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About the Tutorial

Vi IMproved (henceforth referred to as Vim) editor is one of the popular text editors. It is clone of Vi editor and written by Bram Moolenaar. It is cross platform editor and available on most popular platforms like Windows, Linux, Mac and other UNIX variants.

It is command-centric editor, so beginners might find it difficult to work with it. But once you master it, you can solve many complex text-related tasks with few Vim commands. After completing this tutorial, readers should be able to use Vim fluently.

Audience

This tutorial is targeted for both beginners and intermediate users. After completing this tutorial, beginners will be able to use Vim effectively whereas intermediate users will take their knowledge to the next level.

Prerequisites

This tutorial assumes that reader has basic knowledge of computer system. Additionally, reader should be able to install, uninstall and configure software packages on given system.

Conventions

Following conventions are followed in entire tutorial:

\$ command	execute this command in terminal as a non-root user
10j	execute this command in Vim's command mode
:set nu	execute this command in Vim's command line mode

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1. Vim – Introduction

Vim editor is one of the more popular text editors we use today. It is a clone of the Vi editor and is written by Bram Moolenaar. It is cross platform editor and available on most popular platforms like Windows, Linux, Mac and other UNIX variants. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Introduction
- Features of Vim
- Why Vim was created?

Introduction

Vim is acronym for **Vi IM**proved. It is free and open source text editor written by Bram Moolenaar. It was first released in 1991 for UNIX variants and its main goal was to provide enhancement to the Vi editor, which was released way back in 1976.

Vim is considered as clone Vi editor. Like Vi, it is also command centric editor. One of the advantage of learning Vim is – it is available everywhere. Take any UNIX variant like Linux, Mac, HP-UX, AIX and many more, Vim is there by default. Vim traditionally does not have GUI but now there is separate installer called gVim which provides GUI.

Features of Vim

This section discusses some of the important features of Vim:

- Its memory footprint is very low
- It is command centric. You can perform complex text related task with few commands
- It is highly configurable and uses simple text file to store its configuration
- There are many plug-in available for Vim. Its functionality can be extended in great manner using these plug-in
- It supports multiple windows. Using this feature screen can be split into multiple windows
- Same as multiple windows, it also supports multiple buffers
- It supports multiple tabs which allows to work on multiple files
- It supports recording features which allows to record and play Vim commands in repeated manner

Why Vim was Created

Vim is based on original Vi editor, which was created by Bill Joy in 1976. During 90's Vi was lacking behind in-the so called the editor war existed between the Vi and Emacs editor. So Bram implemented a lots of missing features that the Emacs community used as argument for why Emacs was better that Vi/Vim.

2. Vim – Installation and configuration

Vim is lightweight package and its installation is really simple. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Installation on Windows platform
- Installation on Debian based Linux
- Installation on RPM based Linux

Installation on Windows platform

Vim doesn't have any specific requirements. It is simple software bundle which provides all dependencies.

- **Installation**

1. To download Vim visit vim.org
2. Click on Download option from left pane
3. Click on *PC: MS-DOS and MS-Windows* option
4. Download .exe installer from this page. At the time of writing this tutorial installer name was [gvim80.exe](#)
5. Double click on installer and follow on screen instructions to complete installation

- **Configuration**

Vim stores its configuration in simple text file namely `_vimrc` and it is located under home directory of user.

1. To find current user's home directory execute below command in terminal:

```
$ echo %userprofile%
```

2. Navigate to home directory and create a new file namely `_vimrc`. Ensure that this file doesn't have any extension.
3. Open this file in text editor, enter following text and save it:

```
set nu
```

4. Now Vim will show line numbers when file is opened. We'll add more options to this file latter on.

Installation on Debian based Linux

Installation on Linux platform is quite simple as compared to Windows. This section describes installation and configuration on Debian based Linux.

- **Installation**

1. Execute below command in terminal:

```
$ sudo apt-get update  
$ sudo apt-get install vim
```

2. To ensure Vim is correctly installed execute below command:

```
$ which vim
```

3. It should print the location of Vim binary. In my case it was:

```
/usr/bin/vim
```

- **Configuration**

Vim stores its configuration in simple text file namely `.vimrc` and it is located under home directory of user.

1. To find current user's home directory execute below command in terminal:

```
$ echo $HOME
```

2. Navigate to home directory and create a new file namely `.vimrc`. Ensure that this file doesn't have any extension.
3. Open this file in text editor, enter following text and save it:

```
set nu
```

4. Now Vim will show line numbers when file is opened. We'll add more options to this file latter on.

Installation on RPM based Linux

This section describes installation and configuration on RPM based Linux.

- **Installation**

1. Execute below command in terminal:

```
$ su -  
$ yum install vim
```

2. To ensure Vim is correctly installed execute below command:

```
$ which vim
```

3. It should print the location of Vim binary. In my case it was:

```
/usr/bin/vim
```

- **Configuration**

Vim stores its configuration in simple text file namely `.vimrc` and it is located under home directory of user.

1. To find current user's home directory execute below command in terminal:

```
$ echo $HOME
```

2. Navigate to home directory and create a new file namely `.vimrc`. Ensure that this file doesn't have any extension.
3. Open this file in text editor, enter following text and save it:

```
set nu
```

4. Now Vim will show line numbers when file is opened. We'll add more options to this file latter on.

3. Vim – It's friends

Vim is clone of original Vi editor. In this chapter, we will discuss about other Vi clones. Main purpose of this chapter to know other clones and its compatibility with original Vi editor.

In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Vi
- Stevie
- Elvis
- nvi
- vile
- Compatibility with original Vi

Vi

Vi is acronym for Visual. It is screen-oriented text editor originally created for UNIX. The original code for Vi was written by Bill Joy in 1976 and first released on BSD platform. Vi was extension of ed editor which was most common at that time.

Vim was the first editor to introduce multiple modes. There is a separate mode for editing text, selecting text and executing command. Vim editor supports all these modes. Later sections of this tutorial describe these modes.

Stevie

Stevie editor was developed for Atari ST platform. It was released in 1987 it is an abbreviation for ST Editor for VI enthusiastic.

It was very simple and provided only very small subset of the original Vi editor. However, it provided familiar environment to user moving on Atari ST platform.

Elvis

Elvis's main intention was to remove Stevie editor limitation. Stevie used to load entire file in RAM, Elvis removed this limitation by introducing buffers. Also it added some functionality into it like syntax highlighting, multiple window support, networking support and simple GUI.

nvi

nvi stands for new Vi. It was a result of license dispute between AT & T lab and Computer Science Research Group(CSRC) at university of California, Berkeley. Vi was based on ed editor and was under license of AT & T which restricted them to distribute Vi with BSD. Hence they rewrote Vi and released it under BSD license.

Vim

Vim is improved version of Vi and it added many features where Vi was lagging. It added many useful features like:

- Multiple windows/tabs/buffers
- Introduction of Vim scripting language
- Syntax highlighting for more than 200 languages
- Integration with compilers, interpreters and debuggers

Vile

Vile is an abbreviation which stands for Vi like Emacs and it was an attempt to bring popular features from both editor and combine it into one. Few popular features of Vile are:

- One editing mode for each file type
- Introduction of Vile procedural language
- Named functions to bound keys according to user choice

Compatibility with original Vi

Though above discussed editors are considered as Vi clones they are not 100% compatible with original Vi. Below table shows more details about their compatibility:

Clone	Vi compatibility	Notes
STEVIE	10%	Limited features were common
Vile	10%	Limited features and Vi modes were common
Elvis	80%	Larger features were common
nvi	95%	Larger features were common
Vim	99%	Almost identical to Vi with some additional features

4. Vim – Getting Familiar

Beginning with this section we will get our hands dirty with Vim. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

