

QwikChord Version 3.0.2.8

Updated July 2009

INTRODUCTION

QwikChord is the 3rd major release of this application, and incorporates many features that have been requested by users over the years. QwikChord (originally named QuickChord) was initially released in 2003 as a freeware application.

The concept was simple: do one thing, and do it well. At a time when guitar players and instructors were faced with a multitude of applications that tried to do everything, QwikChord did one thing: make chord diagrams.

QwikChord became an underground sensation among guitar teachers worldwide, sparked by a guitar magazine in the UK including the program as a free giveaway by including it on the CD that shipped with the magazine in 2005. Over the course of the next 6 years, QwikChord has been downloaded over a million times.

QUICK START

When QwikChord is opened, you will be presented with the main screen as shown in Figure 1, below.

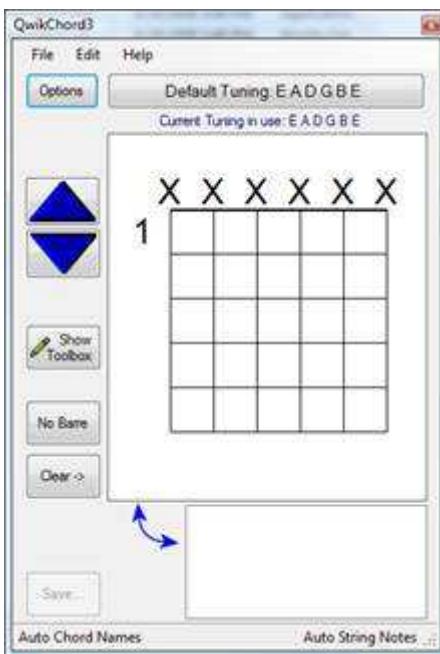


Figure 1

By default, we are looking at a 6 string instrument with 5 frets. The top fret of the diagram is indicated by the number at the top left. In this case, the top fret is fret 1. This area is referred to as the "Chord Builder."

MAKING CHORDS

Creating a chord diagram is simple as clicking on the blank diagram to indicate where the strings are to be fretted. Since this is a chord diagram, it will only allow a single fretted note per string, so if you click on another fret on a string with a note on it, the dot moves to the new location.

You will also notice that the X's at the top of the diagram change. X indicates a string that is not played, so when you have a fretted string, the X is removed. If you wish to indicate that an open string is to be played, simply click on the X to change it to an O. Here is what the diagram looks like when we set all the strings to play a GMajor chord:

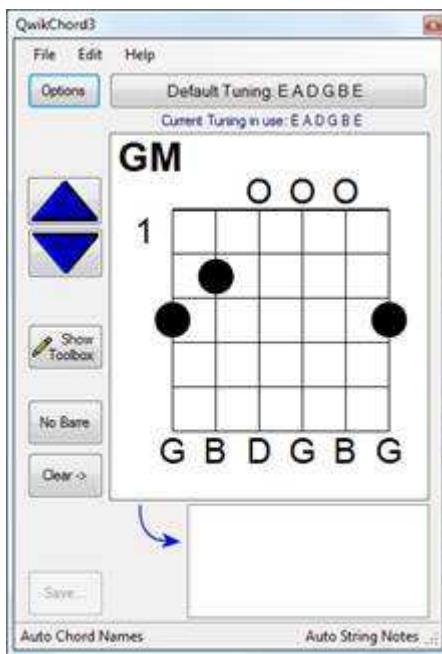


Figure 2

Press the “Clear ->” button to clear the chord.

BARRE CHORDS

QwikChord allows you to notate a Barre chord by including a line that indicates that a single finger is holding down the notes on several strings. Figure 3 below shows a F minor barre chord.

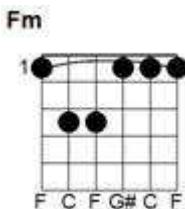


Figure 3

This chord is created by setting all the frets as you would normally. To create the barre line, click down on the 1st string, 1st fret, and drag the mouse to the 6th string, 1st fret. As you drag the mouse, you will see a blue line move with the mouse. When it is released, the barre line is set in place.

