
Subject: Re: closed contour paths: clockwise or anticlockwise - or actually a mixture?

Posted by [George.millward](#) on Fri, 03 Jan 2014 21:13:57 GMT

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On Friday, January 3, 2014 2:01:23 PM UTC-7, David Fanning wrote:

> George.millward@yahoo.com writes:

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>> Hi there,

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>> I'm doing some very straightforward contour plotting - but instead of actually plotting the contours - I'm writing out the path data of closed contours by using the path_info and path_xy keywords.

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>> This is all working fine, but I have a problem: Some of the contour paths (written out as x,y arrays) close in a clockwise order, some close in an anticlockwise order. This is causing trouble when I export the paths to other mapping software because the latter is strictly wanting the paths to always be clockwise.....

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> This seems unlikely. Are you sure you are not confusing the high and low

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> contours? In other words, one path describes a mound, the other path

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> describes a hole. The normal should be pointing toward you in the

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> counterclockwise (mound) contour, and away from you in the clockwise

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> (hole) contour.

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> Cheers,

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> David

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> --

>
> David Fanning, Ph.D.
>
> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.
>
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>
>
> Sepore ma de ni thue. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

David,

Aha - I think that's it. Thanks. I think a contour that is 'high' (above it's surroundings) is written in clockwise order - but if it is a 'hole' it is written in anti-clockwise order. Is that your understanding?

[For anyone trying to follow this thread the relevant parameter here is `path_info.high_low`]

Cheers

George.
