
Subject: Keyword checking

Posted by [Randall Skelton](#) on Wed, 29 May 2002 13:20:45 GMT

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I have run into a great deal of trouble checking keywords in IDL and I thought I would relay my thoughts and frustrations. I am trying to prevent a user from passing an undefined variable in a keyword...

Imagine,

```
pro test, A=a, B=b
  print, n_params()
  print, arg_present(a), keyword_set(a), n_elements(a), size(a,/type)
  print, arg_present(b), keyword_set(b), n_elements(b), size(b,/type)
end
```

If I call this routine as:

```
IDL> .reset
IDL> test, a=1, b=undefvar
% Compiled module: TEST.
      0
      0      1      1      2
      1      0      0      0
```

So, in order to prevent a user from passing junk in a keyword, I have:

```
pro test, B=b
  if n_elements(b) eq 0 and arg_present(b) eq 1 then $
    message, 'You passed an undefined variable as a keyword'
  if n_elements(b) gt 0 then b = 'passed'
end
```

Now,

```
IDL> .reset
IDL> test, b=junk
% Compiled module: TEST.
% TEST: You passed an undefined variable as a keyword
```

Surely there must be something simpler than my 2-step approach ;)

Cheers,
Randall