You can have up to two barre lines in each diagram.

If you want to remove the barre lines, simply click on the “No Barre” button.

CHORD NAMES AND NOTE NAMES

You will notice as you create diagrams that QwikChord automatically puts the note names under each string, and automatically calculates the chord name for you.

QwikChord uses an advanced chord engine to determine the chord names of the finger diagrams. This is done by taking the tuning of the instrument (as indicated by the Tuning button above the diagram), and using the Top Fret as a starting point. With those two items of information, it is easy to determine the notes in the diagram.

These notes are then compared to known chord forms, and the closest matching chord name is determined.

MOVING THE TOP FRET

Let's leave the F minor chord on the diagram, and move the top fret to see what happens. Use the blue arrow keys to the left of the diagram to change the top fret number. Notice that the notes and chord name adjust to show

the correct information based on the top fret you selected. Here is our barre chord shifted so the top fret is the 3rd fret of the guitar instead of the 1st fret:

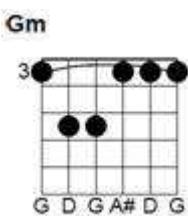


Figure 4

OVERRIDING CHORD NAMES

Sometimes it is necessary to override the automatically calculated features in QwikChord. There are often several different representations for a single chord structure, and the type of music a guitarist plays --and where they live-- often influence the preferences of what is expected on a chord diagram.

Fortunately, this is very easy to change!

To use your own chord name, simply click on the chord name (or the blank area where the chord name would normally appear) and the following dialog will appear:

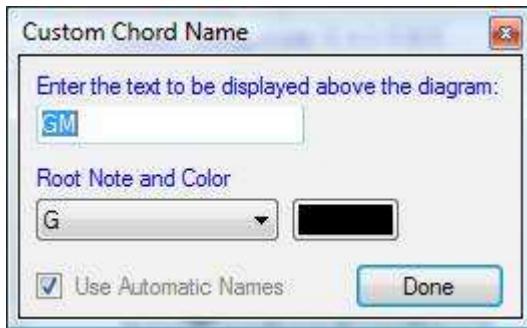


Figure 5

You will notice that the "Use Automatic Names" box at the bottom is checked, indicating that this chord is currently set to automatically calculate the chord name. To override this, simply type in the name you would like to use.

NOTE: The "Use Automatic Names" checkbox becomes UN-checked when you enter a name! This means that the chord will no longer try to automatically create a chord name, and will use the name you entered instead.

Click the Done button to see the results. After you override the chord name, you will notice that your manually entered name remains the chord name, even when you change the fingering. It will stay this way until you hit the "Clear ->" button, which resets the current chord back to the the defaults.

You can also select a different Root Note, and change the color of the Root Note dots. It is important to remember that if you do override the root note, the "Use Automatic Names" option becomes UN-checked.

OVERRIDING NOTE NAMES

Just as you can enter your own chord names, you can also enter custom text to appear under each string. Some users prefer to see interval notation (guitarists that use the Nashville notion prefer this style), and some users prefer to use numbers to indicate which fingers are used to fret each note.

This is easy to do in QwikChord! Just click on the notes below the strings (the the blank area where they will normally appear), and you will see the following dialog open:

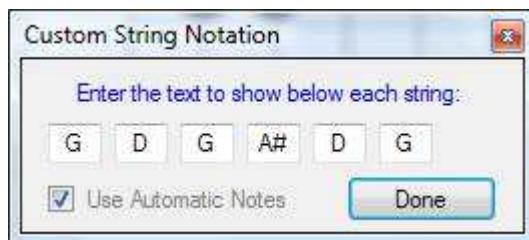


Figure 6

Simply change the text under each string to what you would prefer to see.

NOTE: The “Use Automatic Names” checkbox becomes UN-checked when you change any text! This means that QwikChord will no longer try to automatically create the string text, and will use the text you entered instead.

