
Subject: Re: Idltags Version 2.2
Posted by [shapiro](#) on Thu, 14 Jul 1994 20:55:26 GMT
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kump@morph.ebme.cwru.edu (Kenneth S. Kump) writes:

>
> Could someone explain to me what a "tags file" is? And while you're at
> it, why would someone need it and what are Idltree and Shadow are used for?
>
> ---
>
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A tags file is a file that contains the names of all the procedures and functions in your code. Along with the names are stored the name of the file where the procedure (when I say procedure I am referring to both procedures and functions) can be found and an ex(1) command which can located the first line of that procedure.

If you use vi(1) to edit your source code and you want to edit a procedure you just type :ta <procedure name>. Vi(1) will open the file and place the cursor at the first line of your procedure. If you have the cursor over the first letter of a procedure name then ^] (ctrl-]) will open that file and place the cursor at the first line of the procedure. To return to where you started, after editing another file you can use ^~ (ctrl-~).

Idltree takes a tags file and for each procedure generates a list of all the dependent procedures. A dependent procedure is one that is called from with another procedure. In the following example the procedure one depends on both procedure two and three.

```
pro three,a
  print,'three = ',a
end ; three
```

```
function two,a
  return,a+1
end ; two
```

```
pro one
```

```
three,two(2)
end ; one
```

Shadow reads the list output from idltree, spawns an IDL process and `compiles' (executes a .run) for all the dependent procedures of a specified program. Shadow then saves this `compiled' version using the save command. Shadow can also output a file full of @<filename> directives.

These three programs are not that useful until you start to write IDL applications with 60+ files and 5,000+ lines. Many of the problems that shadow was written to solve can be solved by placing one procedure in each file. This, however, obscures the relationships between groups of procedures.

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