

Igor opens global procedure files with write-protection on since they presumably contain procedures that you have already debugged and which you don't want to inadvertently modify. If you *do* want to modify a global procedure file, click the write-protect icon (pencil in lower-left corner of the window). You can turn this default write-protection off via the Text Encoding section of the Miscellaneous Settings dialog.

When you create a new experiment or open an existing one, Igor normally closes any open procedure files, but it leaves global procedure files open. You can explicitly close a global procedure window at any time and then you can manually reopen it. Igor will not automatically reopen it until the next time Igor is launched.

Although its procedures can be used by the current experiment, a global procedure file is not part of the current experiment. Therefore, Igor does not save a global procedure file or a reference to a global procedure file inside an experiment file.

Note: There is a risk in using global procedure files. If you copy an experiment that relies on a global procedure file to another computer and forget to also copy the global procedure file, the experiment will not work on the other computer.

Saving Global Procedure Files

If you modify a global procedure file, Igor will save it when you save the current experiment even though the global procedure file is not part of the current experiment. However, you might want to save the procedure file without saving the experiment. For this, use the File→Save Procedure menu item.

Shared Procedure Files

You may develop procedures that you want to use in several but not all of your experiments. You can facilitate this by creating a shared procedure file. This is a procedure file that you save in its own file, separate from any experiment. Such a file can be opened from any experiment.

There are two ways to open a shared procedure file from an experiment:

- By explicitly opening it, using the File→Open File submenu or by double-clicking it or by drag-and-drop
- By adding an include statement to your experiment procedure window

The include method is preferred and is described in detail under **Including a Procedure File** on page III-401.

When Igor encounters an include statement, it searches for the included file in "Igor Pro Folder/User Procedures" and in "Igor Pro User Files/User Procedures" (see **Igor Pro User Files** on page II-31 for details). The Igor Pro User Files folder is the recommended place for storing user files. You can locate it by choosing Help→Show Igor Pro User Files.

You can store your shared procedure file directly in "Igor Pro User Files/User Procedures" or you can store it elsewhere and put an alias (*Macintosh*) or shortcut (*Windows*) for it in "Igor Pro User Files/User Procedures". If you have many shared procedure files you can put them all in your own folder and put an alias/shortcut for the folder in "Igor Pro User Files/User Procedures".

When you explicitly open a procedure file using the Open File submenu, by double-clicking it, or by drag-and-drop, you are adding it to the current experiment. When you save the experiment, Igor saves a *reference* to the procedure file in the experiment file. When you close the experiment, Igor closes the procedure file. When you later reopen the experiment, Igor reopens the procedure file.

When you use an include statement, the included file is not considered part of the experiment but is still referenced by the experiment. Igor automatically opens the included file when it hits the include statement during procedure compilation.

Note: There is a risk in sharing procedure files among experiments. If you copy the experiment to another computer and forget to also copy the shared files, the experiment will not work on the other computer. See **References to Files and Folders** on page II-24 for more explanation.