Click the Done button to see the results. After you override the string text, you will notice that your manually entered text remains even when you change the fingering. It will stay this way until you hit the “Clear ->” button, which resets the current chord back to the defaults.

ADVANCED CHORD DECORATIONS

For users who wish to create diagrams in the style of jazz legend Ted Greene’s work, or who are using QwikChord to create scale charts, the “Decorations Toolbox” contains a large number of symbols that can be added to the chord diagram.

Click the “Show Toolbox” button view the Decoration Toolbox, as shown below:

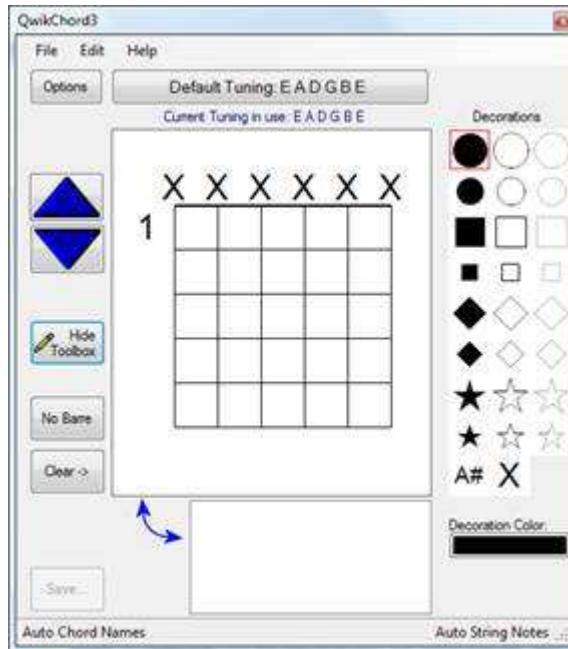


Figure 7

The currently selected decoration is indicated by a red outline, and when you first open the toolbox you will see that the standard large filled circle is selected.

Simply click on a different decoration to select it.

You can change the color of the decoration by clicking the “Decoration Color” button below the toolbox.

NOTE: The color you select will become the default color for the decoration you selected! For example, if you select the X decoration and make it red, that will become the default color when you select the X.

Decorations are “stackable,” which means that you can put more than one decoration on a fret at a time. The example below shows typical chord diagrams where the Note Name or fingering is shown inside of the fret dots:

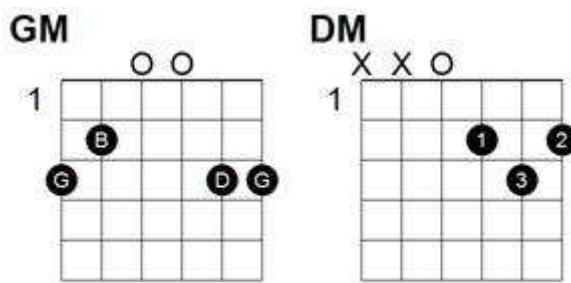


Figure 8

Of course, you can make them as bizarre as you want to by stacking multiple decorations and colors:

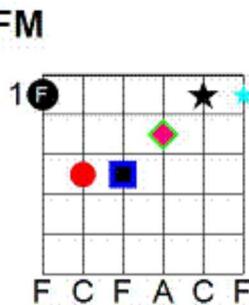


Figure 9

USING DECORATIONS

Decorations in the same “family” (the decorations in the same row: Filled, Outline, 50% Outlined) will replace each other. So if you have a large filled square on a fret, and decide that you want to put an outlined square there instead, the outline will REPLACE the filled square instead of being stacked on top of it.

Just as before, decorations toggle visibility when you click them. If you have the standard large filled circle selected, clicking an empty fret will display a dot. Clicking it again will remove the dot. When you have a stack of decorations, only the selected decoration will change in the stack: all the other decorations will remain unchanged.

USING TEXT DECORATIONS

The Text decoration (shown as an A#) symbol in the toolbox, operates a little differently than the other decorations.

