

AD Model Builder IDE

Emacs `admb-mode` without the Emacs
Version 11.6 (2017-08-30)

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This is the manual for AD Model Builder IDE (ADMB-IDE) version 11.6.
The latest edition of the manual is available at:
<http://admb-project.org/tools/admb-ide/>

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To cite ADMB-IDE, use the newsletter article (see [References], page 21) as a fixed reference.

AD Model Builder IDE is an aggregate of the following software components:

- AD Model Builder 11.6 is released under the BSD License.
Source code: <https://github.com/admb-project/admb>
- GNU Emacs 25.2.1 is released under the GPL.
Source code: <http://ftp.gnu.org/gnu/emacs/>
- ADMB Mode 11.6 for Emacs is released under the Simplified BSD License.
Source code: <https://github.com/admb-project/admb/blob/master/contrib/emacs>
- AUCTEX 11.91 is released under the GPL.
Source code: <http://ftp.gnu.org/gnu/auctex/>
- Emacs Speaks Statistics (ESS) 16.10-1 is released under the GPL.
Source code: <http://ess.r-project.org/downloads/ess/>
- TMB Mode 3.2 for Emacs is released under the GPL.
Source code: <https://github.com/kaskr/adcomp/blob/master/emacs>
- ADMB-IDE .emacs 11.6 is released under the Simplified BSD License.
Source code: <https://github.com/admb-project/admb/blob/master/contrib/ide/dot>
- GCC 4.9.3 is released under the GPL.
Source code: <http://ftp.gnu.org/gnu/gcc/>
- GDB 7.3.50 is released under the GPL.
Source code: <http://ftp.gnu.org/gnu/gdb/>

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1 Preamble

The purpose of ADMB-IDE is to make the convenient features of Emacs `admb-mode` available to non-Emacs users. In other words, to disable the standard Emacs behavior.

Experienced Emacs users may prefer to ignore the ADMB-IDE `.emacs` file, and simply install and load `admb.el` like other Emacs packages. It is a standard “major mode” that follows all Emacs mode conventions.

2 Introduction

2.1 Emacs admb-mode

The process of creating statistical models with AD Model Builder (ADMB) involves writing, compiling, and testing. An integrated development environment (IDE) allows the user to perform these tasks more efficiently than with a basic editor and a shell.

GNU Emacs is a complex and powerful editor that comes with particularly good support for C++, R, \LaTeX , backup/revision control, and other useful tools for statistical computing. Its `admb-mode` provides syntax highlighting, compilation, file manipulation, outline code navigation, templates, and smaller tools for creating ADMB models. Emacs users can fetch `admb-mode` from <https://github.com/admb-project/admb/blob/master/contrib/emacs/admb.el> and start using it right away, after reading the commentary at the top of the file.

The problem with Emacs is that it requires considerable time to learn and configure, although for advanced statistical computing this can be a rewarding investment. As the programmer Larry Wall once said: “If ease of use was the highest goal, we’d all be driving golf carts.” The <http://admb-project.org/tools/editors/emacs/> page contains some pointers for setting up and learning Emacs. There are, however, good reasons why many users may not feel like adopting Emacs as their main editor, but would still appreciate a simple IDE for ADMB.

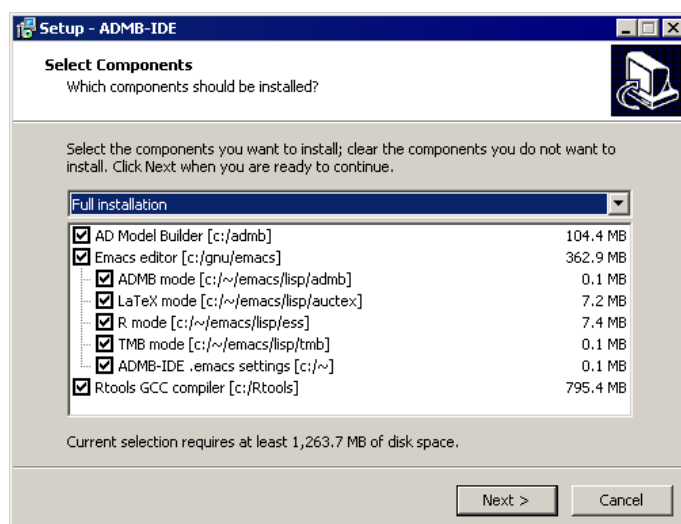
The rest of this tutorial demonstrates how Emacs with `admb-mode` can be configured as a user-friendly ADMB-IDE, without learning the details of Emacs. This is achieved with an unusual `.emacs` configuration file that emulates common keybindings of basic editors, while disabling some of the most used Emacs keybindings. This `.emacs` file is therefore not intended for experienced Emacs users, although they may find it an interesting read.

2.2 ADMB-IDE for Windows

There are two ways to install ADMB-IDE for Windows: use an installer or set up the individual components by hand.

