
Subject: Re: How to set the default working directory?
Posted by [russell.grew](#) on Tue, 14 Apr 2009 09:50:48 GMT
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Assuming you're on Windows and using 6.x,

File --> Preferences --> Startup --> Working directory

I would hope IDL 7.x is similar.

Subject: Re: How to set the default working directory?
Posted by [Maarten\[1\]](#) on Tue, 14 Apr 2009 09:51:05 GMT
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On Apr 14, 7:08 am, rainingpe...@gmail.com wrote:

- > The reason why I want to set this directory is that otherwise every
- > time I am trying to read a file, I have to write the full path. By
- > setting a default working directory, I can just use
- > `id=cdf_open('ge_edb3sec_mgf_20000125_v01.cdf')`
- > instead of
- > `id=cdf_open('C:\ge_edb3sec_mgf_20000125_v01.cdf')`. I believe such a
- > small aim is achievable in such a powerful software like IDL. It is
- > just that I do not know how to do that.

Search for CD in the online IDL manual.

Maarten

Subject: Re: How to set the default working directory?
Posted by [David Gell](#) on Tue, 14 Apr 2009 12:43:06 GMT
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On Apr 14, 12:08 am, rainingpe...@gmail.com wrote:

- > Hi all,
- >
- > I am trying to use IDL to read and write CDF files. Now I am suffering
- > a problem. I am trying to set my default working directory to "D:
- > \IDLWorkspace\". And I set "Reference->IDL->Path" and add the "D:
- > \IDLWorkspace" to the list and move it to the top. But it does not
- > work.
- > The reason why I want to set this directory is that otherwise every
- > time I am trying to read a file, I have to write the full path. By
- > setting a default working directory, I can just use
- > `id=cdf_open('ge_edb3sec_mgf_20000125_v01.cdf')`
- > instead of

> id=cdf_open('C:\ge_edb3sec_mgf_20000125_v01.cdf'). I believe such a
> small aim is achievable in such a powerful software like IDL. It is
> just that I do not know how to do that.
> This is just a simple example. My directory is much longer.
> So as mentioned, I failed at setting the working directory. I hope
> some one could help me.
> Thanks in advance.
>
> Sincerely,
> Li, Tongmu

The !path and path preference are only used in finding the files containing IDL functions and procedures. It doesn't have any effect on searches for other types of files. You can use the CD procedure to set the current working directory. A more general solution, that limits typing, is to use the DIALOG_PICKFILE function to display a file chooser. You can use this function to select a file, then save the directory path for the default in future calls.

Subject: Re: How to set the default working directory?
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 14 Apr 2009 12:52:57 GMT
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rainingpeace@gmail.com writes:

> I am trying to use IDL to read and write CDF files. Now I am suffering
> a problem. I am trying to set my default working directory to "D:
> \IDLWorkspace\". And I set "Reference->IDL->Path" and add the "D:
> \IDLWorkspace" to the list and move it to the top. But it does not
> work.
> The reason why I want to set this directory is that otherwise every
> time I am trying to read a file, I have to write the full path. By
> setting a default working directory, I can just use
> id=cdf_open('ge_edb3sec_mgf_20000125_v01.cdf')
> instead of
> id=cdf_open('C:\ge_edb3sec_mgf_20000125_v01.cdf'). I believe such a
> small aim is achievable in such a powerful software like IDL. It is
> just that I do not know how to do that.
> This is just a simple example. My directory is much longer.
> So as mentioned, I failed at setting the working directory. I hope
> some one could help me.

You can always change your working directory with the CD command:

```
IDL> CD, 'D:\IDLWorkspace\'
```

On Windows, I usually prefer to do this with XCD, which allows me to point and click to move to directories. You can find XCD here:

<http://www.dfanning.com/programs/xcd.zip>

But, most of the time, I prefer NOT to change directories, but to let the directories come to me. If your data file is in a directory in your IDL path, and there is a *.pro in that directory, then I find the program Find_Resource_File more intuitive and less a bother than FILE_SEARCH:

```
IDL> datafile = Find_Resource_File('ge_edb3sec_mgf_20000125_v01.cdf')
```

This program was originally designed to find resource files like the Brewer color table file, but, as I say, it has become more useful than that to me. You can find it among the other Coyote Library files:

<http://www.dfanning.com/documents/programs.html>

Another thing I sometimes do, especially if I am always switching from LINUX to Windows machines, is define default data directories in my IDL startup file:

```
CatSetDefault, 'CDF_DATA_DIR', 'D:\Workspace'
```

Then, in my programs, I get the name of the file I want like this:

```
datafile = Filepath(ROOT_DIR=CatGetDefault('CDF_DATA_DIR'), $  
    'ge_edb3sec_mgf_20000125_v01.cdf')
```

The CatSetDefault and CatGetDefault programs are utility programs in the Catalyst Library code.

<http://www.dfanning.com/catalyst/howtoinstall.html>

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.")
