

# QSwitch Operation Manual



## Remote controlled breakout box:

- 24 pin Fischer connectors for input/output.
- 24 switchable signal lines pairwise twisted.
- 8 BNC break-out lines.
- Individual soft grounding for each signal line.
- Automatic soft grounding on power failure.
- USB and LAN interface.



Get the latest QSwitch pdf manual, firmware update and other information by following the QR code or this link: <https://qm.quantum-machines.co/qe-documentation-firmware>.

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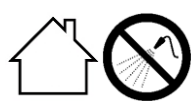







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## 1 Safety and regulatory information

This device has been tested and has been supplied in a safe condition. This manual contains some information and warnings which must be followed by the user to ensure safe operation and to retain the instrument in a safe condition.

This device has been designed for indoor use in the temperature range 15°C to 30°C, **preferably 20-25°C**, 20% - 80% RH (non-condensing). Do not operate while condensation is present. When bringing the device from a cold environment to a warm environment, please allow the unit to thermalize (2-4 hours) before taking it out of its shipping box and attempting to power it on.

Use of this instrument in a manner not specified by these instructions may impair the safety protection provided. Do not operate the instrument outside its rated supply voltages or environmental range.

	For device- and for human protection from any applied high signal voltages, <b>always</b> make sure to ground the instrument, see section 4.1.
	Keep away from strong magnetic fields, as the device contains sensitive magneto-mechanical components.
	Keep this device away from children and unauthorized users.
	<b>Indoor use only.</b> Keep this device away from rain, moisture, splashing and dripping liquids. Never put objects filled with liquids on top of or close to the device.
	<b>DO NOT</b> disassemble or open the cover without first getting advice from QDevil/Quantum Machines.
	Device heats up slightly during use. Make sure that the front and rear panels are unblocked, so that the instrument can be cooled by natural convection. Do not wrap in carpets, fabrics etc.
	<b>Please</b> only connect the instrument to the included power supply using the cable delivered with the instrument.
	Keep this device away from dust and extreme temperatures.
	Protect this device from shocks and abuse. Avoid brute force when operating the device.
	Do not use the device when damage to housing or cables is noticed. Do not attempt to service the device yourself but contact QDevil.
	Not for general waste, recycle as electronic waste.

## 2 Manual overview

### 1 Safety and regulatory information

Important precautions and requirements to the environment in which this instrument is to be used.

### 2 Manual overview

This section.

### 3 Introduction to the QSwitch

To get to know the instrument it is highly recommended starting by reading this section. An overview is provided mentioning the unique features of the QSwitch.

### 4 Getting started

Instructions in powering up, connecting and setting up communication.

### 5 Functionality and operation

Description and examples of the core features and commands of the QSwitch, including a short introduction to the SCPI protocol and list of errors.

### 6 Command Reference

A complete reference for all commands.

### 7 Specifications and performance

Contains a specification overview and data sheet curves.

### 8 Bibliography

A list of relevant references.

### 3 Introduction to the QSwitch

The QSwitch from QDevil/Quantum Machines is a remote-controlled 8 channel breakout box for 24-line Fischer connector terminated cables. The QSwitch is designed for being placed between for example a 24-channel manual breakout box such as the QBox (from QDevil) and the fridge wiring, so that fully automated breakout of any of the 24 DC/low frequency lines from the fridge – the *signal lines* – is possible.

The QSwitch makes it possible to automate/remote control experiments where instruments connected to the breakouts need to be shared between device terminals or switched in and out.

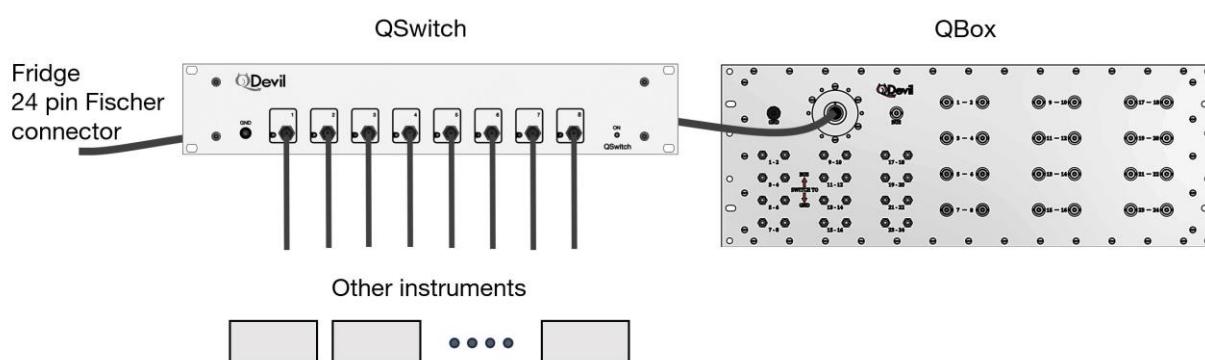


Figure 1. The QSwitch features remote controlled breakout to 8 BNC connectors of the wiring of a standard 24-channel DC/low frequency fridge. It also features individual soft grounding of each signal line and breaking of the further signal path to the QBox or any 24-pin Fischer connector terminated apparatus.

The QSwitch offers break-out of any of the 24 signal lines to any of the 8 BNC connectors. The QSwitch has two 24-pin Fischer connectors, one for connecting to the device under test (OUT/DUT) and one for connecting to a manual breakout box (IN) - or any 24-channel instrument, for example a low-frequency/DC source, featuring a compatible 24-pin connector.

The 24 *signal lines* are wired from the input side (*IN*) to the output side (*OUT*).

To be able to connect the DUT (*OUT*) to the source at the input (*IN*) in a controlled way, all input lines can be switched in and out individually. This is not only useful for protecting the DUT as well as the source, but also supports the case where the DUT should be sourced through one of the breakout BNC's instead of from the input (*IN*).

To protect the DUT when connecting the QSwitch to the fridge, each signal line is at the output side by default grounded through a 1 M $\Omega$  resistor. The 1 M $\Omega$  resistors ensure that any charge on the device's terminals is removed in a safe and well controlled way when connecting. 1 M $\Omega$  rather than 0  $\Omega$  to ground reduces the risk of damaging a connected signal source (this would not damage the QDAC-II, though).

Should *hard* ground be desired, one can short one of the breakouts and use that for common ground.

Every signal line can be tapped out to one or more of the eight breakout lines (BNC).

The microcontroller used for controlling the relays is EMI shielded from the signal lines and uses an external power adapter to minimize noise from the mains power outlet.

The QSwitch is operated through a USB/serial interface or through a LAN interface using SCPI commands. The QSwitch implements a subset of SCPI commands appropriate for its operation.

Multiple QSwitch'es can be cascaded to be able to access more lines. They can also be coupled in parallel to access lines from multiple Fischer connector cables, for example to share instruments between multiple devices.

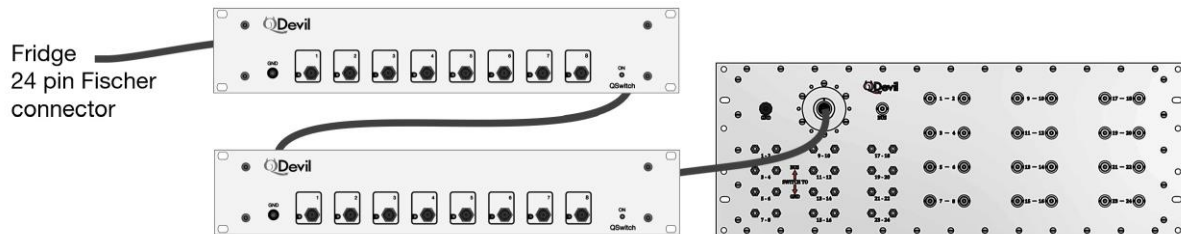


Figure 2. To automate access to more than 8 out of 24 lines, several QSwitch'es can be daisy chained. Obviously, with three QSwitch'es all 24 lines can be accessed. In that case a 24-channel manual breakout box becomes obsolete.

