GNU Screen

Terminal multiplexer

Prefix key `Ctrl+a`

START HERE

`screen -S <name>`
Start a named session

`prefix` **Tab**
Focus next region

`prefix` **d**
Detach, keep it running

`prefix` **[**
Scroll back / copy

`screen -r <name>`
Reattach

`prefix` **c**
New window

`prefix` **n** / **p**
Next / previous window

`prefix` **S**
Split top / bottom

Session survives detach
Window full-screen shell
Region split view of a window



Ctrl+a | then Ctrl+a S in the right region

CONCEPTS

Shortcuts marked prefix: press Ctrl+a, release, then press the key.

Sessions keep running after you close the terminal or lose your SSH connection.

Unlike tmux, a split region only shows a window; it does not own one. Focus a region, then pick a window for it.

Typing a literal Ctrl+a (e.g. start of line in bash) needs Ctrl+a a.

SESSIONS

`screen -S <name>`
New named session
Without -S the session is named <pid>.<tty>.<host>.

`screen -ls`
List sessions

`screen -r <name>`
Reattach to a session
With only one detached session, plain screen -r is enough.

SESSIONS (cont.)

`prefix` **d**
Detach from session
Programs inside keep running; reattach any time.

`screen -R <name>`
Reattach, or create if missing
Handy for aliases; -RR picks the first detached session.

`screen -x <name>`
Attach to an already attached session
Shares the session between two terminals (pairing).

`screen -d -r <name>`
Detach it elsewhere, reattach here
Use when it says Attached; -D -r also logs out the remote.

`screen -dmS <name> <cmd>`
Start a command detached

`prefix` ****
Kill all windows and quit
Asks for confirmation.

`screen -wipe`
Remove dead sessions

`screen -S <name> -X quit`
Kill a session from outside

`prefix` **D** › **D**
Power detach and log out

WINDOWS `prefix +`

c Create window

n / **p**
Next / previous window
Space and Backspace do the same.

0-9 Jump to window number

" Choose window from list
Move with arrows, Enter selects.

Ctrl + **a**
Toggle to the last used window

A Rename window

w
Show window list in status line

k Kill window
Asks for confirmation (y/n).

l Redraw window
Fixes a garbled display.

REGIONS

`prefix` **S** Split top / bottom

`prefix` **|** Split left / right

`prefix` **Tab**
Focus next region
A new region is empty: press Ctrl+a c in it or select a window.

REGIONS (cont.)

`prefix` **X**
Close current region
Closes only the view; the window keeps running.

`prefix` **Q**
Close all regions but this one

`resize +5`
Make region taller by 5 lines
Run via Ctrl+a : ; -h or -v set the direction in newer builds.

COPY MODE

`prefix` **[**
Enter copy / scroll mode
Scroll with arrows or PageUp/PageDown. Esc also enters it.

Space
Set start, then end of selection
Press once to mark, move, press again to copy.

Esc Leave copy mode
Any unbound key leaves it.

`prefix` **]**
Paste last copied text
Pastes screen's own buffer, not the system clipboard.

/ / **?**
Search forward / backward

COPY MODE (cont.)

n / **N** Next / previous match

Ctrl + **u** / **Ctrl** + **d**
Half page up / down

`defscrollback 10000`
Longer scrollback in .screenrc
Default is 100 lines; applies to windows created afterwards.

Copying stays inside screen. For the system clipboard, select with the mouse while holding Shift.

LOGGING

`prefix` **H**
Toggle logging of this window
Appends to screenlog.<n> in the current directory.

`screen -L -Logfile <file> -S <name>`
Start a session with logging

COMMAND MODE

`prefix` **:**
Open command prompt
Accepts any .screenrc command.

`prefix` **?**
List all key bindings

COMMAND MODE (cont.)

`source ~/.screenrc`
Reload configuration

`screen -S <name> -X <cmd>`
Send a command to a session
Example: -X stuff $'ls\n' types into the window.

RECIPES

Starter ~/.screenrc

```
# ~/.screenrc
startup_message off
defscrollback 10000
vbell off
altscreen on
hardstatus alwayslastline
hardstatus string '%{= kw}%-
w%{= kG}%n %t%{-}%+w %=%H'
escape ^Ee
```

Run a long job and leave

```
screen -S build
make all
# Ctrl+a d to detach
screen -r build  # back later
```

Pair on one session

```
# terminal 1
screen -S pair
# terminal 2, same user
screen -x pair
```

HELP

`man screen`
Full manual