delta Better git diffs

CONCEPTS

delta is a pager for git, diff and grep output. It does not run diffs itself: git pipes into it once core.pager = delta is set.

git diff / log / show unified diff
↓ core.pager
delta syntax + word diff
↓ features
Styled output numbers, side-by-side
↓ if long
less scroll, n and N

Options live in [delta] of ~/.gitconfig. Command-line flags override them. Named groups ([delta "name"]) are switched on with features.

SETUP

git config --global core.pager delta
Send git output through delta

git config --global interactive.diffFilter "delta --color-only"
Colour git add -p

git config --global delta.navigate true
Enable n / N jumping

git config --global delta.dark true
Force dark colours (or light)

git config --global merge.conflictStyle zdiff3
Show merge base in conflicts

git config --global delta.line-numbers true
Show old and new line numbers

git config --global delta.side-by-side true
Always side-by-side

git config --global diff.colorMoved default
Detect moved code blocks

delta --version
Print installed version

delta --show-config
Show every active option

delta --no-gitconfig
Ignore gitconfig settings

SETUP (cont.)

delta --config *<file>*
Read settings from another file

VIEWING DIFFS

git diff
Unstaged changes

git diff --staged
Staged changes

git log -p
Commits with patches

git show *<commit>*
One commit

delta *<a>* *<b>*
Compare two files, no repo needed

diff -u *<a>* *<b>* **| delta**
Highlight any unified diff

delta *<(sort <a>)* *<(sort <b>)*
Compare processed input

-s / --side-by-side
Two panels

-n / --line-numbers
Number columns

--navigate
Enable n / N

--keep-plus-minus-markers
Keep + and - prefixes

--width *<n>*
Width of decorations; variable fits text

--paging auto|always|never
When to start the pager

n / N
Next / previous file (pager)

SIDE-BY-SIDE

DELTA_FEATURES=+side-by-side
Toggle on for this shell

DELTA_FEATURES=+
Switch the toggle off again

git -c delta.features=side-by-side diff
Side-by-side for one run

Keep side-by-side and line-numbers out of the main [delta] section if you want to toggle them with DELTA_FEATURES.

COLOURS AND THEMES

delta --show-themes
Preview delta themes on a diff

delta --list-syntax-themes
List syntax themes

delta --show-syntax-themes
Preview syntax themes

--syntax-theme *<name>*
Pick syntax colours (none = off)

--dark / --light
Defaults for terminal background

features = *<theme>*
Activate a named theme

--minus-style *<style>*
Style of removed lines

--plus-style *<style>*
Style of added lines

minus-style = red bold ul "#ffeeee"
Style: colour, attributes, background

Themes are features: they set colours and decorations, not layout. Add side-by-side or navigate separately.

BEYOND DIFFS

rg --json -C 2 *<pattern>* **| delta**
Highlight ripgrep results

[pager] blame = delta
Use delta for git blame

--hyperlinks
Clickable hashes and paths

Merge conflicts need merge.conflictStyle = zdiff3: delta then shows two diffs, base to ours and base to theirs.

RECIPES

Starter gitconfig

```
[core]
    pager = delta
[interactive]
    diffFilter = delta --color-only
[delta]
    navigate = true
    line-numbers = true
[merge]
    conflictStyle = zdiff3
```