Kakoune — Selection-first modal editor

CONCEPTS

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

Uppercase movement extends the selection: w picks a word, W adds the next.

Notation as in the docs: <c-x> is Ctrl+x, <a-x> is Alt+x.

Select w, x, f, s, <a-i>
Refine S, <a-k>, ;, ,
↓ narrow
Act d, c, y, p, |
↓ edit

Commands act on all selections at once: s then c is a multi-cursor rename.

MODES & FILES

`<esc>`
Back to normal mode; drop extra selections

`i` / `a`
Insert before / after selection

`I` / `A` Insert at line start / end

`o` / `O`
Open line below / above

`:w` Write the buffer

`:q` Quit (fails if unsaved)

`:wq` Write and quit

`:q!` Quit and discard changes

`:e` › `<file>`
Open a file in a new buffer

`:b` › `<buffer>`
Switch to a buffer by name

`:` Open the command prompt

MOVEMENT

`h` / `j` / `k` / `l`
Left / down / up / right

`w` / `b` / `e`
Next word start / previous start / end

`f` › `<char>` / `t` › `<char>`
Select to / until character

MOVEMENT (cont.)

`<a-h>` / `<a-l>`
To line start / end

`g` › `h` / `g` › `l`
Go to line start / end

`g` › `g` / `g` › `j` First / last line

`<n>` › `G` Go to line <n>

`<c-d>` / `<c-u>`
Half page down / up

`m` / `M`
Select / extend to matching pair

`<c-i>` / `<c-o>`
Jump list forward / back

SELECTIONS

`x`
Select line, again extends down

`%` Select whole buffer

`s`
Select regex matches inside selection

`S` Split selection on a regex

`<a-s>`
Split selection into one per line

`<a-k>` / `<a-K>`
Keep / drop selections matching a regex

`C` / `<a-C>`
Add cursor on the next / previous line

`,` Keep only the main selection

`(` / `)`
Rotate which selection is main

`;`
Collapse selections to cursors

`<a-;>` Flip selection direction

OBJECTS

`<a-i>` › `<type>`
Select inside an object

`<a-a>` › `<type>`
Select an object with its delimiters

`[` › `<type>` / `]` › `<type>`
Select to object start / end

OBJECTS (cont.)

Object types

Key	Object
`b` `(` `)`	parentheses
`B` `{` `}`	braces
`r` `[` `]`	brackets
`a` `<` `>`	angle brackets
`Q` `"`	double quotes
`q` `'`	single quotes
`g` `` ` ``	backticks
`w` / `<a-w>`	word / WORD
`s`	sentence
`p`	paragraph
`i`	indent block
`n`	number
`u`	argument

EDITING

`d` Delete selection (yanked)

`c`
Change selection (delete + insert)

`y` Yank (copy)

`p` / `P` Paste after / before

`R`
Replace selection with the register

`r` › `<char>`
Replace every character with <char>

`u` / `U` Undo / redo

`>` / `<` Indent / unindent

`<a-j>` Join lines

`.` Repeat last insert or change

`|` › `<cmd>`
Pipe selections through a command

SEARCH

`/` Search forward (regex)

`n` / `N`
Next match / add next match

`*`
Use selection as search pattern (word-bounded)

INSERT & PROMPT

`<c-n>` / `<c-p>`
Next / previous completion candidate