

Shebanq Tutorial

Getting started with Shebanq

To get started with Shebanq follow these steps:

1. Go to <https://shebanq.ancient-data.org/> and click on “log in” in the top-right corner. Create an account or log in.
2. Click on “Queries” in the menu at the top of the page. Click on “Enter new query” at the right side of the page.
3. Enter an *organisation* and a *project*. You can either create a new one, or select one on the list. This is the place where your queries will be stored.
4. Select version 2017 on the left
5. You can now start writing queries!

How to write queries

There are various tutorials only which introduce you to the world of Shebanq and teach you to write queries. However, as the Shebanq website and database is regularly being updated, some tutorials are outdated, lead to syntactical errors while writing queries, or contain broken URLs. The following tutorials are currently (September 2020) very useful and more or less up to date.

1. The Shebanq wiki on GitHub

This is the official [wiki](#) on Shebanq and it contains a complete guide to the Shebanq website. Take a good look at the right pane, where you can find everything about Shebanq, the text, the lexicon, queries, and many more. This is your best guide to understanding the website of Shebanq. Moreover, this wiki is frequently updated and will therefore contain the most recent URLs to important pages like

- transcription table,
- MQL quick start,
- MQL query guide,
- MQL for programmers.

2. Oliver Glanz’ tutorial on GitHub

This [tutorial](#) shows the architecture of Shebanq’s database, visualises the syntax of the text. More importantly, it teaches you how to write queries by giving many examples of both simple and complex queries. However, there are some issues:

- The Emdros Query Tool it refers to no longer works, but the structure of object types and features can be found in the feature documentation. See the link on GitHub or this [direct](#) link.
- Some URLs are outdated but see the Shebanq wiki for the most recent URLs.

3. Oliver Glanz’ YouTube tutorials:

In these [videos](#), Oliver Glanz guides you through the entire process of creating queries and show you how to navigate the Shebanq website. These tutorials are from 2016 and therefore not always up to date. For example:

- Oliver uses an older version of the database. When writing (and publishing) queries you should use the 2017 version.
- The Emdros Query Tool it refers to no longer works, but the structure of object types and features can be found in the feature documentation. See the link on GitHub or this [direct](#) link.

- The website of Shebanq had more items in the menu in 2016 which Oliver uses, among other things, to access the MQL guides and the feature documentation of the database. These menu items can still be found in the right pane on the Shebanq [GitHub](#).

Some General Tips

- The best way to master writing queries is **to look at working queries made** by other scholars. Lucky for you, all queries ever made are accessible for everyone on Shebanq. Take a look at some queries by more experienced scholars, such as Oliver Glanz, for example. Read the description and try to understand what exactly the query does.
- Read the MQL [guide](#) to get an idea of how the query language works. There is also a more [complex guide](#) available for programmers.
- Unfortunately, the Shebanq tool does not tell you what syntactical errors you made. One of the most common syntactical errors has to do with indentation: each block of code that is at **inside** another block of code must be indented, which is achieved by 4 whitespaces in Shebanq. For example:

```
SELECT ALL OBJECTS WHERE
[clause
    [word FOCUS sp = verb]
]
```

- Other things to pay attention to are:
 - o Features and object types (e.g. word, clause, sp, lex) are not case sensitive. Their values (e.g. 'verb' or 'Objc') are **case sensitive**. Typing 'objc' or 'VERB' will result in an error.
 - o Make sure you start **and** end each block using square brackets: '[' for opening and ']' for closing. To get a better overview use a newline for your closing brackets (see how the 'clause' block is closed in the example above).

Currently Working Links (11-9-2020)

- [BHSA feature documentation](#)
- [Transcription table](#)
- [MQL Query Guide](#)
- [MQL Programmer's Guide](#)