i3 Tiling window manager

START HERE

Mod + **Enter**
Open a terminal

Mod + **Shift** + **1-9**
Send window to workspace

Mod + **d**
Launch an app

Mod + **f**
Toggle fullscreen

Mod + **Arrows**
Focus a neighbour

Mod + **Shift** + **q**
Close the window

Mod + **1-9**
Switch workspace

Mod + **Shift** + **r**
Restart i3 in place

Output a monitor
Workspace one named desktop
Container split, stacked or tabbed
Window leaf of the tree

CONCEPTS

Mod is Alt by default; many configs set it to Super (set $mod Mod4). All keys here are the default config's; j k l ; are left, down, up, right.

i3 is a tree: every split makes a container; layouts apply to a container's children. Mod+a focuses the parent.

Config lives in ~/.config/i3/config; Mod+Shift+c reloads it, Mod+Shift+r restarts i3 and keeps windows.

FOCUS

Mod + **Arrows**
Focus left / down / up / right
Default config also binds Mod+j, k, l, ; for left, down, up, right.

Mod + **a**
Focus parent container
Press again to climb further; focus child steps back down.

Mod + **Space**
Toggle focus tiling / floating

Mod + **Shift** + **q**
Kill focused window

[class="*<name>*"] focus
Jump to a window by criteria
Use inside a bindsym or i3-msg.

MOVE WINDOWS

Mod + **Shift** + **Arrows**
Move window left / down / up / right
Mod+Shift+j, k, l, ; also work: left, down, up, right.

Mod + **Shift** + **1-9**
Move window to workspace

move container to output *<dir>*
Send window to another monitor

LAYOUTS AND SPLITS

Mod + **h**
Next window opens beside this one
Splits horizontally. Do it before opening the window.

Mod + **v**
Next window opens below this one
Splits vertically.

Mod + **f** Toggle fullscreen

Mod + **s** Stacking layout

Mod + **w** Tabbed layout

Mod + **e**
Back to split layout; toggles h / v

WORKSPACES

Mod + **1-9**
Switch to workspace N

workspace back_and_forth
Toggle with previous workspace
Set workspace_auto_back_and_forth yes so repeating Mod+N flips back.

workspace next / workspace prev
Cycle through used workspaces

workspace number "*<n>*: *<name>*"
Switch to a named workspace

move workspace to output *<dir>*
Send workspace to another monitor

workspace *<ws>* output *<output>*
Pin a workspace to a monitor (config)

assign [class="*<name>*"] → *<ws>*
Always open an app on a workspace (config)

FLOATING AND SCRATCHPAD

Mod + **Shift** + **Space**
Toggle floating

FLOATING AND SCRATCHPAD (cont.)

Mod + **Left-drag**
Move a floating window
Needs floating_modifier $mod in the config (default).

Mod + **Right-drag**
Resize a floating window
Hold Shift to keep the aspect ratio.

Mod + **Shift** + **-**
Send window to scratchpad
Not bound in the stock config; add: bindsym $mod+Shift+minus move scratchpad

Mod + **-**
Show / hide scratchpad window
Not bound in the stock config; add: bindsym $mod+minus scratchpad show

for_window [class="*<name>*"] floating enable
Always float an app (config)

RESIZE

Mod + **r** Enter resize mode
Then j k l ; or Arrows resize; Enter or Esc leaves.

j / **k** / **l** / **;**
Shrink width / grow height / shrink height / grow width
Only inside resize mode, as in the stock config.

Enter / **Esc**
Leave resize mode

resize set *<w>* *<h>*
Set an exact size

SESSION AND CONFIG

Mod + **Enter** Open terminal

Mod + **d**
Open launcher (dmenu)
Bound to dmenu_run by default; swap in rofi if you prefer.

Mod + **Shift** + **c**
Reload config
Applies most changes without touching windows.

SESSION AND CONFIG (cont.)

Mod + **Shift** + **r**
Restart i3 in place
Keeps your windows; needed after upgrading i3.

Mod + **Shift** + **e** Exit i3

i3 -C
Check the config for errors

i3-msg *<command>*
Run any i3 command from a shell

i3-msg -t get_tree
Dump the window tree as JSON

bindsym $mod+*<key>* *<command>*
Bind a key to a command (config)

exec --no-startup-id *<command>*
Start once at login (config)

exec_always --no-startup-id *<command>*
Also run on restart (config)
Good for wallpaper and bar helpers; they restart with i3.

mode "*<name>*" { ... }
Define a binding mode (config)

set $mod Mod4
Use Super as the modifier (config)

RECIPES

Scratchpad terminal

```
# config
bindsym $mod+Shift+minus move
scratchpad
bindsym $mod+minus scratchpad
show
for_window [class="scratch"]
move scratchpad
# xterm -class scratch &
```

Resize mode

```
mode "resize" {
    bindsym l resize grow width
10 px or 10 ppt
    bindsym Escape mode
"default"
}
bindsym $mod+r mode "resize"
```

Pin apps to workspaces

```
assign [class="Firefox"] → 2
assign [class="Slack"] → 9
for_window
[class="Pavucontrol"] floating
enable
```