

How to Configure your ALT Keyboard



Hey everybody!

Thank you for purchasing your Massdrop ALT Mechanical Keyboard. If you've landed here, you probably want to take full advantage of the keyboard's features, so you've come to the right place.

We'll start with the basics, then we'll move on to complete custom configuration.

Note: All Keyboards come pre-loaded with default firmware. The customization instructions below are for advanced users who want to customize their keyboards firmware.

THE BASICS

Default Hot Keys Hold FN + listed keys to activate

LED Keys

Fn + A: LED Pattern Select Previous

Fn + D: LED Pattern Select Next

Fn + W: LED Brightness Increase

Fn + S: LED Brightness Decrease

Fn + Q: LED Scrolling Pattern Speed Decrease

Fn + E: LED Scrolling Pattern Speed Increase

Fn + Tab: LED Toggle Breathe Effect

Fn + Caps Lock: LED Toggle Scrolling Pattern Direction

Fn + X: LED Toggle On/Off

Fn + Z: LED Toggle Mode (Keys+Edge, Keys Only, Edge Only)

Media Keys

Fn + Page Up: Volume Up

Fn + Page Down: Volume Down

Fn + Delete: Mute

Function Keys

Fn + 1: F1

Fn + 2: F2

Fn + 3: F3

Fn + 4: F4

Fn + 5: F5

Fn + 6: F6

Fn + 7: F7

Fn + 8: F8

Fn + 9: F9

Fn + 0: F10

Fn + - : F11

Fn + = : F12

Other Keys

Fn + P: Print Screen

Fn + [: Scroll Lock

Fn +] : Pause

Fn + Left Arrow: Home

Fn + Right Arrow: End

Fn + Up Arrow: Page Up

Fn + Down Arrow: Page Down

Fn + Escape: Backtick (`)

Fn + Shift + Escape: Tilde (~)

Keyboard Option Keys

Fn + N: Toggle keyboard 6KRO/NKRO (Default state 6KRO)

CUSTOM CONFIGURATION

How do I configure my keyboard?

Note: You will currently need a second keyboard to complete the 3rd step of this process.

1. Create your configuration.
2. Compile the firmware with your configuration.

Use our web-based configurator tool to handle both steps at

once: <https://www.massdrop.com/mechanical-keyboards/configurator> . See below for more information about our configurator.

If you are comfortable with programming and want to use QMK functionality that our configurator does not support, you can manually create and compile your configuration by checking out the official QMK repository: https://github.com/qmk/qmk_firmware . ALT Keyboard is in the folder "massdrop/ALT".

QMK setup instructions are here: <https://docs.qmk.fm/#/newbs>

3. Load the firmware onto your keyboard. To load the firmware onto your ALT keyboard, download the appropriate loader application for your computer's OS here: <https://github.com/Massdrop/mdloader/releases/tag/1.0.3>. Then follow the instructions here: <https://github.com/Massdrop/mdloader>.

We are working with Jack and the other QMK contributors to get the loader application integrated into the next version of QMK Toolbox to simplify this loading process. As part of the loading process, you will need to reset your ALT Keyboard. The reset button is in a hole on the under side of the keyboard:



MASSDROP KEYBOARD CONFIGURATOR

<https://www.massdrop.com/mechanical-keyboards/configurator>

When you first go to the configurator, you will be prompted to choose your keyboard. After choosing, you will see a top-down view of the keyboard and a layer selector on the right side.

By clicking on a key, you can customize its behavior by selecting another key or function in the panel that appears below the keyboard. The currently available behaviors are:

- **Keys** - Individual keys such as letters, numbers, media keys, and function keys.
- **Layer** - Activate and deactivate layers. The ALT Keyboard ships with a keymap where the Fn key activates layer 1.
- **Modifier** - Send multiple modifiers with a single key press or allow a key to be a modifier when held and another key when tapped.
- **Special** - Behaviors specific to the keyboard. For the ALT Keyboard, these control the LEDs.

After you have configured the behaviors to your liking, click the "Compile & Download" button in the top right to download the compiled firmware for your configuration. This typically takes around 30 seconds. You will need to load this compiled firmware onto your keyboard. See step (3) above for instructions.

If you are logged in to Massdrop, you will see a "**Save as a New Copy**" button next to the "Compile & Download" button. Clicking this button will save your configuration, allowing you to revisit it and modify it. The next time you go to the configurator, you will see your saved configurations above the list of keyboards.

About Layers

Layers allow you to configure your keyboard with more behaviors than its number of physical keys. For example with the ALT Keyboard, by default, when you hold Fn + A to change the LED pattern, the keyboard is actually activating Layer 1 and sending the code for switching to the previous LED pattern. The physical key that is mapped to the letter A on Layer 0 is mapped to changing LED patterns on Layer 1.



For each key, its behavior is determined by the highest active layer. For the highest active layer, if the key's behavior is "transparent" (denoted by a grayed-out "(trns)" on the keyboard display), then it falls back to the next-highest layer where its behavior is not transparent.

The QMK documentation has some tips for working with layers: https://docs.qmk.fm/#/feature_advanced_keycodes?id=working-with-layers

Configurator Development Roadmap

Our configurator tool is still a work-in-progress. Here is what you can expect to be added to the tool in the future:

1. Merge our QMK changes back into the main QMK repository.
2. Macros support
3. Support for changing some QMK settings
4. Support for more keyboards

Looking for the latest news and software updates from the DROP community?

Check out the ALT Keyboard Configurator guide and community updates here:

<https://drop.com/talk/9382/how-to-configure-your-ctrl-keyboard>