
Subject: [ANN] Online Surface Plotting Tutorial
Posted by [Struan Gray](#) on Tue, 08 Apr 1997 07:00:00 GMT
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A few weeks ago I posted a half-hearted pointer to a tutorial I have written on how to extend IDL's built-in surface plotting routines. Now that enough time and beta-testers have passed by for me to be reasonably sure that the HTML and IDL code won't crash your machines here's a (slightly) more evangelistic announcement.

IDL SURFACE PLOTTING TUTORIAL

http://www.sljus.lu.se/stm/IDL/Surf_Tips/

IDL's built-in surface plotting routines are fast, adaptable and powerful but suffer from a few problems, particularly when attempting to combine different sorts of plot or displaying two or more surfaces simultaneously. The tutorial shows ways of getting round some annoying bugs and, more importantly, using the built-in routines as building blocks to construct more complex plots. Topics covered include:

- 1) Surface plots that are both coloured and shaded
- 2) Reliable plotting of surface grids in the Z-buffer
- 3) Shading and colouring surface grids
- 4) Plotting two intersecting surfaces
- 5) Hidden surface removal for grids on two surfaces
- 6) A simple way to plot transparent surfaces

There are code snippets embedded in the tutorial pages which can be pasted into the command line of IDL, producing example plots while you read. There is also an example code page where you can download fully-functional, commented routines which you can use to produce plots from your own data using a single command.

I would appreciate any comments and bug reports people might have, so please email any bouquets or brickbats to: struan.gray@sljus.lu.se

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