

How to Create and Edit Text Files Using Terminal on Linux

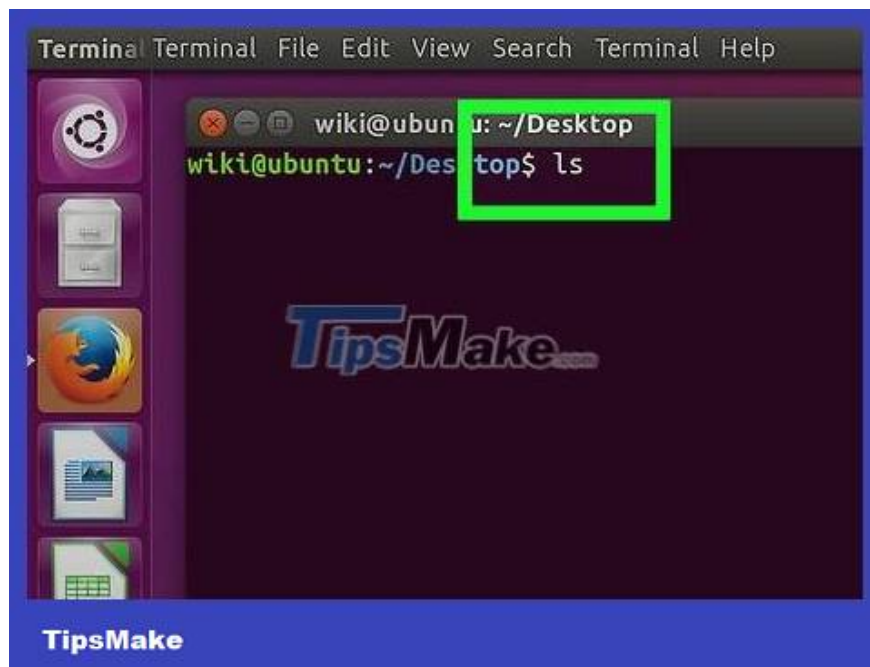
In this article, TipsMake will show you how to use Terminal software on Linux to create text files. After creating the file, you can use pre-installed Linux editing software to edit the text.

Open Terminal

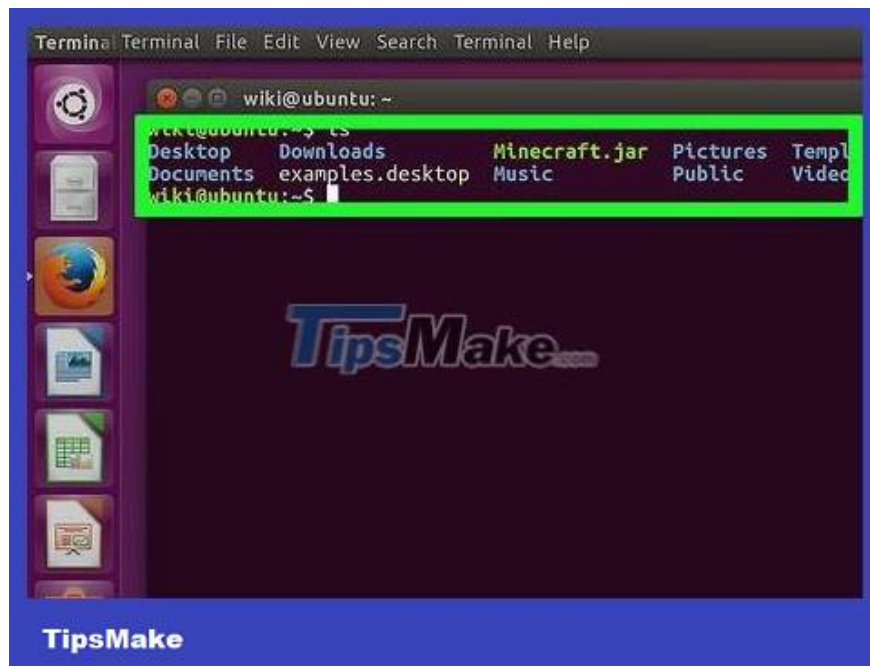


Open Terminal. To open the software, click on **Menu**, then find the Terminal software, which looks almost like a blackboard with a white ">_" symbol, and click on it. You usually find Terminal in the left sidebar of the Menu window.