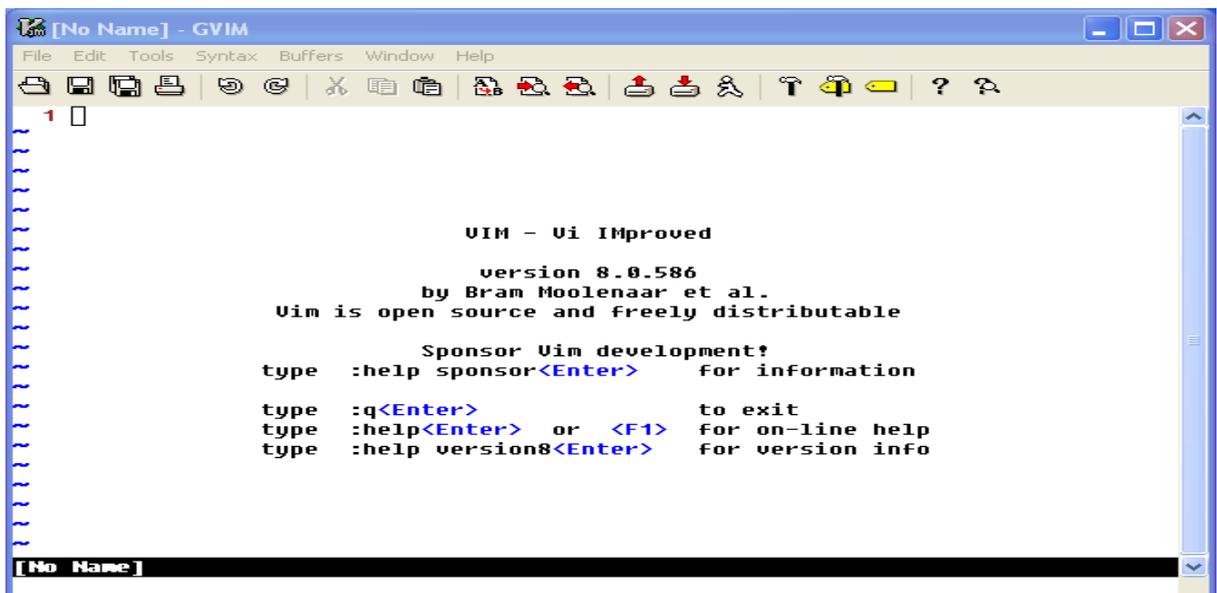
- Start Vim
- Vim modes
- Create new file
- View file in read-only mode
- Edit existing file

Start Vim

Vim is little bit different than today's GUI based editor. It can be started and used from GUI as well as terminal.

- **Use graphical launcher**

To start Vim from graphical launcher just double click on gVim icon. It will open editor window as follows:



- **Use terminal**

Using Vim from terminal will be identical on Windows as well as Linux platform. Perform following steps to start and quit Vim from terminal:

1. Open terminal and enter vim command as follows:

```
$ vim
```

2. It will open Vim in terminal as follows:

NOTE: Here onwards, any Vim command without colon indicates that we are executing that command in command mode.

2. Insert mode

You can use this mode to enter/edit text. To switch from default command to insert mode press i key. It will show current mode in bottom left corner of editor.

We can enter any text once we are in insert mode. Below image shows this:



Use Escape key to switch back to command mode from this mode.

3. Command line mode

This mode is also used to enter commands. Commands in this mode starts with colon(:). For instance, in previous section quit command was entered in this mode. We can go to this mode either from command or insert mode.

- To switch from command mode to this mode just type colon
- To switch from insert mode to this mode press Escape and type colon

In below image colon at bottom left indicates line mode.

2. Switch to insert mode and enter some text there.

```
i
```

3. Quit editor without saving changes

```
:q!
```

OR

Save changes and quit editor using following command:

```
:wq
```

5. Vim – Getting Help

Vim is feature rich editor hence remembering everything about it will be difficult. But there is no need to worry, we can always ask for help. Fortunately this help is provided by Vim itself.

In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Access help manual
- Help on specific topic
- Search help phrase in manual
- Access online help

Access help manual

Help manual is shipped with Vim editor itself and it is really comprehensive. To access help execute below command:

```
:help
```

```
jarvis@earth: -
*help.txt*      For Vim version 8.0.  Last change: 2016 Sep 12

                VIM - main help file

Move around:   Use the cursor keys, or "h" to go left,           h  l
               "j" to go down, "k" to go up, "l" to go right.   j  k
Close this window: Use ":q<Enter>".
Get out of Vim: Use ":qa!<Enter>" (careful, all changes are lost!).

Jump to a subject: Position the cursor on a tag (e.g. |bars|) and hit CTRL-].
With the mouse:   ":set mouse=a" to enable the mouse (in xterm or GUI).
                  Double-click the left mouse button on a tag, e.g. |bars|.
Jump back:       Type CTRL-T or CTRL-O. Repeat to go further back.

Get specific help: It is possible to go directly to whatever you want help
                   on, by giving an argument to the |:help| command.
                   Prepend something to specify the context: *help-context*

                WHAT          PREPEND    EXAMPLE    ~
                Normal mode command          :help x     3,1-8      Top
[No Name]                                0,0-1      All
"help.txt" [readonly] 225L, 8437C
```

Help on specific topic

Help manual will show entire help about Vim. But what if, we are only interested in certain topic. Vim provides command for that as well with following syntax:

```
:help <topic-name>
```

In above command replace <topic-name> with topic in which you are interested. For

instance to access help about vim mode, execute following command:

```
:help modes
```

```

jarvis@earth: -
5. Modes, introduction          *vim-modes-intro* *vim-modes*

Vim has six BASIC modes:

Normal mode                    *Normal* *Normal-mode* *command-mode*
    In Normal mode you can enter all the normal editor
    commands.  If you start the editor you are in this
    mode (unless you have set the 'insertmode' option,
    see below).  This is also known as command mode.

Visual mode
    This is like Normal mode, but the movement commands
    extend a highlighted area.  When a non-movement
    command is used, it is executed for the highlighted
    area.  See |Visual-mode|.
    If the 'showmode' option is on "-- VISUAL --" is shown
    at the bottom of the window.

Select mode
    This looks most like the MS-Windows selection mode.
    Typing a printable character deletes the selection
    and starts Insert mode.  See |Select-mode|.

intro.txt [Help][RO]          526,24-32      60%
[No Name]                    0,0-1       All
"intro.txt" [readonly] 887L, 38298C

```

Search help phrase in manual

You can search specific topic only if you know its name. But what if, you don't know the exact name of help topic. In that case you can use below command:

```
:helpgrep <phrase>
```

For instance, to access help about navigation in Vim execute below command:

```
:helpgrep navigation
```

```

jarvis@earth: -
*ft_sql.txt*   For Vim version 8.0.  Last change: 2013 May 15

by David Fishburn

This is a filetype plugin to work with SQL files.

The Structured Query Language (SQL) is a standard which specifies statements
that allow a user to interact with a relational database.  Vim includes
features for navigation, indentation and syntax highlighting.

1. Navigation | sql-navigation |
  1.1 Matchit | sql-matchit |
  1.2 Text Object Motions | sql-object-motions |
  1.3 Predefined Object Motions | sql-predefined-objects |
  1.4 Macros | sql-macros |
2. SQL Dialects | sql-dialects |
  2.1 SQLSetType | SQLSetType |
  2.2 SQLGetType | SQLGetType |
  2.3 SQL Dialect Default | sql-type-default |
3. Adding new SQL Dialects | sql-adding-dialects |
ft sql.txt [Help][RO] 11,16-32 Top
[No Name] 0,0-1 All
(1 of 6): features for navigation, indentation and syntax highlighting.

```

Access online help

Vim also provides online help. To access online help:

1. Visit [vim-help](#) URL
2. Additionally you can also refer [vim-docs](#) documentation

6. Vim - Editing

Vim provides many commands which make editing functionality really powerful. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Insert
- Append
- Open new line
- Substitute
- Change
- Replace
- Join

Insert text before cursor

To insert text before cursor perform following steps:

1. Move cursor to appropriate position
2. Switch to insert mode

```
i
```

Insert text at the beginning of line

Let us suppose you are in the middle of line and you want to insert text at the beginning of current line then perform following steps:

1. Switch to command mode

```
Esc
```

2. Activate insert mode

```
I
```

This action will move cursor to the beginning of current line and switch Vim in insert mode

Append text after cursor

To append text after cursor perform following steps:

1. Switch to command mode and move cursor to appropriate position

```
Esc
```

2. Switch to insert mode

```
a
```

This action will move cursor next by one position and switch Vim in insert mode.

Append text at the end of line

Let us suppose you are in the middle of line and you want to append text at the end of current line then perform following steps:

1. Switch to command mode

```
Esc
```

2. Switch to insert mode

```
A
```

This action will move cursor to the end of line and switch Vim in insert mode

Open new line below cursor

Let us suppose you are in the middle of line and you want to open new line below current line then perform following steps:

1. Switch to command mode

```
Esc
```

2. Switch to insert mode

```
o
```

This action will insert blank line below current line and switch Vim in insert mode

Open new line above cursor

Let us suppose you are in the middle of line and you want to open new line above current line then perform following steps:

1. Switch to command mode

```
Esc
```

2. Switch to insert mode

```
O
```

This action will insert blank line above current line and switch Vim in insert mode

Substitute text

Let us suppose you want to substitute single character then perform following steps:

1. Switch to command mode

```
Esc
```

2. Move cursor to appropriate position
3. Switch to insert mode

```
s
```

This action will delete character under cursor and switch Vim in insert mode

To substitute entire line use:

```
S
```

This action will delete entire line and switch Vim in insert mode.

