Cisco Ios Quick Reference Cheat Sheet

INTRODUCTION: MASTERING CISCO IOS ON THE FLY

Navigating Cisco IOS can feel overwhelming, especially when you are under pressure to troubleshoot a network outage or configure a new switch. The command-line interface (CLI) is powerful, but its sheer volume of commands makes it easy to forget the exact syntax for a static route or VLAN assignment. This is exactly where a well-structured **Cisco IOS Quick Reference Cheat Sheet** becomes indispensable. Rather than flipping through thick manuals or searching online forums during a critical moment, having a concise, at-a-glance set of commands can save hours and prevent costly errors.

In this article, we build your very own mental and practical cheat sheet. We will cover essential commands for initial device setup, interface configuration, routing protocols, VLANs, access control lists (ACLs), and troubleshooting. Whether you are a network engineer preparing for the CCNA or an IT professional who occasionally logs into a router or switch, these reminders will keep you efficient and confident in the field. Let us dive into the most frequently used Cisco IOS commands, organized by function.

GETTING STARTED: MODES, NAVIGATION, AND BASIC SETTINGS

Every Cisco IOS interaction begins with understanding device modes. You must know how to move between user EXEC, privileged EXEC, and global configuration mode. Below are the foundational commands every engineer should have on their **Cisco IOS Quick Reference Cheat Sheet**.

Accessing and Exiting Modes

- **enable** – Switch from user EXEC mode to privileged EXEC mode (`Router> enable`).
- **disable** – Return to user EXEC mode from privileged EXEC.
- **configure terminal** (or **conf t**) – Enter global configuration mode from privileged EXEC.
- **end** or **Ctrl+Z** – Exit configuration mode and return to privileged EXEC.
- **exit** – Moves back one level; in global config, returns to privileged EXEC.

Basic System Configuration

When you unpack a new device, the first steps are setting a hostname, configuring passwords, and enabling remote access. Use these commands as a checklist:

1. **hostname [name]** – Set the device name (e.g., `Router(config)# hostname HQ-Router`).
2. **enable secret [password]** – Set an encrypted enable password (preferred over `enable password`).
3. **line console 0** – Enter console line configuration.
4. **password [password]** – Set the console password.
5. **login** – Enable password checking on the console.
6. **line vty 0 4** – Enter virtual terminal line configuration for Telnet/SSH.
7. **transport input ssh telnet** – Specify allowed protocols (SSH is recommended).

Saving and Rebooting

Never forget to commit your changes. The quick reference essentials:

- **write memory** or **copy running-config startup-config** – Save the active configuration to NVRAM.
- **reload** – Reboot the device (use with caution).
- **show running-config** – Display the current active configuration.
- **show startup-config** – Display the saved configuration.

INTERFACE CONFIGURATION AND IP ADDRESSING

Without interfaces configured, a router or switch is just a box of metal. The following commands form the backbone of any **Cisco IOS Quick Reference Cheat Sheet** for network connectivity.

Configuring an Interface

To set an IP address on a router interface, enter interface configuration mode:

1. **interface [type slot/number]**, e.g., `interface GigabitEthernet0/0`.
2. **ip address [ip-address] [subnet-mask]** – Assign the IPv4 address.

3. **no shutdown** – Enable the interface (by default many interfaces are administratively down).

For a switch, interfaces are typically access or trunk ports. Key switch commands:

- **switchport mode access** – Set the port as an access port.
- **switchport access vlan [vlan-id]** – Assign the access port to a VLAN.
- **switchport mode trunk** – Make the port a trunk.
- **switchport trunk allowed vlan [vlan-list]** – Restrict allowed VLANs on the trunk.

Verification Commands

After configuration, verify with these tried-and-true show commands:

- **show ip interface brief** – Quick summary of all interfaces, IPs, and status.
- **show interfaces [interface]** – Detailed statistics and errors.
- **show vlan brief** – List VLANs and their assigned ports (switch).
- **show interface trunk** – Display trunking details.

