

**sinclair**

# QL-Pawn



Software by  
**Magnetic Scrolls**

# QL-Pawn

## An Adventure

### Introduction

QL Pawn is an adventure game set in the magical world of Kerovnia during a period of tremendous social upheaval.

Recently, King Erik, the present ruler of the land, has started to lose his hold on the Kerovnian peoples and can no longer rely on their loyalty and supreme devotion to support him through times of war, famine and personal bankruptcy.

Many political commentators have attributed this decline in popularity to Erik's steadfast refusal to reinstate the citizenship of the Roobikyoub dwarves who were banished en masse soon after the assassination of the beloved Queen Jendah II and have never since returned.

The dwarves were thought to be the sole instigators of the assassination plot but the real facts were kept well behind closed (and locked) doors.

Needless to say, the dwarves were of immense economic importance to Kerovnia with their relentless efforts to produce the smoothest, strongest malt whisky this side

of the Obakanga valley and they are sorely missed in these days of economic gloom (not least for the quality of their whisky).

In the absence of the dwarves, the drinks market has been dominated by the Farthington Real Ale Company (which has had some rather dodgy dealings with Boris Grunchkev O.K.B.) and by the Romni gnomes who produce a refreshing spring water. Neither of these two influential groups wants to see the dwarves come back on the scene to take a large slice of the market, but the people of Kerovnia, many of whom are beginning to suspect that the dwarves were completely innocent of the assassination, vehemently disagree.

Standing in the middle of this all is King Erik who becomes more and more unpopular the longer he leaves his decision, and, to top it all, there is a general election on the horizon.

At this point, you arrive on the scene. You will be the principal player in the game and the story unfolds according to your decisions and actions.

The program will describe where you are, who (or what) is there with you and what they are doing. It is then up to you to choose what you wish to do and tell the program about it in plain English (well, almost!).

You'll have to discover the goal of the game and the best way to achieve it by utilising the items you find on your travels, conversing with characters and exercising your imagination.

# Getting started

Before you can run QL Pawn, you must make a backup copy of the program using the two blank cartridges provided. The original master 'Game' cartridge cannot itself be run and should be kept somewhere safe. In this way, if your copies should accidentally be damaged, you will always be able to make another set. The program is protected from illegal copying since the other original cartridge ('Key') must be used to allow the backups to be loaded.

To make a copy

- Reset your QL
- Place the cartridge marked 'Game' in Microdrive 1 (on the left)
- Place the cartridge marked 'Key' in Microdrive 2
- Press [F1] or [F2]

This will automatically run the copying program on Microdrive 2. When the drive has stopped

- Place the 'Key' cartridge in Microdrive 1
- Place your first blank cartridge in Microdrive 2
- Press [ENTER]

This will format the blank cartridge and copy four files onto it. When both Microdrive lights have gone out

- Take out the blank and label it 'Pawn 1'
- Place your second blank cartridge in Microdrive 2
- Place the 'Game' cartridge in Microdrive 1
- Press [ENTER]

This will format the blank cartridge and then copy the first file to Microdrive 2. There will then be a short pause for about 11 seconds. Do not remove the cartridges. The program will then copy the other files onto Microdrive 2. Remove both cartridges and label the second blank 'Pawn 2'

## Running the program

When you have made your backups, loading is straightforward but can only take place if the 'Key' cartridge is present. This prevents the use of illegal copies of the program.

- Reset the QL
- Place the 'Key' cartridge in Microdrive 2
- Place the 'Pawn 1' cartridge in Microdrive 1
- Press [F1] or [F2]

When loading has taken place, you will be asked to place your second backup ('Pawn 2') in Microdrive 1. Do this and press [ENTER]. There will be a pause and then QL Pawn will be loaded.

The program also allows you to load in a part-finished game which you have previously saved on another cartridge. For details of how to do this, read the Special Commands section.