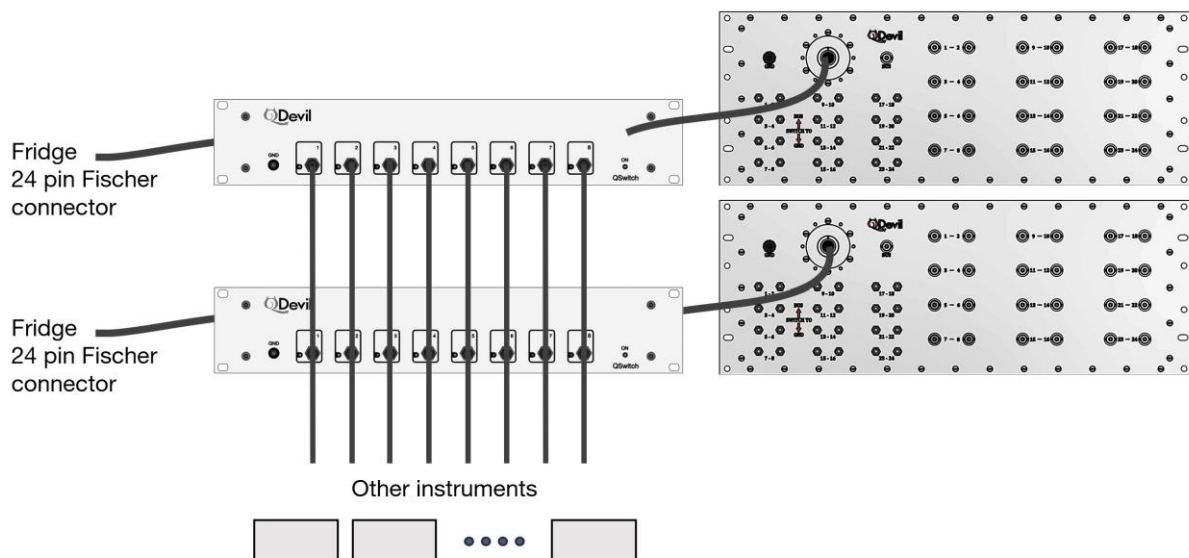


Figure 3. To share instruments between multiple devices or devices with more than 24 terminals several QSwitch can be coupled in parallel by connecting the breakout channels on all units as shown.

### 3.1 Architecture and connections

#### Schematic / signal routing

The QSwitch consists of 10x24 relays which can be toggled individually. Eight of the relay groups are for breaking out to the BNC connectors. One group (!0) is for individual (soft) grounding of the device signal lines. The last group (!9) is for disconnecting the signal lines from the instrument connected to the input (IN).

No more than 40 break-out line relays (for the BNC connectors) can be in the closed state in order not to overload on the power management circuits.

For optimum noise immunity the 24 signal lines are pairwise twisted like they are in typical fridge wiring (1-2, 3-4, 5-6, etc...) and in the QDevil Fischer connector cable (QDevil item no. Q205\_03).

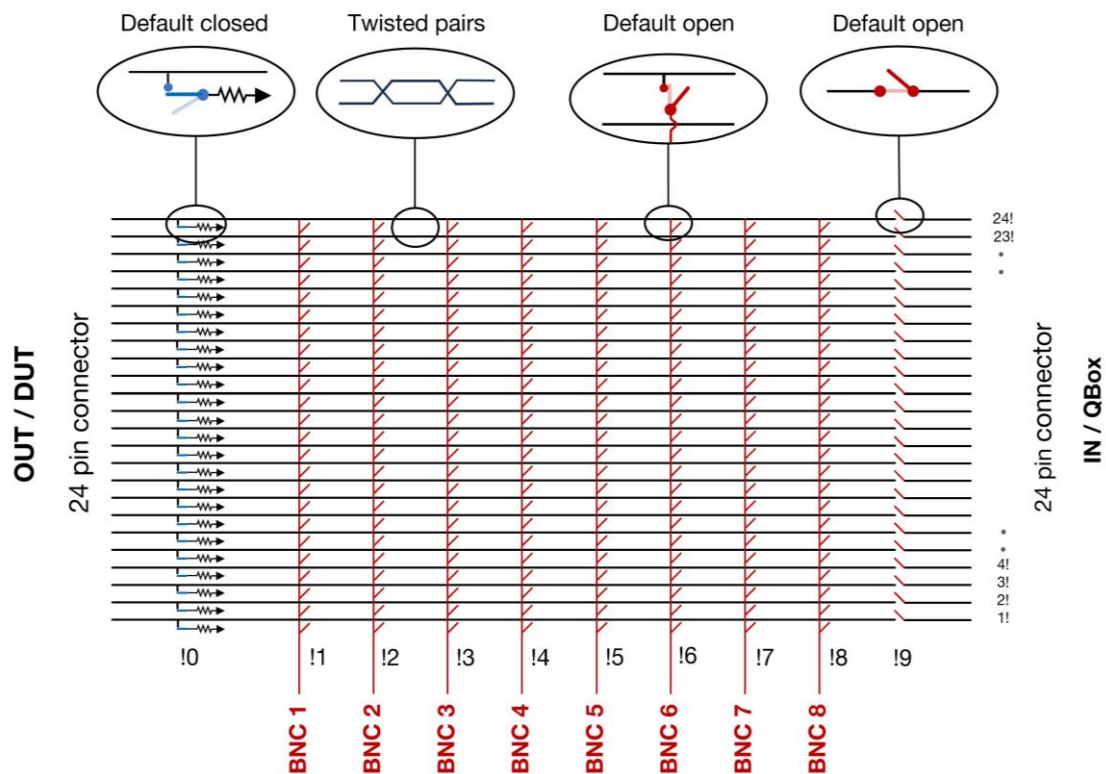


Figure 4. Principle schematic of the QSwitch. All switches (relays) are open by default, except for the 24 soft ground relays; “default” meaning when the power is off or just turned on (unless autosave/restore is enabled). The exclamation marks (!) after the signal line numbers and before the breakout line numbers refer to the syntax for addressing relays, e.g., “23!4” refers to the relay connecting signal line 23 to breakout number 4 (BNC 4). See SCPI “Channel list” syntax section 5.1

Note that the distance between the breakout lines, which run perpendicular to the signal lines, is about 35.5 mm. This implies that if two BNC connectors are connected through an instrument to for example a pair of twisted signal lines, there is a certain cross section for electromagnetic pickup between the breakout lines; smallest when the breakouts are connected to signal lines close to the BNC connectors (1!, 2! ..), and highest when connected to signal lines with high numbers (23!, 24!, ..).

## Front panel

The 8 BNC breakouts are located on the front panel. They are standard BNC connectors with their shield connected to the common chassis ground. Each breakout BNC has an LED indicating if it is connected to any of the 24 signal lines. There are no LEDs for the grounding and input relay groups.

The unit is intended to be rack mounted using rack mount isolators, to avoid ground loops in the setup. Grounding of the unit can be through any of the BNC lines or the shield of one of the two signal cables connected to the rear panel *or* via the ground banana socket (GND) on the front panel.

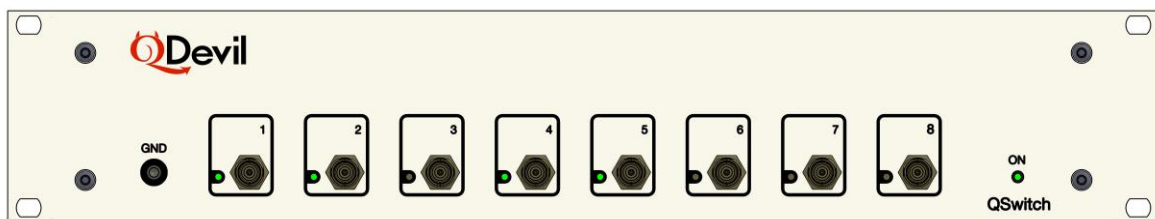


Figure 5. Front plate of the QSwitch.

## Rear panel

To reduce cabling clutter on the front of the rack in which the QSwitch is mounted, the 24-pin input and output connectors are located on the rear panel. Here also the power connector and the USB and ethernet connectors are found. The power is supplied by an included low noise 9V adapter the output of which is galvanically isolated from mains ground. To avoid ground loops and additional noise, both the LAN and USB connectors are galvanically isolated from the signal ground.



Figure 6. Rear plate of the Switch.

Left: 24-pin connector going to equipment like a QBox (typically wired to a voltage source, such as a QDAC-II).

Right: 24-pin connector for connecting to the fridge / device under test (DUT), or any cascaded QSwitch devices.

Middle: LAN and USB connectors connections for communication, and 9 V DC input from the included adapter.