Change text

Let us suppose you want to change text in current line then perform following steps:

1. Switch to command mode

```
Esc
```

2. Execute following command:

```
cc
```

This is similar to substitute action using S

To change text from current cursor position, execute following command:

```
C
```

This action will delete text after current cursor position and switch Vim in insert mode.

Replace text

To replace single character perform following steps:

1. Switch to command mode

```
Esc
```

2. Move cursor to appropriate position
3. Execute following command:

```
r
```

4. Enter character to be substituted.

Note that this command will not switch Vim in insert mode

To replace entire line execute:

```
R
```

It will switch Vim in replace mode as shown in below image:

7. Vim - Navigating

Vim has great support for advanced navigation. In this chapter, we'll discuss some of the popular navigation techniques which help to improve productivity.

Basic navigation

In basic navigation we can navigate to left, right, up and down by position. Below commands can be used for this:

Command	Description
h	Move cursor to left by one position
l	Move cursor to right by one position
k	Move cursor to upward direction by one line
j	Move cursor to downward direction by one line

To perform multi-position navigation use number with these commands. For instance to navigate cursor 10 line below from current line, execute following command:

```
10j
```

You can use numbers with remaining commands as well.

In addition to this, below commands also perform some useful navigation.

Command	Description
0	Move cursor to the beginning of current line
\$	Move cursor to the end of current line
Ctrl + f	Scroll down entire page
Ctrl + b	Scroll up entire page

Navigate to lines

Below command can be used to navigate to specific line:

Command	Description
:n	Jump to the nth line
:0	Jump to the start of file
:\$	Jump to the end of file

Word navigation

We can use following commands for word navigation:

Command	Description
w	Move cursor to the beginning of the next word
e	Move cursor to the end of the current word
b	Move cursor to the beginning of the previous word

Using jumps

Vim keeps track of your navigation using a jump list. You can go backward and forward through that list.

The jump list keeps tracks of all the places you've been to by tracking file name, line number and column number.

To view jump list execute following command:

```
:jumps
```

Following command are based on jump list:

Command	Description
Ctrl + o	Jump back to the previous position
Ctrl + i	Jump to the next position

Cut, Copy and paste actions

We often perform cut, copy and paste actions on text. Vim provides following commands to perform these actions (y stands for yank and p stands for paste action):

Command	Description
x	Delete character from cursor position
X	Delete previous character from cursor position
y	Copy single character from cursor position
p	Paste character after cursor position
P	Paste character before cursor position

Multi-position command

We can use cut, copy and paste commands with words and sentences as well. Below table shows this:

Command	Description
dw	Delete word from cursor position
D	Delete entire line from cursor position
dd	Delete entire line
Y	Copies entire line
yy	Copies entire line

To perform multi-line/multi-word actions just use numbers with command. You can use this syntax with other commands as well. For instance, to delete 3 words use :

```
3dw
```

Undo

We can undo single or multiple actions. To perform one time undo action execute:

```
u
```

To perform multiple undo action, use number with same command. For instance, below command will undo last 3 actions:

```
3u
```

In addition to this, to undo all execute following command:

```
U
```

Redo

Redo is apposite action of undo. Execute any of the command to perform redo action.

```
Ctrl + r
```

```
OR
```

```
: red
```

9. Vim - Searching

Search is very common action and it is one of the actions we use most of the time. In this chapter we will see some command which will allow performing these actions effectively.

In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Search settings
- Search in current file
- Search in multiple files
- Search in help files

Search related settings

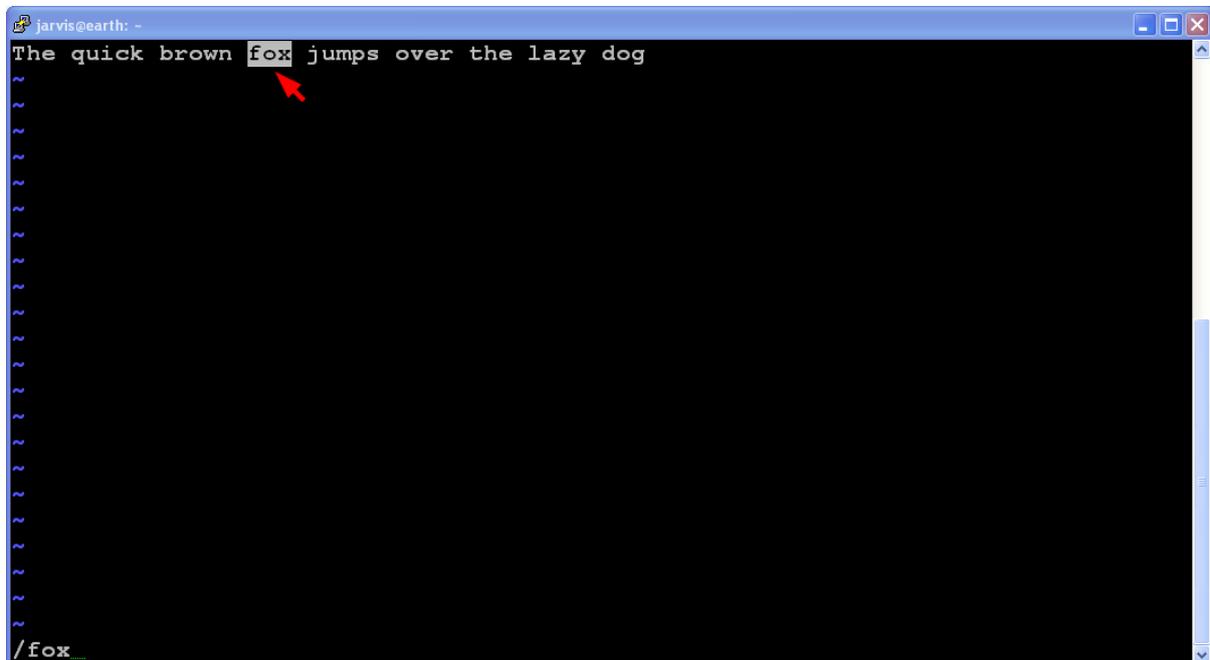
To perform incremental search execute following command:

```
:set incsearch
```

To highlight search execute following command:

```
:set hlsearch
```

This command will automatically highlight current matches. For instance in below image fox word is highlighted:



To disable incremental and highlighted search execute following commands:

```
:set noincsearch
```

```
:set nohlsearch
```

Search in current file

- **Search in forward direction**

Use following commands to perform search in forward direction:

Command	Description
/ <expression>	Search expression in forward direction
n	Find next occurrence. This is same and find next
N	Find previous occurrence. This is same as find previous
//	Repeat previous forward search

- **Search in backward direction**

Use following commands to perform search in backward direction:

Command	Description
? <expression>	Search expression in backward direction
n	Find previous occurrence. This is same and find previous
N	Find next occurrence. This is same as find next
??	Repeat previous backward search

- **Search word under cursor**

Place cursor under any word and execute following commands to perform search operation:

Command	Description
*	Search next occurrence of current word
#	Search previous occurrence of current word

Search in multiple files

Using vimgrep command we can search **<expression>** in multiple files. For instance below command searches string - **Jarvis** in all text files.

```
:vimgrep Jarvis *.txt
```

Note that to go to next and previous occurrence we have to use following commands:

Command	Description
:cn	Go to next occurrence of expression
:cN	Go to previous occurrence of expression

10. Vim – Working with multiple things

Vim is very powerful editor. It supports many advanced features to work with multiple files, buffer and windows. In this section, we will discuss following items:

- Multiple files
- Multiple buffers
- Multiple tabs
- Multiple windows

Multiple files

Let us suppose you are editing a file and you want to open another file in same Vim session. In that case, you can use Vim's edit command. Below table shows these commands

Command	Description
:e	Load new file in buffer for editing
:edit	Same as :e
:e <tab>	List the files for editing from current directory
:edit <tab>	Same as :e <tab>

