

# Formatting Posts With VI

**Source:** <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/alt.linux/2004-09/0175.html>

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I just stumbled across this little 'trick' and thought it was worth passing on.

What the following allows you to do is to simply hit "v" while you are in command mode, and it will re-format the paragraph your cursor is currently on, to a maximum line length of 75 characters, splitting and filling as it works. (The -c option tells it to leave an indented first line alone.)

(You can change the line length; see man fmt.)

In your ~/.exerc, type the following:

```
map v {0!}fmt -c^V^V^V^M
```

(For the newbies: "^V" means hold down Ctrl and press v)

What you will see in vi is:

```
map v {0!}fmt -c^V^M
```

With just cat or less you'll see:

```
map v {0!}fmt -c
```

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This is *really* handy if you are writing anything and have to go back and add or delete words in a sentence near the beginning of a long paragraph. Do the editing, go back to command mode, and hit "v" and 99 times out of a 100 the paragraph is okay again. If it isn't perfect, only a few keystrokes will fix the problem, compared to the tedium of doing the whole thing manually.

AC