## 3.2 Device safety features

When the QSwitch is unpowered, each signal line is connected to soft ground (through 1 M $\Omega$ ) and disconnected from the input and all breakout lines (BNC), so that it is safe to connect a device to the output (*OUT*).

In case of power loss, the relays connecting the signal lines to soft ground will close within approximately 2 milliseconds whereafter the relays connecting to the input side and to the breakouts will open within 200 ms in random order.

## 4 Getting started

To avoid ground loops or other spurious circulating currents, it is highly recommended to use the enclosed rack-mount isolators when mounting the QSwitch in a metallic rack. Avoid making the QSwitch cabinet touch other instruments in the rack.

Please pay attention when rack-mounting the instrument using the included isolators, as the isolation on the 6 mm screws may move when pressed through the plastic “ears”. Please test the isolation *before* connecting the QSwitch to anything else.



Figure 7. Included in the shipping box: (1) QSwitch rack instrument, (2) Power supply, (3) USB cable, (4) Rack mount isolators.

### 4.1 Grounding the QSwitch

The QSwitch is intended to be grounded by the 24-way (Fischer) cable connecting the fridge to the OUT connector on the rear panel, or alternatively through the IN connector. The QSwitch can also function as a grounding start point if grounded through the GND banana socket on the front panel or via the shield of one of the BNC connectors.

It is very important to connect the QSwitch enclosure to ground. Otherwise, the soft-ground will be floating and the device not protected. Further, if a high signal voltage is applied to a signal- or breakout line, a hazardous voltage can be present on the instrument enclosure, if the line is connected to (soft) ground or in the case of a failure inside the instrument.

### 4.2 Powering up the QSwitch

It is recommended to install the instrument in a normal laboratory environment (i.e., at non-extreme temperatures and humidity) with a stable temperature in the range of 18-25 °C.

There is no on/off switch on the QSwitch. It will power up when the cable from the enclosed power adapter is plugged in and the adapter is connected to mains.

### 4.3 Connecting the QSwitch to a device or fridge

When the QSwitch is off, all relays are open, except for the soft-ground relays, which will connect the device side (DUT/OUT) to ground through 1 M $\Omega$  resistors. This state is un-altered after powering up the QSwitch (unless AUTosave is enabled, see section 5.3 *Autosave and restart*). So, it is safe to connect your device both in the OFF state and after powering ON. Soft grounding ensures that any charge on the device's terminals, for example gate electrodes on a quantum dot device, is slowly led to ground.

However, if the instrument has been in use, it is advised either to reset the instrument (\*RST command) or power cycle it before connecting it to the device. Note that \*RST (reset) will not reload an autosaved state but put all relays in their default position (see schematic in Figure 4)

### 4.4 Communication setup

The QSwitch is controlled through its USB/serial interface or via ethernet (LAN) – or both.

For first time use (setting up LAN etc.) and for updating the firmware it is necessary to use the USB port.

Only one LAN client can be connected to the instrument at a time, meaning that there cannot be multiple simultaneous users or computers controlling the instrument.

The command set of the QSwitch is a sub-set of the commands described in the SCPI standard (SCPI Consortium, 1999). See section 5.1 about SCPI command syntax, and limitations.

Messages to the instrument should always end with either a newline character <nl> (0x0A) – also known as line feed character (SCPI standard) or a carriage return <cr> (0x0D) character.

Note that a single QSwitch command line must *not* be longer than 127 characters.  
Please allow a delay between sub-sequent commands of 100 milliseconds, otherwise an error may be generated, and the second command skipped. Further, query command responses may come out of sync.

#### 4.4.1 USB/serial setup

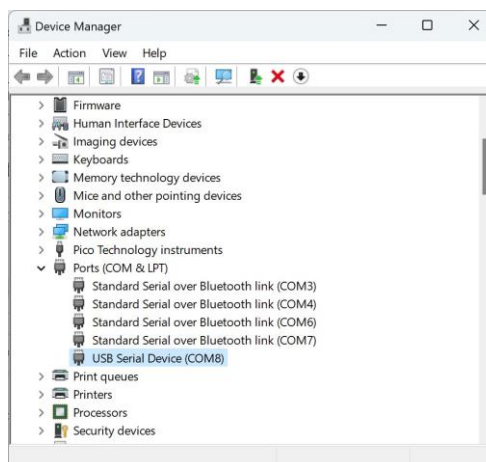
Communication through the USB port works through a virtual serial port over the USB interface, as there is a USB-to-serial adapter inside the instrument (opto-coupled). Since the USB connection is galvanically isolated from the circuits inside the instrument, no transients in the output voltages will occur when the USB cable is plugged in or unplugged.

When communicating with the QSwitch it is necessary to specify the correct serial port to the software. See how to find the correct port number or name below. The instrument will appear as a serial device on the host computer. The communication settings are fixed and cannot be changed:

Serial port setting	Value
Communication rate	9600
Number of bits	8
Parity	None
Stop bits	1
Flow control	None

## Windows

On Windows systems the port can be found by going to the Device Manager and look under Ports (COM & LPT). In the example below it is seen that USB serial port is found at “COM8”.



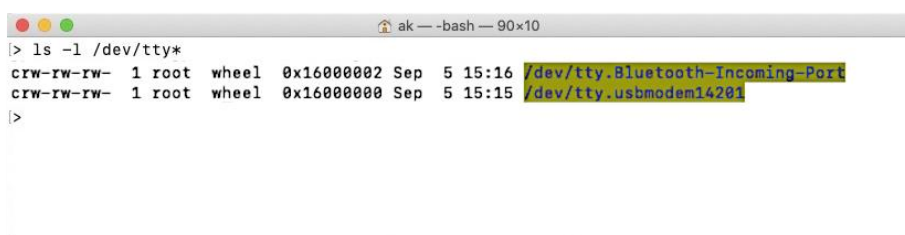
The driver is usually pre-installed, or Windows will download the driver when the QSwitch USB cable is plugged into the PC. If this does not happen the driver can be downloaded from Microchip: <https://www.microchip.com/en-us/product/MCP2221>.

## MAC OS and Linux

Open a command prompt (terminal) and browse the /dev folder for all “tty” devices and look for USB/serial devices. Use the ‘ls’ command to do so (do not type the “>” character). The QSwitch will typically appear as ‘cu.usbmodem#####’, where the number ##### varies from instrument to instrument:



Alternatively, the instrument may be found under /dev/tty/:



If the usb-serial device does not appear in the list, it may be necessary to install it, see *Appendix B*.

## Control using a terminal program via USB

An example of a terminal program which runs on both Windows, Mac, and Linux is CoolTerm (<https://freeware.the-meiers.org/>). The screen shots below is from CoolTerm on a Windows PC. PuTTY is another applicable terminal program (see further down, under *Ethernet via a terminal*).

Before connecting to the instrument, the Connection-Options have to be adjusted. Please update the port number with the previously found port ID:

