

Helix: A "Post-modern" Text Editor

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About Helix

- Minimal terminal-based text editor
- Core: a mixture of Vim and Kakoune (another TUI text editor)
- Open-source, written in Rust
- In active development
 - Expect some bugs
 - Limited documentation/ecosystem compared to other editors
 - Looking for contributors!



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Key features

- Batteries included: built-in LSP, tree-sitter support, file picker, etc.
- Uses a "selection → verb" editing model
 - First select text, then say what to do with it
 - Opposite of vim's "verb → selection" model; to delete a word after your cursor:
 - Vim: `dw` (delete word)
 - Helix: `wd` (select next word, then delete it)
- Multiple "modes", each with different purpose
- "Multiple cursors": allows editing in multiple positions simultaneously

Helix compared to [...]

- Vim/Neovim
 - Many commands use same keys... order of invocation is just inverted
 - No need to learn a programming language to customize
 - Plugins currently not supported, though support planned
- Kakoune
 - More feature-rich
 - More traction generated, rapidly-growing community ⇒ better support in the future
- VS Code/traditional GUI editors
 - Minimalistic
 - Faster/less resource-heavy
 - Missing some IDE features
 - Learning curve

Getting started

- Registered in some distro package managers, generic binaries available
- Optionally configurable through a `.toml` file
 - Can change color theme, keybinds, some behavior
- Includes a "tutor" for a tutorial of the basics: `hx --tutor`
- LSP servers must be installed manually (if you want LSP support)

Packaging status	
Alpine Linux 3.16	22.03
Alpine Linux Edge	22.08.1
AOSC	22.08.1
Arch	22.08.1
Arch Linux 32 i686	22.05
Arch Linux 32 pentium4	0.5.0
Arch Linux ARM aarch64	22.08.1
Arch Linux ARM armv7h	22.08.1
AUR	r3147.eef9...
Chocolatey	22.5
DPorts	22.03
FreeBSD Ports	22.08.1
Gentoo overlay GURU	22.08.1
Homebrew	22.08.1
LiGurOS stable	22.05

LiGurOS develop	22.08.1
MacPorts	22.08.1
Manjaro Stable	22.05
Manjaro Testing	22.08.1
Manjaro Unstable	22.08.1
nixpkgs stable 21.11	0.5.0
nixpkgs stable 22.05	22.03
nixpkgs unstable	22.08
openSUSE Tumbleweed	22.05
Parabola	22.08.1
pkgsrsrc current	22.03
RPM Sphere	22.03
Scoop	22.08.1
T2 SDE	22.05
Termux	22.08.1
Void Linux x86_64	22.08.1
Wikidata	22.03

Basics

- Start in normal mode when you open a file
 - Can enter other modes from normal mode e.g. `i` to enter insert mode at the cursor
 - `Esc` to go back to normal mode
- Most movements also select the text moved past
- Most of these can be prefixed with a number to say how many times to do it

Other modes

- Select mode (v) for making complex selections
- Match mode (m) for selecting/editing text semantically
- View mode (z) for changing the view
- Goto mode (g) for moving around quickly
- Command mode (:) for issuing commands
- Window mode (Ctrl-w) for doing stuff with windows
- Space mode (Space) for miscellaneous actions

Multiple cursors

- C to create new cursor below current one
- s to put cursors on regexes in selected text
- , to remove all additional cursors
- Alt-, to remove a specific cursor; (and) to cycle for which to remove

```
function combineStrings(str1, str2) {  
    return str1 + " - " + str2;  
}
```


A few other neat editing features

- Jumplist for large jumps to different code sections
- . to perform previous edit again
- Macros - record stuff and replay it

Questions?