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Subject: Re: Rotating axis labels

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 04 Oct 2007 15:46:25 GMT

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Melanie writes:

> I am trying to format some plots to look nice for a presentation and I  
> am having trouble with my tick labels on the x axis. Each label is a  
> variable name and there are 20 of them, so just printing them under  
> the axis makes them all run together and thus illegible. Is there  
> some way after setting the xtickname to an array of variable names to  
> then rotate each name so that it can sit at maybe a 45 degree angle or  
> perpendicular to the axis?

What you will want to do is turn axis annotation off of  
that axis and get the tick values. Something like this:

```
IDL> numticks = 5
IDL> Plot, dates, curve, XTickFormat='(A1)', XTick_Get=tickValues, $
    XTicks=numticks
```

Then the labels will be attached with the XYOUTS command. You can use  
the ![XY].Window system variables to find the end-points of the X and Y  
axes in normalized coordinates. This information is critical for  
positioning the labels correctly. Your code will look something  
like this:

```
IDL> ypos = Replicate(!Y.Window[0] - 0.04, numticks+1)
IDL> xpos = !X.Window[0] + (!X.Window[1]) - !X.Window[0]) * $
    FIndGen(numTicks+1)/numTicks
IDL> FOR j=0,numTicks DO XYOutS, xpos[j], ypos[j], $
    Alignment=0.0, Orientation=-45, /Normal
```

Cheers,

David

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

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