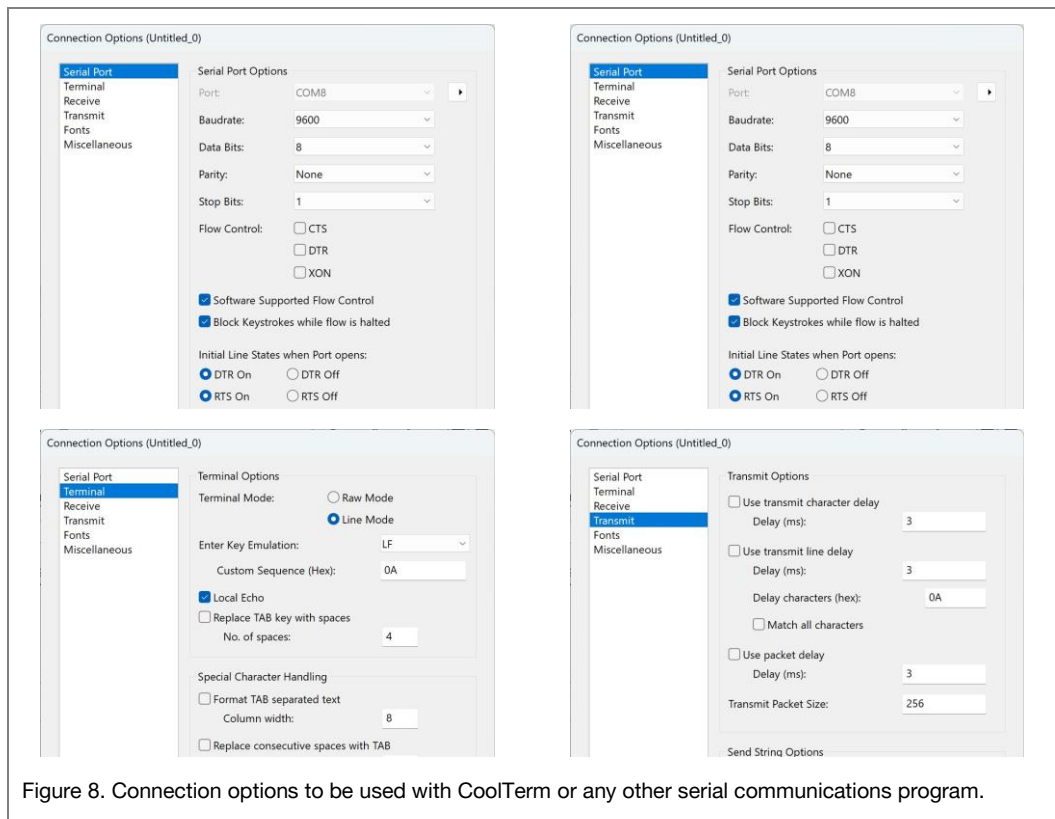


Figure 8. Connection options to be used with CoolTerm or any other serial communications program.

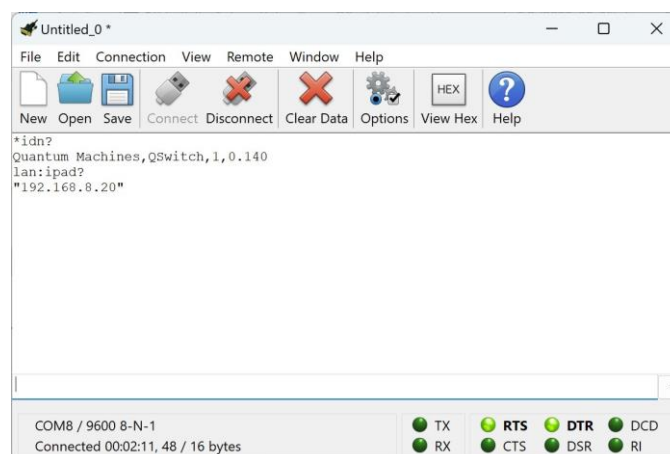


Figure 9. Example of sending a few commands via CoolTerm on a Mac.

## 4.4.2 LAN setup

From factory, the LAN (TCP/IP) interface is set up to acquire an IP address, gateway and subnet mask using DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol). The instrument will present itself with its hostname which by default is the same as its serial number.

It is also possible to manually specify the LAN settings. To use the specified (STATic) settings, it is required to set DHCP to OFF.

Changes to LAN settings are automatically stored in non-volatile memory. However, to effectuate changes, the instrument needs to be restarted either by power cycling or by sending the SYSTem:REStart command to the instrument.

Note, if the instrument does not have a permanent entry in the DHCP server's map of clients (static DHCP), the retrieved IP address may change between power on events or restart events leading to new requests.

Command	Description
[[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]	Node (optional)
LAN:DHCP[?] [<Boolean>]	Determines whether automatic LAN configuration is on or off (default ON)
LAN:IPADdress[?] [<IP address in quotes>]	Sets or queries the instrument's IP address.
LAN:HOSTname[?] [<name in quotes>]	Sets or queries the instrument's LAN name
LAN:GATeway[?] [<IP address of gateway in quotes>]	Sets or queries the IP address of the gateway (router).
LAN:SMASK[?] [<sub-net mask>]	Sets or queries the sub-net mask, in CIDR format.
LAN:MAC?	Queries MAC address of the instrument.

Please see section 5.1 for a brief introduction to the SCPI protocol, and the Command Reference section 6.3.1 for the details of the above commands.

### Example – sets the instrument static IP address and queries the current IP address:

```
>LAN:IPAD "192.168.14.178"           -Sets the static IP address
>LAN:IPAD? CURRENT                   -Queries the current IP address.
"192.168.14.170"
```

## Opening an ethernet (TCP/IP) connection

When connecting the instrument<sup>1</sup> to a local network it will try to retrieve an IP address via DHCP. The network administrator should preferably lock an IP address to the instrument in the router. Alternatively, a fixed IP address can be set using the IPADddress command (see 6.3.1). If it is not possible to discover the instrument's IP address on the local network, it will be necessary first to connect via the USB/serial interface.

When opening a connection to the instrument it is important to use port 5025, otherwise the instrument will not respond.

Please remember to close the TCP/IP connection properly after use. Otherwise, the instrument may become unreachable until restarted or power cycled.

## Ethernet via a terminal

One can test the connection to the instrument is to use a simple Telnet client. However, sometimes a GUI client such as PuTTY ([www.putty.org](http://www.putty.org)) is easier to use... Remember to set port = 5025.

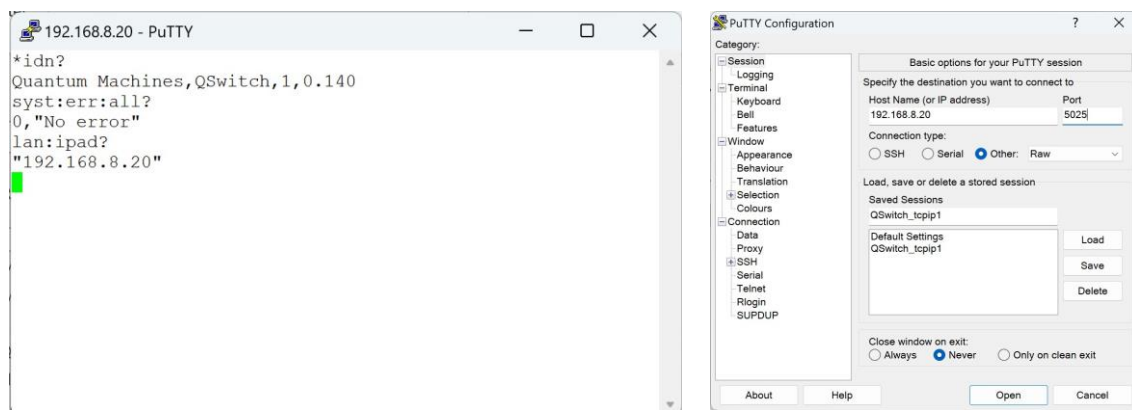


Figure 10. Example of using PuTTY for communication via the LAN port. Right: How to set up PuTTY.

<sup>1</sup> To make the instrument acquire an IP address via DHCP, the ethernet cable should be plugged in *before* powering up the unit, or it should be restarted after plugging in the cable (SYSTEM:REstart).

### 4.4.3 Python

The instrument is designed to be controlled by a higher level instrument control program. A driver is available for QCoDeS, which is Python based. However, controlling the instrument directly from Python is also straight forward. One can connect to the USB/serial port using the *pyserial* package or to the TCP/IP ethernet connection using the *socket* package. However, in many laboratory environments instrument communication relies on the using the VISA library. To do so the *pyvisa* package needs to be installed and imported, and either the NI VISA backend from National Instruments has to be installed or the *pyvisa-py* backend from the *pyvisa* consortium.

Once the above is all set, a simple Python program, may look like this, here using a Jupyter Notebook:

```
import pyvisa as visa
class QSwitch():
    def __init__(self, visa_addr="ASRL15:INSTR", lib=''):
        rm = visa.ResourceManager(lib) # To use pyvisa-py backend, use argument '@py'
        self._visa = rm.open_resource(visa_addr)
        self._visa.write_termination = '\n'
        self._visa.read_termination = '\n'
        # Set baudrate and stuff for serial communication only
        if (visa_addr.find("ASRL") != -1):
            self._visa.baud_rate = 9600
            self._visa.send_end = False
    def query(self, cmd):
        return self._visa.query(cmd)
    def write(self, cmd):
        self._visa.write(cmd)
    def __exit__(self):
        self.close()
```

```
rm = visa.ResourceManager('@') # To use pyvisa-py backend, use argument '@py'
# List connected instruments. Instruments on LAN are often not shown.
rm.list_resources()
```

```
('ASRL15::INSTR',)
```

```
q_usb = QSwitch(visa_addr = "ASRL15:INSTR", lib = '')
q_lan = QSwitch(visa_addr="TCPIP::192.168.8.20::5025::SOCKET", lib='')
# To use pyvisa-py backend, use argument lib='@py'
```

```
import time
print(q_usb.query('*IDN?'))
time.sleep(0.1)
print(q_lan.query("sys:err:all?"))
```

```
Quantum Machines,QSwitch,123,0.140
0, "No error"
```

### QCoDeS (Python)

QDevil has developed a QCoDeS driver for the QSwitch. It is included in the [Qcodes\\_contrib\\_drivers](#) package in the official QCoDeS repository on GitHub, and can be installed as a normal package in Python . Example Jupyter notebooks can be found in the [docs/examples sub folder](#). Documentation can be found here: [https://qcodes.github.io/Qcodes\\_contrib\\_drivers/examples/QDevil/index.html](https://qcodes.github.io/Qcodes_contrib_drivers/examples/QDevil/index.html)

The QCoDeS driver automatically ensures sufficient delays between transmitted commands (see section 4.4), so that the user does not have to take care of this.