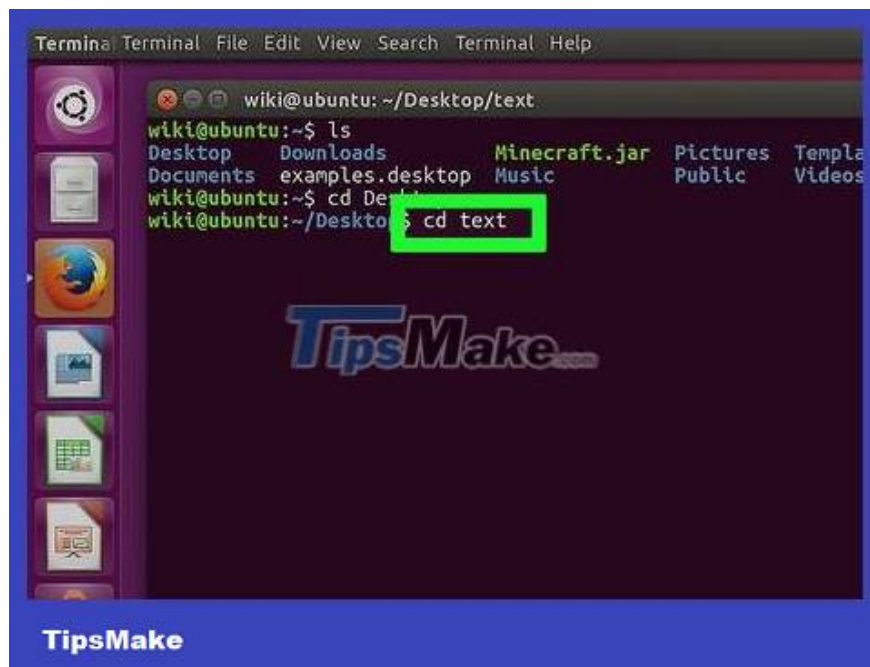
You can click on the search bar at the top of the Menu window and type `terminal` to find Terminal.



Type `ls` into Terminal, then press `Enter`. Terminal will open the main directory, but the command `ls` will display all folders in the current directory. To create a text file in one of those directories, you need to change the current directory.



Find the directory you want to create a text file for. Any category name listed below the command `ls` (for example "Desktop") is a navigable location.



Enter cd directory. You replace "directory" with the name of the directory you want to create the file. This command will shift Terminal's focus from the current directory to the directory you name.

For example, you enter a command `cd Desktop` to move Terminal's command execution location to the Desktop category.

If you want to create a text file in a separate folder within the selected category, simply add "/" after the category name and then type the folder name. For example, for the "Misc" folder in the Documents category, you type `cd Documents/Misc`.

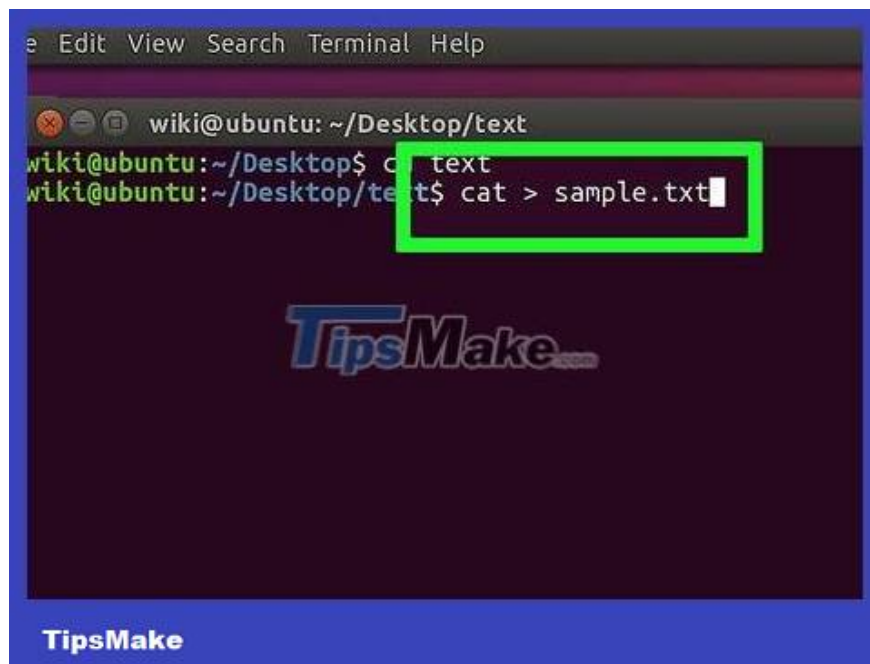


Press ? Enter. This executes a command, switching Terminal's target from the main directory to the directory you specify.



Decide on editing software. You can create simple text files quickly, or use Vim or Emacs for advanced file creation and editing. You have accessed the category where you want to create a text file, now let's create the file.

