# Quake for Mac: Hell in True 3D

An image from a MacQuake alpha, courtesy of Lion Entertainment.

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It hit, and it hit hard.

Quake, the highly anticipated "true 3D"  first person perspective game from id software, has finally been released. After more than two years of code, hype and tears, id has pulled the 12-gauge shotgun from its surreptitious cloak and blown off the stubborn head of the gaming world.

I know what you want to know. Is Quake as good as the intense hype and speculation? And when will the Macintosh version be completed, and by whom?

That's what I'm here to clear up . Now, no more guesses or secondhand news. I present to you Quake, your personal hell in true 3D.

## What is it?

Quake can best be described as id's introduction to next-generation 3D shoot-em-up games. Featuring a superb 3D engine, lightning fast gameplay, and a whole new era of customizability,   it will definitely be a hit in the Macintosh gaming community. It's 3D single player, net player, and design-your-dream-game software, all in one.

# The PC Release

The release of PC Quake was a bit strange. When id first released Doom for the PC, everyone went wild, and not a negative word was ever uttered. (If one was, that person was immediately shot.) With Quake, things went a bit differently.

As everyone knows, id's former project designer, John Romero, hyped Quake more often than Fat Albert eats.   (Hey hey hey!)   Consequently, users expected a tremendous technological/ gameplay leap over the Quake Test version released on the Internet a few months back (see MDR#6). Of course, users received the basic improvements, but the shareware edition of Quake was totally lacking in bells and whistles. No inventory items or character selection options (a la Hexen) and, still, id clung to its resilient tradition of the non-existent storyline. Newsgroups were immediately beset with posts that included the word "sucks" or some other profanity in the subject line.

So, what was the deal?

First, the hype had drawn many id fanantics into a dreamworld wherein they built up a fantasy of Quake being so mind-boggingly great that it was too much to even comprehend. The shareware version was a blunt hit to the head with a reality sledgehammer.

Second, Quake was a totally different game than most people expected. Originally planned was   a more violent, D&D like game, with puzzles, classes of warriors, etc. Other posts referred to Quake meekly as Doom 3, which wasn't too far off the mark.

And third, the modem code, and internet code in general, was still not fixed, which really pissed people off.

Eventually, when folks actually started to play the game instead of complain about it, something happened. As best I can describe, Quake "grew" on them. They realized that there was just nothing out there like it, and that it was wonderfully customizable. The word "sucks" was soon replaced by "rocks." Quake had made it's mark.


## True 3D

The Quake engine is one of the very few "true 3D" engines in existence, and it will more than likely be the VERY FIRST true-3d game ever to hit the Macintosh.

True 3D, for those of you who are new to the gaming world, means that the user has 6 degrees of freedom, (x,-x, y,-y, z, -z) essentially rendering a complete world that can be viewed at any angle. This makes for a huge leap

in level detail, gameplay strategy, and the overall beauty of the game. Bridges placed over other bridges, rooms above rooms, and much-more elaborate architecture are just a few of the perks of true 3D.

## Polygons

Every item, monster, and weapon in Quake is actually a texture-mapped polygon model. The next-generation leap from sprites to polys was one of id's strongest focuses, and they pulled it off admirably. (The final game ended up using only three sprites: Water bubbles, the center of explosions and a golden sphere in an underwater area.)

What's the advantage of polygons over sprites? Sprites are two dimensional and can only be viewed from one angle. Polygon models are 3D, and can be viewed from any angle (e.g., you can walk around a dead body without having it rotate, as in the case of Doom or Marathon).

## Environment

Basically, you have two environments in Quake: Indoors and underwater. On occasion you may find yourself in an outside area, but more often you'll be wandering around in vast dungeons or castles.

## Lighting

The most impressive thing in Quake is its lighting effects. Not only does it feature dynamic lighting (e.g, a rocket lighting up a dark corridor as it jets through), but it also sports soft-edge lighting. All current 3D games (apart from Quake) have sector based lighting, which is basically an unrealistic brightening of sectors. In Quake, maps are shaded to generate light realistically, giving shadows and darkness a distinctly cool dissipating effect the farther away the user is from a light source.