Installer

The `admb-ide-116-win64.exe` installer sets up the main components (ADMB, Emacs, Rtools) with a customized Emacs user interface, file associations, and environment variables to glue everything together. The only catch is that the user must accept the default directory structure, and select whether Rtools is already installed on the machine:



The ADMB-IDE components are arranged in four main directories:

<code>c:/~</code>	Settings and Emacs modes
<code>c:/admb</code>	ADMB
<code>c:/gnu/emacs</code>	Emacs
<code>c:/Rtools</code>	GCC and GDB

It can be problematic to have more than one version of GCC installed on a Windows machine, especially if multiple versions of GCC are active in the `PATH`. Many Windows users already have Rtools installed, so the idea behind having ADMB-IDE use the GCC compiler from Rtools is to reduce the likelihood of GCC version conflicts.

The directory structure above can be practical for setting up and configuring other free software, such as R. By separating the main program (`c:/gnu/r`) from the user settings (`c:/~/.Rprofile`, `c:/~/Rconsole`) and user libraries (`c:/~/r/library`), the main program can be removed and upgraded without affecting the user setup.

One thing to keep in mind is that the installer modifies the user `PATH` and file associations. In rare cases, users may need to reconfigure these according to taste and needs after installing ADMB-IDE. Advanced users may choose to deselect these options during the installation.

Manual setup

Users can also set up and configure the individual components by hand, starting from the `admb-ide-116-win64.zip` kit. The following guidelines may be useful for that:

```
http://admb-project.org/docs/  
http://admb-project.org/tools/editors/emacs/install  
http://admb-project.org/tools/editors/emacs/configure  
https://cran.r-project.org/bin/windows/Rtools/
```

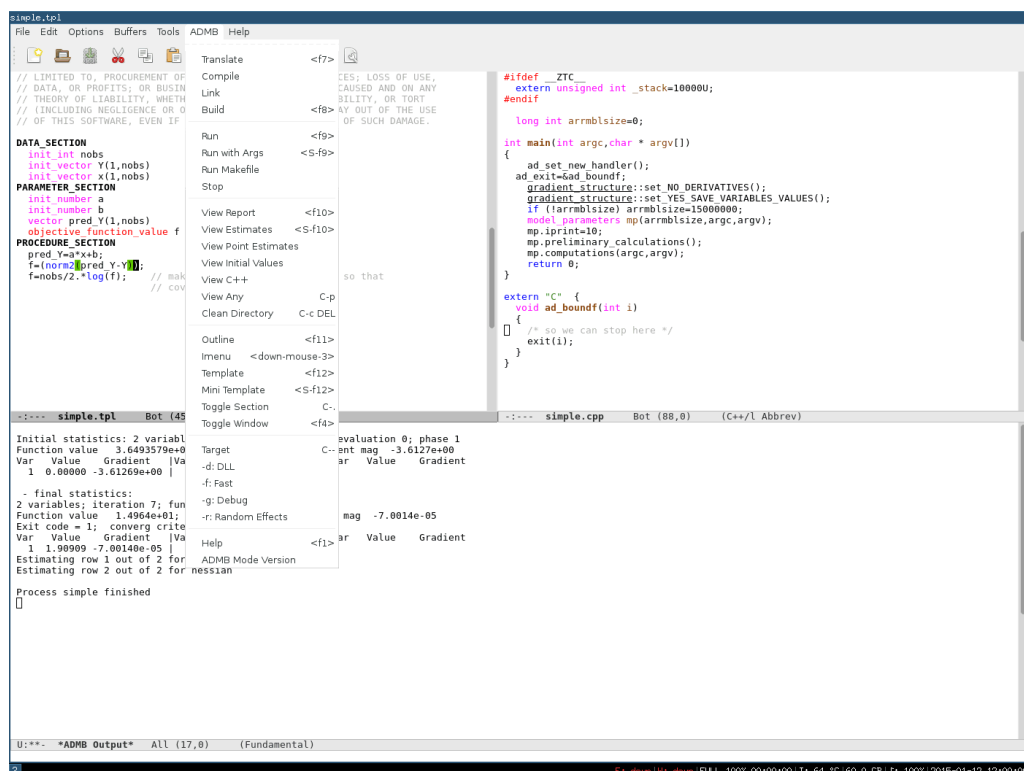
See also the chapters on [ADMB-IDE for Linux/Mac OS], page 4 and [Troubleshooting], page 19 in this manual.

2.3 ADMB-IDE for Linux/Mac OS

Setting up ADMB-IDE for Linux or Mac OS is equivalent to the “manual setup” described above, so the same guidelines apply. The key steps are:

1. Install ADMB, Emacs, GCC (including the C++ component), and GDB.
2. Download the ADMB-IDE `.emacs` configuration file and place it in `~/.``emacs` to apply the simplified Emacs user interface.
3. Download ADMB Mode `admb.el` and place it in `~/emacs/lisp/admb/admb.el` to provide syntax highlighting and IDE features.