Create Text Files Quickly

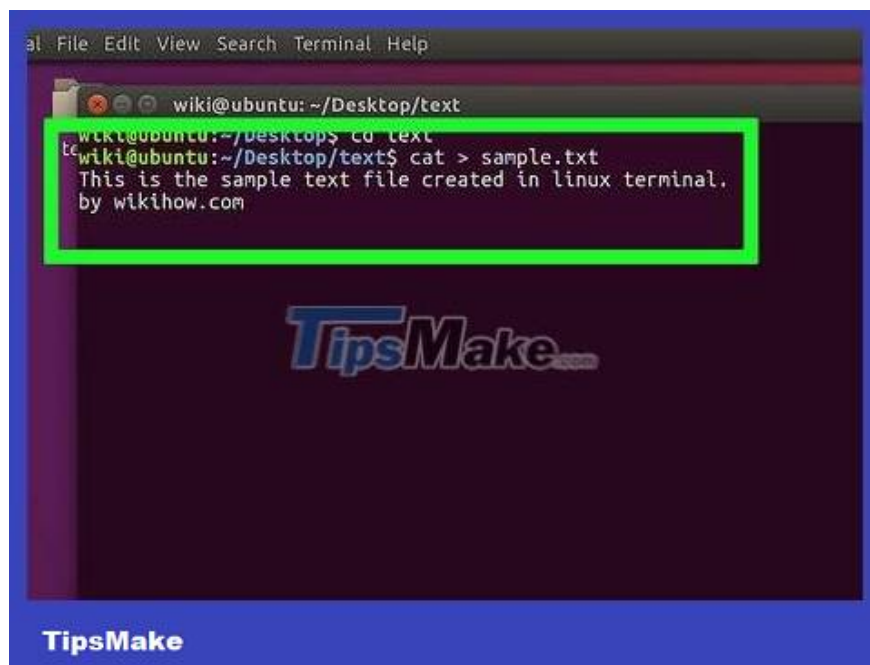


Enter `cat > tên tệp.txt` into Terminal. You replace "filename" with the name you want to give the file (e.g. "report").

For example, when creating the file "kitty", you enter the command `cat > kitty.txt`.



Press ? Enter. This is the operation of creating a new text file according to the name just given in the current directory. The cursor will appear on a blank line in Terminal.

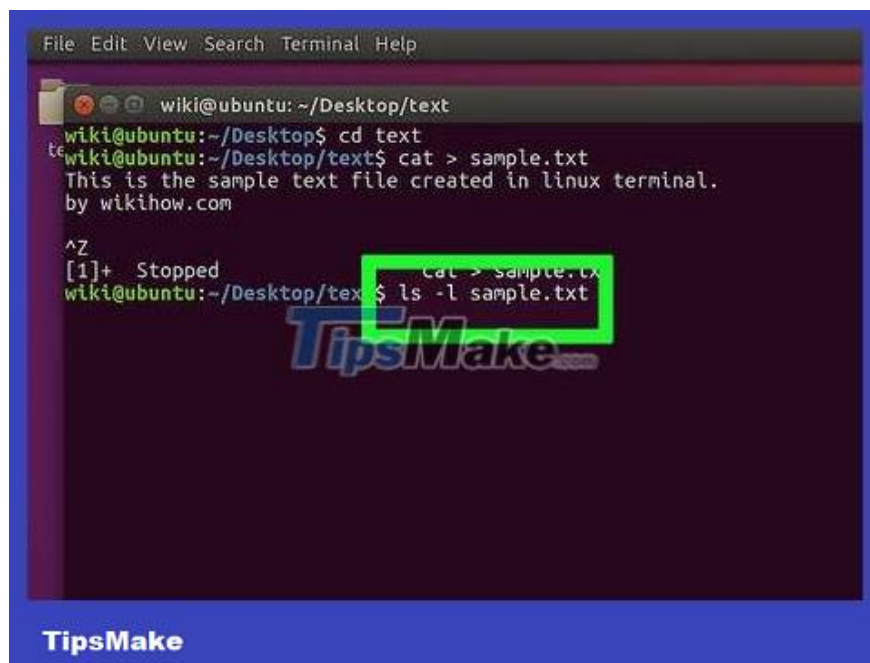


Enter text. You type text as you would any other document. To save the line of text you just typed and move to the next line, press ? Enter.

If the directory contains an open text file, simply double-click the text file when it appears to perform this step.



Press **Ctrl+Z** . This is the command key to save text and return to the command line in Terminal, allowing you to continue entering commands.



Enter **ls -l tên tệp.txt** into Terminal. You replace "filename" with the name you intend to give the text file. This command will locate the file to ensure that it was created in the directory you choose.