## 5 Functionality and operation

The QSwitch supports a small sub-set of the SCPI standard (SCPI Consortium, 1999) only including commands strictly necessary for the intended use, thus making it very easy to program the instrument. The instrument does not live up to all requirements of the SCPI standard.

### 5.1 Quick introduction to SCPI

In SCPI, a command is represented by a *program header* consisting of one or more *instrument control headers*, also referred to as *program mnemonics*, or *keywords*, separated by colon characters “:”. So each command is a hierarchy of colon separated keywords; a command tree, where the keywords are branches and the colons are nodes. In SCPI terminology each branch is called a *sub-system*. Below is a list of the top-level keywords – or *sub-systems* – for the QSwitch:

Command group (sub-system)	Description
*xxx	xxx represents one of the IEEE488.2 mandatory commands . Just *RST and *IDN? Are implemented in QSwitch.
<b>ROUTe</b>	Controls the voltage outputs.
<b>SYSTem</b>	Error read out, non-measurement related settings (e.g. LAN settings), synchronization.

### SCPI syntax in short

Except for the special command headers starting with a, asterisk (\*), most *instrument control header mnemonics* have a long form and a short form which can be mixed, see (SCPI Consortium, 1999) section 6.1.2. For example `syst:comm:lan:ipad?` for querying the instrument’s IP address can also be written as `system:comm:lan:ipaddress?`.

In addition, some mnemonics are optional. Therefore, commands can often be shortened significantly, for example `system:communicate:lan:ipaddress?` Can for the QSwitch be shortened down to: `lan:ipad?`.

In the Command Reference (section 6), the short form of the mnemonics (keywords) are written in uppercase though the instrument does not distinguish between uppercase and lowercase characters. Optional keywords are surrounded by square brackets in the documentation.

Note that this instrument does not support compound (semicolon separated) commands, e.g.  
`syst:comm:lan:ipad?;hostname?;*rst`

#### Command syntax

`Level1:level2:level3 parameter1,parameter2,...`

#### Query syntax

All queries end with a question mark. Some queries take one or more parameters, but most don’t.

`Level1:level2:level3? parameter1, parameter2,...`

## SCPI “Channel list” syntax

Relays are addressed using the so-called *channel list* syntax. Channel lists starts with “(“ and ends with “)”. Inside the parentheses individual relays are addressed as “x!y”, where x designates the *signal line* number (1-24) and y designates the breakout line number (0-9, where 0 and 9 designate the grounding relays and the input relays, respectively).

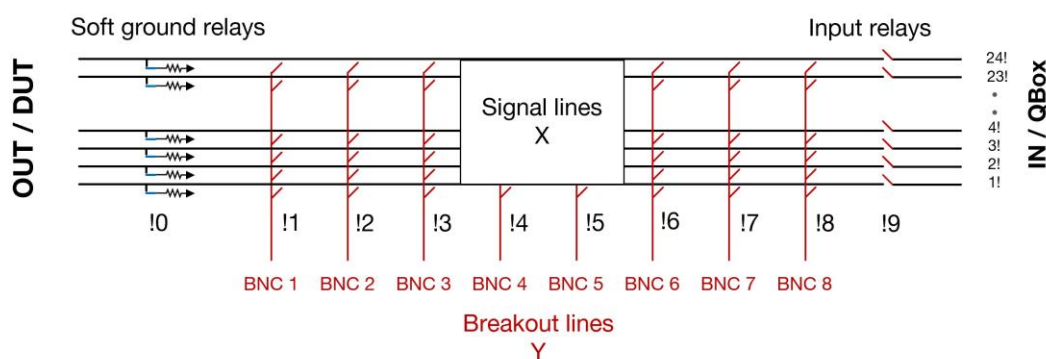


Figure 11. When addressing the relays/switches using channel list notation, one provides the signal line number followed by the breakout line number separated by an exclamation mark. The soft ground relays are addressed as breakout line number “0”, and the input relays as breakout line number “9”. Example: “19!2” will address the relay connecting signal line 19 and breakout line number 2.

Intervals (ranges) of relays can more compactly be addressed in *range notation* by “x<sub>n1</sub>!y:x<sub>n2</sub>!y”. Only the signal line relays “x” support ranges.

Channel list syntax	Description
(@1!3,5!3)	Comma separated. Addresses multiple relays either individually or by range notation.
(@1!0:24!0)	Range notation for addressing multiple relays with consecutive numbers.

### Example – ask the instrument any errors messages and open all soft grounding relays

```
>err:all?
0,"No error"
>open (@1!0:24!0)
```

## 5.2 Opening and closing relays

There are three commands for opening and closing relays: OPEN, CLOSe and \*RST. Though \*RST is an IEEE 488.1 common command, effectively it is a “set all relays to default position” command. Likewise there is a single command which will query the state of all relays: CLOSe:STATe?

Command	Description
[ROUte:]	Node (optional)
CLOSe[?] <channel_list>	Closes the specified relays or queries their close status (0 = open, 1 = closed.).
OPEN[?] <channel_list>	Opens the specified relays or queries their open status (1 = open, 0 = closed.).
CLOSe:STATe?	Returns a list of all closed relays in channel list notation.
*RST	Sets all relays to their default positions (see Figure 4), meaning that all soft grounding relays will close, and all other relays will open (IEEE 488.2 common command).

### Examples of using the open and close commands

```
>close (@12!3,8!4)           # Connect signal line 12 to BNC 3 and signal line 8 to BNC 4.
>close (@1!9:24!9)           # Connect all 24 signal lines to the input.
>open (@1!0:24!0)            # Unground all 24 signal lines.
>clos:stat?                  # Returns all closed relays.
(@1!9:24!9,12!3,8!4)
```

## Timing

All QSwitch commands are sequential commands, meaning that every command is fully executed before the next command in queue is processed.

The USB/Serial communication speed of 9600 baud *and the required minimum 100 ms delay between transmitted command*, see section 4.4, set the limit for how fast commands can be executed.

The OPEN, CLOSe, or \*RST commands take up to around 25 ms to execute due to the low-noise internal digital communication and the actual electro-mechanical switching of the relays. This applies no matter how many relays are addressed in one command. The order of switching is not defined. Some relays may switch already within 5 ms and the last ones close after up to 25 ms.

If AUTosave is enabled there will be an additional delay related to OPEN and CLOSe for writing the configuration to non-volatile memory. This delay is of the order of 45 ms. So, ~70 ms in total internally .

Both because of the limited input buffer length of 127 bytes of the instrument and because of these timing constraints it is recommended to use range notation whenever possible, for example when opening all *grounding relays* or closing all *through relays*.

## Command synchronization

To make sure that an OPEN, CLOSe or \*RST command – or RESTART – has completed, one must wait at least 75 ms before issuing the next command. Alternatively, one can perform a query, such as `syst:err?` (wait 20 ms if using LAN) to find out if the instrument is ready for the next command, as queries will respond only when the previous command is executed, and then add 3 ms to allow for the electro-mechanical relaxation of the relays.

### 5.3 Autosave and restart

The QSwitch features autosave and auto recovery of relay states. When autosave is enabled the total relay configuration will be saved to non-volatile memory every time one or more relays are switched. In case of a power failure, the relays will go to their default states in the order described in 3.2 *Device safety features*. However, if AUTosave is ON, the relays will thereafter immediately go back to their positions before power was lost.

Relay states are also persisted the moment AUTosave is enabled. Should it be required to restart the instrument, for example in order to instate changed communication settings, this can be done without changing the relay states by first enabling AUTosave. After REStart one can disable AUTosave again if wanted.