ROUTING ESSENTIALS: STATIC AND DYNAMIC

Cisco IOS supports both static and dynamic routing. A good **Cisco IOS Quick Reference Cheat Sheet** should include the most common routing protocol commands.

Static Routing

To add a static route:

`ip route [destination-network] [subnet-mask] [next-hop-ip | exit-interface]`

Example: `ip route 192.168.10.0 255.255.255.0 10.0.0.1`

To remove a route, prepend **no**: `no ip route 192.168.10.0 255.255.255.0 10.0.0.1`

Dynamic Routing – OSPF

OSPF is a widely used link-state protocol. Basic configuration steps:

1. Enter router configuration mode: **router ospf [process-id]** (e.g., `router ospf 1`).
2. Advertise networks: **network [network-address] [wildcard-mask] area [area-id]**.
3. Optionally set router ID: **router-id [x.x.x.x]**.

Common verification commands:

- **show ip ospf neighbor** – Check adjacency states.
- **show ip route** – Display routing table.
- **show ip protocols** – Summarise routing protocol parameters.

Dynamic Routing – EIGRP

EIGRP (now classic) can still be found in many networks:

1. **router eigrp [as-number]**.
2. **network [network-address] [wildcard-mask]** – Advertise networks.
3. **no auto-summary** – Disable automatic summarisation (recommended).

Verification: **show ip eigrp neighbors**, **show ip eigrp topology**.

SECURITY AND ACCESS CONTROL LISTS (ACLS)

Network security starts with ACLs. Remember the implicit deny at the end of every ACL. Here are the cheat sheet essentials.

Standard and Extended ACLs

- **access-list [number] [permit | deny] [source] [wildcard]** – Standard ACL (numbers 1-99, 1300-1999).
- **access-list [number] [permit | deny] [protocol] [source] [source-wildcard] [destination] [dest-wildcard] [eq port]** – Extended ACL (numbers 100-199, 2000-2699).

Example: `access-list 101 permit tcp 192.168.1.0 0.0.0.255 host 10.0.0.100 eq 80`

Applying ACLs

ACLs are applied to interfaces using:

- **ip access-group [acl-number] [in | out]** – Apply in the interface configuration mode.

Also useful: **show access-lists** – View all ACLs and hit counts.

SSH and Management Security

To enable SSH, you need a domain name and RSA keys:

1. **ip domain-name [domain]** – e.g., `ip domain-name example.com` (optional if already set).
2. **crypto key generate rsa modulus [1024 | 2048]** – Generate RSA keys.
3. **line vty 0 4** – Then **transport input ssh** and **login local**.

4. Create local username: **username [name] secret [password]**.

Disable Telnet where possible for security.

TROUBLESHOOTING COMMANDS EVERY ENGINEER NEEDS

When things go wrong, a quick reference can be a lifesaver. Memorise these diagnostics for your **Cisco IOS Quick Reference Cheat Sheet**.

Connectivity Tests

- **ping [ip-address]** – Basic test.
- **traceroute [ip-address]** – Path discovery.
- **telnet [ip-address]** – Test TCP connectivity (if enabled).

Checking CPU and Memory

- **show processes cpu** – CPU utilisation per process.
- **show memory** – Memory usage statistics.
- **show buffers** – Buffer pool information (helpful for packet drops).

Interface Troubleshooting

- **show interfaces [interface]** – Look for input/output errors, CRC, collisions.
- **show interface [interface] statistics** – Detailed packet counts.
- **clear counters [interface]** – Reset interface counters.

Logging and Debugging

Use these carefully in production:

- **show logging** – View system messages.
- **debug [option]** – Enable debug (e.g., **debug ip ospf hello**).
- **undebug all** – Disable all debug sessions (or **u all**).
- **terminal monitor** – Display debug messages on your VTY session.

VLAN AND SPANNING TREE QUICK TIPS

Switching environments require specific commands. Your cheat sheet should include VLAN creation and Spanning Tree Protocol (STP) basics.

VLANs

- **vlan [vlan-id]** – Create VLAN (in global config).
- **name [vlan-name]** – Assign a name.
- **interface vlan [**