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Subject: "TRUE" map projections

Posted by [afl](#) on Tue, 24 Jan 1995 21:34:05 GMT

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How can one obtain (for example) a "true" Mercator map projection in IDL? Sounds rather academic, doesn't it? But in a given window if one issues

```
IDL> map_set, /merc, /cont, /grid, /usa, limit=[15,-130,50,-60]
```

vs.

```
IDL> map_set, /merc, /cont, /grid, /usa, limit=[15,-180,50,-30]
```

I guarantee you the "shape" of the geographical boundaries will be different. There must be a single, proper aspect ratio for a map to be called a "true" Mercator projection. Is IDL capable of producing "true" map projections, or is one able to arbitrarily re-shape the projection into any form he wishes such that the specification of the projection is all but pointless? Does one simply say "hmmmm, looks good to me" and move onto the next task?

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