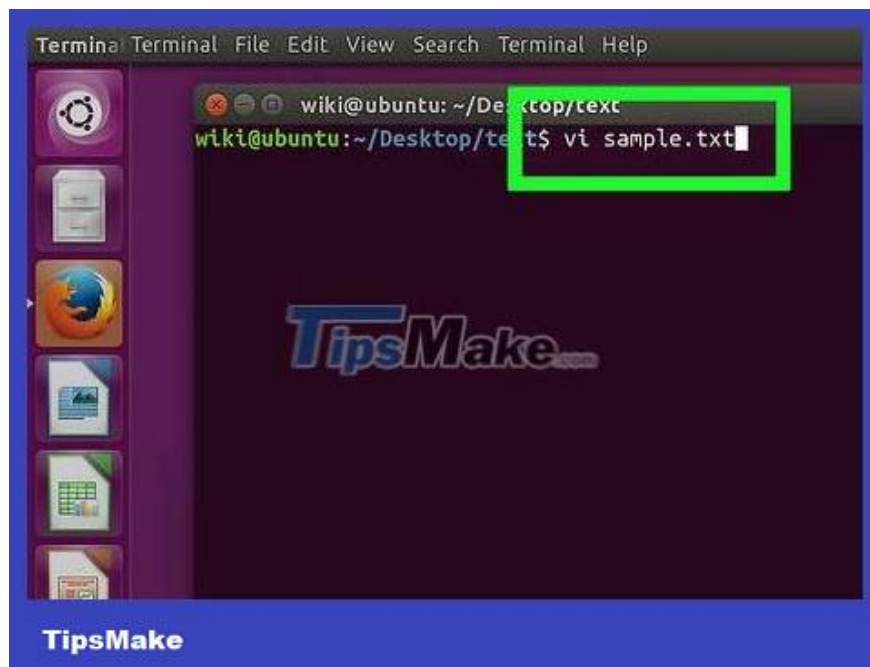
For example, to open the file "textfile", you enter the command `ls -l textfile.txt`.

The letter in this command is a lowercase "L", not a capital "I".



Press ? **Enter**. This displays the time, date, and file name on the next line, indicating that the file was created and saved in the selected directory.

Use Vim



Enter **vi filename.txt** into Terminal. The "vi" part in this command is to choose to use Vim text editing software. You will replace "filename" with the text filename you want to assign to the new file.

For example, for the file "tamins", you enter the command `vi tamins.txt`.

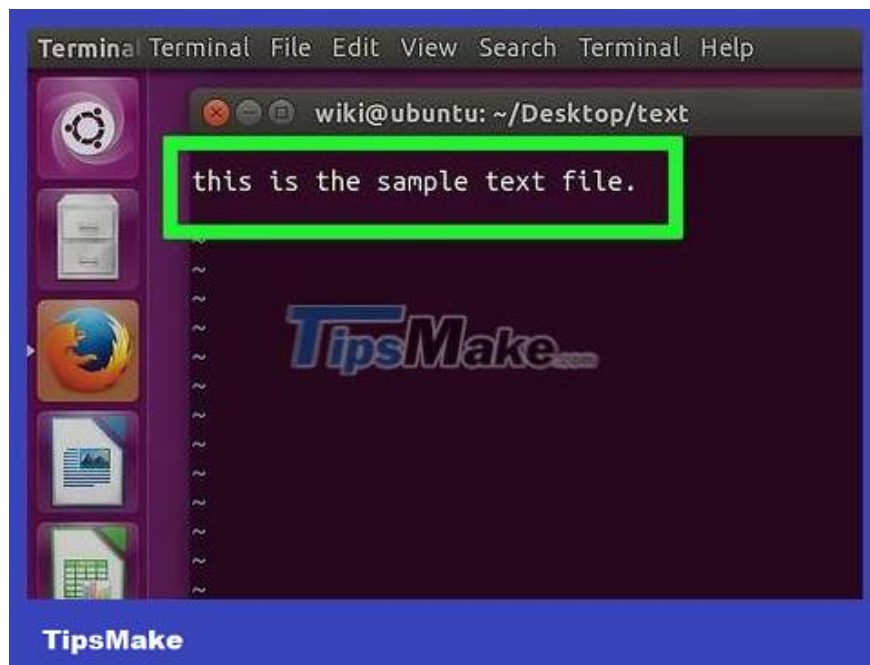
If the current directory has a file with the same name, this command will open that file.



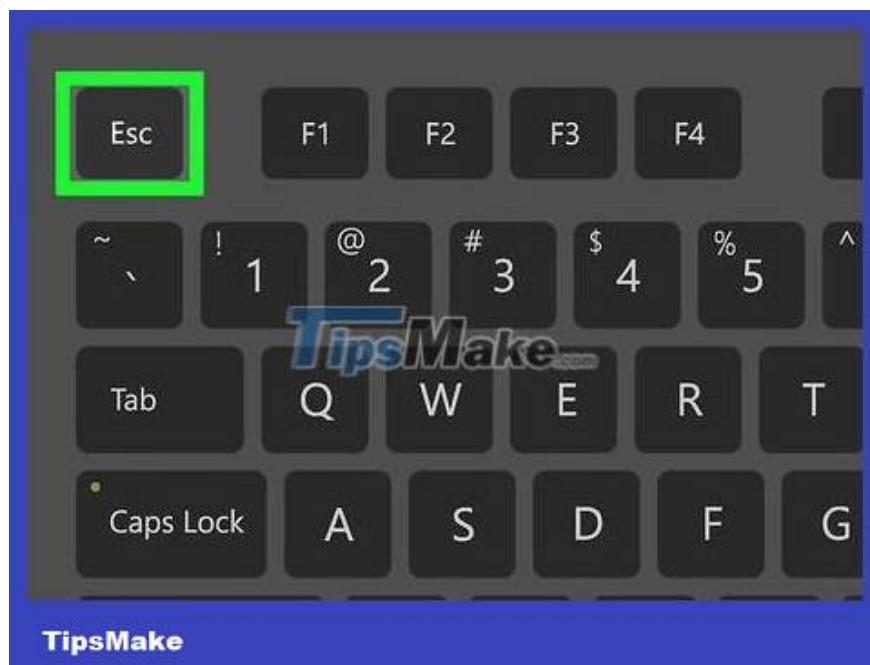
Press ? Enter. This is the operation of creating a new file and opening it in Vim software. You'll see a blank Terminal window, with a tilde (~) on each line and the filename at the bottom of the window.