Note that *reset* (\*RST) and REStart differ in the way that \*RST does *not* restart the firmware, it only resets the relays to their default (factory) positions, while at the same time disabling AUTosave. REStart on the other hand also restarts the firmware and in case AUTosave is ON effectively leaves the relay states unchanged. If AUTosave is OFF, REStart will reset the relays to their default (factory) positions.

Command	Description
[SYSTem:]	Node (optional)
AUTosave[?] [<Boolean>]	Specifies or queries if autosave is on (1) or off (0). If AUTosave is ON, then the on/off state of all relays will be recovered upon power-cycling, and will be unaltered during REStart, unlike *RST (reset) which will disable AUTosave and set all relays to their default (un-pulled) states.
REStart	Restarts the firmware including the LAN interface (effectuating any changes to the LAN settings), and resets the device to its power up condition. If AUTosave is enabled, the states of all relays will be unaltered.

#### Examples of using AUTosave and REStart

```

>*rst                                # Resets all relay positions to their default positions
>clos:stat?                          # Check that all relays are still at their default positions
(@1!0:24!0)
>close (@1!9:24!9)                   # Close all 24 input relays.
>open (@1!0:24!0)                    # Open all soft grounding relays
>close (@12!3,8!4)                   # Connect signal line 12 to BNC 3 and signal line 8 to BNC 4

>autosave on                         # Turn autosave ON and save the current relay states
>restart                             # Restart the firmware
>close:state?                        # Check that all relays are still at their recent positions
(1!9:24!9,12!3,8!4)

```

## 5.4 Error reporting

Error messages follow the SCPI numbering with device specific information added, giving relevant hints to the details of what has failed. For a general description of SCPI errors see the SCPI Vol. 2 Command Reference (SCPI Consortium, 1999) section 21.8.

For simplicity, the QSwitch has just a single error query command, and does not feature any of the status and event registers which are usually a part of SCPI and IEEE 488.2.

Command	Description
[SYSTem:]	Node (optional)
ERRor:ALL?	Returns list of all errors (or 0, "No error"), thus resetting the queue
BEEPer:STATe[?] {ON OFF 0 1}	

### Example – ask for the list of errors after sending an illegal command

```
>blabla
>SYST:ERR:ALL?
-113,"Undefined header"
>SYST:ERR:ALL?
0,"No error"
```

The error queue is emptied every time the `system:error:all?` query is performed.

Below is a list of all possible errors. Note that the error queue buffer has a finite length. Therefore, there is also an error for error queue overflow.



Error number and description	Meaning of error
-108,"Parameter not allowed"	A command with an illegal number of parameters has been received by the instrument.
-109,"Missing parameter"	A command is missing a parameter.
-110,"Command header error"	Something is wrong with a received command.
-113,"Undefined header"	An unknow (e.g. misspelled) command keyword has been received.
-120,"Numeric data error"	A number provided as parameter (e.g. relay number) is out of range or wrong format.
-151,"Invalid string data"	A parameter in the form of a quoted string is wrong in some way. For example, an IP address containing letters or a too long LAN hostname.
-200,"Execution error"	Internal firmware error
-240,"Hardware error"	A hardware error has been detected. Rare.
-240,"Hardware error; USB framing"	Internal firmware communication interface error. Rare.
-240,"Hardware error; USB overrun"	Internal firmware communication interface error. Rare.
-240,"Hardware error; USB general"	Internal firmware communication interface error. Rare.
-310,"System error; out of memory"	The internal controller has run out of memory. . Rare.
-310,"System error; internal software error"	Something went wrong inside the firmware. Rare.
-350,"Error queue overflow"	The error queue is full.

Table 1. List of errors and their meanings. The ones in grey ink are not likely to ever occur.

### 5.4.1 Buzzer and LED

When an error occurs, an error message is appended to the error queue. In addition, if enabled by the user, the internal buzzer will produce a single beep and the front (power on) LED will start flashing. When the error queue has been emptied, the LED will return to its steady state.

In order to reduce electronic and electro-acoustic noise potentially coupling to the signal lines, the beeper and LED flashing pattern is disabled by default and needs to be enabled to produce the described behavior.

LED blink pattern (approx.)	State / error
	Instrument is on and ready
	SCPI error message available (requires BEEP:STAT ON)

## 6 Command Reference

### 6.1 IEEE Common commands

Only selected IEEE 488.2 common (“mandatory”) commands are implemented.

#### \*IDN?

---

Description	Identification query.
Syntax	*IDN?
Arguments	None
Query response	Returns the product name, model number, serial number, and firmware version.
Example(s)	<code>&gt;*IDN?</code> <code>Quantum Machines,QSwitch,123,1.6</code>
Notes	

---

#### \*RST

---

Description	Reset command. Bring the QSwitch into the power on state with all relays at their default positions. It also switches AUTOSave OFF.
Syntax	*RST
Arguments	None
Query response	None. Event only.
Example(s)	<code>&gt;*RST</code>
Notes	This command does not restart device. This means that an active LAN connection is kept alive and that all LAN settings are unaltered, even though they may have been set to new values by the user. For this the REStart command should be used.

---

## 6.2 Signal routing

All relays are controlled using the same ROUTe:{OPEN|CLOSe} commands.

The syntax for selecting a specific relay is:

*<signal line no.>!<breakout line no.>*

To select a range of relays the syntax is:

*<signal line no. n1>!<breakout line no. >:<signal line no. n2>!<breakout line no.>*

where

*<signal line no.>* = 1-24 specifies Fischer connector pin number 1-24

*<breakout line no.>* = 1-8 specifies the BNC connector number 1-8 with two special cases:

*<breakout line no.>* = 0 designates the soft grounding relays (default closed)

*<breakout line no.>* = 9 designates the input relays

Note that the soft-ground “default closed” relays are controlled in exactly the same as all the other relays which are “default open”. Their default state is just different.

To reset all relays to their default state (not AUTosave state), please use the \*RST command.

### ROUTe:CLOSe

Description	Closes one or more specified relay(s) establishing connection between signal lines and breakout lines, soft ground relays and the input connector.	
Syntax	[ROUTe:]CLOSe[?] [<channel_list>]	
Arguments	<channel_list>	(@<range_1>,<range_2> ...) Where range_n specifies a single relay x!y or an interval of signal line relays x:[n1:n2]: x <sub>n1</sub> !y:x <sub>n2</sub> !y Where x = signal lines, y = breakout lines (incl ground an input), and x <sub>n</sub> = 1..24 , y = 0..9
Query response	Returns the close-state of the specified relay(s): 0 = open, 1 = closed.	
Example(s)	<pre> &gt;close (@12!3)      - connect signal line #12 to BNC 3. &gt;close (@1!9:24!9)  - connect all 24 inputs to the signal lines. &gt;close? (@12!3)     - queries the close-state of the line #12 to BNC#3 relay. 1 </pre>	
Notes	Note that the order of closing the relays is not specified and not guaranteed to be as in the channel list. Note that only the signal line relays “x” can be specified as an interval, whereas the breakout relays “y” cannot.	

## ROUTe:CLOSE:STATe?

---

Description	Query only. Returns a list of all closed relays.	
Syntax	[ROUTe:]CLOSE:STATe?	
Arguments	None	
Query response	Returns a list of all closed relays in SCPI channel list notation.	
Example(s)	<code>&gt;close:stat?</code>	- When the command is executed after power up or restart it will return a list of all the closed soft-ground relays (assuming AUTosave off).
	<code>(@1!0:24!0)</code>	
Notes	To minimize the number of bytes to be transferred, the response is compacted using channel list notation. A snippet of Python code is available for “unpacking” such a reply to a more code friendly format.	

---

## ROUTe:OPEN

---

Description	Opens one or more specified relay(s) disconnecting signal lines from breakout lines, soft ground relays or the input.	
Syntax	[ROUTe:]OPEN[?] <channel_list>	
Arguments	<channel_list>	See description for CLOSE
Query response	Returns the open-state of the specified relay(s): 1 = open, 0 = closed.	
Example(s)	<code>&gt;open (@12!3)</code>	- disconnect signal line #12 to BNC 3.
	<code>&gt;open (@1!9:24!9)</code>	- disconnect all 24 inputs from the signal lines.
Notes	Note that the order of opening the relays is not specified and not guaranteed to be as in the channel list.	

