

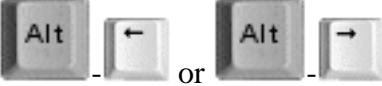





# Linux keyboard shortcuts you should know about


October 29, 2006 at 4:58 am · Filed under [Linux](#)


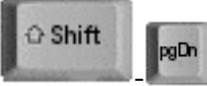


Linux has many keyboard shortcuts. Knowing them makes using Linux much easier.


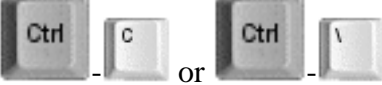
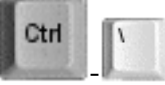


## Console/terminal

-  - shuts down computer
-  ( , , , ...) - switch to  $n$ -th console
-  or  - switch to next/previous virtual terminal
-  - locks terminal input/output - allows to read console contents when output is going too fast. To unlock, press **Scroll Lock** once again.





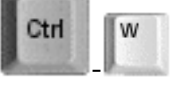
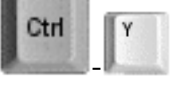






Alternatively, **Scroll Lock** can be enabled using  and disabled with

. **Try last shortcut if your console hangs for unknown reason** - it happened to me many times that I've locked it accidentally by pressing **CTRL-S**.

-  and  - scrolls console buffer up/down. Works also when  is enabled. After changing the terminal (  ) buffer contents is erased and it is impossible to scroll it.


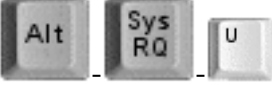
-  - screen refresh
-  or  - kills current task
-  - stands for EOF (End-of-file). If you type it on an empty command line, it will quit bash. This is so much faster than typing *exit*
-  - pause process. Use commands: **bg** to run in background or **fg** to run in foreground.






## Bash & command-line

-  - moves cursor to beginning of command line.
-  - moves cursor to end of command line.
-  - clears command line from cursor position to end of line.
-  - clears command line from cursor position to beginning of line.
-  - clears word to the left
-  - will paste in anything that was deleted by  or 
-  or  -  - **command-line autocompletion**. Automatically completes current command line.  
If autocompletion script is enabled, then also options and applications parameters are autocompleted.
-  - followed by characters will do a incremental search of the previous command history

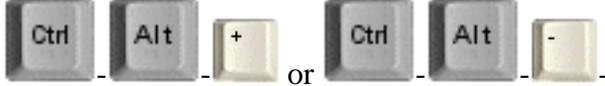



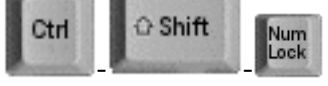







## Kernel shortcuts

Following shortcuts must be enabled in kernel, they also must be enabled using proc interface (*echo 1 > /proc/sys/kernel/sysrq*).


-  - sync all mounted filesystem. Data in buffers is immediately written to disks.
-  - remounts mounted filesystems read-only



-  - performs immediate reboot. Don't do it without syncing and unmounting as it can cause massive filesystem corruption
- , then , then  - attempts to sync all mounted filesystems, remounts them read-only and immediately reboots computer. **Fastest way to reboot Linux.**
-  - prints out list of other SysRQ functions.

## X-Windows shortcuts

-  or  - changes screen resolution (higher/lower). Only if X-Windows server is configured for multiple resolutions.
-  - kill X-server. Running applications will be terminated.
-  - **xkill** - click an application to kill it.
-  will turn the keypad on the keyboard into the mouse, so you can control the mouse from keyboard. Keys  and  on the numpad select left mouse click and right mouse click respectively. Mouse click is done by  on the numpad.
-  ( , , , ... ) - switches to  $n$ -th text console.

## KDE shortcuts

-  - direct shutdown
-  - direct reboot

-   - Starts the run command box. Type a application executable to launch it, folder name to open it, filename to use an appropriate program to launch it, url to go to it in konqueror and any of the numerous web shortcuts(gg, wp) defined by konqueror to activate them.

Do you know any other shortcuts that are worth to know?

