

to other Python based GPIO drivers, is that, as long as you are in the “gpio” group there’s no need to be a sudo user to run the commands. This is great!”

## Testing Procedures

The following describes the test procedures from the provided manual. Test commands are given for switching the LED on/off and reading the button’s status (pressed/unpressed). These worked perfectly (although the LED on mine is not very bright).

Then you are invited to test your 5V FTDI interface (a type of cable you can use to log in directly with no network connection) if you have one. Mine worked perfectly. I was able to get a command line terminal login through the serial port. And that completed the structured test procedures. Everything passed.

## Testing the Quick2Wire Python Libraries

Digging a bit deeper than the test manual instructions, I downloaded the Python Quick2Wire libraries from GitHub <https://github.com/quick2wire> and went through two test programs I found there – flashing the led and using the button to control it. These weren’t yet documented.

It’s worth mentioning that you can use this software library, to control GPIO ports, regardless of what hardware you have (apart from the Pi itself). So, theoretically, I could write a third Python version of the Gertboard test suite to go with the WiringPi for Python and RPi.GPIO versions.

## RGB LED

So then I wrote a little script to blink a three colour (Red, Green, Blue – RGB) LED different colour combinations using P7, P6 & P5 (Quick2Wire numbering scheme) as outputs. That also worked perfectly. Here’s a link to a video guided tour of the Quick2Wire board with test programs in action. <http://youtu.be/JJuKtsdAerU>

## We Interrupt this Article...

Another area where the Quick2Wire Python libraries stand out (which I haven’t explored yet) is epoll support. This allows you to control things using interrupts instead of continual polling. This means that you can have your program respond to a change, instead of using up loads of processor power continually checking the GPIO ports’ states. This is an important development.

## Conclusion

The Quick2Wire Pi Interface is a very nice board with a lot of promise and what looks like being a very good Python Applications Programming Interface (API) behind it. It’s going to be priced cheaper than you’d be able make one yourself. Being ultra-fussy, I’d prefer a more visible (brighter) LED. But that’s really the only thing I’d change, which is saying a lot!

## The Future?

There’s a lot more Quick2Wire add-on boards in the pipeline, including an analog to digital converter (ADC), motor controllers, lcds, servo controllers etc. It’s going to be a modular system, easy to build and easy to use. There’s even talk of a Scratch interface at some point down the line.

All the hardware and software is open source. The emphasis is on software libraries and much needed free teaching resources. It looks very much to me as if Quick2Wire is one to watch. Their web site is at [Quick2Wire.com](http://Quick2Wire.com).

Article by Alex Eames

Alex Eames has often written the code for the Quick2Wire libraries. He’s often up to the task of writing the code or just playing with the hardware. He wrote the

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Quick2Wire team consists of nine people, spanning a 7 hour time zone. They live in Chicago, London, Bristol and the Pyrenees.

They have never all been in one location!