## Talking to the program

To communicate with the program, simply type in a sentence describing what you want to do. When it's waiting for a command it displays the '>' prompt and an underline cursor. Once you have typed your command press the [ENTER] key. Sometimes, the message will be too long to fit onto the screen in one go and MORE will be displayed on the bottom line of the screen until you press a key. Then the message continues.

Editing facilities are similar to those normally found on the QL with a few additions to allow easier input. Firstly, all the [SHIFT], [ALT] and [CTRL] keys are equivalent, thus '[CTRL]-[a]' produces a capital 'A' and '[SHIFT] [←]' will delete the character to the left. Secondly, you may move and delete whole words to the left and right of the cursor using the [↑] and [↓] keys.

```
[↑].....move left one word.  
[↓].....move right one word.  
[CTRL]-[↑].....delete one word to left.  
[CTRL]-[↓].....delete one word to right.
```

Generally, the program expects to be told what to do, so what you type is a command or an instruction. These fall

into several categories; movement, actions, conversation and a few special 'utility' commands.

You will notice a line at the top of the screen which doesn't scroll away with the rest of the text. This is the status line, and contains (from the left); the current location, your current score and the number of moves which have elapsed since the start of the game.

## Movement

To wander around the Kerovnian countryside and neighbouring areas you must tell the program in which direction you wish to travel or where you want to *go*. It understands the eight points of the compass: NORTH, NORTHEAST, EAST, SOUTHEAST, SOUTH, SOUTHWEST, WEST and NORTHWEST, as well as UP and DOWN. (For ease of typing, all these can be abbreviated, to; N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W, NW, U and D). So to move from one place to another immediately to the north (assuming there's nothing to stop you) you can type any of these

NORTH

N

GO NORTH

EXIT NORTH

QUIETLY WALK NORTH

and one or two other variations on the theme. However, if you happen to know that to the north there is, for example, a furniture shop, then you could also type

ENTER THE FURNITURE SHOP  
GO INTO THE FURNITURE SHOP  
WALK INTO THE FURNITURE SHOP  
ENTER SHOP

The last example assumes that there is only one shop nearby, if there were several then the program would prompt you for an adjective (more of this later).

Once inside the shop you might want to sit down, resting your weary legs, thus having spotted a particularly comfortable looking leather couch

SIT DOWN  
SIT ON THE COMFORTABLE LEATHER COUCH  
SIT ON THE COUCH  
GET ON THE COUCH  
GO COUCH

and to get off the couch again

GET UP  
STAND UP  
GET OFF THE COUCH  
GET UP OFF THE COUCH  
GO SOUTH (also leaves the shop).



Talking of leaving the shop, there are a few ways to do this

LEAVE SHOP  
GO SOUTH  
S  
GO S  
OUT  
O  
EXIT  
EXIT SHOP  
EXIT SOUTH

It's quite possible for one location to have several possible exits, in these instances one will be chosen (usually leading back towards the start of the game) if OUT, O or EXIT are used without specifying a direction.

Often locations are connected by doors, so to get from one to the other you can use

GO DOOR  
ENTER DOOR

(this of course only applies if the door is already open).

## **Actions**

The Pawn allows you to use many verbs to give it commands. At the simplest a command consists of a verb (eg. GET) and a noun (eg. paper), thus:

GET PAPER

performs a single action (it picks up the paper). However, if you actually want to pick up several items (for instance the paper, pen and ink bottle) it does become rather tiresome to type GET repeatedly, so you can give it a list

GET PAPER, PEN AND INK BOTTLE  
PICK UP PAPER, PEN, BOTTLE

If it happened that these were all in a school bag, together with an eraser then you could try

GET ALL FROM THE SCHOOL BAG EXCEPT THE ERASER  
GET THE CONTENTS OF THE BAG BUT NOT THE ERASER

You can use lots of verbs in this way, so

EAT ALL ON THE PLATE EXCEPT THE BACON RASHER

is no problem.

Obviously the meaning of ALL must change, depending on the verb that it's being used with. So in GET ALL it means the objects which are in the room, just lying about. In DROP ALL it means the items you are carrying

As you can see, individual actions can become quite complicated, so once they are strung together very powerful commands can be made.