The tutorial in the next chapter uses Windows, but ADMB-IDE is very similar in Linux:



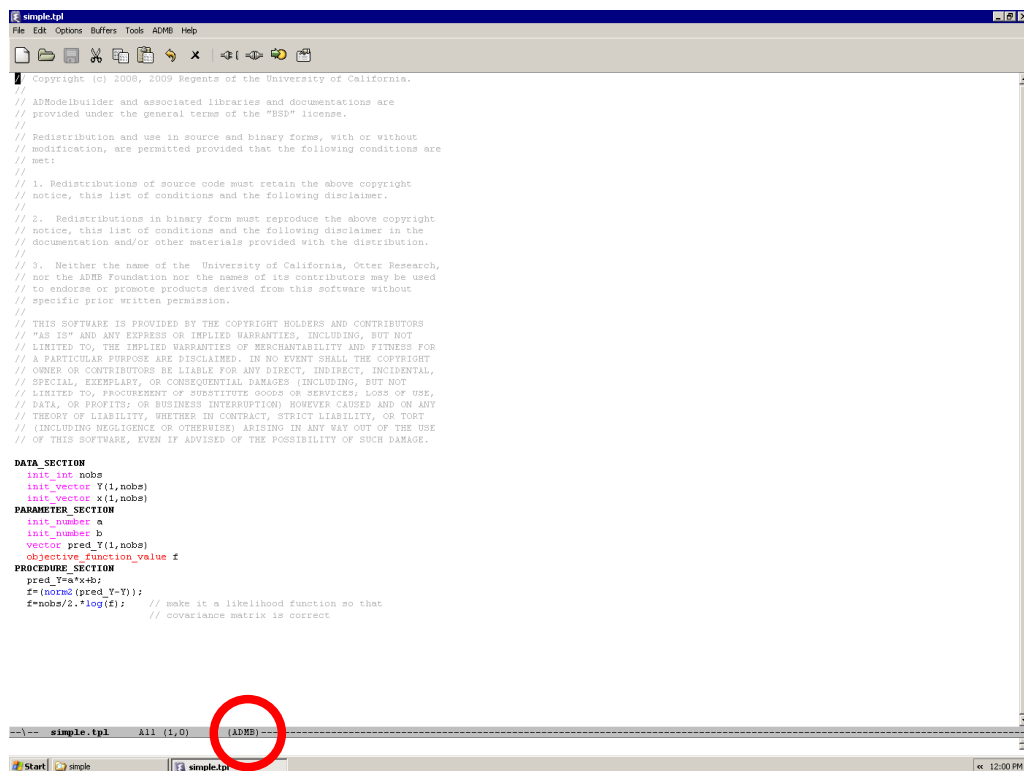
3 Tutorial

3.1 Create a working copy of simple

First open Windows Explorer and create a folder called `c:/simple`. Then navigate to `c:/admb/admb116-gcc493-win64/examples/admb/simple` and copy the model and data files, creating:

```
c:/simple/simple.dat
c:/simple/simple.tpl
```

Now double-click `simple.tpl` in the `c:/simple` folder. The file should open in Emacs in `admb-mode` (see red circle) and the code should be in color:



```

simple.tpl
File Edit Options Buffers Tools ADMB Help

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DATA_SECTION
  init_int nobe
  init_vector Y(1,nobe)
  init_vector x(1,nobe)

PARAMETER_SECTION
  init_number a
  init_number b
  vector pred_Y(1,nobe)
  objective_function_value f

PROCEDURE_SECTION
  pred_Y=a*x+b;
  f=(nobs*(pred_Y-Y));
  f=nobs/2.*log(f); // make it a likelihood function so that
                  // covariance matrix is correct

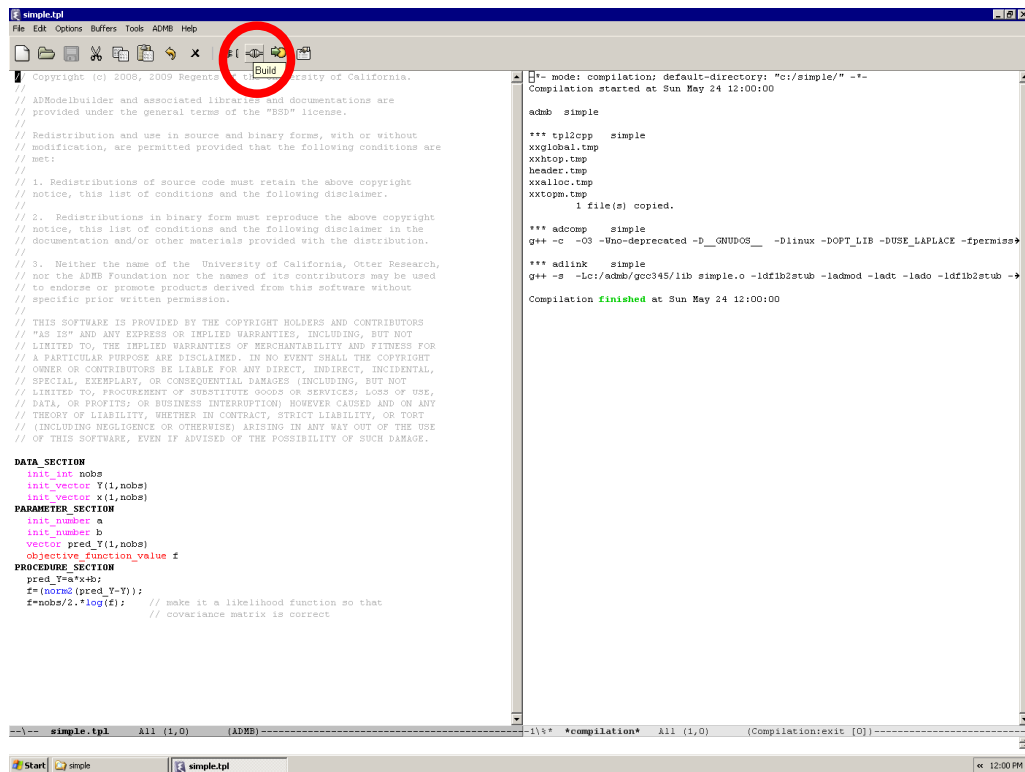
```