---

## 6.3 System commands

System commands are related to general instrument configuration and reading the error message queue.

### 6.3.1 Communication commands

#### SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:DHCP

Description	Enables, disables or queries the instrument's use of DHCP (Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol) for getting its IP address, subnet mask and default gateway.	
Syntax	[[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:DHCP {OFF 0 ON 1} [[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:DHCP[?] [{CURRent STATIC}]	
Arguments	ON 1:	The instrument tries to obtain an IP address from a DHCP server at power on or REStart (default).
	OFF  0:	The instrument uses the static IP address, Subnet Mask, and Default Gateway. The same happens in the absence of a DHCP server.
	[{CURRent STATIC}]: Optional argument. If present, it determines if it is the stored setting or the actual state in use (current) which is queried. CURRent is default.	
Query response	Returns the current or saved (STATic) setting, 0 (OFF) or 1 (ON).	
Example(s)	>SYST:COMM:LAN:DHCP ON - Enables DHCP.	
	>SYST:REST >SYST:COMM:LAN:DHCP? - Queries the current DHCP state. 1	
Notes	Changes to LAN settings are automatically saved in non-volatile memory. To effectuate a new setting, the device needs to be restarted (system:restart) or power cycled.	
	First time configuration of the LAN interface is often done via the USB interface, as the instrument's IP address may be unknown at this stage.	
	Note that if the instrument does not have a permanent entry in the DHCP server's map of clients (static DHCP), the retrieved IP address may change between power on events or other events leading to new requests.	
	If no DHCP server is available or DHCP is OFF, the instrument will use the stored IP address, Subnet Mask, and Default Gateway.	

## SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:HOSTname

---

Description	Sets or queries the host name of the instrument on the network. This is the name under which the instrument appears on the local network. The factory set host name is identical to the serial number of the unit.	
Syntax	[[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:HOSTname "<hostname>" [[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:HOSTname[?] [[CURRent STATIC]]	
Arguments	"<hostname>"	Quoted string containing the new name, max 16 characters.
	[[CURRent STATIC]]: Optional argument. If present, it determines if it is the stored name or the actual host name (current) in use which is queried. CURRent is default.	
Query response	Returns the host name as a quoted string.	
Example(s)	>SYST:COMM:LAN:HOST? - Queries the unit's LAN host name "qswitch-1"	
Notes	Changes are automatically saved in non-volatile memory.  The hostname is the host portion (left most) of the domain name, which is translated into an IP address. When DHCP is activated the hostname is registered with the Dynamic Domain Name System (Dynamic DNS) service at power-on or restart.	

---

## SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:MAC?

---

Description	Queries the instrument's Media Access Control (MAC) address	
Syntax	[[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:MAC?	
Arguments	None	
Query response	Returns the 12-character hexadecimal MAC address surrounded by quotes.	
Example(s)	>SYST:COMM:LAN:MAC? - Queries the instrument's MAC address. "70B3D5921000"	
Notes		

---

## SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:IPADdress

Description	Sets or queries the instrument's IP address.	
Syntax	[[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:IPADdress "<address>" [[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:IPADdress? [{CURRent STATic}]	
Arguments	"<address>":	IP address surrounded by quotes.
	{[CURRent STATic]}:	Optional argument. If present, it determines if it is the stored address or the actual address in use which is queried. CURRent is default.
Query response	Returns either the stored (static) IP address or the actually used IP address (current), which may be different from the stored one if DHCP is ON.	
Example(s)	<p>&gt;SYST:COMM:LAN:IPAD "192.168.14.178" -Sets the static IP address</p> <p>&gt;SYST:COMM:LAN:IPAD? STATic -Queries the static IP address.</p> <p>"192.168.14.178"</p>	
Notes	<p>If DHCP is enabled (SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:DHCP ON), the specified static IP address is not used.</p> <p>Changes are automatically saved in non-volatile memory. To effectuate a new setting the device needs to be restarted (system:restart) or power cycled.</p>	

## SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:GATeway

Description	Sets the default gateway for the instrument.	
Syntax	[[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:GATeway "<address>" [[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:GATeway? [{CURRent STATic}]	
Arguments	"<address>":	IP address surrounded by quotes.
	{[CURRent STATic]}:	Optional argument. If present, it determines if it is the stored gateway address or the current gateway in use which is queried. CURRent is default.
Query response	Returns either the stored gateway (STATic) or the actually used gateway (CURRent), which may be different from the stored one if DHCP is ON.	
Example(s)	<p>&gt;SYST:COMM:LAN:GAT "192.168.1.1" -Sets the static default gateway.</p> <p>&gt;SYST:COMM:LAN:GAT? STATic -Queries the static default gateway.</p> <p>"192.168.1.1"</p>	
Notes	<p>Assigns a static default gateway for the instrument. If DHCP is enabled (SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:DHCP ON), the specified static gateway is not used.</p> <p>Changes are automatically saved in non-volatile memory. To effectuate a new setting the device needs to be restarted (system:restart) or power cycled.</p>	

## SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:SMASk

---

Description	Sets or queries the instrument's subnet mask on the local network.	
Syntax	[[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:SMASk <mask> [[SYSTem:]COMMunicate:]LAN:SMASk? [[CURRent]STATic]]	
Arguments	<mask>:	Sub-net address in CIRD* format. It specifies the number of bits in a 32 bit mask which are not part of the subnet's IP addresses, e.g. 24 = 255.255.255.0, 25 = 255.255.255.128.
	[[CURRent]STATic]]:	Optional argument. If present, it determines if it is the stored mask or the current mask in use which is queried. CURRent is default.
Query response	Returns either the stored (static) subnet mask or the mask currently in use, which may be different from the stored one if DHCP is ON and active.	
Example(s)	<div> <div>&gt;SYST:COMM:LAN:SMASK 24</div> <div>LAN:SMASK? STAT</div> <div>24</div> </div> <div> <div>-Sets the static sub-net mask</div> <div>-Queries the static sub-net mask..</div> </div>	
Notes	<p>*CIRD = Classless Inter-Domain Routing</p> <p>If DHCP is enabled (SYSTem:COMMunicate:LAN:DHCP ON), the specified static sub-net mask is not used.</p> <p>Changes are automatically saved in non-volatile memory. To effectuate a new setting the device needs to be restarted (system:restart) or power cycled.</p>	

---

## 6.3.2 Error system

### SYSTem:ERRor:ALL

Description	Reads all error messages from the error queue.	
Syntax	[[SYSTem:]ERRor:]ALL?	
Arguments	None	
Query response	Returns a comma separated list of error codes and descriptions and empties the queue. If the queue is already empty '0, "No error"' is returned. The return format is (oldest first): <error code>,<error string>,<error code>,<error string> ....	
Example(s)	<p>&gt;SYST:ERR:ALL?                      - Reads all messages in the error queue and clears the queue.</p> <p>0, "No error"</p>	
Notes		

## 6.3.3 Other commands

### SYSTem:BEEP:STATe

Description	Sets or reads the current state of the built-in error buzzer and LED error signal.	
Syntax	[SYSTem:]BEEP:STATe[?] {ON OFF 1 0}	
Arguments	<p>{ON OFF 1 0}:      ON 1: The buzzer sounds when an error occurs (default) and the LED starts flashing.</p> <p>                      OFF 0: The buzzer is silent when errors occur (default).</p>	
Query response	Reports if the buzzer is enabled or disabled for error reporting. 0 = OFF, 1 = ON.	
Example(s)	<p>&gt;SYST:BEEP:STAT OFF                - Causes the buzzer not to sound when errors occur.</p> <p>&gt;SYST:BEEP:STAT?                   - Queries the buzzer state.</p> <p>0</p>	
Notes	The internal buzzer is mainly intended as a help to the user when developing and testing out code. In "production mode" buzzing is rarely desired. Therefore, the buzzer is OFF by default. In order to avoid any electronic noise inside the unit, also front LED will refrain from starting blinking when errors occur – unless the BEEP state is ON.	