[Permalink](#)

## 55 Comments

### 1. [Nikhil](#) said,

October 29, 2006 @ [5:30 am](#)

FOR KDE

Ctrl+Alt+Shift+PageDN -> direct shutdown

Ctrl+Alt+Shift+PageUP -> direct reboot

Alt+F2 -> The god of KDE shortcuts. Starts the run command box. Type a application executable to launch it, folder name to open it, filename to use an appropriate program to launch it, url to go to it in konqueror and any of the numerous web shortcuts(gg, wp) defined by konqueror to activate them. And u can use most kde alias protocols to

### 2. [michuk](#) said,

October 29, 2006 @ [2:13 pm](#)

CTRL+Bksp — kill X-server. Running applications will be terminated.  
It shoud be CTRL+ALT+Bksp

### 3. [pio](#) said,

October 29, 2006 @ [4:39 pm](#)

Michnuk: thanks for pointing out this mistake, fixed.

### 4. [Vivek](#) said,

October 29, 2006 @ [9:40 pm](#)

Dont forget...

Ctrl-Z to pause and thereafter bg or fg to run the process in background or foreground..

Ctrl-L clears the console screen ( actually a FORM FEED code )  
Ctrl-\ kills apps

On bash...

Ctrl-R followed by characters will do a incremental search of the previous command history

**5. [Harel Malka](#) said,**

October 29, 2006 @ [11:24 pm](#)

Best key ever ;o):

CTRL + R and then start typing the beginning of a command you used last week:  
It will cycle through history. Your very own flux capacitor.

**6. [lfs](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [4:12 am](#)

ctrl-shift-numLock will turn the keypad on the keyboard into the mouse. the 5 key clicks, and the / and \* and - keys at the top are the mouse buttons that 5 clicks for, respectively.  
so you can control the mouse from the keyboard.

**7. [Wooga](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [5:51 am](#)

What about CTRL + C to kill programs?

**8. [david](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [5:58 am](#)

Don't forget:  
ctrl-alt- to switch between virtual terminals.  
alt-tab - switch between applications

**9. [chad](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [6:01 am](#)

I think that if you hit CTRL+ALT+F7 while running X window environment it switches back to the virtual console, and CTRL+ALT+F8 switches back to X env

**10. Paul said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [6:53 am](#)

Don't want to be a total noob but what is the "Virtual Terminal".

I access my servers using Putty and often have a few sessions open. Would be great if there was a quick switch. Sort of like screen but with ctrl keys.

**11. [blog.teranetworks.de](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [8:40 am](#)

**Linux Keyboard Shortcuts...**

Pio's blog features a nice write up of some useful linux shortcuts. Some of them even I didn't know about

Check it out. There is also some nice other stuff in his blog like a linux flash 9 vs flash 7 benchmark. Definitely worth a look.

....

**12. srikar said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [9:14 am](#)

You forgot xkill - ctrl+alt+esc

**13. daniel said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [9:47 am](#)

it'll be more correct to say that console shortcuts are actually readline key bindings, for those who didn't enable readline for their shell would be completely confused.

**14. AAM said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [10:00 am](#)

Great article, loved the keyboard letter graphics, where did you get them from?

**15. [Aidan Kehoe](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [10:29 am](#)

Ctrl + Y on a command line will 'yank' (paste) the last text you 'killed' with Ctrl + K or Ctrl + W.

## **16. Andrew said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [10:55 am](#)

Another addition to the history shortcut.

Hit CTRL+R and type in a few characters to match the last command that matches your pattern, you can then hit CTRL+R again to match previous patterns.

CTRL+Y will paste in anything that was deleted by any of delete shortcuts (CTRL+[Y, W, K]).

Type man bash and search for "Readline Command Names" - there are numerous other nifty bash related shortcuts for your perusal.

## **17. [chrak](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [11:01 am](#)

some of these are TTY stuff and some of them are for bash. BTW its alt+Fkey not alt+Fn+Fkey..

## **18. OGRE said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [12:07 pm](#)

Under X-window: Ctrl-Alt-Esc brings up xkill, and you can kill runaway windows with it. Usually the cursor looks like a black skull.

## **19. Doc. said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [12:18 pm](#)

Are there any keyboard shortcuts for

- switching workspaces
- switching keyboard layouts

## **20. [Moving at darkbase.org](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [12:41 pm](#)

[...] Linux keyboard shortcuts you should know about [...]

**21. [Dave](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [1:03 pm](#)

ctrl-shift-numLock will turn the keypad on the keyboard into the mouse.

Brilliant!!! We've got a server with a broken mouse port that's always been awkward to use, thanks.

**22. [Ecco](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [1:28 pm](#)

Hi,

By the way, the shortcut I keep using is Ctrl-D. This one is priceless. It stands for "End-of-File" (aka EOF). If you type it on an empty command line, it will quit bash. This is so much faster than typing "exit".

