Subject: Re: Passing zero as a Parameter/ NOT KEYWORD_SET
Posted by Vapuser on Wed, 30 Jun 1999 07:00:00 GMT
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Martin Schultz <mgs@io.harvard.edu> writes:

> J.D. Smith wrote:
>>
>>
>> That's a bit dangerous. [...]
> Indeed ;-)
>>
>> The best way to proceed is pretend keyword_set() was really
>> named is_defined_and_non_zero(). Forget that it's called
>> keyword_set().

> In fact it is "is_defined_and_uneven" !

HuH?!

```
PRO junk,b=b
  print,keyword_set(b)
END

IDL> junk
       0
IDL> junk,b=1
       1
IDL> junk,/b
       1
IDL> junk,b=0
       0
IDL> junk,b=2
       1

IDL> print,!version
{ mipseb IRIX unix 5.1.1 Jul 20 1998}
```

What version of IDL are you using?

> Just try to pass var=2 into a routine and print keyword_set(var). Hope,
> David will take notice of this in his article.
>

> Another marginal point about setting default values: I recently learned
> from someone's code (cannot remember whose), to use

> if (n_elements(var) ne 1) then var=default
> instead of
> if (n_elements(var) eq 0) then var=default
>
> The advantage being that you can prevent program crashes when someone
> passes a vector or array in what is supposed to be a scalar.
>

If I require a scalar I always do this...

IF n_elements(var) EQ 0 THEN var=default else var=var[0]

> And, finally: Use keyword_set when you want to make sure the value of a
> boolean flag is defined:
> flag = keyword_set(flag)
> Then, later in the code, it's just
> if (flag) then ...
> Or value = x+y*(flag), etc. which would crash otherwise.
>

This, in fact, is the only time I use keyword_set. On all other keywords where values are being passed, I use n_elements() for input and and arg_present for output.

> Regards,
> Martin.
>
> |||||||||||||||\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\----------////////////// //|||||||||||||||
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