

# The Woodnotes Emacs Cheat Sheet for Writers (not Coders)

Emacs is a great word processor for authors and writers: these are the most useful commands for authors of prose. Hint: set text-mode before you begin.

## Files (Opening, Saving, Printing)

**C-x C-f**  
read a file into Emacs

**C-x C-s**  
save a file back to disk

**C-x s**  
save all files

**C-x i**  
insert contents of another file into this buffer

**C-x C-v**  
replace this file with the file you really want

**C-x C-w**  
write buffer to a file with another name

**M-1 M-x ps-print-buffer-with-faces**  
print buffer to a postscript file  
(find-file-other-frame)

open file in a separate frame

## Window ("Frame") and Buffer Commands

**C-x 2** (split-window-vertically)  
Open another window below this one

**C-x 3** (split-window-horizontally)  
Open another window beside this one

**C-x 5 0** (delete-frame)  
delete a frame

**C-x 5 o** (other-frame)  
shift focus to other frame

**C-x ^, C-x v**  
Grow/Shrink window vertically

**C-x {, C-x }**  
Grow/Shrink window horizontally.

**C-x 0** (delete-window)

**C-x 1** (delete-other-windows)

**C-x 4 C-f** (find-file-other-window)

## Cursor Movement

Entity to Move Over	Backward	Forward
character	C-b	C-f
word	M-b	M-f
line	C-p	C-n
sentence	M-a	M-e
paragraph	M-{	M-}
page	C-x [	C-x ]
line beginning/end	C-a	C-e
buffer beginning (or end)	M-<	M->

**M-m** (back-to-indentation)  
Move (forward or back) to the first non blank character on the current line

**C-u 8 C-f**  
moves forward eight characters

**C-x C-x**  
Exchange point and mark (move between ends of selection)

## Scrolling

previous/next screen	M-v	C-v
scroll left/right	C-x <	C-x >
center current line	C-u C-l or C-l	
scroll other window	M-C v	
goto line	M-g	

## Cut/Paste (Kill/Yank)

Entity to Kill	Backward	Forward
character	DEL	C-d
word	M-DEL	M-d
line (to end of)		C-k
sentence	C-x DEL	M-k

kill entire line  
**C-w**  
kill region (the equivalent of "cut")

