

Chapter II-3 — Experiments, Files and Folders

that copies will diverge, creating confusion about which is the “real” data or object. One way to avoid this problem is to discard the merged experiment after it has served its purpose.

The second problem has to do with Igor’s use of names to reference all kinds of data, procedures and other objects. When you merge experiment B into experiment A, there is a possibility of name conflicts.

Igor prevents name conflicts for data (waves, numeric variables, string variables) by creating a new data folder to contain the data from experiment B. The new data folder is created inside the current data folder of the current experiment (experiment A in this case).

For other globally named objects, including graphs, tables, page layouts, control panels, notebooks, Gizmo plots, symbolic paths, page setups and pictures, Igor renames objects from experiment B if necessary to avoid a name conflict.

During the merge experiment operation, Igor looks for conflicts between target windows, between window recreation macros and between a target window and a recreation macro. If any such conflict is found, the window or window macro from experiment B is renamed.

Because page layouts reference graphs, tables, Gizmo plots, and pictures by name, renaming any of these objects may affect a page layout. The merge experiment operation handles this problem for page layouts that are open in experiment B. It does not handle the problem for page layout recreation macros in experiment B that have no corresponding open window.

If there are name conflicts in procedures other than window recreation macros, Igor will flag an error when it compiles procedures after finishing the merge experiment operation. You will have to manually resolve the name conflict by removing or renaming conflicting procedures.

Procedure windows have titles but do not have standard Igor names. The merge experiment operation makes no attempt to retitle procedure windows that have the same title.

The contents of the main procedure window from experiment B are appended to the contents of the main procedure window for experiment A.

During a normal experiment open operation, Igor executes experiment initialization commands. This is not done during an experiment merge.

Each experiment contains a default font setting that affects graphs and page layouts. When you do an experiment merge, the default font setting from experiment B is ignored, leaving the default font setting for experiment A intact. This may affect the appearance of graphs and layouts in experiment B.

The history from experiment B is not merged into experiment A. Instead, a message about the experiment merge process is added to the history area.

The system variables (K0...K19) from experiment B are ignored and not merged into experiment A.

Although the merge experiment operation handles the most common name conflict problems, there are a number problems that it can not handle. For example, a procedure, dependency formula or a control from experiment B that references data using a full path may not work as expected because the data from experiment B is loaded into a new data folder during the merge. Another example is a procedure that references a window, symbolic path or picture that is renamed by the merge operation because of a name conflict. There are undoubtedly many other situations where name conflicts could cause unexpected behavior.

Reverting an Experiment

If you choose Revert Experiment from the File menu, Igor asks if you’re sure that you want to discard changes to the current experiment. If you answer Yes, Igor reloads the current experiment from disk, restoring it to the state it was in when you last saved it.