

Delete Lines Beginning With a Character In Vim

Because Linux is heavily documented “inline” by including many comments in the configuration files, I often make a copy of the original config file then strip all of the comments out of the file I am using for increased readability and to save storage space. For example, a Raspberry Pi uses Debian but has a limited amount of disk space.

First I'm going to show how to remove all lines that begin with a "normal" character. Let's say that you want to remove all lines that start with the letter "A". You'll need to be in command mode first to do this.

```
:g/^A/d
```

In my case, I wanted to remove all lines that started with a dollar sign: \$. This is a special character, see below, so it has to be escaped with a backslash.

```
:g/^\$/d
```

If you want to remove the comments from a bash script, then you need to remove all lines that start with a number sign (aka hash): #. This works in a similar fashion to the command above.

```
:g/^\#/d
```

The last thing I wanted to do to my file was to remove all blank lines. Here you see the dollar sign used with its special meaning.

```
:g/^$/d.
```

For example, to delete all lines containing "profile" (remove the /d to show the lines that the command will delete):

```
:g/profile/d
```

The next example shows use of \| "or" to delete all lines except those that contain "error" or "warn" or "fail."

```
:v/error\|warn\|fail/d
```