

## **An Unofficial Newbie Guide to Emacs for Zaurus users (v 0.2)**

Here is a simple quickstart specially tailored for Zaurus users. You should be able to pick up Emacs in around half an hour.

We assume *\*zero\** knowledge of Emacs. A basic knowledge of working with the terminal is enough.

It is *\*not\** intended to be a substitute for the original Emacs documentations and tutorials.

Convention used in this guide:

**[...]** = the names of the keys on your Zaurus keyboard

**bolded texts** = keys or key combos

*italics* = what a key/ key combo does

Try not to ask "Why?". Just do it.

Let's go!

### #0. The most important things you need to know

The most important keys are

**[CONTROL]** = the "C" key

**[ALT], [Cancel]** = the "M(eta)" key

The most frequent key combos are

**C-c**, **C-x** and **M-x** (= Control c, Control x, Alt/Cancel x)

In the very beginning, you may find C, M and the combos a bit too abstract. But very soon you'll realize that they are used *\*all the time\** and *\*everywhere\**, and using them will become part of the instinct. =)

The most frequent place where the Emacs messages appear is at the bottom of the screen.

### #1. Getting in and out of Emacs

Assuming that you are running Emacs in the terminal.

Start Emacs with

**emacs -nw -color**

Take a quick look at the very first screen which shows some interesting information about Emacs.

Quit Emacs with

**C-x C-c**

You've got it! Now jump into Emacs again to see the real thing...

## #2. Starting and killing a file (or 'buffer' in the Emacs vocabulary)

### Typing:

Just start typing, like working in any other simple text editor. Easy, isn't it? Notice the screen automatically changes to an empty space where you are typing.

Delete a character or a word by using **[BS]** (backspacing).

Keep typing and changing text and use the arrow keys to move around.

### Saving:

Stop typing.

Save your work with

**C-x C-s**

Emacs will then ask you where to save. Let's call the file "test" and put it in ~/ . **[ENTER]** to confirm.

### Killing the file:

Now kill (close) the file with

**C-x k [ENTER]** ('k' for *kill*)

### Opening a file:

Now get your file back

**C-x C-f**

Still remember the file is ~/test ? Go open it.

Kill it again.

## #3. Moving around in a file

Let's use a big enough text for our further experiment.

**C-h t**

So this is the Emacs Tutorial!

Move the cursor around in the text for a few seconds.

Feeling tedious? Here are a few useful commands to help you move faster:

### Word:

**M-f** *Forward*

**M-b** *Backward*

### Line:

**C-a** *Beginning*

**C-e** *End*

Sentence:

**M-a** *Beginning*

**M-e** *End*

Page/Screenful:

**Fn-[DOWN]** *Next*

**Fn-[UP]** *Previous*

Text:

**M-<** *Beginning*

**M->** *End*

Play with each command casually a few times.

*[Note: The original Emacs setting is **C-v** and **M-v** respectively. But I find the original page up/down on Z more handy =) ]*

#### #4. Repetiting a command

Here is one useful way to speed up your work:

### **C-u NUMBER COMMAND**

Repeat the commands (except the last one for "Text") in 4 and use C-u NUM before each. Whoosh! You are quick!

This combo works for many other commands, not just moving around. Try this with other new commands later.

#### #5. No, not this. Stop it!!

Whenever you sense something going astray, stop it by:

### **C-g**

See the "Quit" at the bottom of the screen.

Let's say you want to open a file,  
and you do this: C-c C-x  
Oops. That's not correct.  
Do C-g  
You are safe now.

#### #6. Editing a file

Make sure that you are still in the Emacs Tutorial. (If not, do a **C-h t** )

Let's cannibalize the Tutorial by doing these

<b>M-[BS]</b>	<i>Cut a preceding word</i>
<b>M-d</b>	<i>Cut a following word</i>
<b>C-k</b>	<i>Cut forward till the end of the line</i>
<b>M-k</b>	<i>Cut forward till the end of the sentence.</i>
<b>C-[SPACE]</b>	<i>Mark the beginning of the chunk to be cut</i>
<b>C-w</b>	<i>Mark the end of the chunk and cut it</i>
<b>C-y</b>	<i>Paste the chunk that is cut <u>most recently</u></i>
<b>M-y</b>	<i>Paste earlier chunk cut <u>before</u> the most recent one</i>
<b>C-x u</b>	<i>Undo</i>

Play with them for a while and see what happens.

You don't really have to memorize all these commands. You will know them when you use them more.

Don't save or leave the Emacs Tutorial.

## #7. Working with multiple windows

### Open new windows

One very interesting thing about Emacs is the multi-window display. Now check the calendar

### **M-x calender**

A nice calendar pops up. The cursor goes to the Calendar window. Try to move around inside the Calendar.

### Go to different windows

Take the cursor to another window

**C-x o** [the small letter 'o']

Do this a few times. Stop in the Emacs Tutorial window.

### Close an unwanted window

To close the window you are in

**C-x 0** [the number '0']

To close the other window

**C-x 1**

**[CANCEL]** (3 times)

### #8. Searching

Emacs uses incremental search method.

Two ways of searching

**C-s** *Search forward*

**C-r** *Search backward*

### #9. Switch between different files

Most of the time you will be having more than one file inside Emacs.

These files will all be stored as the 'buffers' in the memory.

In fact most of the time when you are working in Emacs, several "buffers" are generated and not all of them are in sight.

To see all the current buffers, do

**C-x C-b**

To switch to a particular buffer, do

**C-x b**['b' for buffer]

To get out of a buffer, do

**[Cancel]** (3 times)

(In fact this can also close (other) windows)

Wow! You made it! Congratulations! You've mastered the basics of Emacs. You will develop a deeper knowledge of Emacs gradually and naturally as you are using it. Enjoy!

### **A few simple tips**

a. Auto backup

Emacs takes good care of your work. Whenever you save an edited file, Emacs will automatically give you a backup copy of the original one with a "~" added to the filename. A cool feature, isn't it?

Even more: Emacs will do autosaving of your work with a filename #FILENAME#, you can find it if something crashes (alas). But you won't if you save the current work.

b. Useful linux/unix commands

-- Suspend Emacs by **C-z** and return to it by **fg**.

-- Name completion: When running things with **M-x** but then you are not sure about the full name of the command/mode except the first character, hit **[TAB]** and you will see the option(s).

c. Make good use of the config file ~/.emacs

For newbies this can be intimidating enough just by looking at the myriad clusters of brackets and quotation marks in the .emacs file. But actually this is the very core of telling Emacs how to behave. In the beginning it's better to stick with a good sample. There are tons of resources for using Emacs on the internet. You may be surprised by how flexible the settings can be and how people tailor make their own unique setting to suit their personal needs. Learn from these examples as you are getting more and more used to Emacs.

d. Help on the spot

**C-h c COMMAND**      *Find out what a command is*

**C-h k KEY/ COMBO**    *Find out what a key does*

**C-h f FUNCTION**      *Find out what a function is*

If you feel comfortable enough with doing (simple) things with Emacs, you may want to visit the Emacs Tutorial (**C-h t**), which contains everything covered here and a bit more .

The very first screen of Emacs already contains a few pointers to a wealth of information, which practically comprise a small library of Emacs!