Multiple buffers

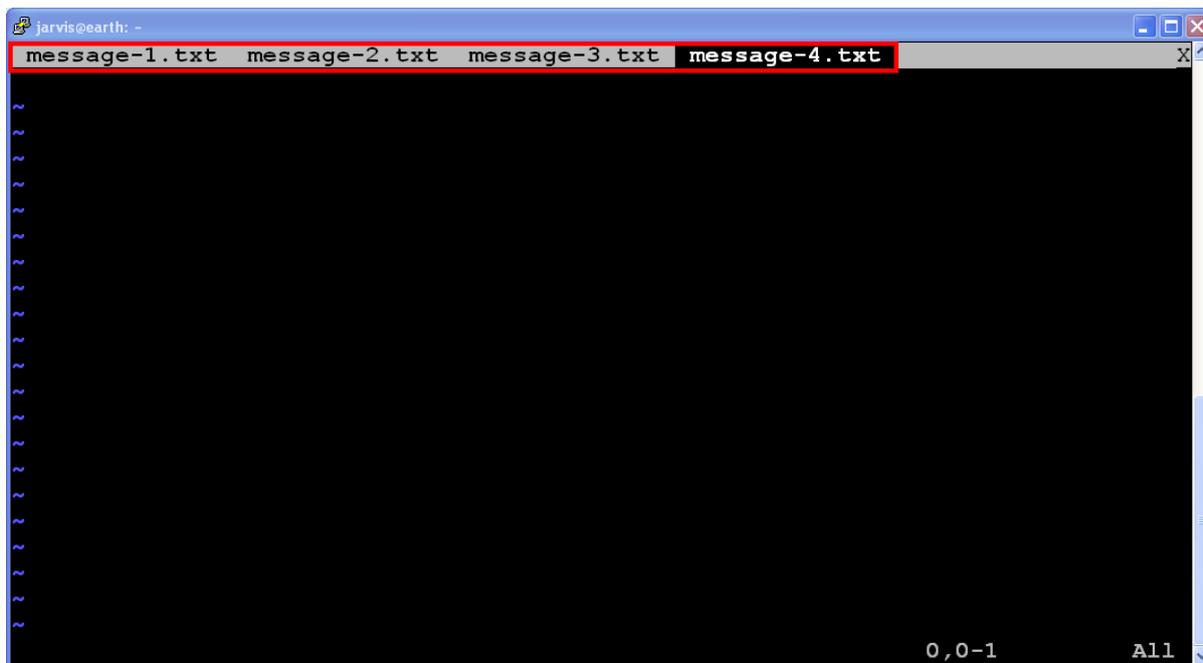
We have already seen what Vim buffers are. Vim supports multiple buffers. Below commands will be useful will working with buffers:

Command	Description
:badd <file>	Add file into new buffer
:bN	Switch to N th buffer. For instance to switch to 3 rd buffer use :b3
:bnext	Move to the next buffer in buffer list
:bprevious	Move to the previous buffer in buffer list
:buffers	List all buffers
:bfirst	Move to the first buffer
:blast	Move to the last buffer
:ball	Load all buffers

For instance, below command adds new file to buffer:

:tabnew <file>	Open new file in tab
:tabclose	Close current tab
:tabnext	Move to the next tab
:tabprevious	Move to the previous tab
:tabfirst	Move to the first tab
:tablast	Move to the last tab

For instance, below images shows multiple tabs:



Multiple windows

In Vim we can create new window using following commands:

Command	Description
:new	Open new window
:new <file>	Open file in new window

In below image, we can see that current Vim window is split into 2 parts after executing following commands:

```
$vim message.txt
```

```
:new
```



```
jarvis@earth: -  
The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
message.txt [+] 1,46 All  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
~  
[No Name] 0,0-1 All  
-- INSERT --
```

11. Vim - Markers

Vim supports bookmark feature. Using this feature we can make navigation within file really faster. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Create bookmark
- Jump to bookmark
- List all bookmarks
- Delete bookmarks
- Local bookmarks
- Global bookmarks

Create bookmark

To create bookmark execute following command:

```
m{bookmark-name}
```

In above example bookmark-name is single alphabetical character. For instance, below command creates bookmark of name a.

```
ma
```

Jump to bookmark

Once bookmark is created we can jump there. Following command can be use to jump to bookmark:

Command	Description
`{bookmark-name}	Move to the exact location of bookmark. Please note that this character is back quote
'{bookmark-name}	Jump to the beginning of bookmark line. Please note that this character is single quote

List all bookmarks

To list all bookmarks execute following command:

```
:marks
```

In below image it show list of bookmarks for current file:

```

jarvis@earth: ~
~
:marks
mark line col file/text
' 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
a 1 4 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
b 1 10 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
d 1 20 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
e 1 31 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
0 1 0 ~/message-1.txt
1 1 0 ~/message-1.txt
2 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
3 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
4 1 16 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
5 1 16 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
6 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
7 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
8 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
9 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
" 1 44 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
[ 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
] 1 0 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
^ 1 45 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
. 1 44 The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog
Press ENTER or type command to continue_

```

Delete bookmark

To delete bookmarks execute following command:

```
:delmarks {bookmark-name}
```

For instance, below command delete bookmark with name a.

```
:delmarks a
```

Local bookmarks and global bookmarks

When you have multiple files open and if you want to go to a particular position in any one of the open files, then you can use global mark feature of Vim.

If the bookmark name is an upper case letter, then that is a global Bookmark. Above discussed commands are applicable for both local and global bookmarks.


```
@a
```

To play same macro multiple times use numbers with it. For instance, to execute same macro 10 times execute following command:

```
10@a
```

13. Vim - Registers

Vim provides many registers. We can use these registers as multiple clipboards. This feature is really useful while working with multiple files. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Copy text in register
- Paste text from register
- List available registers
- Register types

Copy text in register

For copying, we can use normal yank command i.e. yy and to store it in register we can use following syntax:

```
"<register-name><command>
```

For instance, to copy text in register "a" use following command:

```
"ayy
```

Paste text from register

To paste text from register use:

```
"<register-name>p
```

For instance, below command copies text from register "a":

```
"ap
```

List available registers

To list all available registers use following command:

```
:registers
```

Register types

Vim supports following types of registers:

- Unnamed registers

Unnamed register is denoted by "". Vim stores deleted or copied text in this register

- Named registers

We can use 26 named registers; we can use a-z or A-Z. By default vim doesn't uses these registers.

If we use lower case register name then contents will be overwritten and if we use uppercase name then contents will be appended in that register.

- Numbered registers

We can use 0 to 9 named registers. Vim fills these registers with text from yank and delete command.

- Numbered register 0 contains the text from the most recent yank command.
- Numbered register 1 contains the text deleted by the most recent delete or change command

- Default registers

Following are the default registers:

Register	Description
%	Name of the current file
#	Name of the alternate file for the current window.
:	Most recently executed command
.	Contains the last inserted text
"	Last used register

14. Vim - Folding

Fold functionality will be useful when file contents large text. Using this feature we can only show selected portion of file. This feature is particularly useful while working with programming languages. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Activate and deactivate fold functionality
- Various fold actions

Fold activation and deactivation

To activate fold use following command:

```
:set foldenable  
:set foldmethod=indent
```

To deactivate fold use following command:

```
:set nofoldenable
```

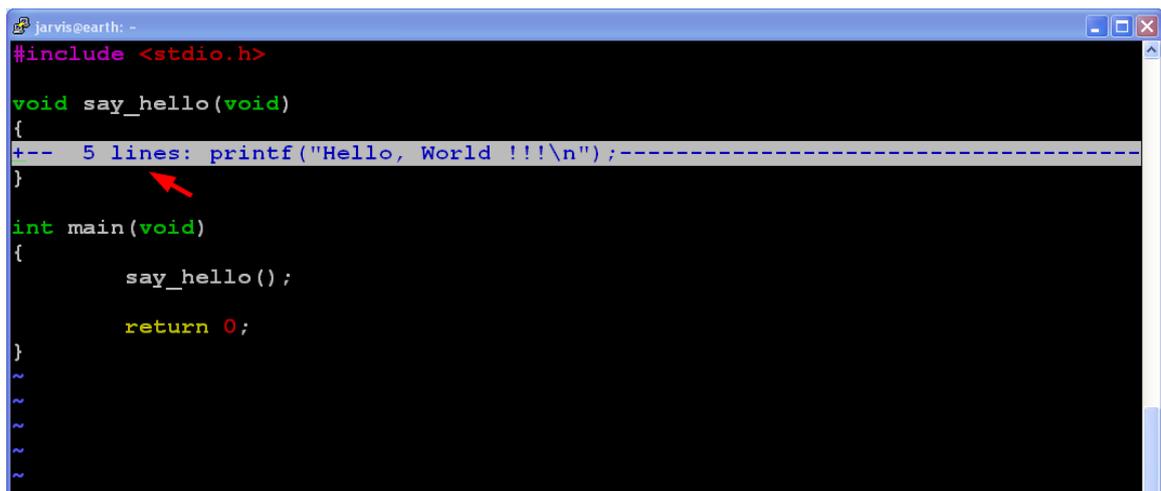
Fold actions

- **Close fold**

To fold code, go to any method and execute following command:

```
ZC
```

For example below image shows the result of this action:



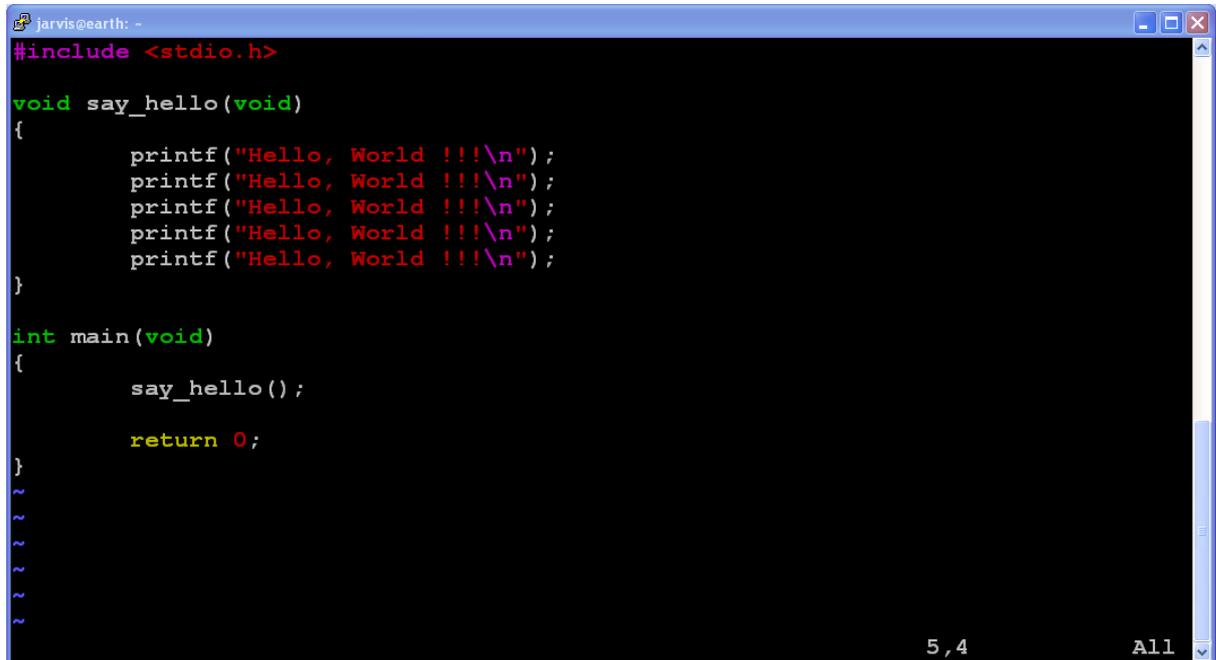
```
jarvis@earth: -  
#include <stdio.h>  
  
void say_hello(void)  
{  
+-- 5 lines: printf("Hello, World !!!\n");  
}  
  
int main(void)  
{  
    say_hello();  
    return 0;  
}
```

- **Open fold**

To open fold use following command:

```
ZO
```

Below image shows the result of this action:



```

jarvis@earth: -
#include <stdio.h>

void say_hello(void)
{
    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
}

int main(void)
{
    say_hello();

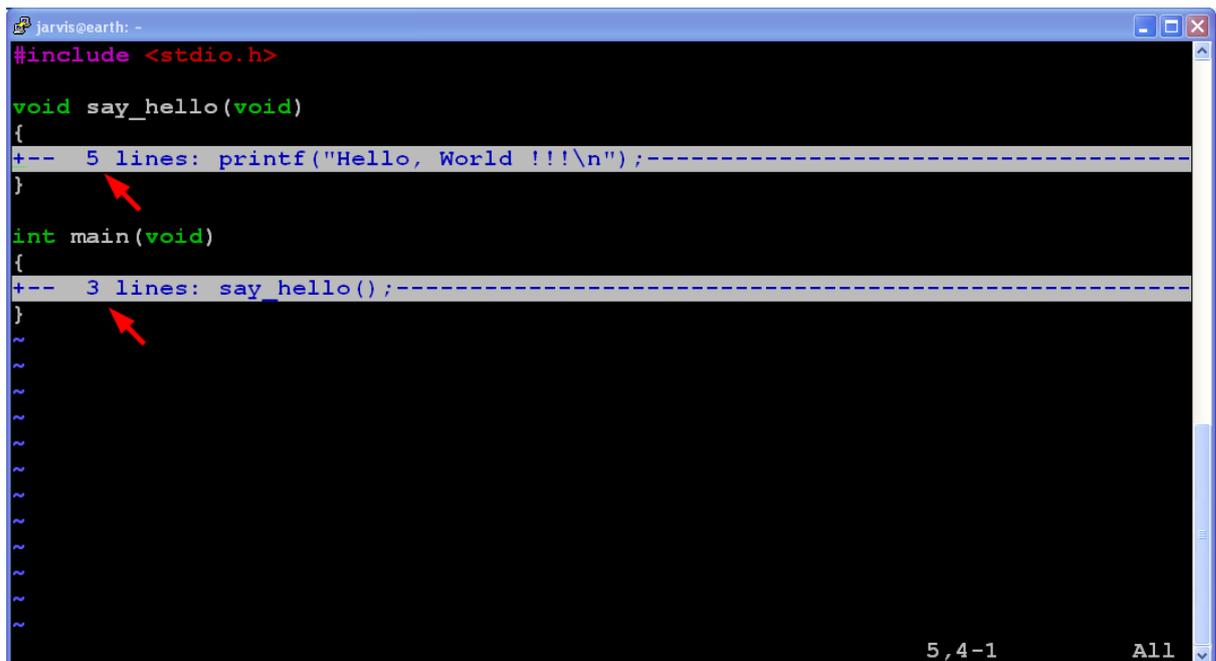
    return 0;
}
~
~
~
5,4 All
  
```

- **Close all folds**

To close all folds execute following command:

```
zM
```

Below image shows the result of this action:



```

jarvis@earth: -
#include <stdio.h>

void say_hello(void)
{
+-- 5 lines: printf("Hello, World !!!\n");-----
}

int main(void)
{
+-- 3 lines: say_hello();-----
}
~
~
~
5,4-1 All
  
```


15. Vim - Diff

Similar to UNIX diff command we can use Vim to show diff in much better manner. It will show diff in colorful manner. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Show differences between files
- Activate and deactivate diff mode
- Navigation in diff mode
- Applying changes from diff window

Show difference

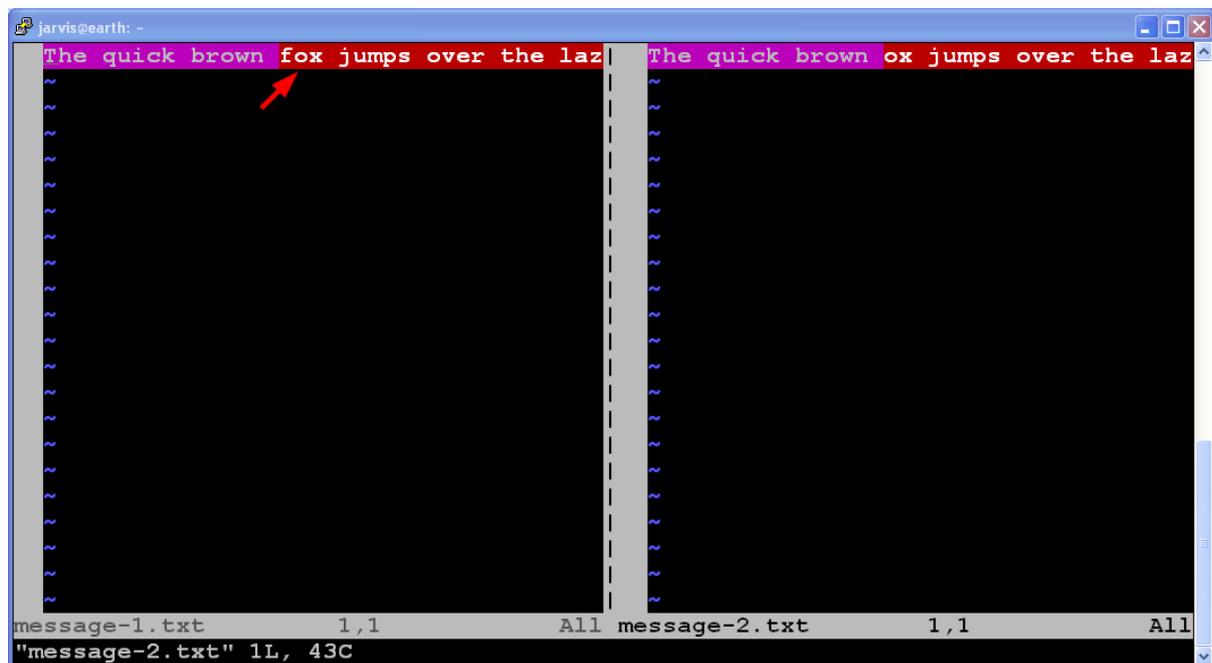
To show differences between files execute below command:

```
$ vimdiff <file> <file>
```

OR

```
$ vim -d <file> <file>
```

For instance below command shows differences:



In above image, text highlighted in magenta color is common. Remaining text is highlighted in red color which indicates that there are some differences after common text.

