
Subject: Re: axis problem

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sun, 20 Jul 2003 15:26:18 GMT

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Reimar Bauer writes:

```
> But if I don't use _extra it looks different.  
>  
> I should have submitted this example too. Then xminor=0 looks different.  
>  
> pro test_axis_minor_error  
> erase  
> window,0  
> tek_color  
> plot,findgen(15),findgen(15),/nodata,xstyle=5,ystyle=5  
>  
> axis,xaxis=0,xticks=4,xminor=0,color=2  
> axis,xaxis=1,xticks=4,xminor=1,color=2  
>  
> axis,yaxis=0,yticks=4,yminor=0,color=2  
> axis,yaxis=1,yticks=4,yminor=1,color=2  
>  
> end
```

Ah, yes. I see now. Well, I **still** don't think this is a bug. Here is why.

With **most** IDL system variables (the ![XYZ].MARGIN system variable is an exception), setting the system variable to 0 is equivalent to setting it to its **default** value. This is good, because otherwise you couldn't ever restore the system variable to its default value without knowing what it was.

I would argue that the MINOR keyword is a local way of setting the ![XYZ].MINOR system variable. (Or something like that. I don't really know what goes on under the hood.) In any case, setting MINOR=0 is equivalent to saying to IDL "do whatever the default thing is for minor tick marks". In this case, you get the usual five tick intervals.

But when you put MINOR=0 into an _EXTRA keyword this "default" behavior mechanism is circumvented, and the MINOR keyword then is treated in a more literal sense. I think this is proper and correct. You certainly can't expect IDL to "process" keywords in an _EXTRA structure, since finding the keywords would be a monumental task and would slow IDL down terribly (for one thing, you

would have to process numerous spellings of the keyword, since keywords can be shortened to their shortest unambiguous spelling).

I think this is a case (there are many) in which IDL has been programmed in a far-sighted and sensitive way, and that it is doing **exactly** what it is suppose to be doing: making life easier for the programmer. :-)

Cheers,

David

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