**23. [amit](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [1:28 pm](#)

hi

this is a really nice blog...quiet helpful to the s/q industry  
thanks

**24. [lugo](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [1:34 pm](#)

strg+shift+ -> switches workspaces  
"->" means cursor right/left

**25. [meneame.net](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [1:58 pm](#)

**Atajos de teclado en Linux...**

Una recopilación de algunos atajos de teclado útiles en linux cuando no te arrancan las X....

**26. [Jim](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [2:51 pm](#)



For me, Ctrl-U kills the \*entire\* line, whereas ctrl-W kills everything to the left. I've tried this in konsole and on a virtual console.

**27. Jim said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [2:51 pm](#)

(also, Ctrl-E moves the cursor to the end of the line).

**28. [Rory](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [4:03 pm](#)

On an Apple iBook, control and alt are beside each other, I keep accidentally killing X while using Control-Backspace. You can disable Control-Alt-Backspace by putting  
Section "ServerFlags"  
Option "DontZap" "yes"  
EndSection

in your xorg.conf.

**29. sloan said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [5:37 pm](#)

And Ctrl-A moves the cursor to the front of the line.

**30. sloan said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [5:43 pm](#)

Also a very helpful command if you know that you recently used a command and would like to run it again you can type ..... ! and the first few letters of the command and the shell will find the last command that you typed and complete the command for you. Here is an example. For adding a default gateway ....

```
#route add default gw 192.168.0.1
```

to complete this command again all you would need to type would be

```
# ! rou
```

The shell will look in the .history file and find the last command that started with rou and complete it for you.

A great! timesaver

**31. [Ebola](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [6:10 pm](#)

Cool reference, and extremely useful, but ctrl alt del reboots your computer rather than shutting it down. Even though it does shut the operating system down it causes the computer to reboot, so I wouldn't say it's a true shutdown.

**32. [vacore.monopolio.com.mx » Blog Archive » Atajos por teclado.](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [6:17 pm](#)

[...] Regresando a Linux, encuentre una página en donde se recopilan varios atajos de teclado, tanto para consola como para el ambiente gráfico. La verdad, había algunos que desconocía o ya no me acordaba, pero que en ciertas ocasiones me hubieran facilitado parte del trabajo. [...]

**33. [xore](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [7:31 pm](#)

“For me, Ctrl-U kills the \*entire\* line, whereas ctrl-W kills everything to the left. I've tried this in konsole and on a virtual console.”  
You're wrong.  
Ctrl-U Kills words, and Ctrl-W kills the entire line

**34. [usucapiao](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [7:47 pm](#)

Very usefull!  
I'll link up to this...

**35. [Steven Mocking](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [11:15 pm](#)

Another useful one you might want to add:

Ctrl+V - Add the next character to the command line literally. Examples include newline and ^D character. Also works for everything you can run on a tty, including cat, vim and echo.

**36. [gianni](#) said,**

October 30, 2006 @ [11:28 pm](#)

as already said, CTRL+ALT+LEFT or CTRL+ALT+RIGHT to switch between workspaces

**37. [its about time» Blog Archive » links for 2006-10-30](#) said,**

October 31, 2006 @ [2:27 am](#)

[...] Linux keyboard shortcuts you should know about » Pio's Blog Extermely useful! (tags: linux keyboard shortcuts tips tricks shell reference howto os bash)  
[...]

**38. Ram Sambamurthy said,**

October 31, 2006 @ [6:16 am](#)

Ctrl-Alt-Esc to kill an application does not work in Gnome! Someone said here that the cursor changes to a skull, but nothing happened. Any ideas?

**39. [JP Loh](#) said,**

October 31, 2006 @ [7:22 am](#)

ctrl+d - logs out the user (from the console, sudo, su, mysql console, psql console, etc)

**40. GB said,**

November 2, 2006 @ [4:12 am](#)

move mouse to start button -> click! -> point to "shut down computer" -> click "turn off"... install linux!

**41. Adam said,**

November 3, 2006 @ [6:19 am](#)

Ctrl+Shift+Alt+Left and Ctrl+Shift+Alt+Right

Drags focused window to other workspaces. A nice way to hide music or things that you don't need to see.

Tab+Tab (double tab) lists autocomplete options except in tsh, this is Ctrl+D in tsh.

**42. [Lixo@net » Blog Archive » Teclas de Atalho - Linux](#) said,**

November 3, 2006 @ [9:30 pm](#)

[...] Lista de Combinações [...]