Press key i. This puts the document into "Insert" mode so you can edit the text if needed. You will see -- **INSERT** -- appear at the bottom of the window when you press the key I.

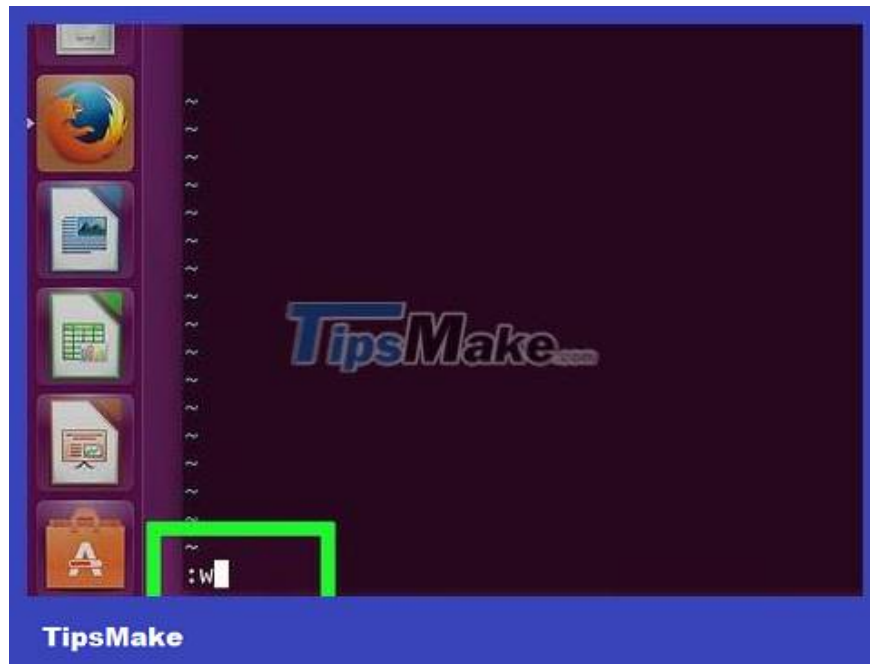


Enter text. You type text as you would any other document. To save the line of text you just typed and move to the next line, just press ? Enter.

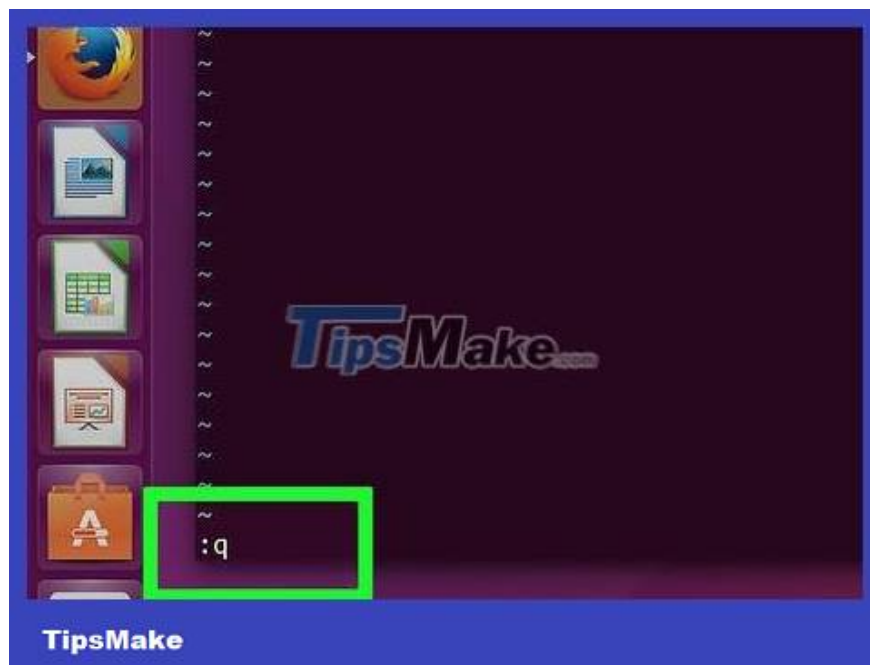


Press key Esc. This key is usually located in the upper left corner of the keyboard. This key will put Vim into "Command" mode.

