

Site

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Links

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Basic Configuration Tutorial

This tutorial is intended for newbies to Quake 2 who wish to create a personal config file that's right for them. In order to help with this process, a basic config file has been provided to use as a starter.

This file contains all the configuration commands we will cover in this tutorial. To download it, click [here](#). Extract this file into your "quake2/baseq2" folder. **Be careful!** This will automatically override all other settings you currently have. If you want to get them back sometime, save the "autoexec.cfg" file from your "quake2/baseq2" folder as "backup.cfg" for later use. If you don't have an "autoexec.cfg" file, backup "config.cfg" instead.

Autoexec.cfg????

The autoexec.cfg file is automatically executed by Quake when it starts up, provided that the file is in the "quake/baseq2" folder. This is the ideal spot for your personal Quake 2 configuration settings.

"Why not config.cfg?" you may ask. The config.cfg file is written by Quake 2 when you set your bindings and controls through the Quake 2 menu. Using an autoexec.cfg is the best way to make sure that your settings are loaded every time Quake 2 starts up.

Basic commands

Before you dive into editing your configuration files, you will need to know some basic console commands. A console command is a command entered into a config file or the game's console, which tells the game what to do. A complete list of console commands for Quake 2 can be found at [here](#).

The first command you will need to learn is the **bind** command. The **bind** command tells Quake to execute a console command when a key is pressed. It is used like this:

```
bind w "+forward"
```

This tells Quake that when the "w" key is pressed, it should execute the **+forward** command. Assigning commands to keys is called "binding" keys.

Another important console command is the **set** command. This command is used to assign values to Quake's internal variables called *cvariables* or simply *cvars*. Cvars are often binary variables. This means that they can have two values, "0" or "1". Binary cvars are mostly used to turn a feature on or off. If the variable is "0", the feature is turned off. If it is "1", the feature is turned on. Using the **set** command with a binary cvar might look like this:

```
set freelook "1"
```

Notice that this command turns the **freelook** cvar on.

Comments

Many people put comments into their config files to make them easier to read. To add a comment, place "//" into your config file. Everything after the two slashes on the same line is a comment and will

not be read by Quake.

Basic Movement

Movement is one of the most important aspects of Quake 2. In order to be able to avoid enemies, you need an efficient method of moving around. This is why many players prefer the "WASD" method. This method uses the keys w, a, s, and d to move forward, left, backward, and right respectively. This method is most effective when the mouse is used for aiming. It may take some getting used to at first, but this method enables players to move about with a freedom not allowed with the default configuration. Let's look at the config. If you downloaded the starter config and extracted it properly, you should be able to find these lines in the "autoexec.cfg" file in your "quake2/baseq2" folder.

```
//Movement settings

set "freelook "1" //Tells quake to use the mouse for aiming
bind w "+forward" //WASD key configuration
      bind a "+moveleft"
      bind s "+back"
      bind d "+moveright"
```

Assigning **freelook** to "1" tells Quake that we want to use the mouse for looking around and aiming. When you start up Quake, if you move the mouse, your player will not move, but your view will change as your player looks around. Use the WASD keys to move around. Practice with these settings for a while. It is well worth it in my opinion.

Jumping and Ducking

Another important movement skill to master is the art of jumping and ducking. These skills will help you to avoid your enemy's shots, as well get into many tough spots. Most players find the spacebar handy for jumping. The starter config uses the "c" key to crouch. If you can work better with different keys for jumping and ducking, feel free to edit the config file. It's more important to have a config you know and can use well than to have a config that is popular. Here's the binds for jumping and ducking from the starter config.

```
bind SPACE "+moveup" //Jump
bind c "+movedown" //Crouch
```

These are pretty self-explanatory. Notice however, that to bind a key to the spacebar, we used the word "SPACE" instead of just a space. This is common for special keys, and we will see more of it later as we move along.

Shooting

It should be obvious by now that moving around a lot doesn't do much good if you can't shoot. In our config, we will use the left mouse button to shoot. Here's how it looks.

```
bind MOUSE1 "+attack" //Fire current
                    weapon
```

That's all there is to shooting. Notice the "MOUSE1" to signify the left mouse button. You may want to remember that the right and middle buttons are "MOUSE2" and "MOUSE3" respectively.

Weapon selection

When it comes to selecting weapons, the wisdom of using the WASD key configuration begins to show. Take a moment to look at the keys surrounding your new movement keys. There are plenty of keys within easy reach that currently aren't doing anything. Hmm, wouldn't it be handy if we could bind one of those keys to use the Rocket Launcher? Then maybe bind another one to the Chaingun, and you could switch back and forth between weapons without having to fumble around with those number keys. Very handy indeed.