simple.tpl All (1,0) (ADMB)

Start simple simple.tpl 12:00 PM

3.2 Build, run, and view the results

Build the model by clicking the  icon, or press f8:



Run the model by clicking the  icon, or press f9:

```

simple.tpl
File Edit Options Buffers Tools ADMB Help

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DATA_SECTION
init_ind nobis
init_vector Y(1,nobs)
init_vector x(1,nobs)


PARAMETER_SECTION
init_number a
init_number b
vector pred_Y(1,nobs)
objective_function_value f

PROCEDURE_SECTION
pred_Y=a*x+b;
f=(nobs*(pred_Y-Y));
f=nobs/2.*log(f); // make it a likelihood function so that
// covariance matrix is correct

Initial statistics: 2 variables; iteration 0; function evaluation 0
Function value 3.6495579e+001; maximum gradient component mag -3.6127e+000
Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient
1 0.00000 -3.61269e+000 | 2 0.00000 -7.27814e-001 |



- final statistics:
2 variables; iteration 7; function evaluation 19
Function value 1.4964e+001; maximum gradient component mag -7.0014e-005
Exit code = 1; converg crit= 1.0000e-004
Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient
1 1.90909 -7.00140e-005 | 2 4.07818 -2.08982e-005 |
Estimating row 1 out of 2 for hessian
Estimating row 2 out of 2 for hessian

```

Many ADMB models output their results to a `.rep` report file, and ADMB-IDE provides the  icon and `f10` key to open the report file. The `simple` model outputs no report file, but the parameter estimates, standard errors, and correlations are found in the `.cor` file.

This is an opportunity to introduce basic buffer and window management. In Emacs, a buffer is like a page, often representing a file, but sometimes other things, like the compilation and command output buffers in the previous two screenshots. The Emacs screen is divided into one or more windows, where each window shows one buffer, while other buffers reside in the background. Explore the *Buffers* menu, as well as [\[Shortcut keys\]](#), [page 16](#).

Try out different ways to open the `.cor` file:

1. Press `escape` to maximize the active window. Then click the  icon or press `C-o` (`Ctrl` and `o`) and select `c:/simple/simple.cor`.
2. Press `escape` to maximize the active window, `C-x 3` to split into two windows, and select the window on the right with a mouse click or `f6`. Click the  icon or press `C-o` and select `c:/simple/simple.cor`.
3. Click the *ADMB* → *View Estimates* menu entry or press `S-f10`.
4. Click the *ADMB* → *View Any* menu entry or press `C-p`, then type `'cor'` and `return`.

The screenshot shows a window titled 'simple.cor' with a menu bar (File, Edit, Options, Buffers, Tools, Help) and a toolbar. The main text area is split into two panes. The left pane contains source code for a program, including copyright notices, data and parameter initialization, and a procedure section. The right pane shows the output of the program, which includes the logarithm of the determinant of the Hessian and a table of parameter estimates.

```

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DATA_SECTION
  init_int nobz
  init_vector Y(1,nobz)
  init_vector x(1,nobz)
PARAMETER_SECTION
  init_number a
  init_number b
  vector pred_Y(1,nobz)
  objective_function_value f
PROCEDURE_SECTION
  pred_Y=n*x+b;
  f=(norm2(pred_Y-Y));
  f=nobz/2.*log(f); // make it a likelihood function so that
                  // covariance matrix is correct

The logarithm of the determinant of the hessian = 5.33488
index  name      value      std dev      1      2
1      a  1.9091e+000  1.5547e-001  1.0000
2      b  4.0782e+000  7.0394e-001  -0.7730  1.0000

```

At the bottom, a status bar shows the active window as 'simple.cor' with a toolbar containing 'Start' and 'simple' buttons. The system clock in the bottom right corner shows 12:00 PM.