## Drawbacks

The engine, although by far the most complex ever coded, does have one major drawback. It just can't handle outdoor settings very well, a fact stated many times by id's coding deity, John Carmack. For this reason, Quake is set mainly indoors, and as most of you know, it's more pleasant to go outside on a sunny day ;)

# Gameplay: Internet and Single Player

Ever wanted to play Marathon or Doom over the Internet, via TCP/IP or IPX? I think we all have. Now, Quake makes it easily possible.

Quake is at its foundation a solid Internet game. No more being forced to play on Appletalk or modem; you now have the choice of real 'Net play. Dial up your ISP, start Quake, type in a server address, and hit enter. Provided the server isn't full, you'll jump right into the middle of a belligerent, no-holds-barred, up-to-16 player deathmatch without any hassle. Instant Fragfest. Macintosh users will be able to connect to PC TCP/IP and IPX servers as well as dedicated Mac servers.

As to single player action, Quake rocks hard. The chilling Nine Inch Nails soundtrack and FX provided by Trent Reznor combined with the morbid and dark dungeon world of Quake sets the atmosphere and mood perfectly. The architecture is gorgeous, boosted by the fact that Quake can basically render anything that can done with polygons. You can make a beam, wall, or any piece of a level slope at any angle, and place it anywhere. Sometimes, I sit back in my comfy computer chair and just stare at some marvel of a level, perhaps murmuring the words, "Damn, that looks smooth."

# Weapons

Weapons, as with all other "entities" in the game, are made from polygon models. Excluding the rocket launcher, all weapons have
excellent texture maps, and look incredible during gameplay. (I can't get enough of gibbing Grunts into a bloody gibblets with the double-barreled shotgun -- but what else is new?) The only con to these weapons, (and one thing that Marathon fanatics will absolutely hate) is that there are no reload sequences.

Oh well...

The weapon lineup includes:

Axe -- Uhh, you hack people with it. Not powerful, but looks cool.
Shotgun -- Starting weapon, kinda lame.
Super shotgun -- I love this thing. You can gib dogs and soldiers with it :)
Nailgun -- Fast, powerful, nails. Need I say more?
Perforator -- Super nailgun with three fast rotating barrels. This will take ANYTHING out.
Grenade launcher -- Shoots pipebombs that explode after a few seconds. They bounce everywhere!

Rocket launcher -- Looks brown, shoots rockets. Gibs things, but doesn't look cool.
Lightning gun -- Fires a streaming bolt of lightning at an enemy and electrifies him. Very cool.


## Monsters

In the monster category, we have:

The Grunt -- Looks like the Former Human from Doom.
The   Rottweiler -- Blam! Doggy die now.
The Knight -- Easy to kill, but don't let 'em slash you with their steel swords!
The Scrag -- Aka the wizard. Shoots yellow snot things at you.
The Enforcer -- Big guy with a mask, looks like the marine from Doom with a backpack.
Ogre -- Awesome enemy that throws grenades and slices you with a bloody chainsaw.
Fiend -- Bearing a faint resemblance to the Demons from Doom, they hop around and tries to eviscerate you.
Zombie -- Coolest enemy in the game, they pull of pieces of their skin and throw it at you. You must gib these guys to kill them.
Shambler -- Huge, 12-foot tall badass monster that will follow you anywhere, run fast as hell and shoots lightning bolts at you or rip your head off. This guy has scared me out of my seat MANY times.
Shalrath -- Spider-like monster that shoots spikey homing missles at you. Looks like something out of Star Wars.
Tarbabies -- Blue pieces o' tar that are very hard to kill, explode in your face and make you cuss.
Chton -- First episode boss that lives in the lava. He is BIG, 50 feet tall at least. This guy wins the award for most massive enemy in a 3D game.
Shub Niggurath -- Last boss, the demon hellspawn lady squid, ready to destroy the world. Be afraid, be very afraid.

