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Subject: graphics window

Posted by [Yang Zhiqiang](#) on Thu, 08 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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---

I have one ignoring problem with IDL graphic window on UNIX. Whenever I point the mouse to the IDL graphic window, all other windows just disappears. How to go around this problem?

thanks,

yang

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Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [davidf](#) on Fri, 09 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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---

Liam Gumley (Liam.Gumley@ssec.wisc.edu) responds to some gentle fun I was poking at him with this:

> I agree that 24 bit color is the way to go if your graphics hardware  
> supports it. It's just that these old 8-bit Unix boxes take forever to  
> die.

And a good thing, too, or some of us wouldn't be able to get any work done answering all the "Device, Decomposed=0" questions we would be getting. :-)

> PS You can try starting Netscape with the flag 'ncols' to reduce the  
> number of colors used, e.g.  
>  
> % netscape -ncols 32 &

Thanks for this. I've updated my article on this subject to include this piece of advice. Netscape is probably the number one reason for color flashing, followed closely by running two IDL sessions on the same machine. But in any case, the problem can be easily handled by knowing more about how (and when) IDL selects its colors:

[http://www.dfanning.com/tips/choosing\\_colors.html](http://www.dfanning.com/tips/choosing_colors.html)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [Liam Gumley](#) on Fri, 09 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT  
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David Fanning wrote:

> Kristine Hensel (hensel@ucar.edu) writes:  
>> This happens to me when I start Netscape before I start IDL. I've  
>> figured out that I have to start Xemacs first if I don't want my Xemacs  
>> cursor to be invisible, then IDL if I don't want my graphics windows to  
>> cause other windows to flash, then my Solaris manual pages if I don't  
>> want them to crash ... now I just try to avoid logging off if things are  
>> working properly.  
>  
> Yikes! Despite Liam's quixotic attempt's to make \*everyone\* use  
> 8-bit display devices, I think the answer is 24-bit color. :-)

I don't believe I'm advocating that \*everyone\* should use 8 bit color.  
The fact is there are Unix boxes out there which have 8 bit graphics  
only, and in many cases there is no way to upgrade them to 24 bit color.  
The color behavior described in this thread is typical of the 8 bit Unix  
consoles we have around here.

The startup file I've posted has overcome this behavior on our in-house  
8 bit Unix displays, as long as color-hungry applications like Netscape  
are not running in the background. In fact I just ran a test on an  
IBM/AIX box down the hall, and even with the startup file, the  
fade-to-black occurs when you click on the IDL graphics window. The  
culprit was that my colleague who uses the IBM box had both Netscape and  
an in-house application (McIDAS) running in the background. Once I  
killed Netscape and McIDAS, there were enough colors for IDL to work  
with (around 140), and using the startup file brought up IDL in a mode  
where there was no color flashing.

I agree that 24 bit color is the way to go if your graphics hardware  
supports it. It's just that these old 8-bit Unix boxes take forever to  
die.

Cheers,  
Liam.

PS You can try starting Netscape with the flag 'ncols' to reduce the  
number of colors used, e.g.

% netscape -ncols 32 &

--

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

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [davidf](#) on Fri, 09 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT  
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---

Kristine Hensel ([hensel@ucar.edu](mailto:hensel@ucar.edu)) writes:

> This happens to me when I start Netscape before I start IDL. I've  
> figured out that I have to start Xemacs first if I don't want my Xemacs  
> cursor to be invisible, then IDL if I don't want my graphics windows to  
> cause other windows to flash, then my Solaris manual pages if I don't  
> want them to crash ... now I just try to avoid logging off if things are  
> working properly.

Yikes! Despite Liam's quixotic attempt's to make \*everyone\* use  
8-bit display devices, I think the answer is 24-bit color. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. Lets' just say I would put some money (if I had any)  
in a company making cheap 24-bit graphics cards.

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.  
Fanning Software Consulting  
Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: [davidf@dfanning.com](mailto:davidf@dfanning.com)  
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>  
Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155

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Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [Kristine Hensel](#) on Fri, 09 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

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> Yang Zhiqiang wrote:  
>  
>> I have one ignoring problem with IDL graphic window on UNIX. Whenever I  
>> point the mouse to the IDL graphic window, all other windows just

>> disappears. How to go around this problem?  
>>

This happens to me when I start Netscape before I start IDL. I've figured out that I have to start Xemacs first if I don't want my Xemacs cursor to be invisible, then IDL if I don't want my graphics windows to cause other windows to flash, then my Solaris manual pages if I don't want them to crash ... now I just try to avoid logging off if things are working properly.

