
Subject: RANDOMU bug (and HTML help)
Posted by [landsman](#) on Sun, 21 Feb 1999 08:00:00 GMT
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Versions 5.1.1 and 5.2 of IDL have a bug in the RANDOMU (and RANDOMN) function such that the SEED variable is initialized to the same value at the start of each session, rather than being initialized by the system clock (see example below). I believe that so long as one stays within one IDL session that this causes no problems, but if one is, say, combining Monte Carlo simulations from different IDL sessions, then the results will be decidedly unrandom.

RSI knows about this problem and say that they are giving it very high priority for a fix.

On another subject, does anyone know if there is a HTML help distribution for IDL V5.2, like there was for IDL V5.1? I couldn't find one on the CD-Rom distribution.

--Wayne Landsman landsman@mpb.gsfc.nasa.gov

mpb{landsman}102: idl

```
IDL> print,!VERSION
{ sparc sunos unix 5.2 Oct 30 1998}
IDL> print,randomu(seed)
    0.415999
IDL> print,randomu(seed)
    0.0919649
IDL> exit
```

mpb{landsman}102: idl
IDL Version 5.2 (sunos sparc). Research Systems, Inc.

```
IDL> print,randomu(seed)
    0.415999
IDL> print,randomu(seed)
    0.0919649
```
