
Subject: Re: Cholesky factorisation

Posted by [Craig Markwardt](#) on Tue, 22 Feb 2000 08:00:00 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Pavel Romashkin <pavel@netsrv1.cmdl.noaa.gov> writes:

>
> I can't help hearing some sarcasm regarding IDL in David McClain's
> postings. Why is that? After all, accepting computer's numerical
> precision is a matter of faith, too, especially in life-critical
> applications Raytheon is developing. I find using upper-level
> language like IDL very convenient, and availability of "lower-level"
> tools like pointers is nice. C is great, but so is IDL I think. If
> we don't trust functions written by others, we might as well write
> everything ourselves in C...
>

I think McClain's point is that the implementation of built-in functions in IDL is strictly black-box. But in IDL's case, it's more like black magic... :-)

Seriously though, many of the routines *are* implemented in IDL itself, and thus inspectable. That's good.

For the built-in routines, however, one has to take it on faith that RSI did a robust implementation, and Numerical Recipes is not always the right choice. Floating point precision on a computer is well-defined these days by the IEEE, and thus I have more faith in it.

Craig

--

Craig B. Markwardt, Ph.D. EMAIL: craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu
Astrophysics, IDL, Finance, Derivatives | Remove "net" for better response
