

---

Subject: Re: Online help with non-windowing devices  
Posted by [scowen](#) on Thu, 29 Jun 1995 07:00:00 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Mark Rivers ([rivers@cars3.uchicago.edu](mailto:rivers@cars3.uchicago.edu)) wrote:

: Prior to IDL 4.0 I could get online help by typing '?', and I would get a  
: text-based interface to the online help. Not beautiful, but it did the job.  
: This no longer works, IDL tries to use the hypertext help and I get an X error  
: opening display.

: There was a post about a month ago which described a way to get the old widget  
: based help by using WIDGET\_OLH. The old text based help was done with the  
: routine MAN\_PROC. MAN\_PROC still exists in IDL\_DIR/lib/, but when I run it  
: there appears to be no online help library available?

Yes, there's a way to do this. I have extensive sets of my own help files that I merge into the system help databases, but with this bloody new hyperhelp (piece of crap if you ask me) you can only merge files in .hlp format for which there are no compilation routines provided. When you run MAN\_PROC it sees nothing because IDL v4.0 comes with no .help files in the help/ dir under the IDL tree. What you have to do is go into the pro dirs in the tree and build your own sets of .help files using MK\_LIBRARY\_HELP and then dump those files into the help/ dir. Then MAN\_PROC will see them. I've given up on hyperhelp and use widget\_olh pretty much all the time.

I've raised this with RSI and was about the 550th person to do so - RSI is getting the company who wrote the interface (its not even in-house fer crying out loud) to address the flexibility issues and expects to release a new version of hyperhelp sometime very soon (don't hold your breath).

PS. Anybody else noticed how some keywords are now no longer valid on certain routines?? The only really irritating one I've found so far is the dropping of CHANNEL as a valid keyword to PLOTS and XYOUTS - way to go with backward compatibility RSI!!

-----  
Paul A. Scowen | Internet: [scowen@tycho.la.asu.edu](mailto:scowen@tycho.la.asu.edu)  
Dept of Physics & Astronomy | [paul.scowen@asu.edu](mailto:paul.scowen@asu.edu)  
Arizona State University | Bitnet: [scowen@asu](mailto:scowen@asu)  
Box 871504, Tempe, AZ 85287-1504 | WWW: <http://wfpc3.la.asu.edu/scowen.html>  
Tel/FAX: (602) 965-0938 / 7954 | <http://wfpc3.la.asu.edu/sah.html>  
-----