**M-w**  
copy region to kill ring (equivalent of "copy")

**M-z char**  
kill through next occurrence of char

**C-y**  
yank back last thing killed

**M-y**  
replace last yank with previous kill

**C-<, C->**  
Select to beginning, end of buffer

## Undo/Redo

**C-x u** or **C-\_** Undo

**M-x redo**

## Transposition and Case Change

**C-t** (transpose-chars)  
Transpose two characters

**M-t** (transpose-words)  
Transpose two words

**C-x C-t** (transpose-lines)  
Transpose two lines

**C-x C-u** (upcase region)  
Make capitals

**C-x C-l** (downcase region)  
Make lower case

**Esc-c**  
Capitalize word

**Esc-u, Esc-d**  
Upcase word, downcase word

### Accumulating Text in Buffers

**(append-to-buffer)**  
Append region to the contents of a specified buffer.

**(prepend-to-buffer)**  
Prepend region to the contents of a specified buffer.

**(copy-to-buffer)**  
Copy region into a specified buffer, deleting that buffer's old contents.

**(insert-buffer)**  
Insert the contents of a specified buffer into current buffer at point.

**(append-to-file)**  
Append region to the contents of a specified file, at the end.

### Formatting Margins, etc.

**C-x .** **(set-fill-prefix)**  
Determines which character will start all lines (like >)

**C-x f**  
Set margin (default: 70)

**C-u 20 C-x f**  
Set margin to 20 characters.

**M-q** **(fill-region)**  
Reformat a paragraph, hard wrapping text. Set using C-x f (auto-fill-mode)

**(fill-individual-paragraphs)**  
Format several paragraphs, each individually

**(fill-region-as-paragraph)**  
Format the entire region selected as one paragraph, combining individual paragraphs.

### Editing, Spaces & Blank Lines

**(canonically-space-region)**  
Remove extra spaces between words in region.

**(checkdoc-rogue-spaces)**  
Find extra spaces at the end of lines in the current file.

**M-\** **(delete-horizontal-space)**  
Delete all spaces and tabs around point.

**M-SPC** **(just-one-space)**  
Delete all spaces and tabs around point, leaving one space.

**C-o**  
Insert blank line at cursor.

**C-a C-o Tab**  
Insert indented line before the current line.

**C-e C-j**  
Insert indented line after current line.

**C-x C-o**  
Remove all blank lines except one

**M-^** **(delete-indentation)**  
Join current line to the previous line

### Indentation and Tabs

**TAB**  
Indent the current line "appropriately" according to mode.  
*In text mode, TAB key is set to indent-relative*

**C-j**  
Perform RET followed by TAB.

**C-M-o** **(split-line)**  
Split the current line at point and move 2<sup>nd</sup> half downward

**C-M-\** **(indent-region)**  
Indent several lines to the same column

**C-x TAB** **(indent-rigidly)**  
Shift a block of lines rigidly right or left

**M-i** **(tab-to-tab-stop)**  
Indent from point to the next pre-specified tab stop column

**(indent-relative)**  
Indent from point to under an indentation point in the previous line.

**(edit-tab-stops)**  
Edit the tab stops

**(tabify), (untabify)**  
Convert all spaces into appropriate # of tabs; replace all tabs with appropriate # of spaces.

### Search/Replace and Incremental Search

**C-s, C-r**  
Incremental search forward/backward

**C-M-s**  
Regular expression search

**C-M-r**  
Reverse regular expression search

**M-p**  
Select previous search string

**M-n**  
Select next later search string

**RET**  
Exit incremental search

**DEL**  
Undo effect of last character

**C-g**  
Abort current search

*Use C-s or C-r again to repeat the search in either direction. If Emacs is still searching, C-g cancels only the part not done.*

### Spelling

**(flyspell-mode)**  
Toggle on the fly spell checking in this buffer

**(flyspell-buffer)**  
Spell check the whole buffer

**M-\$** **(ispell-word)**  
Check and correct spelling of the word at point

**M-TAB** **(ispell-complete-word)**  
Complete word before point based on the current dictionary

**(ispell)**  
Spell-check the active region or the current buffer.

**(ispell-buffer)**  
Check and correct spelling of each word in the buffer.

**(ispell-region)**  
Check and correct spelling of each word in the region.

**(ispell-change-dictionary)**  
Change the ispell dictionary to another language

## Macros

**C-x (** (start-kbd-macro)  
Start defining a keyboard macro

**C-x )** (end-kbd-macro)  
End the definition of a keyboard macro

**C-x e** (call-last-kbd-macro)  
Execute the most recent keyboard macro

**C-u C-x (**  
Re-execute last keyboard macro, then edit

(name-last-kbd-macro)  
Name for the session the most recently defined macro.

(insert-kbd-macro)  
Insert in the buffer a macro's Lisp code.

**C-x C-k**  
Edit a previously defined keyboard macro (edit-kbd-macro).

(apply-macro-to-region-lines)  
Run the last keyboard macro on each complete line in the region.

## Key Bindings

*Add lines like the following in your .emacs file:*

(global-set-key [f1] 'goto-line)  
binds the key F1

(global-set-key [?\M-\l] 'next-line)  
binds the key Alt-L

(global-set-key [?\C-x ?\w] 'beginning-of-buffer)  
binds the key C-x w

## Bookmarks

**C-x r m**  
Set bookmark

(bookmark-jump)  
Jump to a bookmark

## Help

**C-h k** (describe key)  
**C-h b** (describe-bindings)  
**C-h a** (describe-apropos)

## File Coding Systems (Translating DOS-Unix-Mac etc.)

**C-x C-m C** describe-coding-system  
**C-x C-m f** set-buffer-file-coding-system  
**C-x C-m l** set-language-environment  
**C-x C-m t** set-terminal-coding-system  
**C-x C-m x** set-selection-coding-system  
**C-x C-m C-\** set-input-method  
**C-x return C** describe-coding-system  
*You can use return instead of C-m for any of these.*

## Some Cool Functions

### Convert Dos to Unix Line Endings/Remove ^Ms

M-% C-q C-m Return C-q C-j Return

C-x C-m f undecided-unix

### Remove Hard Wrapping

(defun unscrewup-paragraph (beg end)  
(interactive "r")  
(shell-command-on-region beg end "fmt -w2000" nil  
t))

### Remove messy indentation

C-u 0 C-M-\

### Other Misc Stuff for .emacs file

(global-hl-line-mode 1)  
(show-paren-mode t)  
(setq transient-mark-mode t)

(tool-bar-mode -1)  
(menu-bar-mode -1)

(set-default-font "-adobe-new century schoolbook-  
bold-r-normal-14-140-75-75-p-87-iso8859-1")

### Prefix text with a character like >

C-x .[do this on a line containing the char]  
M-q [fill paragraph using fill prefix]

*M-x means "hold down the ALT button and press X." C-u means "hold down the CTRL button and press u." Anything listed in parenthesis is a command accessed by typing M-x and then entering the name of the command.*

### Version history:

9 December 2008: Updates to macros, now based on emacs 22. Major reformat/reorganization  
27 January 2005: Original version