
Subject: Re: One file for each procedure/function?
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 19 Apr 2002 13:19:27 GMT
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Pepijn Kenter wrote:

- > I'm currently writing analyses software (small programs plus routines) for
- > an ozon measurement device and I'm new to IDL. A lot of the routines and
- > programs have already been written and are ready for me to use. These
- > routines have been grouped together in a few .pro files. These files are
- > then compiled explicitly (by .compile statements) in the main programs. The
- > programs are called from the command line.

Just to add a bit to Riemar's useful advice, it is useful to think of a program file as an IDL "command" you are building. The procedure or function that has the same name as the command (and the file) should be the last module in the file. Other procedures and functions that are used by the command module for its internal use can also be placed in the file, but always above (in front) of the command module in the file. In this way, everything is compiled properly when the "command" is used.

Reimer is correct in recommending that these utility routines be named starting with a base "command" name. Otherwise, you have command name chaos and you can never be sure what procedure or function with this name you are actually running. For example, naming an event handler module "Quit" is always a bad idea. The name "MyProgram_Quit" is much more specific.

Sometimes utility routines take on a life of their own, and we find them to have wider use than we expected them to initially. In this case, we take them out of the command file and place them in a command file of their own, so they can enjoy wider use by other programs that want to use them.

It is not unusual to place the programs from an entire application in separate directories according to functionality, etc. But typically, these are subdirectories of an "application" directory that can be added to a user's Path easily.

By the way, you are correct in thinking that the use of compile statements goes completely against the IDL WAY. They are typically used only as a last resort to sort out command name chaos (see above). :-)

Cheers,

David

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