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Subject: Re: Philosophy of for loops

Posted by [marc schellens\[1\]](#) on Tue, 29 Aug 2000 06:43:26 GMT

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Todd Clements wrote:

>  
> Hello, again, everyone!  
>  
> I was just wondering what the general consensus of the "IDL Expert  
> Programmers" was on the use of for loops. When I first learned IDL, I  
> remember getting from someone or somewhere the mantra "for loops are evil"  
> because they take up so much time. Of course, as I learn more and watch  
> what goes on in this group, it seems like "for loops are sometimes evil"  
> would be a better mantra. The question then becomes, when do they become  
> evil?  
>  
> In response to my thread on summing diagonal elements, Craig said that for  
> loops aren't always bad if you can do a lot at once, and his code proves  
> that you can have some fast loops.  
>  
> So what defines a slow loop? Is it having a bunch of accesses to  
> sub-elements of arrays? Is it just having a bunch of statements? I suppose  
> I could do some tests of my own, and I have a little, but it's much more  
> fun to hear what you all have to say on the subject. I wouldn't have seen  
> any IDL-ku if I just kept my thoughts to myself!  
>  
> Todd

Simple and short answer:

Loops are then evil, when you can avoid them.

cheers,

:-) marc

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