# 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