
Subject: Re: Colors again!

Posted by [davidf](#) on Tue, 22 Jun 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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Harald Frey (hfrey@ssl.berkeley.edu) writes:

- > colors are driving me crazy in IDL. But please, do not answer the
- > problem would
- > go with device,decomposed=0. It's not true, at least not in this case.
- > I'm
- > working in

Oh, come on, Harald, it's **always** true! :-)

- > Any suggestions?

I would read the following article (at least) in
the Using Colors in IDL section of my tips page:

http://www.dfanning.com/tips/choosing_colors.html

This article answers the questions you ask. You can find
even more detailed information in my book. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting

Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com

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

Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

Subject: Re: Colors again!

Posted by [Harald Frey](#) on Tue, 22 Jun 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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Liam Gumley wrote:

- > This seemingly random behavior is caused by your desktop. If you have
- > applications like Netscape running before you start IDL, IDL will have
- > many fewer colors to work with. On our local machines which run CDE, we
- > always set the Style Manager to 'Most Colors for Applications'. However
- > we still get the behavior you described when a second IDL session is
- > started. This is a result of having an 8 bit desktop. On our Sun Ultra

> machines (which are supposed to have Creator3D 24 bit graphics cards),
> we've been unable to figure out how to get around this problem (has
> anyone solved this?).
>
> On the other hand my SGI box has a 24 bit graphics card, and it handles
> multiple 8 bit IDL sessions just fine: the color tables don't interfere
> with one another.
>

Thank you for your answer. I definitely avoid running any other application in parallel. I already figured out that the number of available colors changes not only from day to day, but also decreases after some time in a session. My solution on this is just logging-out as often as possible, which is a different pain as well.

Harald

Subject: Re: Colors again!

Posted by [Liam Gumley](#) on Tue, 22 Jun 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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Harald Frey wrote:

> My idl_startup.pro file contains the device,decomposed=0 line and after
> starting
> IDL I get the information
>
> IDL> print, 'Number of colors is ', !d.n_colors
> Number of colors is 256
> IDL> plot,findgen(200)
> IDL> print,!d.n_colors
> 106

Until you actually create a window with PLOT, IDL has not tried to grab any colors from the desktop. You need to put a command like this in your startup file:

```
window, /free, /pixmap & wdelete, !d.window
```

Then at least the correct number of colors will be reported. Or you could try my COLORSET routine, which is available at <http://cimss.ssec.wisc.edu/~gumley/colortools.html>

> After any plot command the number of available colors is cut by more
> than half, and this number changes from day to day between 118 and 104,
> maybe depending on the weather.
> It may be a problem of my machine and not of IDL. If I force my CDE
> Style Manager-Color to "Most Colors for Applications" then I get 211 colors in

> IDL but the screen looks very colorless. Right now it is set to "More Colors
> for Applications".

This seemingly random behavior is caused by your desktop. If you have applications like Netscape running before you start IDL, IDL will have many fewer colors to work with. On our local machines which run CDE, we always set the Style Manager to 'Most Colors for Applications'. However we still get the behavior you described when a second IDL session is started. This is a result of having an 8 bit desktop. On our Sun Ultra machines (which are supposed to have Creator3D 24 bit graphics cards), we've been unable to figure out how to get around this problem (has anyone solved this?).

On the other hand my SGI box has a 24 bit graphics card, and it handles multiple 8 bit IDL sessions just fine: the color tables don't interfere with one another.

Sorry I can't be of more help....

Cheers,
Liam.

--

Liam E. Gumley
Space Science and Engineering Center, UW-Madison
<http://cimss.ssec.wisc.edu/~gumley>

Subject: Re: Colors again!
Posted by [David R. Klassen](#) on Wed, 23 Jun 1999 07:00:00 GMT
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I, too, was having all kinds of color problems due to the configuration of my new machine, and trying to understand the intricacies of X-Windows *and* IDL together. I have decided to live with the color-flashing (it really doesn't bother me) and stay in 8-bit color mode rather than go to 24-bit color with a smaller screen resolution. Since I can control the colors of my xterm's I can easily find a text/background combination I'll be able to read when the color tables switch in the flash - however, my question is, is there a way to control the text/background colors of the IDLDE? It comes up black on white which becomes black on black in the flash. If not, I'll just have to stick with running IDL in an xterm.

David Fanning wrote:

>

> Harald Frey (hfrey@ssl.berkeley.edu) writes:

>
>> Maybe I have to change to a 24-bit system. If my boss pays for it?
>
> A great idea! But not likely to relieve your frustrations. Add to
> them, more likely. :-)
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>
> --
> David Fanning, Ph.D.
> Fanning Software Consulting
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--
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Subject: Re: Colors again!
Posted by [davidf](#) on Wed, 23 Jun 1999 07:00:00 GMT
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David

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> the Using Colors in IDL section of my tips page:
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> http://www.dfanning.com/tips/choosing_colors.html
>
> This article answers the questions you ask. You can find
> even more detailed information in my book. :-)
>
> Cheers,
>
> David
>

David,

first of all thank you for the answer and the pointing to the explanation.
Now I probably have to ask a CDE expert how to force it to less colors.
With my present settings I can not even allocate 128 colors for my IDL
session without having the color flashing problem. Maybe I have to change
to a 24-bit system. If my boss pays for it?

Harald
hfrey@ssl.berkeley.edu

Subject: Re: Colors again!

Posted by [Martin Schultz](#) on Thu, 24 Jun 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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Harald Frey wrote:

>
> David Fanning wrote:
>
>>
>> I would read the following article (at least) in

> in the flash. If not, I'll just have to stick with running IDL in
> an xterm.

Have you tried Emacs with it's idl-wave mode? That should be fully
configurable.

Axel
