

Linux Editors

- What is a text editor?
 - A text editor is a program which enables you to create and manipulate character data (text) in a computer file.
 - A text editor is not a word processor although some text editors do include word processing facilities.
 - Text editors often require "memorizing" commands in order to perform editing tasks. The more you use them, the easier it becomes. There is a "learning curve" in most cases though.
- There are several standard text editors available on most LINUX systems:
 - ed - standard line editor
 - ex - extended line editor
 - vi - a visual editor; full screen; uses ed/ex line-mode commands for global file editing
 - sed - stream editor for batch processing of files
- In addition to these, other local "favorites" may be available:
 - emacs - a full screen editor and much more
 - pico - an easy "beginner's" editor
 - lots of others

The Standard Display Editor - vi

- vi supplies commands for:
 - inserting and deleting text
 - replacing text
 - moving around the file
 - finding and substituting strings
 - cutting and pasting text
 - reading and writing to other files
- vi uses a "buffer"
 - While using vi to edit an existing file, you are actually working on a copy of the file that is held in a temporary buffer in your computer's memory.
 - If you invoked vi with a new filename, (or no file name) the contents of the file only exist in this buffer.
 - Saving a file writes the contents of this buffer to a disk file, replacing its contents. You can write the buffer to a new file or to some other file.
 - You can also decide not to write the contents of the buffer, and leave your original file unchanged.
- vi operates in two different "modes":
 - Command mode

- vi starts up in this mode
- Whatever you type is interpreted as a command - not text to be inserted into the file.
- The mode you need to be in if you want to "move around" the file.
- Insert mode
 - This is the mode you use to type (insert) text.
 - There are several commands that you can use to enter this mode.
 - Once in this mode, whatever you type is interpreted as text to be included in the file. You cannot "move around" the file in this mode.
 - Must press the ESC (escape) key to exit this mode and return to command mode.