Kristine

--

Kristine Hensel    Phone: (303) 497-1539  
High Altitude Observatory/NCAR   E-mail: hensel@ucar.edu  
P.O. Box 3000   Office: FL2 3070  
Boulder, CO 80307-3000

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [Liam Gumley](#) on Fri, 09 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

Yang Zhiqiang wrote:

> I have one ignoring problem with IDL graphic window on UNIX. Whenever I  
> point the mouse to the IDL graphic window, all other windows just  
> disappears. How to go around this problem?

Try using the startup file shown below (save it as idl\_startup.pro):

```
;---cut here---  
;- Set up 8 bit display and grab colors  
  
if !version.os_family eq 'unix' then device, pseudo = 8  
device, retain = 2, decomposed = 0  
window, /free, /pixmap, colors = -5  
plot, [ 0 ]  
wdelete, !d.window  
print, 'Color table size is ', !d.table_size  
  
;- Set graphics and widget font sizes  
  
device, set_character_size = [ 6, 9 ]  
widget_control, default_font = '7x13'  
  
;- ensure IDL 5.0 XMANAGER behavior is consistent with IDL 4.0  
  
xmanager, catch = 0
```

;---cut here---

Then use the system variable IDL\_STARTUP to point to the full path and name of the startup file e.g.

```
setenv IDL_STARTUP $HOME/idl_startup.pro (C shell)
export IDL_STARTUP=$HOME/idl_startup.pro (Korn shell)
```

This code will be executed every time you start a new IDL session, and it should give you a consistent well-behaved 8 bit IDL display on all Unix platforms (as long as your Unix desktop is set to 8 bit or 24 bit mode: if you use a 16 bit or 32 bit desktop, all bets are off).

Cheers,

Liam.

PS: Let me know if this does not work.

--

Liam E. Gumley

Space Science and Engineering Center, UW-Madison

<http://cimss.ssec.wisc.edu/~gumley>

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [Grady Daub](#) on Fri, 09 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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I've often found that to happen when running more than one IDL session at a time. Something, maybe, to do with the way the colors work. It will also happen when you screw with the amount of colors in the graphics window. If you open a window with just

WINDOW

things are fine. But, if you do something ambitious :-) and use

WINDOW, COLORS= ###

(where ### is a number)

you can run into the disappearing everything else problem.

The other windows aren't really disappearing, only changing colors in response to the new palette. Either that, or your graphics window is full-screen. In which case, click the middle mouse button on the border and send it to the back.

This explanation isn't too indepth, only an account and a theory. :-/

-Grady Daub

(Remove MMER and ZOOKS to reply by e-mail.)

Yang Zhiqiang wrote:

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> point the mouse to the IDL graphic window, all other windows just  
> disappears. How to go around this problem?  
>  
> thanks,  
>  
> yang

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [davidf](#) on Sat, 10 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT

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---

bkrrrrr (beaker@llama.pilz.cack) writes:

> Some of our "old" 8-bit unix boxes are only  
> a couple of years old. Mine's an Ultra 1. :)  
> It still has 7+ years of life left in it.

Sorry to hear it. :-(

> Also, laptops are typically limited to 16-bit  
> at 1024x768.

Not the new Dells. I'm not ashamed to use my  
6 month old Inspiron as a desktop machine. It  
has 24-bit color at 1024 by 768 resolution.

Cheers,

David

P.S. Let's just say the amount of software that will  
NOT run on 8-bit machines is increasing almost as fast  
as we can write it. Our clients all use 24-bit  
machines exclusively. But, then, we have VERY  
exclusive clients. :-)

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [bkrrrr](#) on Sat, 10 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT  
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---

Liam Gumley wrote:

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> die.

