
Subject: Re: About keywords and positional parameters
Posted by [JD Smith](#) on Thu, 07 Nov 2002 20:37:03 GMT
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

On Thu, 07 Nov 2002 09:57:54 -0700, David Fanning wrote:

> lily_zhang (fengliza@sina.com) writes:

>

>> Would you tell me how to distinguish the keywords and positional

>> parameters in IDL procedures and functions?

>

> Positional parameters are those variables that come after the command

> name. They have a position after the name (1, 2, 3, etc.). Keyword

> parameters also come after the command name, but they have a

> KEYWORD=variable (or sometimes a /KEYWORD, which means KEYWORD=1)

> appearance. Keyword parameters can come in any order and don't affect

> the count of positional parameters.

>

> You can't tell from looking whether a positional or keyword parameter is

> an input parameter or an output parameter (or both). You have to read

> the documentation to discover this.

>

>

>

I agree that you can't tell if a parameter is *meant to be* an input parameter, an output parameter, or both without reading the documentation, but you certainly can tell whether it is *capable* of passing output:

```
if arg_present(parameter) then parameter=myungodlyfunction(foo)
```

ARG_PRESENT() may or many not reveal anything useful, depending on the context. Its primary legitimate use is in avoiding calculations of optional keyword/argument outputs if the caller didn't ask for them.

JD
