VIM configuration

Make VI default editor

In order to make vi the standard global default editor to edit crontab for example use this command for debian:

```
update-alternatives --config editor
```

and select vim.basic or vim.nox

or

change the symlink to the default editor manually:

```
rm /etc/alternatives/editor
ln -s /usr/bin/vi /etc/alternatives/editor
```

or

In order to make vi the global default editor in debian to edit crontab for example, either

```
vi /etc/bash.bashrc
```

and add this line at the end of the file:

```
export VISUAL=vi
```

To make this change only for an individual user (whereby \sim is the home directory of the current user or change it to the home directory of the user this should be changed for):

```
vi ~/.bashrc
```

and add this line at the end of the file:

```
export VISUAL=vi
```

Debian 9 VIM Mouse issues

In Debian 9, vi/vim has mouse support enabled by default. While this makes it easy to go to a different area of the file via mouse clicks, it causes copy&paste to fail and/or to behave weirdly.

To revert to the old behaviour, a local .vimrc file needs to be created. It can be empty (just containing a double quote sign which is a comment). When this file exists, the default config with mouse support (/usr/share/vim/vim80/defaults.vim) is not being loaded. Editing the defaults.vim file directly is discouraged as this will be overwritten by updates.

Last update: 2023/05/29 11:53

vi ~/.vimrc

add something to it. In the very least one double quoted line as a comment:

"placeholder as /usr/share/vim/vim80/defaults.vim is loaded if no ~/.vimrc exists

Debian vim colour syntax highlighting

By default Debian installs vim-tiny which does not support syntax highlighting. To install all required modules for console use

```
apt-get install vim-nox
```

then edit /etc/vim/vimrc

```
vi /etc/vim/vimrc
```

and enable syntax, dark backgrounds and remembering the previous cursor position by removing the double-quotes in front of the relevant lines like this:

```
" Vim5 and later versions support syntax highlighting. Uncommenting the next " line enables syntax highlighting by default. syntax on
```

" If using a dark background within the editing area and syntax highlighting $\mbox{\tt "}$ turn on this option as well

set background=dark

Good default configuration

Add the configuration to your local .vimrc file in your home directory for various sensible and convenient settings:

```
vi ~/.vimrc
```

http://wuff.dyndns.org/ Printed on 2025/12/03 12:22

```
" Sets the number of columns for a TAB
set softtabstop=4
set expandtab
                    " Expand TABs to spaces
                    " Fix telnet issues where cursor keys add A B etc
set nocompatible
                    " Disable automatic visual mode when selecting with
set mouse-=a
mouse
" Only do this part when compiled with support for autocommands.
if has("autocmd")
  " Enable file type detection.
  " Use the default filetype settings, so that mail gets 'tw' set to 72,
  " 'cindent' is on in C files, etc.
  " Also load indent files, to automatically do language-dependent
indenting.
  " Revert with ":filetype off".
 filetype plugin indent on
  " Put these in an autocmd group, so that you can revert them with:
  " ":augroup vimStartup | au! | augroup END"
  augroup vimStartup
    au!
    " When editing a file, always jump to the last known cursor position.
    " Don't do it when the position is invalid or when inside an event
handler
    " (happens when dropping a file on gvim).
   autocmd BufReadPost *
      \ if line("'\"") >= 1 && line("'\"") <= line("$") |
         exe "normal! q`\"" |
      \ endif
 augroup END
endif " has("autocmd")
```

More info

VIM Cheat Sheet

From:

http://wuff.dyndns.org/ - Wulf's Various Things

Permanent link:

http://wuff.dyndns.org/doku.php?id=linux:vim&rev=1577550580

Last update: 2023/05/29 11:53



http://wuff.dyndns.org/ Printed on 2025/12/03 12:22