The first (and arguably most important) difference is that Text items are always on the top of the stack. If you have a Text item on a fret and then select a different decoration and click on the fret, that decoration will be placed beneath the text.

The second difference is that there are two ways to put text on the fret board.

1. Select the Text (A#) decoration and click on the diagram. The text tool will automatically assume you are painting “Note names” and insert the correct note where you clicked.
2. If you Right-Click on a fret, you will get a dialog box that allows you to enter whatever text you want to appear.

NOTE: *This can be done at any time, and with any other decoration selected. It will also work if the Decoration Toolbox is not visible.*

Normally, most users will set the text decoration to be white in color, and place text on top of a large filled decoration.

COPYING CHORD DIAGRAMS

OK, so now that you have a chord diagram, what can you do with it? The easiest thing to do is to paste a diagram into another document. With a chord diagram displayed, simply hit **<Ctrl><C>** (Or, **Edit -> Copy Image To Clipboard** from the menu) to copy the chord diagram, then switch to another application (for instance, Microsoft Word) and hit **<Ctrl><V>** to paste it.

Almost too easy, isn't it?

There are some cross-platform applications (OpenOffice, for example) that do not paste graphics correctly from QwikChord, due to changes in Microsoft's architecture. (The OpenOffice team currently lists this as an open issue, and is working on it.) Fortunately, it is very easy to set QwikChord to save your diagrams to a "Clip-Art" or "Theme Gallery" folder for that application, and you can just drag and drop diagrams from there!

SETTING OPTIONS

There are several options you can change to customize how QwikChord operates. Clicking the “Options” button will open the following dialog in QwikChord:

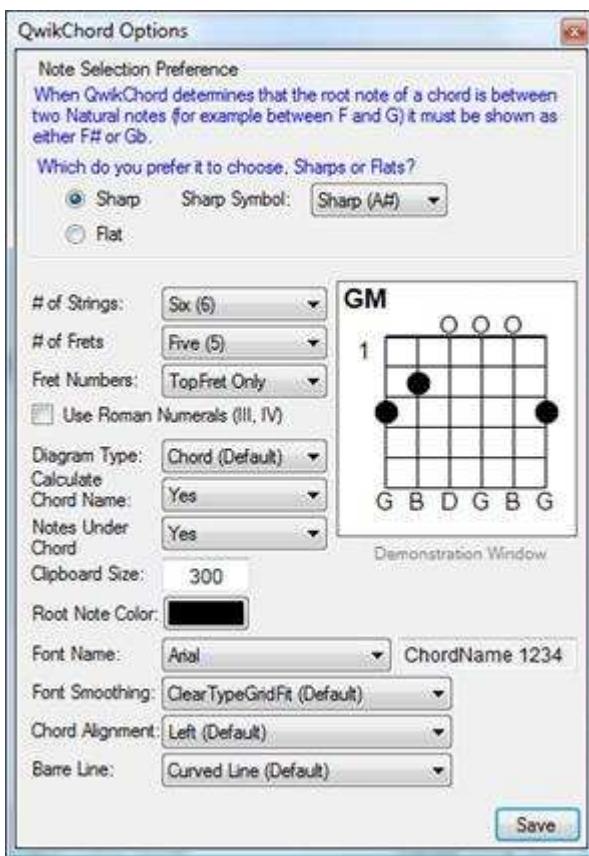


Figure 10

This window allows you to change the “global parameters” of how QwikChord works, and contains a preview window to allow you to see how your changes will look.

