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Subject: Re: Need help with basic spawn command  
Posted by [Allan Whiteford](#) on Thu, 17 May 2007 11:14:57 GMT  
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Note that the return value can be obtained (at least under unix) with the `exit_status` keyword to `spawn`.

```
IDL> spawn, 'basic', exit_status=a
IDL> print,a
10
```

however, it's far more useful to use the `printf` in your program as Yi suggested to return data back. The exit status is typically used to return whether or not a command executed correctly or not.

Probably best to ignore this message unless you're really sure that you want the return value from the program rather than just its output.

Thanks,

Allan

Yi wrote:

```
> IDL's spawn procedure can't get the return value from C program.
> Of course, you can get the result using second argument like this :
>
> IDL> spawn, 'basic', result
>
> In this case, the result variable is not the return value of main
> function(C Program)
> but the output text result of the 'basic' command in Shell(Unix) or
> Command Prompt(MS Windows)
>
> The 'result' variable is string array, so it can catch multi lines
> text output.
>
> Anyway, if you want to use spawn procedure, the C program should be
> modified.
>
> I expect that you can get result if you insert,
>
> printf("%d", n);
>
> into your C code.
>
>
```

wrote:

```
>
>> Im running IDL on XP.
>>
>> I have this basic C code:
>>
>> #include <stdlib.h>
>>
>> int main()
>> {
>>
>>     int n=5;
>>     n=n*2;
>>     return n;}
>>
>> //This file is basic.c
>>
>>> From IDL, I just want to call this program and return n.
>>
>> In IDL, I can write:
>>
>> SPAWN, 'basic'                ; this of course runs the
>> basic.c program.
>>
>> But this doesnt return anything of course.. ive tried to add another
>> variable after this line such as:
>> SPAWN, 'basic', variable
>>
>> But windows doesnt like any of this...
>>
>> Can anyone help me with this basic application? With spawn in the past
>> ive gotten it to do calculations on a variable and return them, but
>> with no input, im unsure how to get the output.
>>
>> Thanks for any help! Ive also boughten the 'from c->dlim->idl' book but
>> it wont be in for a few days.
>
>
>
```

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