**Frequently asked questions**

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**How do I get started in mapping?**

First get the essential tools, Radiant (editor) and q3map (compiler). You can find them on our [download page](http://www.surfacegroup.org/downloads/).

If you want to start designing levels what you need to do is head over to the [Getting Started](http://www.surfacegroup.org/tutorials/getting_started/) tutorial and read through it. Then, continue on to the [Basic Construction](http://www.surfacegroup.org/tutorials/basic_construction/) and [Making Your First Room](http://www.surfacegroup.org/tutorials/first_room/) tutorials. After that and then you should feel more at home and you can then read some more advanced tutorials and be well on your way to a good understanding of how to map.

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**What is caulking?**

This is applying a texture called caulk (which is found in the common texture folder) to any faces that you cannot see. (If you dont know how to texture, see the [texturing tutorial](http://www.surfacegroup.org/resources/tutorials/texturing/)) Caulking unseen faces means the game engine doesnt draw them, which means less geometry is drawn (see [r\_speeds](http://www.surfacegroup.org/resources/faq.shtml#rspeeds)) giving you higher fps. Some mappers make their maps out of caulk first entirely and then put textures on the brush faces they want to be seen. Note, however, that if a brush is entirely made of caulk (on all its faces) and the player can see it, it will cause the "hall of mirrors" effect. [back to menu](http://www.surfacegroup.org/resources/faq.shtml" \l "menu)

**What is a leak?**

When you are creating your levels, you should see it as if you're in outer space. You are creating a world, and it needs to be sealed off from outer space! In the editor this means that the map you are creating needs to have no gaps that lead into the void. Think of the void as everything in camera view, and you are making things in the void, but you need to seal them off from it, like our atmosphere seals us off from space.

Note: water, fog, doors-- anything that's an entity really-- wont seal from the void. You must have a normal brush or a sky brush to seal it.

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**Why can't I compile my map?**

This is a question which could have so many replies, your best bet is to go to the [forums](http://www.surfacegroup.org/forums/) and give as much information as possible. If someone can help you they will. Also be sure to search the forum for your problem before posting a new thread.

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**Are there any guidelines to mapping?**

Although you can make many things you can't make everything you want. You cant make every shape ever invented and you have to keep in mind the r\_speeds. These are how many polygons (polys) are on screen at once, which come from the brushes you create. The more polys on screen the higher the r\_speeds will be and that means the lower the FPS will be and the more game lag you will get. So you need to keep your r\_speeds within certain boundaries. RTCW allows for a lot compared to older games like HL.

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**My map wont load, it says "couldn't find bsp".**

Before you play your map type in the console (usually by pressing the ` key) /sv\_pure 0 (that's a zero) This means the server isn't pure so you can load your custom map since its not in a pak file or from the original game, the server is set to this to prevent cheating in hindsight. Note that for single player maps, since your not creating a server as such, there is no need to type in sv\_pure.

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**How do I select a shape or deselect one?**

[Getting Started tutorial for more information.](http://www.surfacegroup.org/tutorials/getting_started/)

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**My camera view distance is really short or my camera view is sluggish.**

You can use the cubic clipping camera setting by pressing the button with the button on, the camera has a low drawing distance, which can improve performance its a bit sluggish. On the other hand with it turn off you can have full drawing distance.

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**What is compiling?**

In level design for rtcw you create a .map file. This map file then needs to be compiled into a .bsp file. The compile is where tools figure out what the map should be like in game, it determines the lighting, the environment, everything, it compiles it so it can be played.

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**What are r\_speeds?**

These are how many polys are on screen at once. Polys are from the brushes you create. The more polys on screen the higher the r\_speeds and that means the lower the fps can be and the more pc lag you will get.

You can display r\_speeds by typing "/r\_speeds 1" in console   
You should **keep to a maximum of 8000/10000** in the "Leafs" column  
  
  
  
  
  
if you go over these it should be in less visited areas and only in places you cant get it down. Also these are old limits for quake 3, rtcw uses a modified quake 3 team arena engine, so you can probably get away with 12000+, check your fps (/cg\_drawfps 1) and if its ok then you can rest easy.  
  
For a list of useful mapping commands go the[console commands](http://www.surfacegroup.org/resources/console_commands.shtml) resource page.

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**How do I make a room?**

If you want to start designing levels what you need to do is head over to the [Getting Started](http://www.surfacegroup.org/tutorials/getting_started/) page and follow the tutorials through. Read [Basic Construction](http://www.surfacegroup.org/tutorials/basic_construction/) and [Making Your First Room](http://www.surfacegroup.org/tutorials/first_room/). After that and then you should feel more at home and you can then read some tutorials and start learning how to map.

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**What is a brush?**

A brush is basically most things you create in the world, such as curves and shapes. So its what you have made, if you make a wall, that's a brush, if you make a floor that's a brush. Its just things you have dragged out and made