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a couple of years old. Mine's an Ultra 1. :)  
It still has 7+ years of life left in it.  
Also, laptops are typically limited to 16-bit  
at 1024x768.

bkr

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [J.D. Smith](#) on Fri, 16 Jul 1999 07:00:00 GMT  
[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

---

David Fanning wrote:

>  
> Liam Gumley (Liam.Gumley@ssec.wisc.edu) responds to  
> some gentle fun I was poking at him with this:  
>  
>> I agree that 24 bit color is the way to go if your graphics hardware  
>> supports it. It's just that these old 8-bit Unix boxes take forever to  
>> die.  
>  
> And a good thing, too, or some of us wouldn't be able  
> to get any work done answering all the "Device, Decomposed=0"  
> questions we would be getting. :-)  
>  
>> PS You can try starting Netscape with the flag 'ncols' to reduce the  
>> number of colors used, e.g.  
>>  
>> % netscape -ncols 32 &  
>

> Thanks for this. I've updated my article on this subject to  
> include this piece of advice. Netscape is probably the  
> number one reason for color flashing, followed closely  
> by running two IDL sessions on the same machine. But in  
> any case, the problem can be easily handled by knowing  
> more about how (and when) IDL selects its colors:  
>  
> [http://www.dfanning.com/tips/choosing\\_colors.html](http://www.dfanning.com/tips/choosing_colors.html)

Another option which is use is:

netscape -install

which installs a private colormap for netscape with the full 256 colors. Web pages look good, and idl is happy to run a the same time. The only drawback is colormap flashing when in netscape, but I just put it on it's own virtual desktop and fill the screen with it, so it's not too big of a nuisance.

JD

--

J.D. Smith                   |\*|    WORK: (607) 255-5842  
Cornell University Dept. of Astronomy |\*|    (607) 255-6263  
304 Space Sciences Bldg.       |\*|    FAX: (607) 255-5875  
Ithaca, NY 14853            |\*|

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 15:08:21 GMT  
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Daniel Larson writes:

> OK, i'm a long time user of IDL (10+ years), so I can't believe I'm  
> going to ask this question. How do I get the darn graphics window to  
> stay on top in IDL 8.1 on Windows 7? The preferences are set  
> correctly, I tried changing the backing store, the window size... Has  
> anyone else had this problem?

Are you kidding!? All I do anymore is complain about the damn WSHOW command and why it's broken. The usual response from technical support is "Huh, what's the WSHOW command?"

If fact, I have discovered that this is a deep conspiracy at ITTVIS to completely eliminate direct graphics. No doubt due the the increasing



popularity of Coyote Graphics. :-)

I have IDL running on the right monitor and graphics windows appearing on the left monitor. I have discovered in IDL 8.1 that if I have a direct graphics window and a function graphics window that I can NEVER put a direct graphics window in front of a function graphics window!

You talk about something that annoys the living hell out of me...

Cheers,

David

P.S. Have I mentioned lately how much I love IDL 8.1? :-)

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 16:12:21 GMT

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---

David Fanning writes:

>

> Daniel Larson writes:

>

>> OK, i'm a long time user of IDL (10+ years), so I can't believe I'm  
>> going to ask this question. How do I get the darn graphics window to  
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> Are you kidding!? All I do anymore is complain about  
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> direct graphics. No doubt due the the increasing  
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> I have IDL running on the right monitor and graphics  
> windows appearing on the left monitor. I have discovered  
> in IDL 8.1 that if I have a direct graphics window and  
> a function graphics window that I can NEVER put a  
> direct graphics window in front of a function graphics  
> window!  
>  
> You talk about something that annoys the living  
> hell out of me...

I just moved my IDL 8.1 installation over to my left monitor, where the graphics windows appear, just to see what would happen.

I made a Coyote Graphics window:

```
IDL> cgHistoplot, cgDemoData(7), /Window
```

This window appears on top of my Workbench and disappears when I click in the Workbench to edit a file. I can put it back on top with cgShow:

```
IDL> cgShow
```

While that window is on the display, I made a function graphics window:

```
IDL> p = Plot( cgDemoData(1) )
```

That window also immediately appears on top of the Workbench. However, when I click in the editor to edit the file, the damn window won't go away! It stubbornly persists in staying directly in front of the area of the Workbench I want to type in!

To get rid of it, I click the "Minify" button.

Now, if I type WShow I get a Window Out Of Range error. If I type cgShow, by Histogram plot comes to the front. If I go to the taskbar and Maximize by function graphics window, it pops up in front of my Histogram window.

