

What is Vi?

Vi (pronounced vee-eye) is a text editor available on HCP Wales which was originally developed by Bill Joy in 1976 while he was at the University of California, Berkeley. Vi was designed to run on remote terminals over a 300 baud modem connection and is known as the "visual editor". Vi is part of the Linux standard base so you can guarantee that it will be installed on other Linux systems you may have access to.

Using Vi

To use Vi on HPC Wales you must logon to a head node such as ab-log-001, rather than the main login server login.hpcwales.co.uk. You can only use it in terminal mode. To logon to HPC Wales you can use PuTTY. Please read the documentation before installing, and note that you can download PuTTY for free and install it on your computer.

Getting Started

To begin editing a new file type "vi" at the command prompt

Then type "i" to change to insert mode and begin typing

Then press the <Esc > key when you are done typing

Then type ":w path/to/file" and hit enter to save the file

Then type ":q" to quit vi

Starting Vi

Command	Description
vi	run vi
vi myfile.txt	run vi and open myfile.txt
vim	run vim
vim /home/user/myfile.txt	run vim and open

Leaving Vi

Command	Description
ZZ	quit vi and write current file
:q	quit vi
:wq	write current file and quit
:q!	quit vi and do not write current file

File Operations

Command	Description
:e /home/user/myfile.txt	edit myfile.txt (tab completion works)
:w /home/user/myfile.txt	write myfile.txt (tab completion works)
:w	write open file

Modes

Command	Description
<Esc> Key	return to command mode
i	change to insert mode before current cursor position
a	change to insert mode after current cursor position
o	change to insert mode but start a new line below current cursor

Cursor Operations

Command	Description
[repeat]w	move forwards [repeat] words
[repeat]b	move backwards [repeat] words
^	move to the beginning of the line
0	move to the beginning of the line
[repeat]f<letter>	move forwards to the [repeat] instance of <letter>
[repeat]F<letter>	move backwards to the [repeat] instance of <letter>
[number]G	move to line [number]
H	move to the home line (first line on the screen)
M	move to the middle line (on the screen)
L	move to the last line (on the screen)
(move backwards one sentence
)	move forwards one sentence
{	move backwards one paragraph
}	move forwards one paragraph

Edit Operations

Command	Description
u	undo
<Ctrl>r	redo
[repeat]dw	delete (cut) [repeat] words
[repeat]dd	delete (cut) [repeat] lines
d\$	delete (cut) to end of line
dG	delete (cut) to end of file
[repeat]yw	yank (copy) [repeat] words
[repeat]yy	yank (copy) [repeat] lines
p	put (paste)

Search and Replace

Command	Description
[repeat]/<string>	search forwards to the [repeat] instance of <string>
:s/<old-string>/<new-string>	search and replace the first instance of <old-string> with <new-string> on this line
:s/<old-string>/<new-string>/g	search and replace all instances of <old-string> with <new-string> on this line
:%s/<old-string>/<new-string>/g	search and replace all instances of <old-string> with <new-string> in this file

Getting Help

:help

References

man vi	command line documentation
Learning the Vi and Vim Editors, Seventh Edition	http://openisbn.com/isbn/059652983X/

Downloading

You can download a version to run on your local workstation from

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

Contact us on support@hpcwales.co.uk or for further information please visit our website www.hpcwales.co.uk