Now, you're going to have to do a little thinking for this part. I'm leaving it up to you to decide where you want your weapon switching binds. I'm just here to show you how to implement them. I do have a few suggestions however:

1. Bind the weapons you use most to keys that your fingers can reach most naturally. The "R", "E", "F", and "Q" keys are all fairly natural movements.
2. Do not bind all the weapons in Quake 2 to keys near your hands. I recommend that you keep the number keys bound to weapon selection as *well* as your new binds. That way, you can bind only the weapons you use most and save room near your fingers for other important binds. (Communication binds, aliases, etc.)

Ok, hopefully by now you've thought of some good places to bind your weapons. Now to show you how to do it. In the starter config, I have set up a portion just for binding weapons. I placed empty binds in for all the keys around your fingers, except for "c", which is already used for crouching. All you need to do is put one of the following in the quotes behind the key you wish to bind to.

```

use Blaster
use Shotgun
use Super Shotgun
use Machinegun
use Chaingun
use Grenade Launcher
use Rocket Launcher
use Hyperblaster
use Railgun
use BFG10K

```

Once you're done binding all your weapon selections, save your autoexec.cfg file and start up Quake. Try playing around with your new settings for a while. It is essential that you are familiar with your config before you go into a real battle.

Communication

If you play multiplayer, there may come a time when you want to communicate with the people you are playing with. To accomplish this, Quake has quite a few commands. If you want to type a message to all the players in the game, you should bind a key to the `messagemode` command. I recommend "t" for "talk" because it is easy to remember, but you can place this bind wherever you want on the keyboard.

Once it is bound correctly, if you press the "t" key, a prompt will appear in the upper left corner of your screen and you can type your message. Just press Enter, and your message will be broadcast. Be careful where you choose to type, since all your movement and firing keys are disabled while you are typing your message. If you decide you don't want to type, pressing the Escape key will remove the prompt and let you play normally again.

Quake also has a handy feature that is useful for teamplay games or mods like CTF. It is known as `messagemode2`. This is exactly like `messagemode`, but it only broadcasts the message you type to members of your team. If you never play teamplay mods, it would be senseless to bind this command. Just like weapon selection, you need to be careful where you bind this, if you should

choose to use it. Make it a convenient spot that is easy to remember.

Both `messagemode` and `messagemode2` have corresponding commands for binding specific phrases into your config files. These commands are `say` and `say_team`. These commands would be useful if I wanted to bind a specific phrase to a key. Here are some examples.

```
bind t "messagemode"           //Bring up message prompt
bind y "messagemode2"         //Send a message to my team
    bind p "say Nice Shot!!" //Demonstration of "say"
bind o "say_team Help Me!!"   //Demonstration of "say_team"
```

That should do it for communication. One note however. Quake 2 is a game, not a chat session. If you want to chat to your buddies, use IRC or Usenet. Please use your chat bindings sparingly.

Aliases

Sometimes in more advanced configs, it is necessary to group many commands into one. We do this by creating an *alias*. An alias is a group of commands that are executed by binding the name of the alias to a key. Here is a rather useful alias that zooms in the player's view to make it easier to aim long-distance shots.

```
//Zoom alias
alias +zoom "set fov 45;set sensitivity 6"
alias -zoom "set fov 90;set sensitivity 12"
bind MOUSE2 "+zoom" // right mouse button to zoom in
```

This may all look like a foreign language to you, so I'll explain it step by step. The first line declares "+zoom" as an alias. The part of the line in quotes are the commands executed by this alias. Notice that the two commands are separated by a semicolon. An important thing to note in this alias are the "+" and "-" before each alias. When you declare an alias with a plus sign, that means it will run the alias when the key is pressed. A minus sign means that it will run the alias when the key is released.

Now let's find out what those commands do. The `fov` command sets the Field of Vision that you have. The default setting is 90 degrees. You can set your fov all the way up to 180, but it causes the game to look very strange. The advantage of a higher fov is that you can see enemies to the side of you easier. Many players have their fovs set to 110 or higher. However, in this alias, we set the fov down to 45 degrees. This causes a "zooming" effect, which lets us see things that are farther away more clearly.