GET ALL EXCEPT THE CASES BUT NOT THE VIOLIN CASE THEN KILL THE MAN-EATING SHREW WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE VIOLIN CASE, REMOVE THE SHREW'S TAIL AND USE IT TO TIE THE POLE AND THE NOOSE TOGETHER

This command can be broken down into four actions. Let's look at these one at a time

- i) GET ALL EXCEPT THE CASES BUT NOT THE VIOLIN CASE

This will get all the objects in the room, less the cases but *will* get the violin case. CASES is an example of a group of objects which can be referred to with a single word, eg. AN OLD RUSTY KEY, A SHINY NEW KEY AND A LARGE PADLOCK KEY could be referred to with the single word KEYS, such as in the command

GET THE KEYS

which is equivalent to the longer

GET THE OLD RUSTY KEY, THE SHINY NEW KEY AND THE LARGE PADLOCK KEY

or

GET THE KEYS EXCEPT THE SHINY ONE

which is equivalent to

GET THE OLD RUSTY KEY AND THE PADLOCK KEY

- ii) KILL THE MAN-EATING SHREW WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE VIOLIN CASE

Here we're trying to use whatever is in the violin case to kill the shrew. Lets hope there's something mean in that violin case!

### iii) REMOVE THE SHREW'S TAIL

This is an example of a *possessive* construction. Saying SHREW'S lets QL Pawn know that we mean that particular tail. (Well it would be mighty unwise to try to remove the tail belonging to the fire breathing dragon that happens to be asleep next to the shrew!)

### iv) USE IT TO TIE THE POLE AND THE NOOSE TOGETHER

Worthy of note in this command is the use of the pronoun IT, which refers back to the last direct object you used, in this case the shrew's tail. This command is also phrased in the form USE ITEM TO DO VERB TO ANOTHER ITEM.

These four distinct parts can all be issued in the same command by using AND, THEN, '.', and ','.

## Conversation

You are not alone in the wilderness!

Occasionally, you will meet characters on your travels and you (being the polite sort) may wish to converse with them.

Maybe you merely want to pass the time of day but, on the other hand, there may be some cunning ulterior motives for your enquiries.

There are five basic structures which the program allows you to use in order to talk to characters:

- i) ASK someone ABOUT something  
eg ASK THE ALIEN ABOUT THE SPACESHIP
- ii) ASK someone "something"  
eg ASK THE ALIEN "WHO AM I?"
- iii) SAY TO someone "something"  
eg SAY TO ALIEN "HELLO"
- iv) SAY "something"  
eg SAY "HOW CAN I WIN THIS GAME?"
- v) someone, "something"  
eg ALIEN, "PHONE HOME"

## Special Commands

These are mostly one word commands which can be used at any time during the game as you see fit. They cannot (apart from INVENTORY) be used as part of multiple action commands, as anything following them is ignored.

### INVENTORY

This gives you a list of the objects that you are carrying or wearing. It may be abbreviated to simply I.

## AGAIN

Instead of completely retyping a command, AGAIN repeats your previous command.

## EXITS

This lists the ways out from your current location.

## SCORE

This displays your current score, along with the maximum possible score. Your score is also displayed as part of the status line at the top of the screen.

## BRIEF

In 'brief mode' you will only get the description of a room if you actually type LOOK to request it, rather than automatically when you enter the room.

## VERBOSE

In 'verbose mode' room descriptions are given every time you enter a room, even if you have been there previously.

## NORMAL

The default mode, 'normal mode', gives room descriptions when you enter a room for the first time, thereafter it only updates the status line and tells you the new room's name.

## CONTRAST

This toggles between green and white text, to allow for variations due to type of television/monitor.

## LEFT $n$ & RIGHT $n$

These allow you to set the left and right margins to a number  $n$ ; these are used by QL Pawn to avoid loss of text when using televisions and some monitors. If both margins are set to 0, about 64 characters may be displayed in one line. Note that you cannot set the margins to overlap!

