Subject: Re: Numerical Recipes Article
Posted by David Foster on Fri, 07 Nov 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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Paul E Howland wrote:
>
> Wayne Landsman wrote:
>
> As both a Mathematica and IDL user, I too was interested to read this
> article. The principal reason for the IDL code "clearly winning" lies
> in the way they have written their code. A better Mathematica example
> would have been:
>
> Reverse[#]&/@Select[Transpose[{vels,mags}], (100<#[[1]]<=200)&]
> answer=%[[Ceiling[Length[%]/4]]][[1]]
>
> which performs the sort and select without even having to explicitly
> call the Sort routine. I would argue that this is not much more
> complicated than the IDL example:
>
> temp=mags(where(vels le 200. and vels gt 100., n))
> answer=temp((sort(temp))(ceil(n/4)))

You'll have to pardon me, but I'm not a Mathematica user, and the code here looks like it was scraped off the walls of some Egyptian temple. If you were to show the IDL code to a programmer not familiar with IDL, he/she could probably figure out what it's doing. Show the Mathematica code to a programmer not familiar with Mathematica and he'll probably think your type-writer broke.

There's often a trade-off between elegance/simplicity and functionality. Is Mathematica's sorting capabilities that much more flexible and powerful to justify such strange syntax?

Dave
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