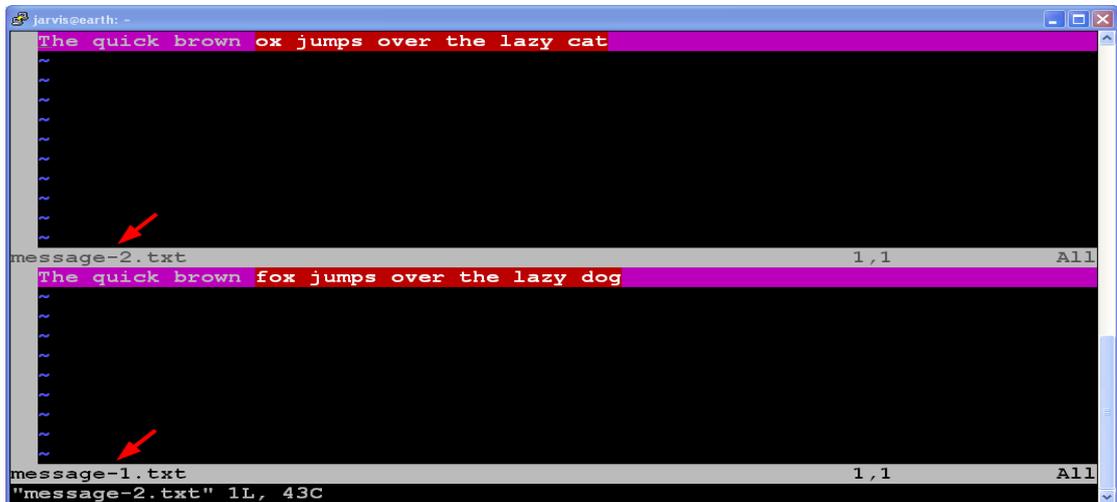
Activate and deactivate diff mode

If you are already in vim and you want to perform diff action, then use one of the following command:

- **diffsplit**

Use below command to perform horizontal split:

```
:diffsplit filename
```



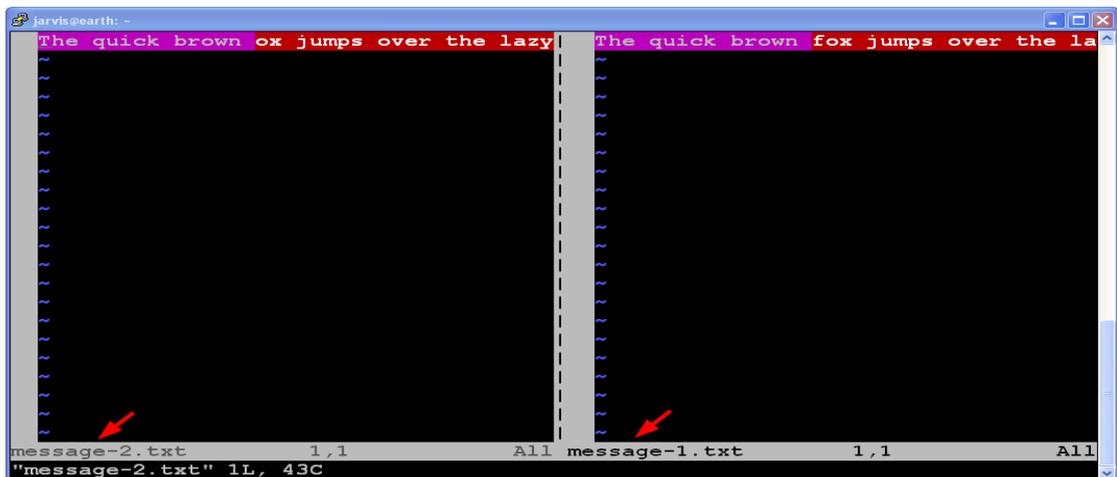
Above images shows that we are comparing two files namely message-1.txt and message-2.txt.

- **Vertical diffsplit**

To perform vertical split use following command:

```
:vert diffsplit <filename>
```

It opens following window:



Above images shows that we are comparing two files namely message-1.txt and message-2.txt.

Navigation in diff mode

Navigation in diff mode is little bit different. For instance, when you scroll text from one window then text from adjacent window also scrolled. This is called scrollbind. To enable this use:

```
:set scrollbind
```

To disable this use:

```
:set noscrollbind
```

If you edit file in this mode then use following command to update diff:

```
:diffupdate
```

- **Switch between diff window**

To switch between diff windows execute following command:

```
Ctrl + w Ctrl + w
```

Please note that, we have to press Ctrl + w 2 times.

- **Jump to previous change**

In diff window, execute following command to jump to previous change:

```
[c
```

- **Jump to next change**

In diff window, execute following command to jump to next change:

```
]c
```

Apply changes from diff window

- **Applying change in current diff windows**

To apply change from adjacent diff window to current diff windows execute:

```
:diffget
```

For instance, if you are in left window and you want to take change from right window to current window then you will execute above command.

- **Apply change from current pane to another**

To apply change from current diff window to adjacent diff window execute:

```
:diffput
```

For instance, if you are in left window and you want apply change from current window to right window then you will execute above command.

16. Vim – Plug-ins

Using plug-ins, we can extend the functionality of Vim. Vim supports many plug-ins and most of them are available freely. This chapter is about Vim plug-ins and we will discuss following items:

- Plug-in management
- Some useful plug-ins

Plug-in management

This section discusses plug-in management. Vim provides various plug-in managers but we won't be using any plug-in manager, instead we'll be doing all these steps manually for better understanding. Once you understand these steps, you can go with plug-in manager.

- **Install plug-in**

To install any plug-in perform following steps:

1. Create `~/.vim/bundle` directory in user's home directory
2. Copy plug-in inside this directory
3. Set `runtimepath` in vim

Let us install badwolf plug-in in Vim. It is a color scheme for vim.

```
$ mkdir -p ~/.vim/bundle
$ cd ~/.vim/bundle/
$ git clone https://github.com/sjl/badwolf.git
$ echo "set runtimepath^=~/.vim/bundle/badwolf" > ~/.vimrc
```

Now plug-in is installed, so we can use badwold color scheme as follows:

```
:colorscheme badwolf
```

- **Update plug-in**

If we observe carefully, plug-in is a just collection of files and if we want to update that plug-in then just update appropriate plug-in directory from `~/.vim/bundle`.

- **Remove plug-in**

Removing plug-in in Vim is really simple. To remove plug-in perform following steps:

1. Remove plug-in directory from `~/.vim/bundle`
2. Modify `runtimepath` appropriately

Some useful plug-ins

Below is list of some useful Vim plug-ins:

Name	Description
DumpX	Disassemble C/C++ code
awk.vim	Indenting for AWK script
Pathogen	Vim package manager
git-switcher.vim	Automatically save and load vim session based on switching of git branch
Pyflakes	Provide linting for python files

17. Vim – Using Vim as IDE

We can configure Vim to use it as an IDE. In this section, we will discuss following items:

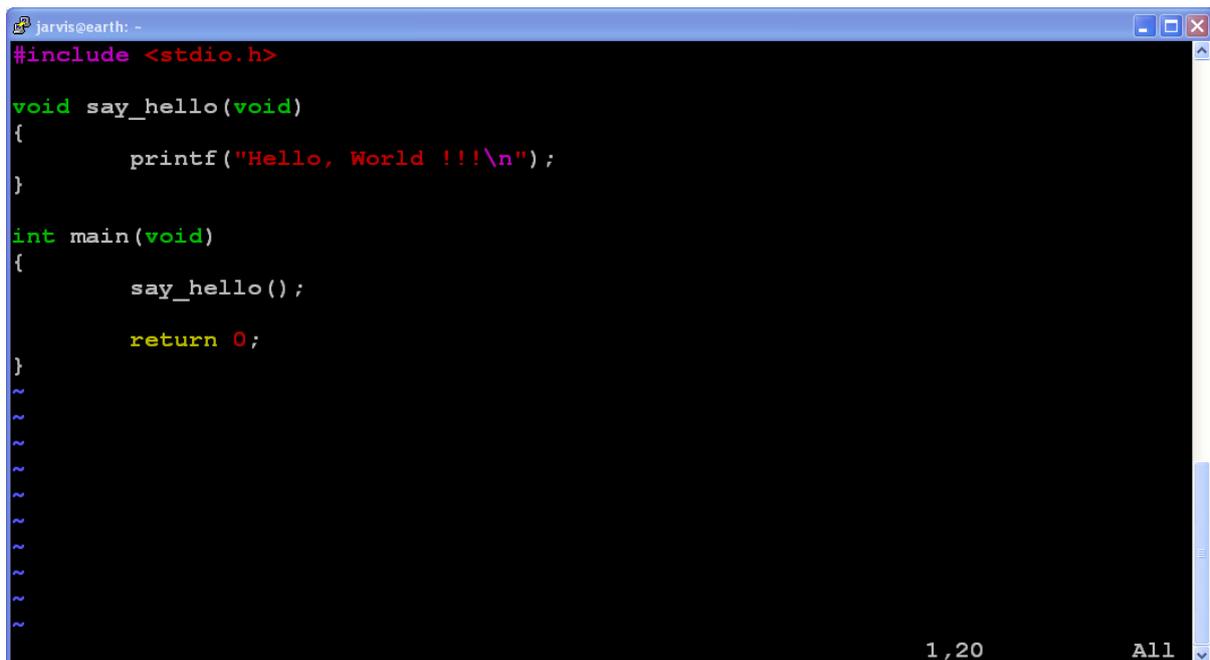
- Syntax highlighting
- Smart indentation
- Bounce
- Execute shell commands
- Configuring ctags and cscope
- Auto-completion and auto-suggestion

