

---

Subject: Re: xemacs syntax highlighting problem  
Posted by [J. Fischer](#) on Fri, 17 Jan 2003 05:16:01 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Paul van Delst wrote:

> Why can't the fontification be based on a "context" buffer (dunno what the proper term  
> would be). That is, you update syntax highlighting based on the immediate context of what  
> surrounds the line in question? I have no idea how one would specify the extent of the  
> context, though.

This wouldn't really help to improve efficiency.

> The efficiency issue Carsten mentions can be a real bugger. I use nedit and it checks the  
> entire buffer every keystroke. Not usually a problem unless you have a lot of lines of  
> code and you type in a string near the top of the file. The first use of ' causes all the  
> following 's to be redefined and the character string syntax highlighting "flips". The  
> closing ' in the line I'm typing corrects the situation but it can take a couple of  
> seconds while nedit cogitates over the matter. Can be a real pain in the rear.

There is nothing wrong about checking the entire buffer. Actually, it is the only way to get a efficient (almost) real-time and `_proper_` syntax highlighting.

This puts a higher responsibility on the patterns design, though. What you describe is a badly designed patterns set. The patterns described by a beginning and ending ' simply need an "error expression" to make it stop. Confirm the NEdit documentation. You have to determine what can't be or normally won't be (highlighting needn't be a syntax parser, it shall only help to reduce errors) inside " (for example if " should be contained in a single line, then you would give \$ as error expression, or does the language you are using have comments? Do they normally occur inside ").

Hope you got the point.

Cheers,  
Joerg

---