
Subject: Re: Help needed on calling an IDL procedure from the Linux command line
Posted by [Michael Wallace](#) on Sat, 27 Aug 2005 23:25:03 GMT

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> So I was wondering: is it possible to pass input variables via a
> command line call? Can these be provided directly, or via an input
> file? I contacted David Fanning, and he suggested that this group would
> be a good source of information on this topic. Any help or information
> that you have on this would be greatly appreciated.

The new IDL 6.2 includes support for command line arguments. You can specify command line arguments with either the -arg or -args options. For example:

```
$ idl test.pro -quiet -args arg1 arg2 arg3
```

Notice that the file test.pro must be a batch file rather than a procedure or function. If it's not a batch file, you will get the error message about programs not being able to be compiled in single statement mode. Here are the contents of a very simple test.pro:

```
args = command_line_args()  
print, n_elements(args)  
print, args
```

And here's what I get when running it:

```
$ idl test.pro -quiet -args arg1 arg2 arg3  
      3  
arg1 arg2 arg3
```

Typically, I will keep the batch file pretty small and use it only parse the command line arguments. I then call the procedure or function that does the real work. I split things up this so that I can call my core code either from the command line or from another routine. My batch programs usually look something like:

```
args = command_line_args()  
; check args and set input and keyword values  
really_nifty_idl_code(input1, input2, keyword = keyword1)
```

-Mike