Now if I type cgShow, my Histogram window pops forward of the Workbench, but behind the persistently annoying function graphics window. I can bring the Histogram window forward of the function graphics window if I click on it,

but I have to reach for the mouse, obviously, to do that.

Sigh....

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 16:38:40 GMT

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---

David Fanning writes:

- > That window also immediately appears on top of the Workbench.
- > However, when I click in the editor to edit the file, the
- > damn window won't go away! It stubbornly persists in staying
- > directly in front of the area of the Workbench I want to type in!

I found a button in the IDL graphics preferences that was set. The button was "Graphics windows stay on top". This button was set in my Workbench.

With the button not selected, the function graphics window appears in front of the Workbench when it is created, but then disappears seemingly forever when I click in the Workbench to type something. Nothing I can find to do in the Workbench brings it forward.

I can find it again by either clicking on my IDL icon in the taskbar at the bottom of my page, finding the window I want, and clicking on it. Or, I can find it by cycling through the 10-20 open windows I have on my computer at any one time with Alt-Tab. It disappears again when I do anything in the Workbench.

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.  
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>  
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

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Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 16:49:45 GMT  
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---

David Fanning writes:

>> That window also immediately appears on top of the Workbench.  
>> However, when I click in the editor to edit the file, the  
>> damn window won't go away! It stubbornly persists in staying  
>> directly in front of the area of the Workbench I want to type in!

If I move my Workbench back to my right monitor, and set the "Graphics window stays on top" preference button, then whenever I type in the Workbench in my right monitor, the function graphics window pops forward on my left monitor. This is great, except that I normally keep my e-mail and newsgroup reader on my left monitor. If I want to read the newsgroup, for example, and I pull that application forward, the graphics window stays on top of that!

Basically, those function graphics windows are either constantly getting in the way, or completely gone when you need them. No wonder I find myself exasperated most of the day. They act exactly like my children!! :-(

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.  
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
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Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [Daniel Larson](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 17:05:56 GMT

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---

On May 25, 12:49 pm, David Fanning <n...@idlcoyote.com> wrote:

> David Fanning writes:

>>> That window also immediately appears on top of the Workbench.

>>> However, when I click in the editor to edit the file, the

>>> damn window won't go away! It stubbornly persists in staying

>>> directly in front of the area of the Workbench I want to type in!

>

> If I move my Workbench back to my right monitor, and set

> the "Graphics window stays on top" preference button, then

> whenever I type in the Workbench in my right monitor, the

> function graphics window pops forward on my left monitor.

> This is great, except that I normally keep my e-mail and

> newsgroup reader on my left monitor. If I want to read the

> newsgroup, for example, and I pull that application forward,

> the graphics window stays on top of that!

>

> Basically, those function graphics windows are either

> constantly getting in the way, or completely gone when

> you need them. No wonder I find myself exasperated most

> of the day. They act exactly like my children!! :-(

>

> Cheers,

>

> David

>

> --

> David Fanning, Ph.D.

> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

> Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Well, at least I know I'm not crazy. The take-away message: buy another monitor.

What then, do you suppose, is the function of the preference selection "graphic window stays on top"?

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 17:33:43 GMT

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Daniel Larson writes:

> What then, do you suppose, is the function of the preference selection

> "graphic window stays on top"?

Well, I've always assumed it was put in there specifically to annoy me, but then I am prone to conspiracy theories. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. I feel the same way about "conspirator" who empties the dishwasher occasionally (VERY occasionally!) and puts the dishes in God only knows what strange places! My wife tells me I am paranoid. :-(

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 17:46:15 GMT

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---

Daniel Larson writes:

> What then, do you suppose, is the function of the preference selection  
> "graphic window stays on top"?

Here is another theory. This is ITTVIS's way of telling us we \*really\* want to be using Coyote Graphics routines, where we get both IDL 8 functionality AND programs that work the way we expect them to. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. Some days I see the whole ITTVIS development effort as a conspiracy to put money in my pocket, but it's probably just me seeing it that way. :-)

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>  
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 17:52:38 GMT  
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---

David Fanning writes:

> P.S. Some days I see the whole ITTVIS development  
> effort as a conspiracy to put money in my pocket,  
> but it's probably just me seeing it that way. :-)

But even this gravy train may be drying up. Have  
you see the latest post over on AstroBetter? When  
the astros leave, there won't be many of us left.