You will see the mouse pointer appear at the bottom of the window.



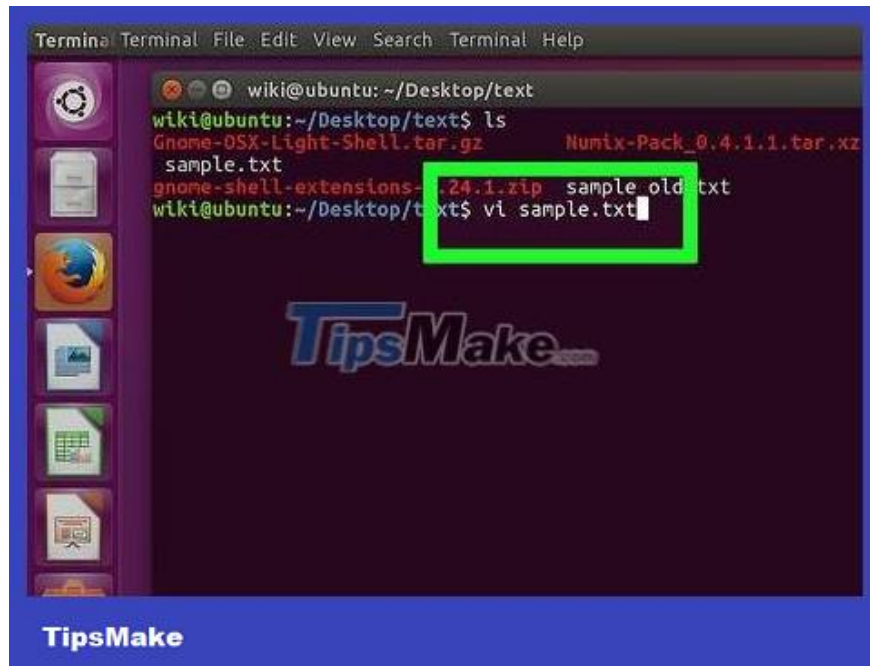
Type **:w** into Terminal and press **? Enter**. This is the command to save the current document.



Type **:q** into Terminal and press **? Enter**. This is the command to exit Vim and return to the main Terminal interface. The text file is now in the specified directory.

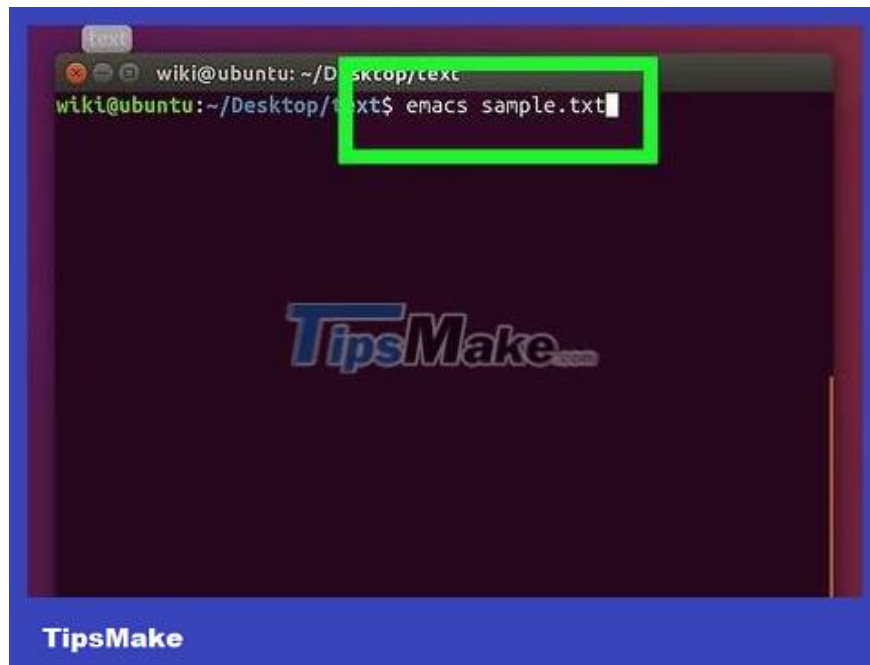
You can check the text file by entering the command **ls** into Terminal and pressing **? Enter**, then find the file name.

You can enter commands **:wq** to save and exit in the same command.



Reopen the file in a Terminal window. Similar to creating a file, you enter a command `vi tên_t?p.txt` to open the file. Now when you open the file, you will see that any changes you saved have been implemented.

Use Emacs



Enter emacs tên_t?p.txt into Terminal. You replace "filename" with the name you intend to give the text file.



