
Subject: Re: Parameters for Dummies

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 31 May 2002 16:22:30 GMT

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Sean Raffuse (sean@me.wustl.edu) writes:

> is there any time when I should really be using a positional parameter
> instead of a keyword parameter? The more I do, the less I see why a
> positional parameter would ever be better. Yet, I'm sure they're there for
> a reason. Please enlighten me, oh most wise discussion group.

Here is a loose rule of thumb: Positional parameters are
for **required** parameters. Keyword parameters are for
everything else.

Cheers,

David

--

David W. Fanning, Ph.D.

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

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Subject: Re: Parameters for Dummies

Posted by [Craig Markwardt](#) on Fri, 31 May 2002 17:42:00 GMT

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David Fanning <david@dfanning.com> writes:

> Sean Raffuse (sean@me.wustl.edu) writes:
>
>> is there any time when I should really be using a positional parameter
>> instead of a keyword parameter? The more I do, the less I see why a
>> positional parameter would ever be better. Yet, I'm sure they're there for
>> a reason. Please enlighten me, oh most wise discussion group.
>
> Here is a loose rule of thumb: Positional parameters are
> for **required** parameters. Keyword parameters are for
> everything else.

An interesting diversion which connects to both Sean's and David's
points. There are a few astronomy software analysis tools (IRAF and
FTOOLS to be specific) which name **all** of their parameters. The
required parameters can be given positionally, in which case you don't
need to give the keyword name, but otherwise you can give all the

parameters as named keywords.

This would be nice for IDL, and seems to be the kind of thing that Sean was thinking of, but it certainly doesn't exist in IDL as it stands.

Craig

--

Craig B. Markwardt, Ph.D. EMAIL: craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu
Astrophysics, IDL, Finance, Derivatives | Remove "net" for better response

Subject: Re: Parameters for Dummies
Posted by [thompson](#) on Fri, 31 May 2002 18:11:11 GMT
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David Fanning <david@dfanning.com> writes:

> Sean Raffuse (sean@me.wustl.edu) writes:

>

>> is there any time when I should really be using a positional parameter
>> instead of a keyword parameter? The more I do, the less I see why a
>> positional parameter would ever be better. Yet, I'm sure they're there for
>> a reason. Please enlighten me, oh most wise discussion group.

> Here is a loose rule of thumb: Positional parameters are
> for *required* parameters. Keyword parameters are for
> everything else.

I second that.

I've encountered IDL software where the developer decided to make EVERY parameter a keyword parameter, even the required ones that you have to enter in every time. I found all that typing quite a pain. (On the other hand, I also remember the bad old days, before IDL keywords were invented, and all parameters were positional, even if you had twenty of them!)

William Thompson

Subject: Re: Parameters for Dummies
Posted by [R.Bauer](#) on Mon, 03 Jun 2002 06:45:01 GMT
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David Fanning wrote:

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>
> Sean Raffuse (sean@me.wustl.edu) writes:
>
>> is there any time when I should really be using a positional parameter
>> instead of a keyword parameter? The more I do, the less I see why a
>> positional parameter would ever be better. Yet, I'm sure they're there for
>> a reason. Please enlighten me, oh most wise discussion group.
>
> Here is a loose rule of thumb: Positional parameters are
> for *required* parameters. Keyword parameters are for
> everything else.
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
```

I agree to this but sometimes I am angree about not chooosen
a keyword parameter.
This is when I like to use keyword inheritance by _extra and so on.

regards

Reimar

--

Reimar Bauer

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a IDL library at ForschungsZentrum Juelich
http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg1/idl_icglib/idl_lib_intro.h tml