If I were a young guy, I know which computer language  
I would be learning. :-(

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.  
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>  
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [Matt\[2\]](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 18:01:52 GMT  
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---

On May 25, 11:52 am, David Fanning <n...@idlcoyote.com> wrote  
> David

Wow, that's a lot of posts to try to follow up on. But how about  
this:

idlwave.org

You'll thank me later.

Cheers,

Matt

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 18:18:59 GMT

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---

Matt writes:

> Wow, that's a lot of posts to try to follow up on. But how about  
> this:  
>  
> idlwave.org  
>  
> You'll thank me later.

I tried that. It's worse than trying to learn Amharic (for  
an upcoming trip to Ethiopia) when you are approaching 60. :-(

Cheers,

David

P.S. Let's just say concentrating so much attention on your  
stroke to the exclusion of all other input may be helpful  
in tennis, but it makes it decidedly harder to think when  
you are writing programs. :-(

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 25 May 2011 18:32:32 GMT

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Matt writes:

> Wow, that's a lot of posts to try to follow up on. But how about  
> this:



>  
> idlwave.org  
>  
> You'll thank me later.

Not too long ago the boys were gone and the wife  
and I decided to have a nice, romantic "date".  
We got a DVD movie, I made some pop-corn, she poured  
a couple of glasses of wine, etc.

We went downstairs to watch the movie and the boys  
had everything so torn up for playing XBox or some  
damn thing on the TV that we couldn't even figure  
out how to play the movie!

You thing somebody like that is going to learn EMACS!?  
Think again. :-)

Cheers,

David

P.S. I don't recommend placing a laptop on your lap for a  
wild, romantic evening, either. :-(

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.  
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>  
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [cgguido](#) on Fri, 27 May 2011 15:15:31 GMT  
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---

On Wednesday, May 25, 2011 1:32:32 PM UTC-5, David Fanning wrote:

>  
> P.S. I don't recommend placing a laptop on your lap for a  
> wild, romantic evening, either. :-(

Hahahaha. Doh!

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 27 May 2011 15:31:17 GMT  
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---

Gianguido Cianci writes:

>> P.S. I don't recommend placing a laptop on your lap for a  
>> wild, romantic evening, either. :-(  
>  
>  
> Hahahaha. Doh!

Thank goodness! Sometimes I feel like Coyote is the  
only one with a sense of humor around here. ;^)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.  
Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>  
Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

---

---

Subject: Re: graphics window  
Posted by [peterkamatej](#) on Sun, 08 Sep 2013 16:26:01 GMT  
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---

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>  
>> That window also immediately appears on top of the Workbench.  
>> However, when I click in the editor to edit the file, the  
>> damn window won't go away! It stubbornly persists in staying  
>> directly in front of the area of the Workbench I want to type in!  
>  
> I found a button in the IDL graphics preferences that  
> was set. The button was "Graphics windows stay on top".  
> This button was set in my Workbench.  
>  
> With the button not selected, the function graphics  
> window appears in front of the Workbench when it is  
> created, but then disappears seemingly forever when  
> I click in the Workbench to type something. Nothing  
> I can find to do in the Workbench brings it forward.  
>

> I can find it again by either clicking on my IDL  
> icon in the taskbar at the bottom of my page,  
> finding the window I want, and clicking on it. Or,  
> I can find it by cycling through the 10-20 open  
> windows I have on my computer at any one time with  
> Alt-Tab. It disappears again when I do anything  
> in the Workbench.  
>  
> Cheers,  
>  
> David  
>  
>  
>  
> --  
> David Fanning, Ph.D.  
> Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.  
> Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.idlcoyote.com/>  
> Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")

Dear David,

I see this is quite an old discussion but just for the case this question is still unanswered..

You can get the Object Graphics window back to front very simply, there is a method "Show" of the Window object. Try this:

```
IDL> MyWindow = window(window_title='Hello World!')
```

When you click on the workbench, the window disappears into background.

```
IDL> MyWindow.show
```

You have the window back.

Slightly more complicated it is with the Plot object, which does not have a "show" method. However, it has a "window" property, which retrieves a reference to the parent Window object. Therefore, you can get a Plot into foreground by this

```
IDL> MyGraphics = plot(hanning(100))  
IDL> MyGraphics.window.show
```

Cheers,

Matej

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