The `sensitivity` command changes the sensitivity of the mouse. Since we are reducing our field of vision, we need to reduce our mouse sensitivity so we can aim more easily. The "-zoom" alias changes our settings back to the default fov and sensitivity. Notice that we have to bind our key to the "+zoom" alias in order to get this to work properly.

What if we decide that it isn't convenient to hold down a mouse button to zoom. Maybe we want to create an alias that would let us press a key to zoom, and then press that key again when we are ready to go back to normal view. To modify our above alias, we could change the "+zoom" alias to "zoom_on" and the "-zoom" alias to "zoom_off". Now we need to add another command to the end of each alias. We want to bind the MOUSE2 key to "zoom_off" in the first alias, and bind it to "zoom_on" again in the second alias. Now when we execute the "zoom_on" alias, it changes our fov and sensitivity to our zoomed settings and binds our key to execute the "zoom_off" alias when we press it again. Then the "zoom_off" alias sets everything back to the way it was before. The whole thing might look like this:

```
alias zoom_on "set fov 45;set sensitivity 6;bind MOUSE2 zoom_off"
alias zoom_off "set fov 90;set sensitivity 12;bind MOUSE2 zoom_on"
```

```
bind MOUSE2 "zoom_on" // right mouse button to zoom in
```

This approach is more complicated, but it gives you more insight into how to create aliases. You should know one more thing before you go create your own aliases. In many aliases, it is necessary to use the `wait` command between some of your other commands. This is because Quake can't handle too many commands at once. A `wait` will help Quake sort things out, and it won't slow down your alias too much. If your alias doesn't work correctly at first, try adding some `waits` and see what happens.

Personal Settings

Now it's time for you to do some more work. For some of these settings, you probably won't want to use the settings I've given in the starter config. This is your *personal* config file, so now it's time to make it really personal. Here's the section from the starter config:

```
//Personal preferences
set cl_run "1" //Always run
set sensitivity "12" //Mouse sensitivity
set name "Player" //Replace with your playing name
set skin "male/grunt" //Replace with your skin
set gender "male" //Replace with your gender
```

Let's examine these commands one by one. The `cl_run` cvar is your way of telling Quake whether you want your player to always run, or only to run when you push down a specific key. I have it set to "1" in the starter config, because a walking player is an easier target. However, there are tactical advantages to walking occasionally. When you play multiplayer Quake, you can hear the footsteps of other players, and they can hear yours. When you are walking, your footsteps are not as loud, so walking is handy if you should want to sneak up on someone. If you want to always run, but have a key that will make you walk when it is held down, bind a key to "+speed"

The `sensitivity` command we've already discussed. It controls the sensitivity of your mouse. "12" is the default settings, but you should play around with some different settings and use the one you like best. To change a setting, just type the command in Quake 2's console. The console can be brought up using the "~" key while playing Quake. Press "~" again when you are done entering commands. Commands entered in the console will not be loaded the next time you play Quake. Put the sensitivity you like best in your "autoexec.cfg" file when you are done.

A little note here. Cvars that aren't binary can be set in two ways. You can use the "set [cvar] [value]" notation, as shown in the config above, or you can use them as standalone commands, like "sensitivity 20." The second notation is handy for entering commands from the console, but either way will work just as well.

The `name` command sets the name you use when you play multiplayer Quake. The default is "Player", but you should probably think of something a little more creative. Place your name in your "autoexec.cfg" when you pick one.

The `skin` command is another way to personalize your config. Your "skin" is what the other players in the world see you as. However, in order to see someone's skin, you must have it on your hard drive in the "quake2/baseq2/players/[model name]" folder. The model is what your player is shaped like, and the skin is the covering placed over the model. The value given to the `skin` command should be the model name, then a slash (/) and then the name of the skin. If you want to browse through some of the models that come with Quake, you can go to the "Player Setup" section of the Quake 2 Multiplayer menu. Quake will let you browse through the different models and skins on your hard drive, and show you what they look like. For more outstanding models, go to www.planetquake.com/q2pmp. As usual, place the model/skin you want to use in your "autoexec.cfg" file.

The `gender` command needs little explanation. Your choices are "male", "female", or "none". The main effect of this command is changing the message when you die. Instead of "Player killed himself", you will see "herself" or "itself". If you have trouble identifying your gender, consult your family physician.

Ending Notes

Well, that about does it. Now you know the basics of how to make your own personal Quake 2 config. Please remember to change any settings you wish if you downloaded the starter config. It is intended to help you get used to Quake 2 commands. If you want to see some other creative configs, visit the [Configs](#) section of this page. Until then, have fun and keep fragging!

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