After viewing, maximize a window by pressing **escape**, or close a window by clicking the **×** icon or pressing **C-w** or **C-f4**.

Note how the ADMB menu and toolbar icons are only available when the active window is in **admb-mode**. Press **f2** at any point to switch a window to **admb-mode**.

3.3 Debug

Types of bugs


Bugs in ADMB models can be categorized by the point of discovery:

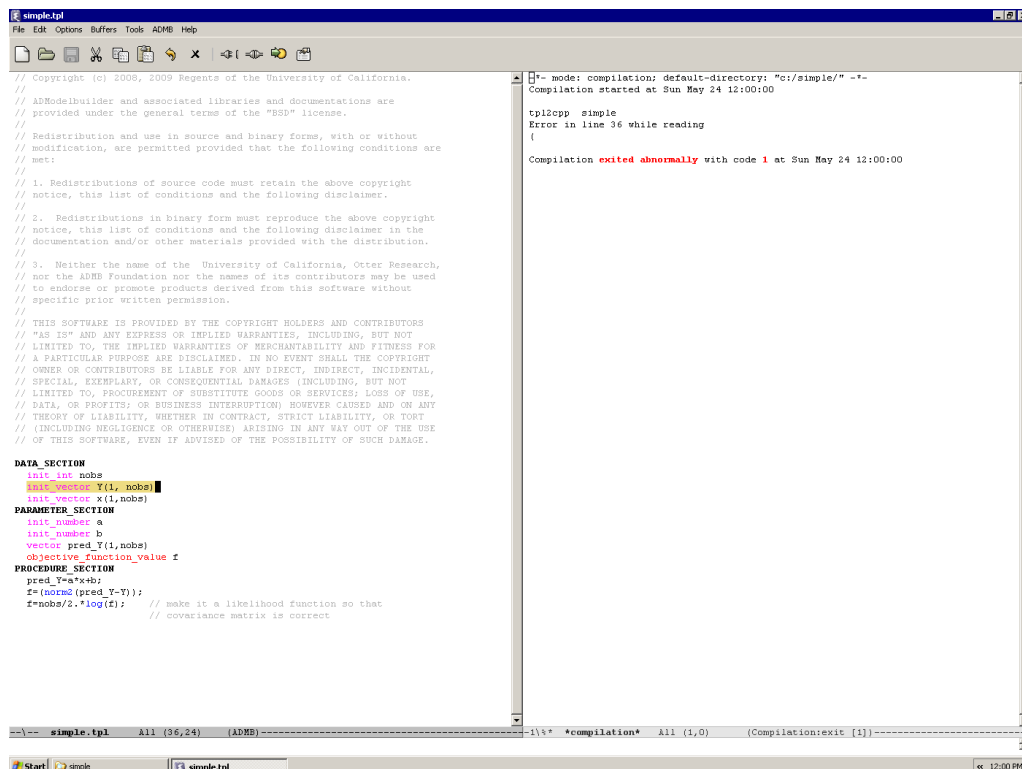
1. `tpl2cpp` reports a bug (cannot translate)
2. `g++` reports a bug (cannot compile or link)
3. The model builds fine, but crashes or writes no output when run (no results)
4. The model runs fine, but not like it is supposed to (strange results)

Locating bugs

- Warnings or error messages indicate line number, or function/variable name
- Insert lines of code that print informative messages during runtime
- Comment out parts of the code
- Use a debugger

