
Subject: Re: Naive pointer question ?

Posted by [David Burrige](#) on Thu, 24 Jan 2002 15:30:35 GMT

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Hi Paul et al.

> <BIG snip>

> p.s. Common blocks are not evil. They are unfairly maligned (and misaligned) but should be used

> judiciously.... just like GOTOs.

Sorry, I couldn't resist this!!! The problem with common blocks two-fold, both relating to their global scope (ie: the reason for using them in the first place). First, if you have two programs running in an IDL session (e.g. a pair of widget programs) which both use the same common block, each will corrupt the others data. In fact, you might even just be using two routines that don't realise another is accessing the common block. Secondly, you cannot trace the changes in a common block, so debugging becomes a nightmare. This is even worse in IDL when variables can change TYPE as well as value.

That's it. Rant over:-) Let's just say, I gave them up a LONG time ago!:-)

Cheers,

Dave