**43. [Keyboard shortcuts revisited » Pio's Blog](#) said,**

November 7, 2006 @ [12:14 am](#)

[...] Few days ago I have posted summary of Linux shortcuts that are worth to remember. This article got very large number of readers and great number of comments. [...]

**44. [TheJoe](#) said,**

November 11, 2006 @ [9:51 pm](#)

Also in Fedora Core with GNOME, Alt-F2 runs the command box.. And it's extremely usefull!!

Joe

**45. [سردال « من هنا وهناك](#) said,**

November 13, 2006 @ [7:31 pm](#)

[...] اختصارات لوحة المفاتيح لنظام لينكس [...]

**46. Pitch said,**

November 14, 2006 @ [12:39 am](#)

Thanks for the great site. I'm using putty from windows to get to a unix network. Once in I change to csh (from ksh). CTRL-U (and W and) do the same thing and clear the whole line but CTRL-K works. Any knowledge on this? It would be nice if someone had a quick fix. The program is literally an executable on my desktop and is not a shortcut, but I did notice that WinSCP-3 has a putty key generator, but WinSCP-3 was installed at a later time and is probably not the same as the one on my desktop.

**47. kate said,**

November 14, 2006 @ [3:02 am](#)

Hi, and thanks. I am trying to learn Linux on my own and this should make my time a breeze.

**48. [Ray](#) said,**

November 17, 2006 @ [10:58 am](#)

Thanks for your job. Hopefully you don't mind that I translate this passage in to Chinese and put it into my blog.

I leave a link for your blog and to this passage at the beginning of my translation:  
<http://www.lirui.name/post/22.html>

And by the way I think it should be "X-Window" instead of "X-Windows". The "s" behind the X-Window does not exist in Linux.

周末愉快！ (This means have a nice weekend!)

**49. [Melody](#) said,**

November 22, 2006 @ [3:11 am](#)

Hi, I have red hat linux on a laptop... (I'm also a beginner at linux x\_x)  
I don't know if it's the difference of laptop keyboard settings, or if there's something I need to enable in linux, I can't get any of these short-cut commands to work... help? anyone?

**50. [Myglobalblog » Blog Archive » Life has shortcuts](#) said,**

November 25, 2006 @ [9:28 am](#)

[...] [Url.Site.Linux.Tutorials.linux shortcuts](#), what are they and what do they mean [...]

**51. [Tureba](#) said,**

November 27, 2006 @ [6:19 pm](#)

On KDE (and possibly on other window managers):  
Ctrl+Tab = switch to the next workspace  
Ctrl+Shift+Tab = switch to the previous workspace

Also, on any window manager:  
Alt+Tab = switch to the next program  
Alt+Shift+Tab = switch to the previous program

Last one, on forms:  
Tab = switch to the next field (as expected)  
Shift+Tab = switch to the previous field (\_very\_ useful)

Tureba

**52. [每点博刻 - Dedian's Talking @ every day » links for 2006-11-28](#) said,**

November 28, 2006 @ [3:17 am](#)

[...] Linux keyboard shortcuts (tags: Linux shortcut keyborad shell) This entry is filed under Del.icio.us. You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2.0 feed. You can leave a response, or trackback from your own site. Leave a Reply [...]

**53. Joe R said,**

December 2, 2006 @ [11:48 am](#)

The suggested method for doing a kernel reboot using the SysRq key is to remember "[Raising Skinny Elephants Is Utterly Boring](#)". In order, that would be

SysRq + Alt + R, S, E, I, U, B

allowing pauses between each and holding down Alt and SysRq for each of them.

Thoroughly useful for a kernel panic, but it depends on whether the "Magic SysRq Key" has been enabled in the kernel.

**54. [Rowan Rodrik van der Molen](#) said,**

December 25, 2006 @ [5:56 am](#)

Thanks for the comprehensive list.

The shortcuts listed under "Bash & command line" are actually readline shortcuts and as such available in many more programs (such as gdb, python, mysql, psql, etc.).

Like many other people, I've compiled a list of a number of the default readline shortcuts. Mine can be found at [www.bigsnoke.us/readline/shortcuts](http://www.bigsnoke.us/readline/shortcuts).

**55. Ian Stephen said,**

December 30, 2006 @ [3:37 am](#)

alt-esc gives command completion possibilities same as tab-tab. Done at a blank command line one can learn many new commands!