

That line contains a code marker comment.

The format of a code marker comment is:

```
// *** <code marker text> ***
```

The code marker text, which appears in the code marker popup menu, is everything after "`// ***`" and before "`***`".

The code marker comment must be flush left with no spaces, tabs, or any other text before "`// ***`".

You can insert a code marker comment manually or by clicking the code markers popup menu and choosing "Insert Code Marker Comment". You can not insert a code marker comment if the procedure window is write protected or is open for read only.

Aligning Comments

You can align comments introduced by "`//`" in a procedure window by selecting text and choosing **Edit**→**Align Comments**. This aligns subsequent comments with the first comment in the selected text. This feature is available for procedure windows only, not for notebooks.

Aligning comments requires that the procedure window use the spaces mode of defining default tabs. To ensure this, when you choose **Edit**→**Align Comments**, Igor adds a `DefaultTab` pragma to the procedure window if it is not already there. See **The Default Tab Pragma For Procedure Files** on page III-406 for details about this pragma. The `DefaultTab` pragma is ignored by versions of Igor prior to 9.00 so comments that you align using this technique will not appear aligned in earlier versions.

Aligning comments also requires that the procedure window use a monospace font. It is up to you to make sure that this is the case. The factory default fonts for procedure windows, Monaco on Macintosh and Lucida Console on Windows, are monospace fonts.

When you choose **Edit**→**Align Comments**, Igor finds the first selected line containing a comment (introduced by "`//`"). It then works on each subsequent selected line and attempts to align comments by inserting or removing tabs. During this process, Igor removes spaces that appear between the end of the line's active code and the comment.

Comments that are flush left are left unchanged as they typically appear above function definitions and are already positioned as desired.

By default, other pure comment lines (lines with nothing before the comment symbol except for spaces and tabs) are also left unchanged unless:

- The section consists entirely of pure comment lines
- You press the Option key (*Macintosh*) or Alt key (*Windows*) while choosing **Edit**→**Align Comments** to override the default behavior

In some cases, exact alignment is not possible. For example, if the active code of the second selected line extends past the comment in the first selected line, removing all tabs from the second selected line does not achieve alignment. In such cases, Igor does the best it can.

Procedure File Text Encodings

Igor uses UTF-8, a form of Unicode, internally. Prior to Igor7, Igor used non-Unicode text encodings such as MacRoman, Windows-1252 and Shift JIS.

All new procedure files should use UTF-8 text encoding. When you create a new procedure file using **Windows**→**New**→**Procedure**, Igor automatically uses UTF-8.

Chapter III-13 — Procedure Windows

Igor must convert from the old text encodings to Unicode when opening old files. It is not always possible to get this conversion right. You may get incorrect characters or receive errors when opening files containing non-ASCII text.

For a discussion of these issues, see [Text Encodings](#) on page III-459 and [Plain Text File Text Encodings](#) on page III-466.