lines

File Manipulation

Session File Manipulation

:w	write (save) the file
:w *filename*	write to the specified file
:w %.new	appended **.new** to current name
:w! *filename*	overwrite the specified file
:q	quit the session
:q!	quit and do not save the session
:wq	write the file and quit

Multiple-File Manipulation

:n	go to the next file
:n!	go to the next file without saving
:wn	write the file and go to the next file
:N	go to the previous file
:N!	go to the previous file without saving
:wN	write the file and go to the previous file

Common Command Examples

xp transpose two characters
ddp swap two lines
%% move to the next delimiter in this line **{[()]}**
cw change the rest of the word
c2w change the rest of the current word and the next
4dd delete four lines