
Subject: Re: IDL batch mode: Command line args?
Posted by [Martin Schultz](#) on Wed, 01 Apr 1998 08:00:00 GMT
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Mark Elliott wrote:

>
> I'd like to run IDL (from UNIX) in batch mode with a command
> like:
>
> unixprompt> idl batchprog.pro
>
> How can I provide additional arguments to be used by the batch
> program. For example, is there a syntax like:
>
> unixprompt> idl batchprog.pro inputfile.txt
>
> or
>
> unixprompt> idl batchprog.pro 5 3.78 "John Doe" 24.0
>
> If this can be done, how are the additional args obtainable within the
> batch program? I can find no documentation that this is possible.
> Still I can always hope...
>
> Thanks.

Hi Mark,

your question intrigued me, and I came up with a solution involving a temporary file that is written by a little Unix shell script and contains the arguments passed to IDL. This is certainly not perfect, and I haven't spent any time on error checking etc., but it may provide a start. I must admit that I have never tried to execute IDL in batch mode before, and my 2-minute primer on this led to the conclusion that you can only run main programs this way and that you have to provide an EXIT command in order to leave IDL after your program has terminated. If this is not true, I'd be happy to learn more!

Now, here is how it works:
the shellscript idlbatch (make sure it's executable):

```
# Unix shell script to pass arguments into idl
# when running in batch mode
# uses echo to store the command line arguments in a
# temporary file which can be read by batchtest.pro
# Example: idlbatch batchtest 5 8
echo $* > tmpfile
idl $1
```

Your main program (see batchtest.pro as an example) will have to read in 'tmpfile' and extract the arguments: the first argument is the name of the program itself. In batchtest.pro I simply call a second procedure batchtest2.pro (also attached below), which multiplies the first two arguments (defaulted by a value of 3). Certainly, there is lot of room for improvements on the parameter parsing and type determination - who knows, maybe David is interested ?

Best regards,
Martin.

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```
; simple IDL test program to be run in batch mode
; on the Unix xshell type idlbatch batchtest [arguments]

print,"I'm in !"
; read tmpfile produced from the shell script
args = "
openr,ilun,'tmpfile',/get_lun
readf,ilun,args
free_lun,ilun

; for now we assume all arguments are numeric
; except for first one which is the name of the IDL program
argv = str_sep(args,' ')
argv = float(argv(1:*))
if (n_elements(argv) ge 2) then $
    batchtest2,argv(0),argv(1) $
else if(n_elements(argv) ge 1) then $
    batchtest2,argv(0) $
else $
    batchtest2
```

```
exit,/no_confirm,status=0
```

```
pro batchtest2,a,b
```

```
if (n_elements(a) eq 0) then a=3  
if (n_elements(b) eq 0) then b=3
```

```
print,'A*B=',a*b
```

```
return  
end
```

File Attachments

- 1) [batchtest.pro](#), downloaded 118 times
 - 2) [batchtest2.pro](#), downloaded 113 times
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