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Subject: SAVE/RESTORE of sysvars (was IDL and X and PS)

Posted by [ali](#) on Wed, 16 Sep 1992 16:26:35 GMT

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In article <15SEP199217204994@stars.gsfc.nasa.gov>, knight@ll.mit.edu (Fred Knight) writes:

> Thanks to Bill for sharing the setplot routine.  
> Another way to store the system variables is to write them to a save file:  
>  
> save,/sys  
>  
> and then recall them later:  
>  
> restore

This will certainly work. It is, however, moderately fragile because we (RSI) don't give any assurances that system variables won't change in an upwardly compatible way between releases. If for example, we add a new field to a system variable, your existing SAVE/RESTORE copy of that variable will no longer be restorable. IDL issues an error, skips the saved variable, and continues restoring anything else in the SR file.

It's true that we change system variables very rarely. However, it can be pretty disconcerting to discover that something you've been using for some time suddenly breaks when a new IDL is installed (especially if you've forgotten exactly what it did!).

With the clarity afforded by hindsight, allowing S/R on system variables was probably a mistake on our part. In any event, I would suggest a different approach, perhaps using a startup file to set system variable preferences.

- Ali, RSI ([ali@rsinc.com](mailto:ali@rsinc.com))

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