
Subject: Re: calling a function

Posted by [James Kuyper](#) on Fri, 15 Nov 2002 18:24:41 GMT

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Steve wrote:

>

> Dear all, I have a problem!

> I have a program (main.pro) written in IDL. Then, inside the main.pro

> I want to use a function that I found on Goddard library.

> The function is named glactc.pro, and the calling sequence is the

> following:

> GLACTC, ra, dec, year, gl, gb, j

> How can I call glactc.pro inside main.pro?

If it's really a function (starts with the FUNCTION keyword), then you have to type:

```
result = GLACTC(my_ra, my_dec, my_year, my_gl, my_bg, my_j)
```

On the other hand, if it's a procedure (starts with the PROC keyword), then you have to type:

```
GLACTC, my_ra, my_dec, my_year, my_gl, my_bg, my_j
```

You don't need the 'my_' prefixes, I'm just emphasizing that the names don't need to match; it's also not an error if they do match.

> After that, when I compile the program, do I have to link

> glactc.pro? If yes, how can I do that?

No. All you have to do is make sure that glactc.pro is in a directory that's in IDL's search path. That can either be in your current directory, or in one of the directories listed in the IDL_PATH environment variable.

Alternatively, you can load glactc.pro, even if it's not in the IDL_PATH, by typing:

```
IDL> .run /non-idl/path/name/glactc.pro
```

You don't need to add the '.pro' at the end; IDL will figure it out if you leave it out.

Note: if the name of the file is different from the name of the procedure or function that you need to execute, then you have to use the '.run' approach. That's why it's generally a good idea to have the function and the filename match.

> Is it possible to write "makefile" (like C programming) into IDL?

No, but the reason it's not possible is that it's not really needed.
