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Subject: Re: Most Common IDL Programming Errors  
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 09 Apr 2008 02:27:18 GMT  
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Peter Mason writes:

> Getting "rows" mixed up with "columns" (whatever they are) when using IDL  
> calls that involve matrices.

Oh, my gosh! I've been working on an EOF (Empirical Orthogonal Functions) problem the past 3-4 days, and I'll bet I spent half my time trying to wrap my mind around this! "OK, does the LA\_SVD routine think like IDL or like matrix algebra? When it says the first mode EOF is in the column of the output is that in a linear algebra sense or an IDL sense?" One more day of it and I'll be ready to buy Matlab. (Heck, all the examples are in Matlab code.)

Even now, when I am *\*sure\** I know what I'm doing, I have momentary doubts. Why don't you write us a primer, Peter? :-)

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>  
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

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