
Subject: Re: Multiple conditionals

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sat, 07 Feb 2009 12:48:04 GMT

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Bernhard Reinhardt writes:

```
> I guess I can not shock you IDL old stagers with this but for an IDL
> newbie like me this seems quite strange:
>
> IDL> if 1 eq (1 or 2) then print, "true" else print, "false"
> false
> IDL> if "a" eq ("a" or "b") then print, "true" else print, "false"
> true
>
> Maybe that's the IDL-way of punishing people to addle to type the long
> version:
>
> IDL> if ("a" eq "a" or "a" eq "b") then print, "true" else print, "false"
> true
> IDL> if (1 eq 1 or 1 eq 2) then print, "true" else print, "false"
> true
>
> Can anyone explain the logic behind this behavior to me?
```

I've given up "explaining" a great deal of IDL's behavior, but this one is fairly simple. IDL does "bitwise" comparisons between values. So...

```
IDL> print, binary(1 or 2)
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 1
IDL> print, binary(1)
0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1
```

Clearly, these two bit patterns are different, so the answer is "false":

```
IDL> if 1 eq (1 or 2) then print, "true" else print, "false"
false
```

I'll leave it to someone else to explain why strings are handled differently. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

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