
Subject: Re: Procedures with variable/dynamic argument list??
Posted by [Kenneth P. Bowman](#) on Fri, 22 Oct 2010 13:56:00 GMT
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In article

<d5d024b5-fb3e-438e-9277-c4dc032c35e2@n24g2000prj.googlegroups.com>,
SonicKenking <ywangd@gmail.com> wrote:

> Is it possible in IDL to code a procedure using variable/dynamic
> argument list?? i.e. the number of arguments is arbitrary and the
> procedure is able to accept them all with some argument array?
>
> Similar to the "va_list" in C or "*args" in Python.
>
> The Print command in IDL is a good example too for accepting arbitrary
> number of arguments and print them all. Unfortunately, the Print
> command is not written in IDL, hence no sneak peek of the source code
> ~~

IDL procedures and functions are flexible about how many
arguments you provide, as long as you don't pass too many.

You do have to provide at least as many dummy arguments
in the procedure definition as you intend to use. That is

```
PRO VAR_ARGS, a1, a2, a3, a4
```

can be called as

```
VAR_ARGS, x, y
```

It is up to the procedure to know what to do in that
case. (See the N_PARAMS function.)

As far as I know, there is no direct mechanism for
handling an arbitrary number of arguments other than
making a list in the procedure/function definition.

Ken