Example 1: `tpl2cpp` reports a bug

Create a bug by inserting an extra space inside a vector declaration: `init_vector Y(1,nobs)` → `init_vector Y(1, nobs)`. Then click the  icon or press `f7` to translate TPL to C++:



```


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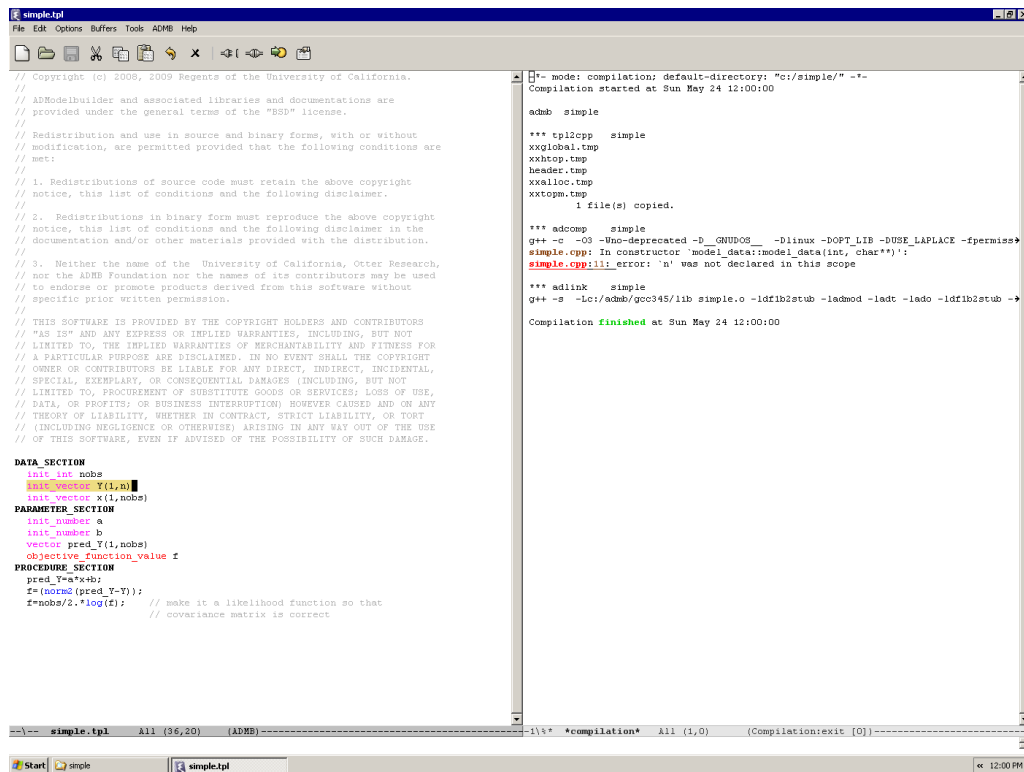
DATA_SECTION
init int nobs
init_vector Y(1, nobs)
init_vector x(1,nobs)
PARAMETER_SECTION
init_number a
init_number b
vector pred_Y(1,nobs)
objective_function_value f
PROCEDURE_SECTION
pred_Y=a+b*x;
f=(norm2(pred_Y-Y));
f=nobs/2.*log(f); // make it a likelihood function so that
// covariance matrix is correct

```

The `tpl2cpp` translator reports an error in line 36 of `simple.tpl`. Click *Edit* → *Go To* → *Goto Line* or press `C-g` to move the cursor to that line, and then remove the unwanted space.

Example 2: g++ reports a bug

Create a bug by referring to a nonexistent variable: `init_vector Y(1,nobs) → init_vector Y(1,n)`. Then click the  icon or press **f8** to build the model:



```

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DATA_SECTION
init_int nobs
init_vector Y(1,n)
init_vector x(1,nobs)
PARAMETER_SECTION
init_number a
init_number b
vector pred_Y(1,nobs)
objective_function_value f
PROCEDURE_SECTION
pred_Y=a*x+b;
f=(norm2(pred_Y-Y));
f=nobs/2.*log(f); // make it a likelihood function so that
                  // covariance matrix is correct