Syntax highlighting

Syntax highlighting is one of the important features of IDE. To enable syntax highlighting use:

```
:syntax on
```

For instance, below image show syntax highlighting for C code:

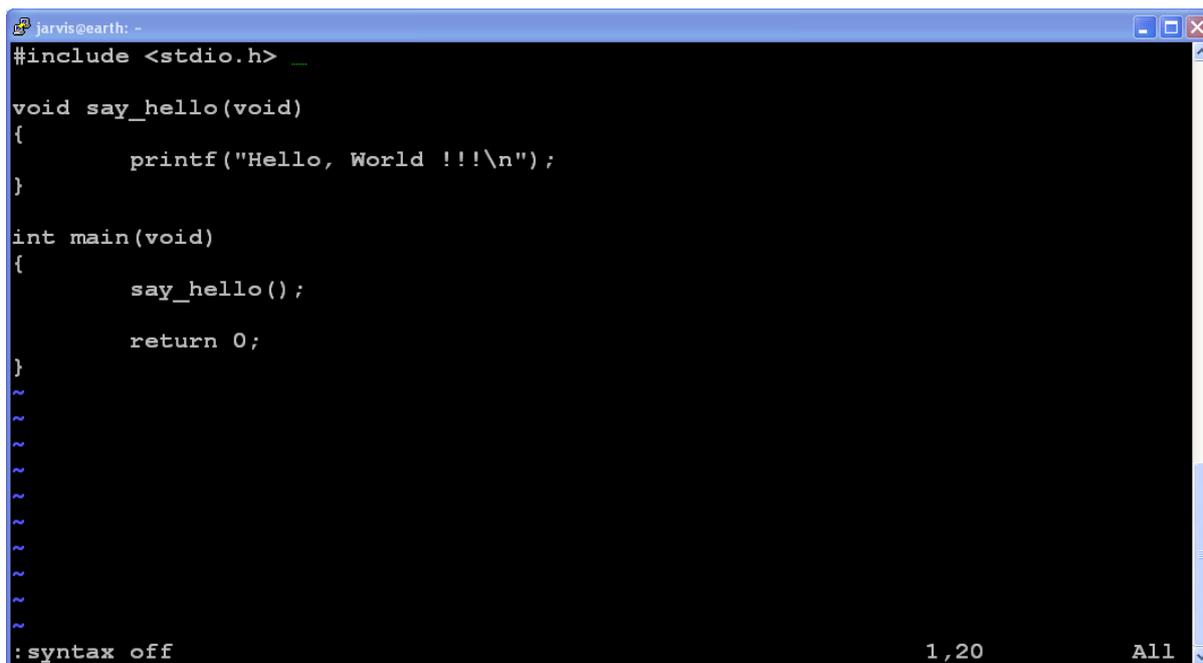


The screenshot shows a terminal window titled 'jarvis@earth: -'. The code displayed is a C program with syntax highlighting: '#include <stdio.h>' is in pink, 'void say_hello(void)' is in green, 'printf("Hello, World !!!\n");' is in white, 'int main(void)' is in green, 'say_hello();' is in white, and 'return 0;' is in yellow. The code is enclosed in curly braces. At the bottom right of the window, it shows '1,20' and 'All'.

To disable syntax highlighting use:

```
:syntax off
```

When syntax highlighting is disabled, it will show following output:



```
jarvis@earth: -
#include <stdio.h>

void say_hello(void)
{
    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
}

int main(void)
{
    say_hello();
    return 0;
}
~
~
~
~
~
~
~
~
:syntax off          1,20          All
```

Smart indentation

To perform auto and smart indentation use following commands:

```
: set autoindent
```

```
: set smartindent
```

In addition to this you can use below command to auto-indent C code:

```
: set cindent
```

Bounce

If you are using programming language which uses curly braces to combine multiple statements then % key will be your friend. This key will jump between start and end of curly braces quickly.

For instance, you are at line 11 and execute % command then it will move cursor the line 4. Below image shows this:

```

jarvis@earth: -
1 #include <stdio.h>
2
3 void say_hello(void)
4 {
5     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
6     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
7     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
8     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
9     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
10    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
11 }
12
13 int main(void)
14 {
15     say_hello();
16
17     return 0;
18 }
~
~
~
~
:set nu          2,0-1          All

```

Execute shell commands

To execute single command from Vim editor user:

```
!:<command>
```

For instance, to execute pwd command use following syntax:

```
!:pwd
```

However, if you want to multiple shell commands then execute following command:

```
:shell
```

Above command will give you terminal access, where you can execute multiple commands. Once you are done with it, just type exit command which will return back to Vim session.

Configure ctags and cscope

Combination of ctags and cscope provides many useful features like go to function definition, go to function declaration, find function calls, search file, and many more. Perform below steps to configure these tools:

1. Generate tags using following command:

```
$ ctags <file>
```

This command will generate new file namely tags

2. Provide tag file to vim using following command:

```
:set tags=tag
```

3. Now move your cursor under function name and press **Ctrl +]** to go to function definition.
4. Use **Ctrl + t** to come back to previous position

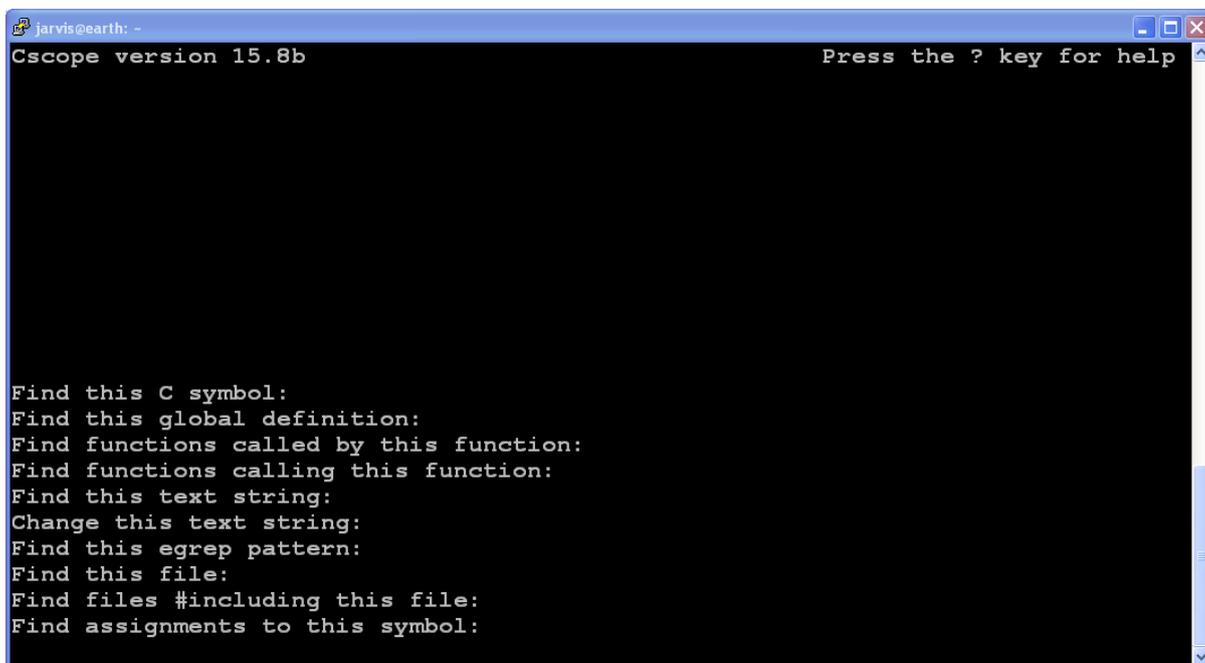
To install and configure cscope perform following steps:

1. Install cscope

```
$ sudo apt-get install cscope
```

2. Generate ctags and launch main window

```
$ cscope -R
```



```

jarvis@earth: -
Cscope version 15.8b                               Press the ? key for help

Find this C symbol:
Find this global definition:
Find functions called by this function:
Find functions calling this function:
Find this text string:
Change this text string:
Find this egrep pattern:
Find this file:
Find files #including this file:
Find assignments to this symbol:
  
```

3. User Ctrl + d to close cscope window

Auto-completion and auto-suggesting

We can use following commands for auto-completion:

Command	Description
Ctrl + x Ctrl + N	Word completion
Ctrl + x Ctrl + L	Line completion
Ctrl + x Ctrl + F	File name completion

Note that we have to use these commands in insert mode.

