
Subject: Re: cgArrow Solid keyword with a cgWindow
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 18 Apr 2013 15:34:51 GMT
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Fabien writes:

> By the way, what are the rules for this? Do all routines have an /ADDCMD
> but not all routines have a /WINDOW? Could one of the two be suppressed?

The rational for having two keywords that do the same thing is that when you get so excited about a great new idea, you sometimes start coding before you really understand what the hell it is you are doing. This is the unfortunate, messy result.

Originally, I thought a single WINDOW keyword would work great. You set the WINDOW keyword, the command gets added to the resizable graphics window. What could be simpler?

But, then I realized I wanted the graphics commands to act like "normal" graphics commands. If I do a line plot, I see a line plot. If I then do a contour plot, the contour plot shows up in the same window as the previous line plot, and so on. So, I changed the meaning of WINDOW to mean "get rid of all the other commands in this window and add this command to the window". That required the ADDCMD keyword for things I wanted to "add" to commands that were already in the window.

Then, of course, you could replace commands, etc. I saw the keyword list rapidly getting completely out of control. So I decided only two keywords, WINDOW and ADDCMD. "WINDOW" more or less means "start over with this command as the first command in the window". ADDCMD more or less means "add this command to the list of commands that already exist in the window". But, life is complicated, and it is not always so easy to sort out the details.

Consider something like cgArrow. Has anyone anywhere ever drawn an arrow in a graphics window without anything else around? Probably not. So, in this case WINDOW probably should mean ADDCMD 99% of the time. But, as soon as I make a decision like that, somebody sends me an e-mail complaining that they just want a damn arrow in a graphics window! Sigh.

So, I'm just saying it's complicated. I do my best. ;-)

Cheers,

David

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