Subject: Re: Julian Day Question
Posted by Craig Markwardt on Fri, 26 May 2006 05:52:31 GMT
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Mike Wallace <mwallace.no.spam.please@swri.edu.invalid> writes:

>> Anyone have any ideas about this? Is a Julian Day number
>> a "standard" in the sense that OpenGL is a standard?
>
> Julian Day is simply the number of days past 12 noon UTC on January 1,
> 4713 BC. Nothing more. Nothing less. However I have seen people use
> the term "Julian Day" for a quantity that is not actually a Julian
> Day, but something derived from a Julian Day. There are Modified
> Julian Days and Truncated Julian Days and Reduced Julian Days among
> many others. There's also a Julian Year, but despite the name it has
> absolutely no relationship to Julian Days.
>
> I will say that the IDL Julian Day routines give me what I expect to
> see. Perhaps the others are just variations.

My experience is that the naive usage of the IDL JULDAY function does not give me what I expect to see. For a given calendar date, say JULDAY(5,26,2006), I normally expect this to refer to midnight at the start of the day (JD 2453881.5), whereas IDL returns the Julian day at noon, twelve hours later (JD 2453882). Of course, if one specifies hours, minutes and seconds, then the proper result pops out.

I.e., I would naively expect these to be the same but they are not:
```
JULDAY(5,26,2006,  0,0,0)
JULDAY(5,26,2006)
```

Craig

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Craig B. Markwardt, Ph.D. EMAIL: craigmnet@REMOVEcow.physics.wisc.edu
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