GNU Emacs Survival Card

for version 24

In the following, C-z means hit the 'z' key while holding down the Ctrl key. M-z means hit the 'z' key while hitting the Meta (labeled Alt on some keyboards) or after hitting Esc key.

Running Emacs

To enter GNU Emacs, just type its name: emacs. Emacs divides the frame into several areas: menu line, buffer area with the edited text, mode line describing the buffer in the window above it, and a minibuffer/echo area in the last line.

C-x C-c quit Emacs

C-x C-f edit file; this command uses the minibuffer to

read the file name; use this to create new files

M-* pop back to where M-. was last involved the file name; use this to create new files

M-x tags-query-replace run query-replace on all files

by entering the name of the new file

C-x C-s save the file C-x k kill a buffer

C-g in most context: cancel, stop, abort partially

typed or executing command

C-x u undo

Moving About

C-1 scroll current line to center of window

C-x b switch to another buffer
M-< move to beginning of buffer
M-> move to end of buffer
M-g M-g go to a given line number

Multiple Windows

C-x 0 remove the current window from the display

C-x 1 make active window the only window

C-x 2 split window horizontally
C-x 3 split window vertically
C-x o move to other window

Regions

Emacs defines a 'region' as the space between the mark and the point. A mark is set with ${\tt C-}space$. The point is at the cursor position.

M-h mark entire paragraph C-x h mark entire buffer

Killing and Copying

C-w kill region

M-w copy region to kill-ring

C-k kill from the cursor all the way to the end of

the line

M-DEL kill word

C-y yank back the last kill (C-w C-y combination

could be used to move text around)
M-y replace last yank with previous kill

Searching

C-s search for a string

C-r search for a string backwards

RET quit searching

M-C-s regular expression search
M-C-r reverse regular expression search

Use C-s or C-r again to repeat the search in either direction.

Tags

Tags tables files record locations of function and procedure definitions, global variables, data types and anything else convenient. To create a tags table file, type 'etags input_files' as a shell command.

M-. find a definition

C-u M-. find next occurrence of definition
M-* pop back to where M-. was last invoked
M-x tags-query-replace run query-replace on all files

recorded in tags table

M-, continue last tags search or query-replace

Compiling

M-x compile code in active window

C-c C-c go to the next compiler error, when in the

compile window or

C-x ' when in the window with source code

Dired, the Directory Editor

C-x d invoke Dired

d flag this file for deletionflag all backup files for deletion

u remove deletion flag

x delete the files flagged for deletion

C copy file

g update the Dired buffer

f visit the file described on the current line s switch between alphabetical date/time order

Reading and Sending Mail

M-x rmail start reading mail q quit reading mail h show headers

d mark the current message for deletionx remove all messages marked for deletion

C-x m begin composing a message

C-c C-c send the message and switch to another buffer
C-c C-f C-c move to the 'CC' header field, creating one if

there is none

Miscellaneous

M-q fill paragraph

M-/ expand previous word dynamically C-z iconify (suspend) Emacs when running it

under X or shell, respectively

M-x revert-buffer replace the text being edited with the text of the file on disk

Query Replace

M-% interactively search and replace using regular expressions

Valid responses in query-replace mode are

SPC replace this one, go on to next replace this one, don't move skip to next without replacing replace all remaining matches back up to the previous match

RET exit query-replace

C-r enter recursive edit (M-C-c to exit)

Regular Expressions

. (dot) any single character except a newline

zero or more repeatsone or more repeatszero or one repeat

[...] denotes a class of character to match

[^...] negates the class

 $\c c$ quote characters otherwise having a special

meaning in regular expressions

 $\dots \setminus \dots \setminus \dots$ matches one of the alternatives ("or")

element

n same text as nth group matches at line beginning matches at line end

\w matches word-syntax character
\W matches non-word-syntax character

\< matches at word beginning
\> matches at word end
\b matches at word break
\B matches at non-word break

Registers

C-x r s save region in register

C-x r i insert register contents into buffer C-x r SPC save value of point in register C-x r j jump to point saved in register

Rectangles

C-x r r copy rectangle to register

C-xrk kill rectangle C-xry yank rectangle

C-x r t prefix each line with a string
C-x r o open rectangle, shifting text right

C-x r c blank out rectangle

Shells

M-x shell start a shell within Emacs
M-! execute a shell command

M-| run a shell command on the region C-u M-| filter region through a shell command

Spelling Check

M-\$ check spelling of word at the cursor
M-x ispell-region check spelling of all words in region
M-x ispell-buffer check spelling of entire buffer

International Character Sets

C-x RET $C-\setminus$ select and activate input method for the

current buffer

C-\ enable or disable input method

M-x list-input-methods show all input methods

M-x set-language-environment specify principal language

C-x RET c set coding system for next command

M-x find-file-literally visit file with no conversion of any kind

M-x list-coding-systems show all coding systems

 ${\tt M-x\ prefer-coding-system}\quad {\tt choose\ preferred\ coding\ system}$

Keyboard Macros

Simple Customization

M-x customize customize variables and faces

Getting Help

Emacs does command completion for you. Typing $\mathtt{M-x}\ tab$ or space gives a list of Emacs commands.

C-h Emacs help

C-h t run the Emacs tutorial

C-h i enter Info, the documentation browser

C-h a show commands matching a string (apropos)C-h k display documentation of the function invoked

by keystroke

Emacs gets into different modes, each of which customizes Emacs for editing text of a particular sort. The mode line contains names of the current modes, in parentheses.

 ${\tt C-h}\ {\tt m}$ get mode-specific information

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