Press ? Enter. As long as the file name does not overlap with an existing text file in the current directory, this command will open the new text file in the Emacs editor.

For example, a file named "newfile" would require the command `emacs newfile.txt`.

If you enter a file name that already exists, this command opens that file.

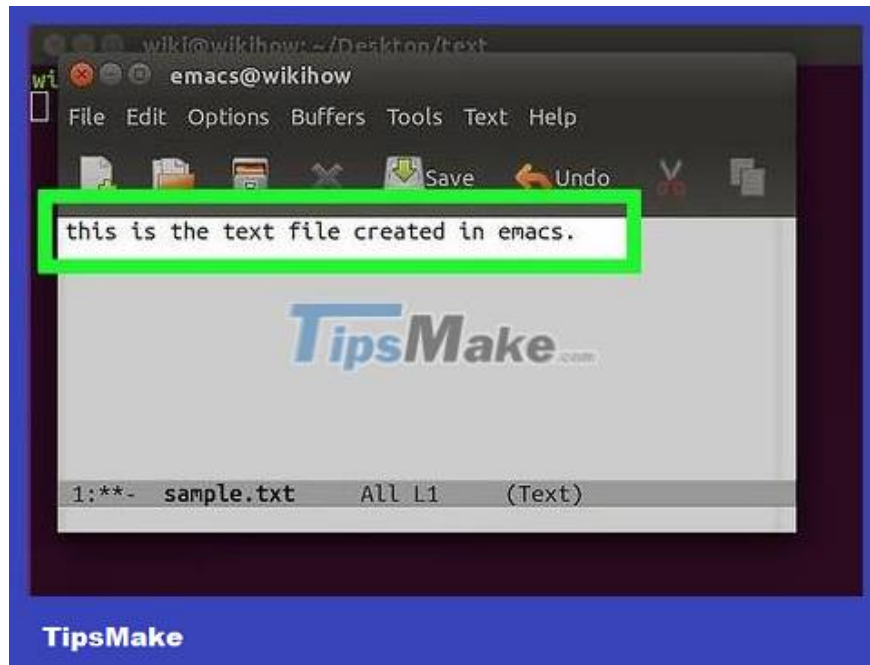


Learn Emacs commands. Emacs has a wealth of powerful commands that allow you to navigate documents, look up related or supporting information, manipulate text, and understand code. These commands are divided into two types: Control commands and Meta commands.

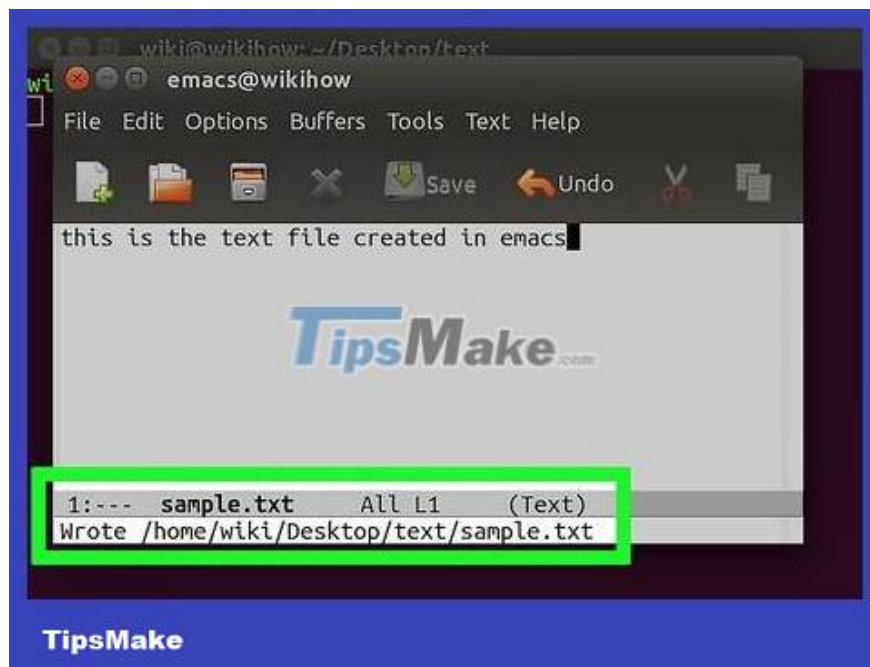
The Control Command has the form: C- . To execute a Control command, you hold down the key `Ctrl` while pressing the specified letter key (for example `Ctrl` and `A`).

The Meta (or Exit) command has the form: M- or `ESC` . The letter "M" refers to a key `Alt` or keys `Esc` on a computer, as not all computers have keys `Alt`.

