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Subject: Re: sqrt(-1)??? answer depends on platform!!!

Posted by [hahn](#) on Mon, 11 Dec 1995 08:00:00 GMT

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brooker@ccfm.ireq.ca wrote:

> An observation I just made for IDL ver 3.5.1 and how it interprets SQRT(-1).

> This should produce an error.

[output on various systems deleted]

> peter b.

IDL 4.0.1 for Windows gives...

```
IDL> a = sqrt(-1)
```

```
% Program caused arithmetic error: Floating illegal operand
```

```
IDL> print, a
```

```
-1.#IND0
```

```
IDL> help, a
```

```
A          FLOAT    =    -1.#IND0
```

Obviously IDL gets a NAN from the math processor...

IDL 4.0 on IBM rs6000

```
IDL> a = sqrt(-1)
```

```
% Program caused arithmetic error: Floating illegal operand
```

```
% Program caused arithmetic error: Square root of a negative
```

```
IDL> print, a
```

```
NaNQ
```

```
IDL> help, a
```

```
A          FLOAT    =    NaNQ
```

Hmmm. Can't I get literally the same answer an all systems?

Norbert

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