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```
> Here's the problem in brief.
>
> 1. Start IDL
> 2. a=intarr(320,256,200)
> 3. In another window the Solaris program topx tells me that IDL
> is using about 39 megabytes, approximately correct for the array.
```

```
> 4. a=0
> 5. topx still says IDL is using 39 megabytes.
>
> When I free an array how do I get IDL to give up the memory it
> grabbed to get the array in the first place? I think IDL can reuse
> the 39 megabytes if it needs it but I'd like to make that memory available
> to any other process running on my machine, not just IDL.
```

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"We do custom earthquakes (for food)"

"Just more roadkill on the information superhighway"

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Subject: Re: How do I free memory?

Posted by [steinhh](#) on Wed, 13 Jul 1994 08:52:14 GMT

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In article <GEOMAGIC.94Jul12152036@moe.seismo.do.usbr.gov>, geomagic@seismo.do.usbr.gov (Dan O-Connell) writes:

|> In article <1994Jul12.152415.23858@noao.edu> eharold@corona.sunspot.noao.edu (Elliott Harold) writes:

|> [..]

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|>

|> Delvar deletes variables and deallocates their memory.

|>

But this doesn't really give the memory back to the operating system.

The problem is in unix, and has nothing to do with IDL. Any other program using large memory chunks has the same problem.

So, no cure is available (under UNIX, that is).

Stein Vidar Haugan

Subject: Re: How do I free memory?

Posted by [n9140397](#) on Wed, 13 Jul 1994 15:28:59 GMT

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In article <GEOMAGIC.94Jul12152036@moe.seismo.do.usbr.gov> geomagic@seismo.do.usbr.gov (Dan O-Connell) writes:

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> Delvar deletes variables and deallocates their memory.

Yeah, but, remember that calling delvar *also* erases the main program you have running. Just a quirk I ran into playing around

with it a couple of days ago myself.

This may or may not be a problem. In any case, putting delvar in a program seems to be a pretty bad idea, as the program erases itself...

Or, is there a way around that? Anybody?

Mike H.
UCSD SIO

Subject: Re: How do I free memory?
Posted by [caron](#) on Wed, 13 Jul 1994 16:24:32 GMT
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In article <3009vu\$1q3@hermod.uio.no>, steinh@amon.uio.no (Stein Vidar Hagfors Haugan) writes:

|>

|> In article <GEOMAGIC.94Jul12152036@moe.seismo.do.usbr.gov>, geomagic@seismo.do.usbr.gov (Dan O-Connell) writes:

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Remember you are on a virtual memory machine. Whats important to performance is the amount of physical memory you need to satisfy memory requests. Its true that when you "free" memory you dont decrease the virtual address space, but (assuming you have enough swap space) that doesnt effect performance really.

Its a good idea to free unneeded memory, so that your programs virtual space stays as compact as possible.

See July 1994 Unix Review "Understanding SVR4 Memory Allocation" for gory details.