18. Vim – Remote File Editing

Many times we need to work with remote servers. And often we edit files from those remote servers. One of the obvious solution to edit those files is to log in to the remote sever and edit files. But sometimes it is convenient to edit those files from local machine because we might have installed and configured various plug-in on our local system. In this chapter, we will discuss following items:

- Access remote files
- Understand netread and netwrite
- Other supported protocol

Accessing remote files

Vim supports remote file editing using following syntax:

```
$vim scp://user@server.com/filepath
```

In above example vim will recognize that it has to use scp protocol and it will access file using that protocol. For instance:

```
$ vim scp://jarvis@remote-server.com//tmp/message.txt
```

Above command will open /tmp/message.txt file from remote-server. It will use SCP protocol and jarvis user's credentials for authentication.

Using nread and nwrite

Vim supports nread and nwrite functionality which stands for net read and net write respectively. Previous section shows method to access remote file while launching Vim. But what if you are already in Vim? Then you can use following commands:

```
:Nread scp://jarvis@localhost//tmp/message.txt
```

In addition to reading we can also modify file on remote server directly. In that case use Nwrite command as follows:

```
:Nwrite scp://jarvis@localhost//tmp/message.txt
```

Once file is opened, you can use regular Vim commands.

Other supported protocols

In addition to SCP, Vim supports following protocols:

1. FTP
2. SFTP
3. HTTP (read-only)
4. rsync

19. Vim – Tips and Tricks

Now we got fair idea about Vim. Let us discuss few tips and tricks of Vim to improve productivity. In this section, we will discuss following items:

- Convert spaces to tabs and vice-versa
- Highlight miss-spelled words
- Word completion
- Copy line character by character
- Indent code
- Change file format

Convert spaces to tabs and vice-versa

- **Convert tabs to spaces**

If you are editing a file and you want to convert entered tab character to spaces then execute following command:

```
:set expandtab
```

Note that, this command will not change existing tabs to spaces. To achieve this execute following command:

```
: set tabstop=4 shiftwidth=4 expandtab  
:retab
```

In above command we are instructing Vim to convert tabs into 4 spaces

- **Convert spaces to tabs**

To convert spaces to tabs execute below command:

```
:set noexpandtab  
:retab!
```

Highlight miss-spelled words

We can instruct Vim to highlight miss-spelled words. To do this execute following command:

```
:set spell
```

Below image highlights misspelled word in Vim:

A screenshot of the Vim editor window. The title bar reads 'jarvis@earth: -'. The main text area contains the sentence 'The quicckkk brown fox jumps over the lazy dog'. The word 'quicckkk' is highlighted in red, and a red arrow points to it. The status bar at the bottom shows ':set spell', '1,12', and 'All'.

Word completion

Vim also provides word completion. For this execute following command in insert mode:

Ctrl + p

A screenshot of the Vim editor window. The title bar reads 'jarvis@earth: -'. The main text area contains the sentence 'This Is The Vim Editor'. Below it, the word 'The' is followed by a cursor. A completion menu is shown with 'This' highlighted in pink and 'The' in grey. The status bar at the bottom shows '-- Keyword completion (^N^P) match 1 of 2'.

Copy character line by line

Use following command to copy and paste line character by character:

Command	Description
Ctrl + y	Copy and paste text located above the cursor

Ctrl + e	Copy and paste text located below the cursor
----------	--

Note that we have to use these commands in insert mode.

Indent code

If you have un-indented code to indent it execute following command:

```
=%
```

For instance, if you have un-indented code like this:

```

jarvis@earth: -
1 #include <stdio.h>
2
3 void say_hello(void)
4 {
5 printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
6     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
7 printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
8     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
9 printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
10    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
11 }
12
13 int main(void)
14 {
15     say_hello();
16
17     return 0;
18 }
~
~
~
~
:set nu                               5,1      All

```

Then go to line 4 and execute =% command. It will indent code like this:

```

jarvis@earth: -
1 #include <stdio.h>
2
3 void say_hello(void)
4 {
5     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
6     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
7     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
8     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
9     printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
10    printf("Hello, World !!!\n");
11 }
12
13 int main(void)
14 {
15     say_hello();
16
17     return 0;
18 }
~
~
~
~
-- INSERT --                          4,4      All

```

Change file format

To change file format to UNIX execute following command:

```
:set ff=unix
```

To change file format to DOS execute following command:

```
:set ff=dos
```

20. Vim - Personalization

We can personalize Vim according to our requirement. In this section, we will discuss following items:

- Configuration files
- Changing fonts
- Changing color scheme
- Personal highlighting
- Status line

Configuration files

For Vim configuration files can be at user level or global level. User specific settings will be stored in user level files while global settings will be stored in global level files.

- **Vimrc file**

- Global vimrc

To find out global vimrc file execute following command in editor

```
:echo $VIM
```

OR

```
:echo \%VIM\%
```

On Linux this file will be located under `/usr/share/vim` directory while on Windows it will be under `C:\Program Files\Vim` folder

- Local vimrc

Local vimrc will be located under user's home directory. For instance, on Linux it will be under `/home/<USER>` directory while on Windows it will be under `C:\Documents and Setting\<USER>` folder

Note that, on Windows file name will be `_vimrc` whereas on Linux it will be `.vimrc`.

- **Gvimrc**

- Global gvimrc

On Linux this file will be located under `/usr/share/gvim` directory while on Windows it will be under `C:\Program Files\Vim` folder

- Local gvimrc

Local gvimrc will be located under user's home directory. For instance, on Linux it will be under `/home/<USER>` directory while on Windows it will be under `C:\Documents and Setting\<USER>` folder

Note that, on Windows file name will be `_gvimrc` whereas on Linux it will be

.gvimrc.

- **exrc**

exrc files are used for backward compatibility. These files are ignored if either vimrc or gvimrc file is present.

- Global exrc

On Linux this file will be located under /usr/share/vim directory while on Window it will be under C:\Program Files\Vim folder

- Local exrc

Local exrc will be located under user's home directory. For instance, on Linux it will be under /home/<USER> directory while on Windows it will be under C:\Documents and Setting\<USER>_exrc folder

Changing fonts

To change font execute following command in gVim:

```
:set guifont=courier
```

Above command will change font to courier.

Change colorscheme

To change color scheme execute following command:

```
:colorscheme <tab>
```

When you press tab character, it will show available color schemes for Vim.

Personal highlighting

- **Highlight characters after certain columns**

Execute below command to highlight columns greater than 73:

```
:match ErrorMessage /\%>73v.\+/\
```

Below image shows this:


```
:set spelllang=de
```

- **Abbreviation**

Using abbreviation we can create shortcuts for long string. For instance below command creates abbreviation namely "quick".

```
:abbr quick the quick brown fox
```

If you type "quick" and press tab then it will be replaced by "the quick brown fox" string

We can use this to correct some typos. For instance below command does this:

```
:abr teh the
```

- **Status line**

Status line is shown at the bottom of editor. To enable status line execute following command:

```
:set laststatus=2
```

To remove this for current session execute following command:

```
:set laststatus=0
```

21. Vim - Conclusion

Vim is really powerful editor and now you can get your hands dirty with it. Mastering Vim will really improve your productivity. Using Vim you can solve many complex tasks with few commands. You can refer following documentation to know more about Vim.

Vim official documentation

You can access Vim's official documentation from following website:

<http://www.vim.org/>

Vim Scripting guide

You can enhance vim further by writing scripts to it. It has its own scripting language. To know more about it, visit following link:

<https://vim.sourceforge.io/scripts/index.php>

Vim plug-ins

Vim plug-ins further extend its functionality and makes you more productive. You can install, configure and even write plug-ins for Vim. You can refer documentation regarding this from their official website.