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HINT: If you're reading this via elvis' built-in __:help__ command, then you should probably begin by reading about __:help__ itself. To do that, move the cursor onto the word "__:help__" and press the **Enter** key.

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If you require technical support, you may get a quicker response by posting a message to the __comp.editors__ newsgroup.

1. WHAT IS ELVIS?

Elvis is a clone of vi/ex, the standard UNIX editor. Elvis supports
nearly all of the vi/ex commands, in both visual mode and ex mode.
Elvis adds support for multiple files, multiple windows, a variety
of display modes, on-line help, and other miscellaneous extensions.

Like vi/ex, Elvis stores most of the text in a temporary file,
instead of RAM. This allows it to edit files that are too large to
fit in a single process' data space. Also, the edit buffer can
survive a power failure or crash.

Elvis 2.1 runs under the following operating systems:
* **UNIX.** If you have X-windows, elvis can use a graphical
  interface, in addition to the traditional text-based interface.
* **MS-Windows/95 and Windows/NT.** Both a console (text-based) and a
  graphical version are available.
* **MS-DOS.** It can also run in a DOS window under Windows 3.1.
  However, there is no graphic 16-bit version of elvis.
* **OS/2.** The basic OS/2 port only supports a text-mode interface
  using VIO calls; it acts exactly like the termcap interface.
  There is also a real port of the termcap version which requires
  the EMX library, and a version which uses the graphical "x11"
  interface which requires XFree86.

Elvis is freely redistributable, in either source form or executable
form. There are very few restrictions on how you may use it.

1.1 About this manual

This document is written in HTML. You should be able to view it with
any Web browser, such as Mosaic or Netscape. These browsers also
allow you to print the manual, if you prefer.

You can also use elvis to view it or print it; elvis has a built-in
HTML display mode. To print this document using elvis, you must
first set some printer options. After that, you can just load any of
these files, maybe set the display mode to HTML via the command
":display html" (if elvis doesn't set the display mode
automatically), and then give the command ":lp".

Each chapter is stored in a separate file; you'll need to print each
one separately. A shell script/batch file named printdoc.bat is
provided to help you do this.

1.2 Overview of Elvis

The user interface of Elvis/vi/ex is weird. There are two major
command modes in Elvis, and a few text input modes as well. Each
command mode has a command which allows you to switch to the other
mode.

You will probably use the visual command mode most of the time. This
is the mode that Elvis normally starts up in.

In visual command mode, the entire screen is filled with lines of
text from your file. Each keystroke is interpreted as part of a
visual command. If you start typing text, it will *not* be inserted,
it will be treated as part of a command. To insert text, you must
first give an "insert text" command, such as <u>i</u>. This will take some
getting used to. (An alternative exists. Look up the <u>initialstate</u>
option.)

The <u>ex</u> <u>mode</u> is quite different. Elvis displays a ":" character on
the bottom line of the screen, as a prompt. You are then expected to
type in a command line and hit the **Enter** key. The set of commands
recognized in the ex mode is different from visual mode's.

1.3 Special features of Elvis

Compared to the traditional ex/vi, elvis supports the following
major new features:

Multiple edit buffers
You can edit several files at the same time. The <u>:buffer</u> ex
command lists the current edit buffers. You can switch to a
different buffer by typing <u>:(</u>*buffername* or <u>:buffer</u> *buffername*.

Multiple windows
The <u>:split</u> ex command or <u>^Ws</u> visual command will create a new
window showing the same edit buffer. You can use <u>:split</u> *filename*
to edit a different file in a new window. Related commands allow
you to do things like search for a tag and display it in a new
window, or move among windows.

Multiple user interfaces
In addition to the traditional <u>termcap</u> user interface, elvis
also supports graphical interfaces for <u>X11</u> and <u>Windows95</u>, plus
some other stripped-down interfaces.

A variety of display modes
The <u>:display</u> command lists the available display modes, and can
set the display to a particular mode. The <u>^Wd</u> visual command
toggles between display modes.

Online help
This uses elvis' built-in "html" display mode to display the
manual, which uses multiple fonts and hypertext links to improve
readability. To access it, give the command <u>:help</u>. (But you
already figured that out, didn't you?)

Highly configurable
Elvis has a set of configuration scripts, each of which is run
at a specific time. For example, <u>elvis.ini</u> is run when elvis
starts up, and <u>elvis.arf</u> is run after reading a file. See the
chapter on <u>sessions</u> for a discussion of these.

There is also an <u>elvis.msg</u> file which can be used to translate
the built-in messages into another language.

The X11 interface has a fully configurable toolbar.

The elvis.syn file contains descriptions of various languages,
for use with the syntax-coloring display mode.

Enhanced tags
　　The tags feature has been extended to support overloaded tags,
which C++ tends to use a lot. See the tags chapter.

Macro debugger
　　To help you develop keyboard macros (and also report
incompatibilities between elvis and vi), elvis has a built-in
macro debugger. The the article in the Tips chapter.

Network support
　　Elvis can read via the **http** protocol, and read/write via the **ftp**
protocol. See the Internet chapter.

Aliases
　　You can construct csh-style aliases for the ex commands, via the
:alias command. See the article in the Tips chapter.

New options
　　Elvis has roughly 200 different options. See the Options chapter
for a list.

Built-in calculator
　　Elvis has a :calc command which evaluates C-like expressions.
These expressions are also used for some other commands, such as
:if and :eval, among other things. See the Arithmetic
expressions chapter.