# acQuake

As most of you know, this auspicious port is being programmed by Lion Entertainment, the company that did the superb job of delivering Mac users id's earlier games, Doom II and Ultimate Doom. Thankfully, MacQuake is not expected to be a very time-consuming conversion and, in fact, there's an alpha version already running! (It has not and will not be released!) The biggest challenge, according to Lion, is "optimization and network code."

The following specs were provided by Bruce Burkhalter of Lion Entertainment and Shawn Green of id Software (Thanks guys!):

## Basic port info

Supported display modes/resolutions:

| | |
|---|---|
| 320x200 | (pixel-doubled horizontally and vertically/ letterboxed) |
| 320x240 | (pixel-doubled horizontally and vertically) |
| 320x400 | (pixel-doubled horizontally/letterboxed) |
| 320x480 | (pixel-doubled horizontally) |
| 640x400 | (letterboxed) |
| 640x480 | |
| 832x624 | |
| 1024x768 | |
| 1280x1024 | |

NOTE: Pixel-doubled resolutions means that they will run full screen.

Network connectivity:

| | |
|---|---|
| Modem: | Communications Toolbox, Apple Modem Tool |
| Serial: | Communications Toolbox, Serial Tool |
| TCP/IP: | MacTCP & Open Transport |
| AppleTalk: | AppleTalk Data Stream Protocol & Open Transport. |
| IPX: | MacIPX |

Sound:

16-bit stereo

Redbook audio.

Add-ons:

PC add-ons will work except in the case where executable, binary code of the application itself would need to be changed to allow the add-on to work.


# Features of the port

### System

First of all, MacQuake will be a Power Mac game only. Id has decided that it would be next to impossible to make a good '040 port. As for speed, the preliminary MacQuake frames per second (fps) on a 601/603e/603ev is 15 fps at 320x240 (pixel doubled). For 604/604e, it should be around be 15fps at 640x480. Early
requirements for RAM will probably be about 16 megabytes.

### Interface

Yes, Mac users will have to normal Mac interface, so we don't have to go floundering around those dastardly PC options screens.

### Port status

Everything in MacQuake works (including TCP/IP and IPX) except for AppleTalk, modem, direct connection, optimizations, and Mac UI. Lion has already played against PC users on a couple of Quake servers.

### Sprockets

Lion has stated that Apple's page flipping and double buffering Drawsprockets will be used in the MacQuake port! I'm estactic =) This should make for a tremendous speed increase on many Power Macs.

### QD3D/RAVE support

MacQuake will not support any 3D API in the first release, which is unfortunate. However, id has stated that they are open to the possibility, if any chip manufacturers would like to contact them.

Lion has informed me that the biggest reason that card support will not be in the first Mac Quake release, is that the PC version does not support 3D cards. It would be extremely hard for Lion to add this in before id does it. Once this feature is added to the PC version, it will be much easier to add it to the Mac

version.

Beta testing

id is going to use a software testing company to test Quake, so no beta testers are needed. Therefore, everyone who keeps writing Lion about this topic, you can STOP! :)

More info

For the latest, up-to-the-second information on the MacQuake port, visit: MacQuake: One more reason to buy a Mac, at:

http://www.grayphics.com/3dmacgames/macquake/

# Clans

One of the most exciting parts about MacQuake is the very new implementation of Quake clans. Never before has deathmatch been cooler. Now, intead of being just a lone deathmatch killer, you have the option of joining or starting your own Quake clan, and fighting with a group of buddies. (It is interesting to note that although id officially picked up the Quake clan idea later, the clan model was thought up not by id, but by end users of Quake.)

The only requirements for starting a clan is that you have your own webpage, a logo, and more than five members. id will then register you on their pages for free, and your legendary battles can begin. I cannot emphasize enough how important a step this is for netplay gaming.

For more clan info, visit id software's official clans site, at:

http://www.idsoftware.com/dmm/

# Conclusion

MacQuake will be a revolutionary add-on to the already extensive game library we Mac users have begun to amass. Packing a 3D engine of the highest technology, this looks to be a huge contender in the Macintosh

gaming market. As for the expected release date? Sometime in early '97, or, to quote Shawn Green, "Less than 6 months."

ason Carter is a regular contributor to MDR. He last wrote about MacHexen in MDR#8.