
Subject: Absolute value of negative number is negative
Posted by [wlandsman](#) on Mon, 08 Feb 2016 19:00:18 GMT
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I was surprised to find that taking the absolute value of a 16 bit integer vector was yielding negative numbers.

While this is non-intuitive, I think it is unavoidable. --Wayne

```
IDL> tab= -32768S    ;IDL won't let us define -32768 as a short integer
```

```
tab= -32768
```

```
    ^
```

% Integer constant must be less than 32768.

```
IDL> tab = intarr(1)    ;but we can assign a short integer to -32768
```

```
IDL> tab[0] = -32768
```

```
IDL> help,tab          ;Still a short integer
```

```
TAB          INT      = Array[1]
```

```
IDL> print,tab[0]      ;Still a value of -32768
```

```
-32768
```

```
IDL> print,abs(tab[0]) ;Absolute value is negative!
```

```
-32768
```