NOTE: *The current chord in the Chord Builder will be cleared when you open the Options dialog! Be sure to save it to the Favorites area if you want to continue working with a chord.*

The table below explains the options available:

Note Selection Preference	Notes can either be sharp or flat. For instance the note between A and B can be called either A sharp or B flat. When calculating a chord name, QwikChord need to know which you prefer to see.
Sharp Symbol	You can chose the symbol used to indicate sharp notes. It can be either: # or +. The # is the default.
Flat Symbol	You can chose the symbol used to indicate flat notes. It can be either: b or -. The b is the default. NOTE: <i>A lowercase b is used instead of the true flat symbol as many users do not have the appropriate fonts to display the correct character.</i>
# of Strings	You can have between 4 and 7 strings in your chord diagram. The default is 6 strings for a guitar.
# of Frets	You can have between 5 and 10 frets for a diagram. Most chord diagrams show 5 frets, however higher numbers are useful for scales. NOTE: <i>Although the Chord Builder display “squashes” the diagram to fit in the editor, the saved or copied graphic files are the correct aspect ratio.</i>

SETTING TUNING

Guitar players love different tunings! Fortunately, QwikChord is a general purpose chord diagram generator and is perfectly at home creating diagrams for other instruments as well. Click the Tuning button above the chord diagram to set the tuning you want to use. The following dialog will be displayed:

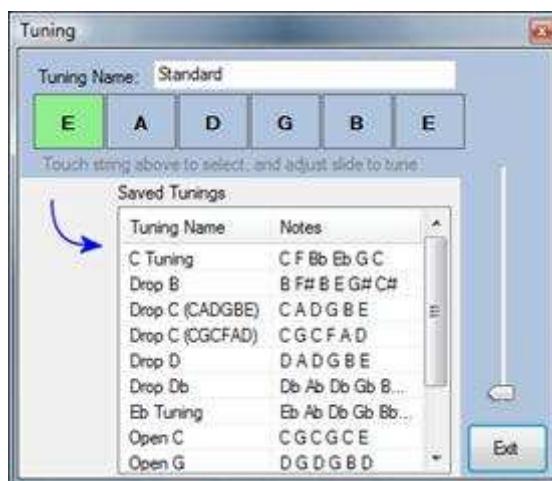


Figure 11

The top of the dialog shows the tuning name, and a row of boxes that indicate what each string is tuned to. To adjust the tuning for each string, simply click on the box for that string (it will highlight in green to indicate that it is selected), and use the slider to the right (or the Up/Down arrows on your keyboard) to adjust the tuning.

SAVING TUNINGS TO FAVORITES

If you would like to save the tuning for future use, make sure it has a descriptive name and click on the arrow that is pointing into the “Saved Tunings” area. It will be added to the list, and will always be available for future use.

RESTORING SAVED TUNINGS

When you click on a name in the Save Tuning area, you will notice that the arrow to the left changes to point to the top. Just click on the arrow, and your selected tuning will be moved to the current tuning area at the top.

DELETING TUNINGS

When a tuning name is selected in the Saved Tunings area, you will notice that the garbage can is visible to the left. If you wish to delete the tuning, just click the garbage can. You will be prompted before the tuning is deleted.

COMMITTING CHANGES

The Exit button closes the Tuning page. If you have made changes to the current tuning, you will be asked if you want to use that tuning. Clicking **Yes** will make that the new default tuning for your chords.

Clicking **No** will ignore any changes you made, and let you continue using the tuning as it was prior to visiting the Tuning page.

SAVING /RESTORING FAVORITES

Back on the main page, let's look at how you can work with several chords using the Favorites area. You can think of the favorites area as a temporary storage area for you to work with a collection of chords that you intend to save or send to others.

When you are creating a chord diagram in the chord builder, you will notice the arrow pointing to the Favorites area directly below. Clicking this arrow will add the current chord to the list of favorites. You can add as many chords as you like to this list.

When you click on a chord name in the Favorites, you will notice two things: the arrow will change to point back to the Chord Builder, and the garbage can will appear, as shown below:

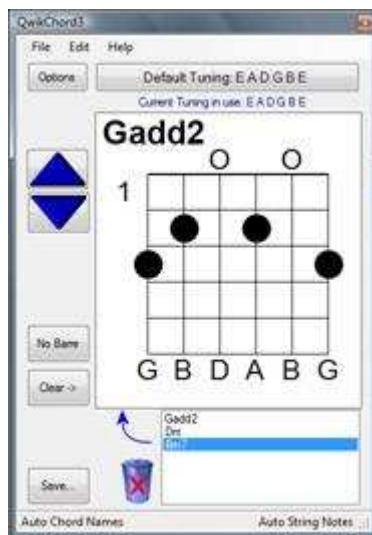


Figure 12

Clicking the arrow (or double-clicking a chord name) will restore the favorite chord to the Chord Builder area, where you can resume changing it, or copy it to another application.

