
Subject: IDL Answer Tool Alpha Version
Posted by [oet](#) on Mon, 28 Jun 1993 15:48:15 GMT
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As our IDL library archive grows up, we have now developed an "Answer Tool".

It is available via ftp:

```
ftp.sma.ch (141.249.3.33)
```

```
cd /pub/idlmeteo  
bin  
get IATOOOL_0.1a.tar.Z
```

note: The indexed news archives are included in the IATOOOL, so you don't need to get the news-archives in the directory /pub/idlmeteo/idlusers!

It was developed on IDL 3.1 , SunOS 4.1.2

If you have this environment, you should be able to directly startup the tool after uncompressing in the directory IATOOOL with `./iatool` .

On other systems it is required to get the WAIS stuff from think.com and to recompile at least the waisindex, waisserver and waisq programs.

Below the manpage for further information.

As it is just a first alpha version the documentation is not to much, so feel free to contact me if you run into problems.

Under IDL 3.0 it is required to recompile the application in the subdirectory iatool.src just typing 'make' because the runtime moduls are not compatible from 3.0 to 3.1 and backwards.

Have Fun,

Thomas

--

```
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iatool(1)

USER COMMANDS

iatool(1)

NAME

iatool - IDL Answer Tool

SYNOPSIS

iatool

DESCRIPTION

The Idl Answer Tool is an enhanced online help for idl libraries. In addition to the capabilities of the IDL internal Online Help '?' the idl answer tool allows to compose more detailed select statements and to retrieve a lot of additional informations:

- Select by library and/or category
- Select by name (some beginning characters)
- Clicking on a procedure name in the list box displays the entire source code, not only the help part (except for the idl basic routines). This allows to learn quickly from existing procedures.
- User specific configuration. Some options like font, display window size, print command can be defined by the user via an included properties editor.
- Browsing through the IDL notes of the IDL distribution via pulldown menus.
- Show numbered color indices for all default color tables from the idl distribution. All information is retrieved directly from colors.tbl.
- Address Book of IDL Distributors and Help lines
- Easy addition of own libraries:
The database is generated from help files, with a the utilites provided with the Idl Answer Tool package you can add your own libraries to the database in a single step after the generation of the help file with `mk_library_help`.
- On Unix Systems: Indexed text search through all available procedures, notes and examples from the IDL distribution and archives of `comp.lang.idl-pvwave` and other visualization news groups with information about IDL. Multiple OR combined with multiple AND searches are possible. (Based on the WAIS Text retrieval system

from think.com).

RESTRICTIONS

Sun Release 4.1 Last change: 1E1 1

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The IDLSolve sub modul works only on Unix systems and requires a running WAIS-Server with a well configured WAIS-source file to get correct information about the server for the IDL-WAIS-Client (see installation notes).

NOTES

If you have runtime licenses it is recommend to install the Answer Tool as runtime modul and startup idl via a shell script with the parameters -rt, for example:

```
#!/bin/csh
```

```
idl -rt='iatool.run'
```

"MODIFICATION HISTORY"

Written by: Thomas.Oettli@sma.ch, 16-dec-1992

rewritten from scratch 05-May-1993

11-June-1993, Th. Oettli, added WAIS-Client modul
for free text search