Helix Modal selection editor

START HERE

- `w` Select next word
- `Esc` Back to Normal mode
- `d` Delete the selection
- `Space` › `f` Open file picker
- `x` Select the line
- `g` › `d` Go to definition
- `i` Insert before selection
- `:w` Save

Select w, x, s, % → **Refine** C, K, ;, , narrow → **Act** d, c, y, > then →

CONCEPTS

Selection first, then action: w selects a word, d deletes it. There is no operator-pending state like in Vim.

Every selection has a cursor; several selections edit in parallel. ; collapses to one and , keeps only the primary.

Keys marked LSP need a language server, TS needs a tree-sitter grammar. Run hx --health to check a language.

Alt in the key tables is Alt on Linux and Windows, Option on macOS.

MODES & FILES

- `Esc` Return to Normal mode
- `i` / `a` Insert before / after selection
- `I` / `A` Insert at line start / end
- `o` / `O` Open line below / above
- `v` Select (extend) mode

Motions extend the selection instead of replacing it; Esc or v leaves.

- `:w` Save file
- `:q` Quit window
- `:wq` / `:x` Save and quit

MOVEMENT

- `h` / `j` / `k` / `l` Left / down / up / right
- `w` / `b` / `e` Next word start / previous start / end
- `W` / `B` / `E` Same, for WORDs
- `f` / `t` Find / till next char
- `F` / `T` Find / till previous char
- `Ctrl` + `u` / `Ctrl` + `d` Half page up / down
- `PageUp` / `PageDown` Page up / down
- `G` Go to line number
- `Ctrl` + `o` / `Ctrl` + `i` Jumplist back / forward

GOTO & MATCH

- `g` › `g` File start (or line number)
- `g` › `e` End of file
- `g` › `d` Go to definition (LSP)
- `g` › `r` Go to references (LSP)
- `g` › `y` Go to type definition (LSP)
- `g` › `i` Go to implementation (LSP)
- `g` › `f` Open file under selection
- `g` › `n` / `g` › `p` Next / previous buffer
- `m` › `s` › *<char>* Surround selection with char
- `m` › `d` › *<char>* Delete surrounding char
- `m` › `i` › *<obj>* Select inside text object

Objects: w word, ( ) parens, " quotes, f function, t type, a argument, c comment.

- `m` › `a` › *<obj>* Select around text object

EDITING

- `d` Delete selection
- `c` Change selection (delete + insert)
- `y` Yank (copy)
- `p` / `P` Paste after / before
- `u` / `U` Undo / redo
- `r` › *<char>* Replace selection with char
- `R` Replace with yanked text
- `>` / `<` Indent / unindent
- `~` Switch case
- `Alt` + `d` / `Alt` + `c` Delete / change without yanking

Keeps the register intact, handy before a paste.

- `J` Join lines
- `Ctrl` + `c` Toggle comment
- `.` Repeat last insert
- `=` Format selection (LSP)

SELECTIONS

- `x` Select line, again extends down
- `%` Select whole file
- `s` Select regex matches inside selection

The core multi-cursor move: select a block, press s, type a pattern, Enter.

- `S` Split selection on regex
- `C` Add cursor on next line
- `;` Collapse to a single cursor
- `,` Keep only primary selection
- `K` Keep selections matching regex
- `Alt` + `K` Remove selections matching regex
- `Alt` + `s` Split selection on newlines

Turns a multi-line selection into one cursor per line.

- `Alt` + `o` / `Alt` + `i` Expand / shrink syntax node (TS)

SEARCH

- `/` Search forward (regex)
- `n` / `N` Next / previous match
- `*` Search for selection as a word
- `Space` › `/` Search the whole workspace
- `v` › `n` Add next match to the selection

Press v first so n extends instead of replacing.

SPACE MENU & PICKERS

- `Space` › `f` File picker (workspace root)
- `Space` › `b` Buffer picker
- `Space` › `s` Document symbols (LSP)
- `Space` › `a` Code actions (LSP)
- `Space` › `r` Rename symbol (LSP)

SPACE MENU & PICKERS (cont.)

- `Space` › `k` Hover docs (LSP)
- `Space` › `g` Changed files picker
- `Space` › `?` Command palette
- `Space` › `y` / `Space` › `p` Yank / paste via system clipboard
- `]` › `d` / `[` › `d` Next / previous diagnostic (LSP)

PICKER & COMPLETION

- `Ctrl` + `n` / `Ctrl` + `p` Next / previous entry

Tab and Shift+Tab or the arrows work too.

- `Enter` Open selected
- `Ctrl` + `t` Toggle preview

WINDOWS & SHELL

- `Ctrl` + `w` › `v` / `Ctrl` + `w` › `s` Vertical / horizontal split
- `Ctrl` + `w` › `h/j/k/l` Move between splits
- `|` Pipe selections through a command

Replaces each selection with the command output, e.g. | sort.

RECIPES

Rename a word everywhere in a block

```
# 1. x or % or pick lines
# 2. s  then type the word, Enter
# 3. c  type the new name, Esc
```

One cursor per line

```
# select lines with x x x
# C adds a cursor per line, or Alt+s
# A to append at every line end
```

Wrap a word in quotes

```
# w to select the word
# m s "  surround with quotes
# m r " '  swap to single quotes
```

Sort a block of lines

```
# x x x to select
# | sort  then Enter
```

HELP

- `:tutor` Interactive tutorial