Clicking the garbage can will remove the chord from the Favorites list. You can also select multiple chord names and delete them all at the same time.

SAVING FILES

Once you have several chords in the Favorites list, it is easy to save them. You will notice the **Save...** button is visible whenever you select a chord in the Favorites list. Clicking this button will open the Save Files dialog shown here:

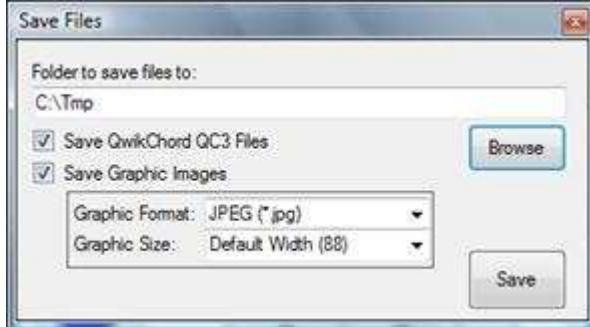


Figure 13

The Save Files dialog is designed to save ALL the files in the Favorites list. You can save them as native QwikChord (QC3) files, as graphics (JPG, BMP, and PNG are supported), or both.

Click the **Browse** button to select the folder to save the files to. This folder name will show in the box titled "Folder to save files to."

Next, decide what kind of files you want to save by putting a checkmark in the "Save QwikChord QC3 files" and "Save Graphic Images" boxes.

If you selected to save your files as graphic files, another set of options will become visible to you:

- Graphic Format
 - o You can choose either JPG, BMP, or PNG graphics
- Graphic Size
 - o Default Width: 88
 - o Tiny Width: 50 (Good when there is no chord names or string text)
 - o Custom Width

If you select a custom size, you will be able to specify a width to use for the graphic file. The height is

automatically calculated by QwikChord so the resulting diagram has the correct aspect ratio.

NOTE: *The minimum width that can be created is 50 pixels, anything smaller will not be allowed.*

Once you have selected your save options, click the Save button. All the chords in your favorites list will be processed and the folder you selected will contain the files.

OPENING FILES

When you install QwikChord, it will automatically be associated with QC3 files. If you double-click a QC3 file in explorer, or attempt to open one via email or the web, it will open in QwikChord automatically.

You can also open several QC3 files at the same time, and load them all into your favorites list. Select **File -> Open To Favorites** from the menu in QwikChord, from here you can select several QC3 files at the same time and they will all open in the Favorites area.

CHORD DEFINITION EDITOR

QwikChord is pre-configured with a set of “shorthand” notation for all the chord names, which are normally fine for most scenarios. However, depending on the instrument (QwikChord is used for more than just guitars!), audience, or type of music, there are times when users prefer to see a different way of expressing a chord name.

While you can overwrite the chord name with custom text at any time, if you constantly need to edit a specific chord name because the default “shorthand” is not suitable, it is time to use the Chord Definition Editor.

Let's say we have a Gadd2 chord, as shown here:

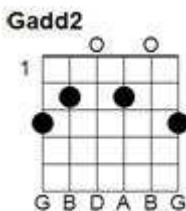


Figure 14

If I prefer to always see “add2” chords show up as “add9” chords (technically, they contain the same notes, the voicing is different), then we need to re-define the shorthand for this particular chord pattern.

