
Subject: need more plotting symbols please

Posted by Dilkushi@gmail.com on Thu, 31 Aug 2006 22:14:19 GMT

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Dear All

In my assignment the number of variables I am requested to plot are increasing (exponentially !!).. hence I need new plotting symbols please.. I would appreciate it if somebody could point me to a database..

Hoping to hear from you

Thanks

dilkushi

Subject: Re: need more plotting symbols please

Posted by [David Fanning](mailto:David.Fanning) on Mon, 02 Oct 2006 16:24:14 GMT

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don.woodraska@gmail.com writes:

> I modified your code, symcat.pro, to support negative symbols. For
> those who don't know, negative symbols produce lines that connect the
> points in a plot. Thank you David for writing clean code that allowed
> me to only change 3 lines.

Huh!? I can do it in NO lines!

Plot, findgen(11), PSym=-SymCat(34)

Did you find that to be a problem?

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Subject: Re: need more plotting symbols please

Posted by don.woodraska on Mon, 02 Oct 2006 17:02:20 GMT

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It's not a problem, just a preference. Being a mac person, I expect things to just work, especially when the intent is clear. I love the

function as it stands, but I like having the flexibility to be lazy and not worry about it.

I also just realized that we're sacrificing the histogram-like `psym=10` option. I may remap that symbol to another number.

Thanks again!

David Fanning wrote:

```
> don.woodraska@gmail.com writes:
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>> those who don't know, negative symbols produce lines that connect the
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> David Fanning, Ph.D.
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Subject: Re: need more plotting symbols please
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 02 Oct 2006 17:23:30 GMT
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don.woodraska@gmail.com writes:

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> things to just work, especially when the intent is clear. I love the
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> not worry about it.
```

Well, the problem is that when you write new programs you have to be careful not to improve things too much. That is to say, if you change the interface, even if you are changing a LOUSY interface, you better have a VERY good reason for doing so. (If you need examples, consider just about anything

from a Microsoft Windows program).

For example, if you were writing the PLOT command over again, you would not make the dependent data the first positional parameter if there was one parameter and the second positional parameter if there were two parameters. You would write the arguments as people tended to use them. But if you write a wrapper to the PLOT command, you would be foolish to change the way the PLOT command does things or you would confuse *everyone*. (The LIMIT keyword to MAP_SET, in which the order is [y,x] instead of the usual [x,y] is another example. I don't think I have *ever* written the LIMIT correctly in one go.)

So, in this case, I prefer to allow the user to place the minus sign outside the symbol number because that's how IDL does it. I'd confuse myself if I tried something else. :-)

> I also just realized that we're sacrificing the histogram-like psym=10
> option. I may remap that symbol to another number.

Oh, right. I didn't think of that. I'll fix that myself. I've screwed up index 8, too. Humm. I should have spent a few more minutes thinking about this, it looks like. :-)

I'll have something new later today.

Cheers,

David

>
>
>

--

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Subject: Re: need more plotting symbols please
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 02 Oct 2006 18:00:04 GMT
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David Fanning writes:

> Oh, right. I didn't think of that. I'll fix that myself. I've screwed
> up index 8, too. Humm. I should have spent a few more minutes thinking
> about this, it looks like. :-(
>
> I'll have something new later today.

OK, here is another interface dilemma. I screwed up before by not thinking as clearly as I should have about what I was doing. (I'm certain this doesn't happen to you.)

So, out of 44 indices, I should have reserved 8 and 10 for what the user expects them to be. I didn't. So now I want to reserve them. This means I either (1) map this functionality to unused index numbers, say 45 and 46, which REALLY defeats the user's expectation, or (2) map these to what the user expects but change the old numbers out from under all the thousands of users (I'm being facetious) that have already downloaded SYMCAT.

I've chosen option 2. I've thought hard about it. I don't like it. But that's what I've done. Mostly this decision stems from a GREAT reluctance to change an already-defined interface, and from a bet that not too many people have already downloaded and are using SYMCAT in their programs. I could be completely wrong, but that's how these kinds of decisions get made, for better or worse. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

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Subject: Re: need more plotting symbols please
Posted by [Jean H.](#) on Mon, 02 Oct 2006 18:14:51 GMT
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Why not using a keyword, so the user can keep the old indices (default), or use the shifted ones? ... everybody would be happy!

just a thought...

Jean

David Fanning wrote:

> David Fanning writes:

>

>

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>> up index 8, too. Humm. I should have spent a few more minutes thinking
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> Cheers,

>

> David

Subject: Re: need more plotting symbols please

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 02 Oct 2006 18:30:48 GMT

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Jean H. writes:

> Why not using a keyword, so the user can keep the old indices (default),
> or use the shifted ones? ... everybody would be happy!

Well, everybody except the person who maintains the code. :-)

Yes, I did give this a couple minutes of thought, but rejected it because that path leads to convoluted and impossibly ugly code on this end. If I ever want to make *another* change to the program I want to make a change in ONE place, not in several places. Plus, I'd like to be able to read the darn code a couple of months from now.

Cheers,

David

--

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