## QUIT

All good things come to an end, as they say, so if you want to stop playing this is how you do it.

## RESTART

This lets you replay the game from the beginning without having to reset your QL and reboot the game. Since it must reload some information from the program Microdrive, this **MUST** be present in Microdrive 1 (the left hand drive).

## SAVE $n$ (here $n$ is a number between 0 and 7)

You may save up to 8 game positions on any one Microdrive cartridge. Before starting QL Pawn, format a blank cartridge in the normal fashion, do **not** put any files on it. This cartridge should be placed in Microdrive 2 (on the right).

DO NOT try to save games on your Game or Key Microdrive cartridges.

RESTORE *n*

This reloads previously saved games. As with SAVE the saved game Microdrive goes in Microdrive 2. If you attempt to load a saved game from a Microdrive which is corrupt, or which contains other files then QL Pawn will be forced to restart, reloading entirely.

## Abbreviations

When you have played QL Pawn for some time you will find that lots of common or long (or just plain awkward to type) words have short versions to allow quicker input of commands. Here is a list of just a few:

DROP	DR	GET	G
INVENTORY	I	NORTH	N
SOUTH	S	EAST	E
WEST	W	NORTHEAST	NE
NORTHWEST	NW	SOUTHEAST	SE
SOUTHWEST	SW	UP	U
DOWN	D	OUT	O
LOOK	L	PRONOUNS	PN
WITH	WI	FROM	F

In addition to the abbreviation of some words, you will soon notice that QL Pawn will not object if you allow your English to become a little sloppier, for example



the program is completely happy with all the following commands:

GET THE NOOSE THEN TIE IT TO THE POLE  
G NOOSE, TIE IT TO POLE

or

GET EVERYTHING THEN PUT ON THE HAT  
G ALL, WEAR HAT

Occasionally it will object, if you are not specific enough when telling it which object you really mean. If you are carrying two hats, a spotted blue one and yellow striped one, and you say

DROP HAT

the program cannot decide which hat you want to drop, and so responds:

Which one, the small hat or the spotted hat?

You can now reply in several ways. Let's assume it's the yellow striped hat you want to drop. Possible replies are:

YELLOW  
STRIPED  
YELLOW ONE  
STRIPED ONE  
THE YELLOW ONE  
THE YELLOW HAT  
THE YELLOW STRIPED HAT  
STRIPED YELLOW ONE

as well as retyping the command again, having inserted the missing adjective thus:

DROP YELLOW HAT  
DROP STRIPED YELLOW HAT

Should you give a combination of adjectives unknown to the program, assuming there is no spotted yellow hat, then

DROP SPOTTED YELLOW HAT

will produce:

What spotted yellow hat?

The position of an object can also be used to specify which particular object you wish to use. For example, if you were carrying two keys, one in a bag and one in your pocket, then -

LOOK AT THE KEY THAT IS IN MY POCKET

will tell you about the one in your pocket rather than the one in the bag. Similarly —

LOOK AT THE KEY IN THE BAG

gives the description of the other key. If you type -

PUT THE KEY IN THE BAG IN MY POCKET

then QL Pawn will move the key currently in the bag into your pocket.

## Advice From The Experts

If you have never played an adventure game before, the following advice will be helpful. Some of it may seem a bit obvious at first but, taken as a whole, it provides a good basis for success in the game.

- i) Make a map, briefly detailing each location, its exits and the objects you find there.
- ii) Examine everything closely as most of the objects you will find will be useful at some point in the game.
- iii) Read the location descriptions very carefully - otherwise you may miss something important.
- iv) Save the game frequently. That way you can try something risky and return to the saved position if something goes badly wrong or you inadvertently get 'killed'.
- v) If the program doesn't understand one of your commands try rephrasing it, using different words to convey what you wish to achieve. Be sure that what you type would allow anyone reading it to understand your meaning, so that they could perform the actions you're asking the computer to take.

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