From the edit menu, select **Edit -> Chord Definition Editor...** to see this dialog:

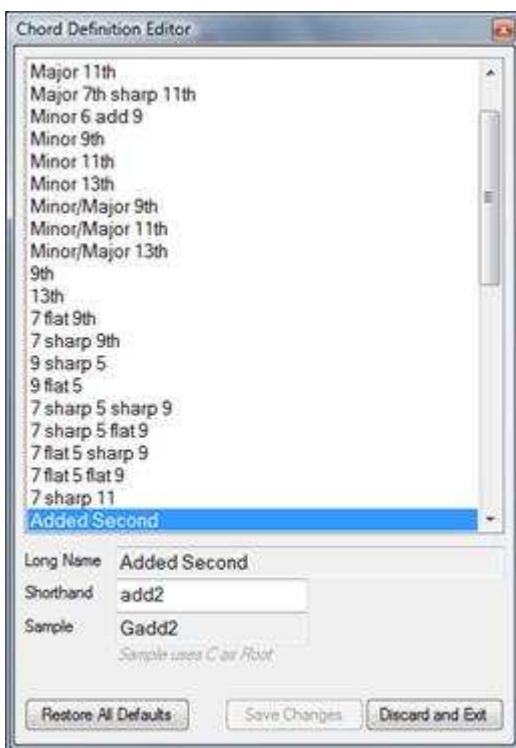


Figure 15

If you already have a chord in the Chord Builder (in this example, we had Gadd2 displayed), then the Chord Definition Editor will highlight the current chord name as shown above.

The list at the top is every chord name that QwikChord recognizes. If you click a chord name, directly below the list you will see the Long Name, the Shorthand, and a Sample of what a chord name would look like with the Shorthand name applied.

When we change the shorthand from add2 to add9, and Save / Cancel pair of buttons will appear to allow you to save your changes. You can continue to change as many chord definitions as you wish.

When you are done editing, you have two options:

Save Changes: This will permanently save all the changes you made while in the Chord Definition Editor. From this time forward, any chords you create in the Chord Builder will use the shorthand names you have edited.

Discard and Exit: This option exits the Chord Definition Editor without saving any changes you made. All edits you have made will be lost.

Finally, there is the **Restore All Defaults** button.

This overwrites ALL shorthand notation back to the “out of the box” defaults. You will be given a prompt asking you to confirm that you want to do this, and just like individual edits, you will need to click the “Save Changes” button to permanently save the changes.

GETTING UPDATES

We have always been, and always will be, a customer oriented company. As software developers we understand the current trend to use key generators and online registration to prevent people from copying software, however as an end user nothing is more aggravating than trying to install a piece of software you've installed on another computer only to find out you are prevented from doing so.

We believe that when you pay for software, it is yours to do with what you want to.

If you want to install it on a single computer, or a dozen, it is totally up to you. We use no online registration or codes to limit or track your installation, and when you receive the installer it is a fully functional application that does not install any 3rd party applications or track your usage.

We believe that a certain amount of copying software for friends is good for a company: it exposes more people to our software than we could have reached, and hopefully they will see fit to buy their own copy one day.

We handle updates differently than most companies. When you buy QwikChord, you are entitled to free maintenance updates for the life of the product. We distribute these updates ONLY via email to those people that have purchased the product.

This way, we hope to put piracy control back in the hands of the consumer. You are free to copy and distribute your software as much as you want to, however, only you will be receiving updates. While you can certainly spend your days sending your updates out to everyone you copied the program to, we assume that will get old after a while.

Click on the **Help -> Check For Updates** item in the QwikChord menu, and QwikChord will anonymously request the latest revision number of QwikChord. If there is a new version available, all you need to do is click the link and request that QwikChord.com send you the latest release.

Simple!

SUPPORT

QwikChord has been the result of community effort, and we offer sincere and deep thanks to the thousands of users that have taken the time over the years to write in with suggestions and feedback.

If you have any requests or comments, please visit our website at www.QwikChord.com and take a moment to let us know! We still take the time to personally reply to almost every email we receive, and our customers recognize the value in seeing their ideas are heard as we incorporate their suggestions into the product.

Thank you!