
Subject: Re: Coping with DOS filenames

Posted by [thompson](#) on Mon, 16 Sep 1996 07:00:00 GMT

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Fred Knight <knight@ll.mit.edu> writes:

> No doubt this question has been discussed previously, but I couldn't
> find it mentioned on the FAQ, and I didn't find a routine in Landsman's
> IDL AStronomy Llibrary to answer it.

> Here's the problem. I just changed to IDL on a PC and am trying to cope
> with 8-character filenames. The main problem is IDL not compiling
> procedures and functions whose names exceed 8 characters. How have
> people coped with this? Is there a general scheme people are using?
> The IDL Installation Guide only alludes to this problem as something you
> need to be careful of. Here's an example:

> IDL> multiplot,x,y ; pro with 9 characters in its name.
> % Attempt to call undefined procedure/function: multiplot
> ...

> but, a shorter name works:

> IDL> myplot,x,y ; pro with <9 characters
> Compiled Module: MYPLOT.
> ...

> In summary, the question might be phrased: Is there a general scheme to
> change long (>8 chars) IDL module names for use under DOS so that they
> can be compiled?

If you store the routine multiplot in a file called multiplo.pro, then the PC version of IDL will find it automatically. One thing to watch out for is if you have two routines whose names start with the same eight characters, e.g. multiplot and multiplot2. In that case, you have to store both routines in the same multiplo.pro file.

It used to be that PCs gave you no choice. DOS forced filenames to be no more than eight characters, so you couldn't have a file called multiplot.pro even if you wanted one. However, with the advent of Windows NT and Windows 95, this restriction is disappearing, but it seems like IDL is not keeping up. However, I don't know if this problem is solved in the most recent versions of IDL for Windows--I hope so. Personally, I find this restriction so severe, that I do not recommend people to attempt to run our software on PCs until it's corrected.

Bill Thompson
