

Sidebar

Programming · VS Code Editor Settings Cheat Sheet

The editor.* family of VS Code settings: the exact ID to search for, what it does, and its default. Defaults shown are for a recent Windows install; Preferences: Open Default Settings (JSON) shows yours.

FINDING & CHANGING SETTINGS

- Ctrl+, Opens the Settings editor (search box at the top)
- Preferences: Open User Settings (JSON) Command Palette (Ctrl+Shift+P); edits your settings.json directly
- Preferences: Open Workspace Settings (JSON) Project-only settings, saved in .vscode/settings.json
- Preferences: Open Default Settings (JSON) Read-only list of every setting with its default value
- @modified Search filter: shows only settings you have changed
- @id:editor.tabSize Search filter: jump to one exact setting ID
- @lang:python Search filter: settings that can be set per language

FONT & CURSOR

- editor.fontSize Font size in pixels (default 14 on Windows/Linux, 12 on macOS)
- editor.fontFamily Comma-separated font list, e.g. "Cascadia Code, Consolas, monospace"
- editor.fontLigatures true joins symbols like => into one glyph (default false ; needs a ligature font)
- editor.lineHeight 0 = automatic (default); a small number is a multiple, a larger one is pixels
- editor.cursorStyle line (default), block, underline, line-thin, block-outline, underline-thin
- editor.cursorBlinking blink (default), smooth, phase, expand, solid
- editor.cursorSmoothCaretAnimation off (default), explicit, on : the caret glides instead of jumping
- editor.smoothScrolling true animates scrolling (default false)
- editor.mouseWheelZoom true : Ctrl + mouse wheel changes the font size (default false)

SETTING SCOPE & PRECEDENCE

- User Applies to every project on this machine
- Workspace Overrides User for the open project (.vscode/settings.json)
- "[python]": { ... } Language block in settings.json ; overrides for one language only
- // comments settings.json is JSON with comments, so comments and trailing commas are allowed

INDENTATION

- editor.tabSize Width of a tab in spaces (default 4)
- editor.insertSpaces true (default): pressing Tab inserts spaces, not a tab character
- editor.detectIndentation true (default): VS Code guesses tabs/spaces from the open file and overrides the two above
- editor.autoIndent How new lines are indented: full (default), advanced, brackets, keep, none
- editor.guides.indentation Vertical indent guide lines (default true)
- Status bar: Spaces: 4 Click it to switch one file between tabs and spaces, or to convert its indentation

WRAPPING & LAYOUT

<code>editor.wordWrap</code>	<code>off</code> (default), <code>on</code> , <code>wordWrapColumn</code> , <code>bounded</code>
<code>editor.wordWrapColumn</code>	Column used by <code>wordWrapColumn</code> and <code>bounded</code> (default 80)
<code>editor.rulers</code>	Vertical lines at given columns, e.g. <code>[80, 120]</code> (default none)
<code>editor.lineNumbers</code>	<code>on</code> (default), <code>off</code> , <code>relative</code> , <code>interval</code>
<code>editor.minimap.enabled</code>	The code overview strip on the right (default <code>true</code>)
<code>editor.scrollBeyondLastLine</code>	<code>true</code> (default) lets you scroll past the last line
<code>editor.folding</code>	Show fold arrows in the gutter (default <code>true</code>)
<code>editor.stickyScroll.enabled</code>	Pins the current function/class headers at the top while scrolling (<code>true</code> by default in recent versions)

WHITESPACE & BRACKETS

<code>editor.renderWhitespace</code>	<code>none</code> , <code>boundary</code> , <code>selection</code> (default), <code>trailing</code> , <code>all</code>
<code>editor.renderControlCharacters</code>	Show invisible control characters (default <code>true</code>)
<code>editor.bracketPairColorization.enabled</code>	Matching brackets in matching colours (default <code>true</code>)
<code>editor.guides.bracketPairs</code>	Lines joining bracket pairs: <code>false</code> (default), <code>true</code> , <code>"active"</code>
<code>editor.matchBrackets</code>	Highlights the partner of the bracket next to the cursor (default <code>always</code>)
<code>editor.renderLineHighlight</code>	Highlight the current line: <code>none</code> , <code>gutter</code> , <code>line</code> (default), <code>all</code>

FORMATTING & SAVING ACTIONS

`editor.formatOnSave` Format the file whenever you save (default `false`)

`editor.formatOnPaste` Format pasted text (default `false`)

`editor.formatOnType` Format as you type, e.g. after `;` or Enter (default `false`)

`editor.defaultFormatter` The extension ID that formats files, e.g. `"esbenp.prettier-vscode"` (default none)

`editor.codeActionsOnSave` Run fixes on save, e.g. `{ "source.organizeImports": "explicit" }` (default `{}`)

`Shift+Alt+F` Format the whole document right now (Windows/Linux)

SUGGESTIONS & TYPING HELP

`editor.quickSuggestions` Pop-up suggestions while typing: on in code, off in comments and strings by default

`editor.acceptSuggestionOnEnter` `on` (default), `smart`, `off`: whether Enter accepts the suggestion

`editor.suggestSelection` Which suggestion is pre-selected: `first` (default), `recentlyUsed`, `recentlyUsedByPrefix`

`editor.snippetSuggestions` Where snippets sit in the list: `top`, `bottom`, `inline` (default), `none`

`editor.tabCompletion` `off` (default), `on`, `onlySnippets`: Tab accepts a suggestion

`editor.autoClosingBrackets` `languageDefined` (default), `always`, `beforeWhitespace`, `never`

`editor.linkedEditing` `true`: renaming an HTML tag also renames its partner (default `false`)

`editor.inlayHints.enabled` Inline hints such as parameter names: `on`, `onUnlessPressed`, `offUnlessPressed`, `off`

A REASONABLE STARTER SET (MY SUGGESTIONS, NOT DEFAULTS)

`"editor.formatOnSave": true` Consistent formatting without thinking about it (pick a formatter first)

`"editor.minimap.enabled": false` More room, and rarely missed

`"editor.renderWhitespace": "boundary"` Shows stray double spaces without clutter

`"editor.rulers": [100]` A gentle line-length marker

`"editor.guides.bracketPairs": "active"` Helps read nested code

`"editor.smoothScrolling": true` Easier on the eyes

`"editor.mouseWheelZoom": true` Quick zoom for presentations and tired eyes

`"[markdown]": { "editor.wordWrap": "on" }` Wrap only prose files, not code

WHY DID MY TAB SIZE CHANGE BY ITSELF?

`editor.detectIndentation` is true by default, so VS Code looks at each file and uses whatever indentation it finds there, ignoring `editor.tabSize` and `editor.insertSpaces`. If your settings seem to be ignored, set `"editor.detectIndentation": false` or change the indentation from the *Spaces: 4* item in the status bar.