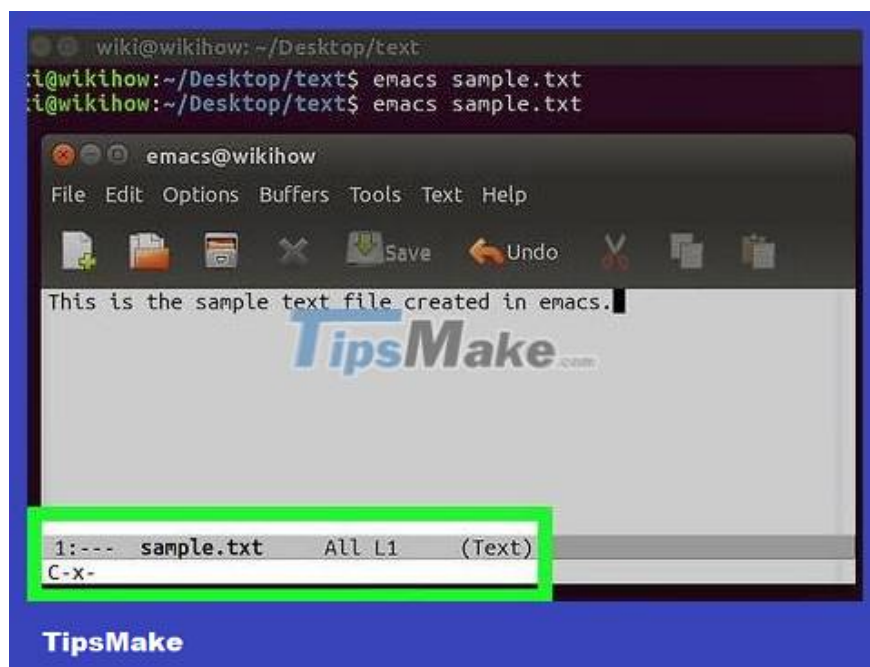
A command written as follows C-a b (or M-a b) requires you to hold down the key `Ctrl` (or `Alt` or `Esc`) while simultaneously pressing the first key (e.g. key `a`), release both keys, and then immediately press the second key (e.g. key `b`).



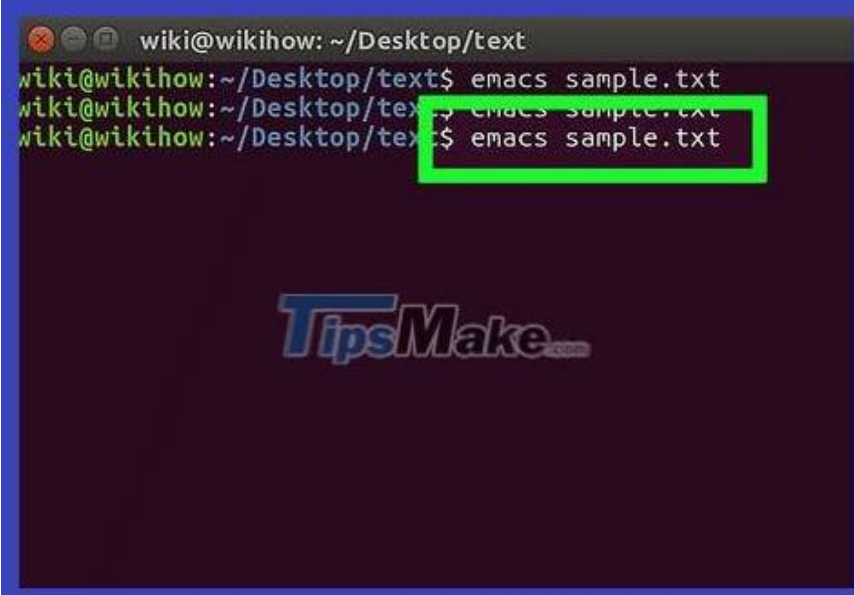
Enter text. You can type text as you would any other document. To save the line of text you just typed and move to the next line, press `Enter`.



Press the **Ctrl+X** key , then press again **S**. This is the file saving operation.



Press the **Ctrl+X** key , then press **Ctrl+C** again . This exits the Emacs editing software and returns to the menu in Terminal. The text file is saved under the name you just set in this directory.



```
wiki@wikiphow: ~/Desktop/text
wiki@wikiphow:~/Desktop/text$ emacs sample.txt
wiki@wikiphow:~/Desktop/text$ emacs sample.txt
wiki@wikiphow:~/Desktop/text$ emacs sample.txt
```

The image shows a terminal window with a dark background and a blue border. The window title is "wiki@wikiphow: ~/Desktop/text". The terminal output shows three lines of the command "emacs sample.txt" being entered and executed. The second and third lines are highlighted with a green rectangular box. A "TipsMake.com" watermark is visible in the center of the terminal window. The "TipsMake" logo is also present at the bottom left of the blue border.

Open the text file again. To open the file, you enter the command `emacs t?p.txt` into Terminal. As long as you're in the directory where the file is, this command can open the file in Emacs, so you can continue editing if you want.

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