Martin Schultz wrote

and D. Fanning, R. Bauer and J.D. Smith replied

[...]

oh well! Just when I for once thought I knew IDL ;-(
(1) I confess: I confused IF with KEYWORD_SET. It is still sometimes enstranging that
  IF (2) THEN PRINT,'TRUE'
will not print anything...

(2) Of course, n_elements(var) eq 1 only makes sense when you expect a scalar. Guess, I wasn't clear enough here. It's just that I sometimes found I was running into trouble with ambiguous keywords such as COLOR which can occasionally be a vector (see SPLOT), but must be scalar on (most) other occasions. Now the test 'EQ 1' is of course only suitable for the 'other occasions'.

(3) Reimar Bauer makes a good point that you want to define a variable locally if you want to make sure not to pass it back (however, I often find that passing previously undefined variables back is useful)

Gotta go back and learn some more ;-)

Martin

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