All new notebook files should use UTF-8 text encoding. When you create a new notebook using Windows→New→Notebook, Igor automatically uses UTF-8. Also, the NewNotebook operation defaults to UTF-8.

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, **Plain Text File Text Encodings** on page III-466, and **Formatted Text Notebook File Text Encodings** on page III-472.

Creating a New Notebook File

To create a new notebook, choose Windows→New→Notebook. This displays the New Notebook dialog.

The New Notebook dialog creates a new notebook *window*. The notebook *file* is not created until you save the notebook window or save the experiment.

Normally you should store a notebook as part of the Igor experiment in which you use it. This happens automatically when you save the current experiment unless you do an explicit Save Notebook As before saving the experiment. Save Notebook As stores a notebook separate from the experiment. This is appropriate if you plan to use the notebook in multiple experiments.

Note: There is a risk in sharing notebook 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.

If you do create a shared notebook file then you are responsible for copying the shared file when you copy an experiment that relies on it.

Opening an Existing File as a Notebook

You can create a notebook window by opening an existing file. This might be a notebook that you created in another Igor experiment or a plain text file created in another program. To do this, choose File→Open File→Notebook.

Opening a File for Momentary Use

You might want to open a text file momentarily to examine or edit it. For example, you might read a Read Me file or edit a data file before importing data. In this case, you would open the file as a notebook, do your reading or editing and then kill the notebook. Thus the file would not remain connected to the current experiment.

Sharing a Notebook File Among Experiments

On the other hand, you might want to share a notebook among multiple experiments. For example, you might have one notebook in which you keep a running log of all of your observations. In this case, you could save the experiment with the notebook open. Igor would then save a reference to the shared notebook file in the experiment file. When you later open the experiment, Igor would reopen the notebook file.

As noted above, there is a risk in sharing notebook files among experiments. You might want to "adopt" the opened notebook. See **References to Files and Folders** on page II-24 for more explanation.

Saving All Standalone Notebook Files

When a notebook window is active, you can save all modified standalone notebook files at once by choosing File→Save All Standalone Notebook Files. This saves only standalone notebook files. It does not save packed notebook files, or notebook windows that were just created and never saved to disk; these are saved when you save the experiment.