
Subject: Re: usersym keywords -- why?

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 11 Nov 2008 15:13:24 GMT

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Reimar Bauer writes:

> Just a quick question why isn't it passed by _EXTRA ?

The keywords THICK and COLOR are not passed by _EXTRA because if you use them on the IDL command line, they are not "extra":

```
Plot, data, PSYM=SYMCAT(4), THICK=2, COLOR=200
```

Thus, I can't get them inside my program. But, that said, I can understand some of Chris's confusion, because the THICK keyword only applies to symbols I can create with USERSYM. (Any symbol where I have to "lift the pen" to draw cannot be created in USERSYM, such as a plus sign or an asterisk.)

In fooling around with this today, I realized that if I had added the COLOR keyword, too, I would have something that was even more powerful, so I have done that:

```
http://www.dfanning.com/programs/symcat.pro
```

This gives me the ability to independently set the thickness of the line, and the thickness of the symbols (at least for those symbols I can render with USERSYM):

```
Plot, findgen(11), THICK=1, PSYM=-SYMCAT(4, THICK=2)
```

and it gives me the opportunity to draw the line in one color and the symbols with another, without having to do this on two separate calls:

```
yellow = FSC_Color('yellow')  
green = FSC_Color('green')  
Plot, Findgen(11), Color=yellow, PSYM=-SYMCAT(4, COLOR=green)
```

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.")
