

What is it: QLab is the award-winning software that makes it simple to create rich multimedia designs for live performances and installations. From Broadway to Britain's West End, from Denver to Denmark, QLab is the tool of choice for many of the world's most prominent designers.

Where can I get it? Free download from <http://figure53.com/qlab/> for Mac only.

Where can I find out more? The help available within Qlab is very comprehensive and explains the program very well. Click on Help and Qlab Help for more.

Overview

- The left side of the screen contains a toolbox with a list of cue types. Of interest will be **AUDIO** (play a sound file), **FADE** (fade out an audio cue), **VIDEO** (play a video file) and **ANIMATION** (animate / fade a video cue).

1. Getting Started

First off, patch the audio and video (if any) connections from Qlab to your devices. Click on the Qlab menu then Workspace preferences. Click Audio to patch the audio, and Video to patch the video. You can now start adding cues.

2. Adding Media Files to Qlab

Before you start, number the files sequentially at the start of the file name, using 2 digits (e.g. 03 instead of 3). This will ensure the cues are imported into Qlab in the correct order.

The easiest method is to drag and drop the files onto Qlab. Qlab will automatically create a cue containing each media file.

- ✘ If any of your cues have a red X symbol next to them it means you need to do something before the cue can be played. Hold the mouse pointer over the X for an explanation of what's wrong.

3. The Inspector

Clicking on a cue highlights it, and makes it the next cue to play. The black teardrop-shaped blob indicates this. At the bottom of the screen is the Cue Inspector window – this contains a wealth of information about the cue, enabling you to adjust and control it.

4. Fading sound cues

Drag a Fade cue below the cue you wish to fade. Then drag the sound cue onto the fade. Click on the Fade cue, click on the Levels tab, and click on the Master fader to indicate the level you wish to fade to. If appropriate, tick Stop Target When Done. You set the length of the fade in the Curve Shape and Settings tab.

5. Fading video cues

Drag an Animation cue below the video cue. Drag the video cue onto the Animation cue. Click on the Animation cue and on the Settings tab, click Opacity. Reduce that to zero. This will fade the video out. If you want to fade the audio too, you'll need to add a Fade cue to do that.

6. Sequences

↓ This down arrow at the far right of the cue is Auto-Continue. After the cue is fired, QLab waits for the duration specified by the post wait (which may be zero) and then automatically fires the next cue.

⬇ This blobby arrow is Auto-Follow. After this cue is fired, QLab waits for the exact duration of the cue's action (whatever that may be), and then automatically fires the next cue.

Pre-Wait blocks the running of the cue until that time has elapsed.

7. Show Control

MIDI Show Control is a simple language which allows devices to communicate with one another.

But I don't have a Mac!

Similar software is available for the PC. SFX is industry-standard sound and video playback software.