## SYSTem:BEEPer:IMMediate

Description	Makes the built-in buzzer create a short sound.
Syntax	[SYSTem:]BEEPer[:IMMediate]
Arguments	None
Query response	No query version. Event only.
Example(s)	<code>&gt;BEEP</code> - Makes the instrument produce a buzzing sound.
Notes	

## SYSTem:AUTosave

Description	Controls if relay states are automatically saved in non-volatile memory. When autosave is enabled, the relay states are automatically re-established when the QSwitch is REStart'ed or powered on.
Syntax	[SYSTem:]AUTosave[?] [{ON OFF 0 1}]
Arguments	{ON 1 OFF 0}: ON 1: AUTosave is enabled and the current state is saved. OFF 0: AUTosave is switched off.
Query response	Reports if autosave is enabled or off. 0 = OFF, 1 = ON.
Example(s)	<code>&gt;SYST:AUT OFF</code> - Causes autosave of the QSwitch state to be enabled. <code>&gt;AUT?</code> - Queries the autosave state. <code>0</code>
Notes	Note, if AUTosave is enabled the execution time for OPEN and CLOSe command is increased with about 45 ms, which is the time it takes to write the relay states into non-volatile memory, see <i>Timing</i> in section 5.2.

## SYSTem:REStart

Description	Restarts the firmware including the LAN interface (effectuating any changes), and resets the device to its power up condition*.
Syntax	[SYSTem:]REStart
Arguments	None
Query response	None
Example(s)	<code>&gt;SYST:REST</code> <code>&gt;rest</code>
Notes	*) If AUTosave is ON, then REStart will effectively not change the states of the relays as the last saved state before REStart will be read from non-volatile memory and all relays will be set accordingly – so no change.

## 7 Specifications and performance (preliminary)

### Main unit

Number of signal lines	24
Signal line input relays	Default <i>off</i>
Number of breakout lines	8
Max number of closed breakout relays	40
Signal line grounding	Through 1 M $\Omega$ resistors. Default <i>on</i>
Wiring	Pair-wise twisted (1-2,3-4 ...)
Line to line isolation	$\geq 10$ G $\Omega$ (design)
Line to ground isolation	(to be determined)
Signal line resistance	Typical $< 0.4$ $\Omega$ , including input relay
Signal line pair mutual capacitance	10 / 25 / 42 pF (min. / typ. / max.)
Relay switching time	$< 25$ ms ( $< 70$ ms when autosave is on)
Maximum signal current	100 mA
Maximum signal voltage	75 V
Bandwidth	$\geq 10$ MHz (-3dB attenuation at 10 MHz)
Power failure behaviour	Signal lines are soft grounded before all other relays open
Power on condition	Signal lines are connected to soft ground and all other relays open. If autosave is enabled, the last switch configuration will be re-established within $\sim 70$ ms
Power requirement	DC 9 V, 2.5 A, stable, low noise
Dimensions (mm)	Width: 485 (19"), height: 88.9 (2U), 94 incl. feet, depth: 314
Weight (excl. cables)	4.7 kg

### External power supply

Power requirement	100-240 VAC, 50/60 Hz, 0.7-0.35 A
Dimensions without cables (mm)	Width: 54, height: 33, depth: 79
Weight (incl. cables)	0.3 kg

## 8 Bibliography

IEEE Standards Board. (1992). *IEEE Standard Codes, Formats, Protocols, and Common Commands for Use With IEEE Std 488.1-1987, IEEE Standard Digital Interface for Programmable Instrumentation*. New York, USA: The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc.

SCPI Consortium. (1999). *Standard Commands for Programmable Instruments (SCPI)*. Retrieved from <https://ivifoundation.org/scpi>

## Appendix A Firmware update

Firmware updates are distributed as executables for multiple platforms. To perform the firmware update the instrument must be connected to the host computer via the USB/serial port. Please disconnect any program which may be connected to the device over USB/Serial before updating.

On MAC-OS and Linux systems the installation executable has to have its attribute changed to “executable” by using the “chmod +x” command. The firmware update program will automatically identify the instrument and start updating. It lasts a couple of minutes. Please avoid interrupting the instrument and computer during the update.

Before starting the firmware updater program, make sure that you have disconnected any USB/Serial interface on your computer, which might be connected to the QSwitch, for example a terminal program or Python code.

### Example – executing the firmware installer on Windows

```
> ./qswitch-fw-update.exe
Putting device COM8 in bootloader mode
Updating QSwitch firmware to version 0.141... (ETA 14:48:59)
Update finished
(Press Enter to close)
Press any key to continue . . .
PS C:\Users\ak\qswitch>
Update finished
>
```

Please remember to push <enter> when finished, if prompted. Otherwise, a message will appear in your terminal/program when connecting over the USB/serial interface afterwards as the firmware updater is blocking the connection.

### Web address for firmware updates

Updates, when available, can be downloaded from this web site: <https://qm.quantum-machines.co/qe-documentation-firmware>.

## Appendix B Mac and Linux USB/serial driver information

The following is published by Microchip at <https://www.microchip.com/en-us/product/MCP2221>.

### Appendix B1. Linux driver instructions

The following is published by Microchip at <https://www.microchip.com/en-us/product/MCP2221>:

#### MCP2200/MCP2221 - Linux Driver Instructions

In order to be able to use the MCP2200/MCP2221 with Linux, the kernel must have support for USB CDC class drivers.

The cdc\_acm driver is used for the CDC interface of the device.

If the cdc\_acm driver is compiled as a module, when plugging the MCP2200/MCP2221, this driver will be loaded by the kernel.

To verify that, type:

```
lsmod | grep cdc
```

or you can verify it like this:

```
dmesg | grep ttyACM
```

After that, there will be an entry in /dev

in order to find the entry type:

```
ls /dev/ttyACM*
```

If there are any issues, there will be no entries. But if everything goes well we should see something like:  
/dev/ttyACM0

In order to be able to use your favourite terminal program, we will create a link between /dev/ttyACMx and a serial port.

To do that just type:

```
ln -sf /dev/ttyACM0 /dev/ttyS3
```

In some other systems, there might be a different number after "ttyACM".

You have to provide the number that appears in your system. As for the "ttyS3", I had chosen this one since it was an unused serial device node.

Now, let's make some settings on the serial port. Use "stty" to set serial port parameters. E.g. :

```
stty -F /dev/ttyS3 115200
```

You can start now whatever serial port utility you want (minicom, gterm, ...)

## Appendix B2. MAC OS driver instructions

The following is published by Microchip at <https://www.microchip.com/en-us/product/MCP2221>:

Important!

=====

This readme file applies only to MAC OS X version starting with 10.7 (incl.) and beyond.

Composite CDC + (any other interface) USB devices (such as the MCP2200 & MCP2221, which are composite CDC+HID devices) will only work on Mac OS X 10.7 (or later).

Mac OS X 10.7 is the first OS X version that supports USB Interface Association

Descriptors (IADs), which are needed when implementing composite USB devices with multiple interfaces, with at least one CDC-ACM function. Prior versions of Mac OS X did not support IADs, and therefore can only support non-composite, single function CDC-ACM devices.

Upon plugging in a USB CDC ACM virtual COM port device into a Mac OS X based machine, the OS should automatically enumerate the USB device successfully, and a new object should show up as:

/dev/tty.usbmodemXXXX

(where XXXX is some value, such as "fd1321")

To test the CDC functionality a procedure like follows can be used:

Open TERMINAL. This can be done by clicking SPOTLIGHT and searching for TERMINAL.

Spotlight is the little magnifying glass in the upper right of the screen.

In Terminal, with the USB CDC ACM device NOT plugged in (yet), type:

ls /dev/tty.\*

This will show all serial devices currently connected to the Mac. In the author's case,

the following list appears:

/dev/tty.Bluetooth-Modem

/dev/tty.Bluetooth-Incoming-Port

/dev/tty.BluePortXP-115D-SPP

Now, plug the MCP2200 or MCP2221 device into a USB port of the Mac. Hit the UP cursor, which will bring the search command back ( ls/dev/tty.\* ) and hit return. You should get the exact same list as before, but this time, with a new serial device.

In the author's case, it was:

/dev/tty.usbmodemfd1321

Once the complete name is known, the received serial port data can be displayed by typing:

screen /dev/tty.usbmodemfd1321

(replace "fd1321" in the above line with the value for your machine).

The baud rate can be set by using syntax like follows:

screen -U /dev/tty.usbmodemfd1321 115200

where "usbmodemfd1321" should be replaced with the actual value of the device, and "115200" should be replaced with actual desired baud rate (ex: 9600, 19200, 38400, 57600, 115200, etc.).

More details and usage information for screen can be found in the man page of the "screen" utility.

A number of serial port utilities can be found on the App Store. "Serial Tools" is a good example of a free serial terminal application.