
Subject: Re: 24 bit colors in IDL
Posted by [Nigel Wade](#) on Wed, 18 Nov 1998 08:00:00 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:

```
>
> Andy Bristow (ajbristow@dera.gov.uk) writes:
>
>> I was just getting my head round 24-bit, having been prompted by this
>> thread. So, at Philip's suggestion I went to
>>
>> http://www.dfanning.com/tips/colors24.html
>>
>> All well and good. Sounds relatively straightforward.
>>
>> So on my SGI (IRIX 6.5.1, IDL 5.1) I tried some of the
>> suggested code (immediatley after starting IDL up):
>>
>> device,decomposed=0
>> tvlct,[[255],[255],[0]],100
>> plot,randomu(10,10),color=100
>>
>> expecting the plot to be yellow, as advertised. Except no, _I_
>> get a medium-light shade of grey!
>>
>> Any suggestions?
>
> Oh, dear. I think this is one of those TrueColor/DirectColor
> tricks that SGI engineers like to play on people.
```

Why do you want to blame SGI?

If IDL asks for a DirectColor visual and gets what's wrong with that?

If you look at the idlhelp under "The X Windows Device" you will find it says:

```
"How IDL Selects a Visual Class
When opening the display, IDL asks the display for the following
visuals,
in order, until a supported visual class is found:
DirectColor, 24-bit
TrueColor, 24-bit
PseudoColor, 8-bit, then 4-bit
StaticColor, 8-bit, then 4-bit
GrayScale, any depth
StaticGray, any depth"
```

So, if IDL first asks for DirectColor, and on an SGI it gets it because the display supports it. You shouldn't assume that because the default visual someone else gets isn't the same as yours that it is the fault of the system. In this case it is probably because your display doesn't support DirectColor or because it can only handle one visual at a time. An SGI O2 display provides 26 visuals.

If you want to change the default visual which IDL asks for then set `idl.gr_visual` in your X defaults file.

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