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Subject: Re: Keyword precedence

Posted by [Craig Markwardt](#) on Mon, 28 Aug 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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"Mark Hadfield" <m.hadfield@niwa.cri.nz> writes:

> It's interesting that David Fanning and Martin Shultz have both recommended  
> the following idiom for establishing overridable defaults

```
>  
> pro my_plot, COLOR=color, _EXTRA=extra  
>   if n_elements(color) eq 0 then color = 12  
>   plot, COLOR=12, _EXTRA=extra  
****      Ooops  ^^      ****
```

```
> end
```

>  
> This has the effect, unintended and normally irrelevant, that if the  
> following call is made with the COLOR keyword set to an undefined variable

```
>  
> my_plot, COLOR=color
```

>  
> then this variable is set to 12 on output. It isn't too hard to imagine a  
> situation (successive calls to different routines with different default  
> colours) where this will bite an unwary programmer, though in several years  
> of using this idiom I have seldom thought about this side-effect and have  
> very seldom been bitten.

I have had a difficult time keeping up with this thread. Whew! I  
often do my keyword passing with the following draconian but safe  
technique.

```
pro my_plot, COLOR=color0, _EXTRA=extra  
  if n_elements(color0) eq 0 then color = 12 $  
  else color = floor(color0(0))  
  plot, COLOR=color, _EXTRA=extra  
end
```

COLOR0 is the value passed in, which is distinct from the value of the  
local variable COLOR. I agree. It's ugly.

Craig

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Astrophysics, IDL, Finance, Derivatives | Remove "net" for better response  
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