```

```

g++ -mode: compilation; default-directory: "c:/simple/" -x-
Compilation started at Sun May 24 12:00:00

admb simple

*** tp12cpp simple
xxg10bal.tmp
xxhtop.tmp
header.tmp
xxalloc.tmp
xxtopm.tmp
1 file(s) copied.



*** adcomp simple
g++ -c -O3 -Wno-deprecated -D_GNUPOS -Dlinux -DOPT_LIB -DUSE LAPLACE -fpermiss
simple.cpp: In constructor 'model_data::model_data(int, char*)':
simple.cpp:11: error: 'n' was not declared in this scope

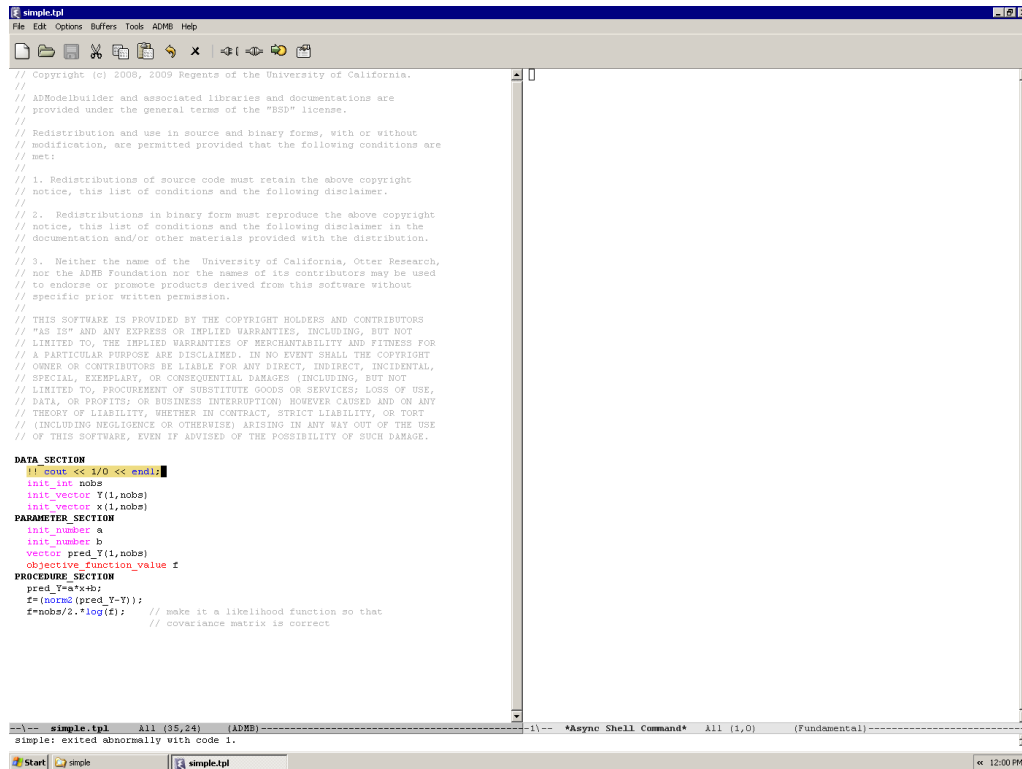
*** adlink simple
g++ -s -Lc:/admb/gcc345/lib simple.o -ldf1b2stub -ldcmdb -ldc -ladd -ldf1b2stub ->
Compilation finished at Sun May 24 12:00:00

```

The **g++** compiler reports an error in line 11 of `simple.cpp`. Click the highlighted filename to open the C++ source file with the cursor in that line. After realizing what the problem is (with the help of the error message *'n' was not declared in this scope*), go back to the ADMB code in `simple.tpl` and change the `'n'` to `'nobs'`.

Example 3: No results

Create a bug by dividing by zero at the top of the DATA_SECTION: `!! cout << 1/0 << endl;`. Then click the  icon or press `f8` to build the model. Ignoring the warning, click  or press `f9` to run the model:



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DATA_SECTION
!! cout << 1/0 << endl;
init_int nobe
init_vector Y(1,nobe)
init_vector x(1,nobe)
PARAMETER_SECTION
init_number a
init_number b
vector pred_Y(1,nobe)
ObjectiveFunctionValue f
PROCEDURE_SECTION
pred_Y=a*x+b;
f=(norm2(pred_Y-Y));
f=nobe/2.*log(f); // make it a likelihood function so that
// covariance matrix is correct

```

simple: exited abnormally with code 1.

The shell command `simple` exits abnormally with code 1, a generic code for failure. The easiest way to search for this bug is to insert informative messages in the code, like



```

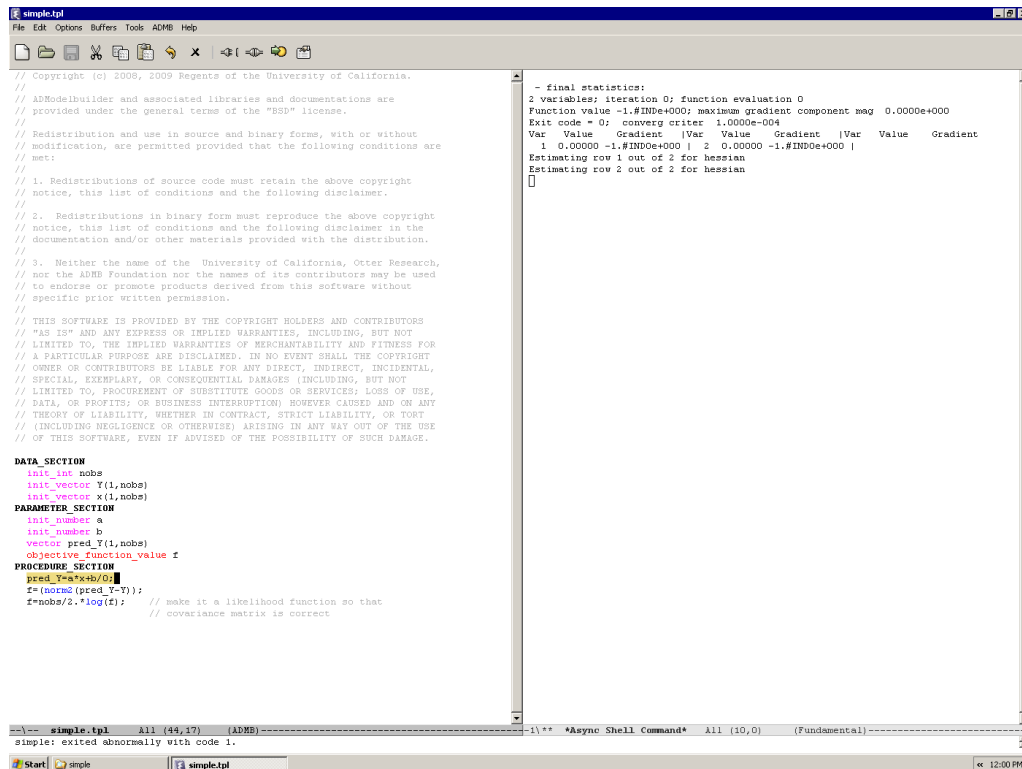
DATA_SECTION
!! cout << "DATA_SECTION begins" << endl;
...
!! cout << "DATA_SECTION ends" << endl;

```

and/or simplify the model, possibly by commenting out parts of the code. After narrowing the search step by step, the problematic line(s) can be changed or removed. To comment or uncomment large parts of code, use the `M-;` keystroke (see [\[Shortcut keys\]](#), page 16).

Example 4: Strange results

Create a bug by dividing by zero in a `PROCEDURE_SECTION` assignment: `pred_Y=a*x+b;` → `pred_Y=a*x+b/0;`. Then click the  icon or press `f8` to build the model (this time there is no compiler warning). Click  or press `f9` to run the model:



```

// Copyright (c) 2008, 2009 Regents of the University of California.
//
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// provided under the general terms of the "BSD" license.
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// OF THIS SOFTWARE, EVEN IF ADVISED OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

DATA_SECTION
init_int noba
init_vector Y(1,noba)
init_vector x(1,noba)
PARAMETER_SECTION
init_number a
init_number b
vector pred_Y(1,noba)
objective_function_value f
PROCEDURE_SECTION
pred_Y=a*x+b/0;
f=(noba*(pred_Y-Y));
f=noba/2.*log(f); // make it a likelihood function so that
                  // covariance matrix is correct

- final statistics:
2 variables; iteration 0; function evaluation 0
Function value -1.#INDe+000; maximum gradient component mag 0.0000e+000
Exit code = 0; converg critter 1.0000e-004
Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient
1 0.00000 -1.#INDe+000 | 2 0.00000 -1.#INDe+000 |
Estimating row 1 out of 2 for hessian
Estimating row 2 out of 2 for hessian

```

The ADMB on-screen report indicates successful convergence (exit code 0) with an objective function value of ‘-1.#INDe+000’, while Emacs reports failure (exit code 1). The easiest way to search for this bug is to insert informative messages in the code, like

PROCEDURE_SECTION

```

cout << "The value of a   is: " << a   << endl;
cout << "The value of a*x is: " << a*x << endl;
cout << "The value of b   is: " << b   << endl;
cout << "The value of b/0 is: " << b/0 << endl;
cout << "The value of f   is: " << f   << endl;

```

and/or simplify the model, possibly by commenting out parts of the code. A more advanced option is to use a debugger.

GDB: When the going gets tough

Emacs and GCC can interact closely with the GDB debugger—these programs were all created by the same programmer, Richard Stallman. A program must fulfill two conditions before debugging:

- The model executable (e.g., `simple.exe`) must build successfully, so a debugger is only helpful for bugs of type 3 and 4 (see [Types of bugs], page 9).
- The model executable must include debugging symbols. To embed debugging symbols with ADMB-IDE, either select “Debug” compilation from the *ADMB* → *Target* menu, or press `C-- g` (Ctrl and -, then g), followed by `return`.

Using GDB to debug an ADMB model is beyond the scope of this tutorial, but when simpler debugging methods fail, it is time to click *Tools* → *Debugger (GDB)*:

```

[New thread 3668.0xc64]
Breakpoint 3, main (argc=1, argv=0x32430) at simple.cpp:65
(gdb) c
Continuing.

Breakpoint 1, main (argc=1, argv=0x32430) at simple.cpp:78
(gdb) c
Continuing.

Program exited normally.
(gdb) run
Starting program: c:\simple\simple.exe
[New thread 1300.0x504]

Breakpoint 3, main (argc=1, argv=0x32430) at simple.cpp:65
(gdb) cont
Continuing.

Breakpoint 1, main (argc=1, argv=0x32430) at simple.cpp:78
(gdb) what mp
type = model_parameters
(gdb) display armbysize
1: armbysize = 150000
(gdb) print mp
$3 = {<model_data> = {<ad_comm> = {_vptr$ad_comm = 0x532084, static time_flag = 0, s...
(gdb)

Initial statistics: 2 variables; iteration 0; function evaluation 0
Function value 3.649379e+001; maximum gradient component mag -3.6157e+000
Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient
1 0.00000 -3.61269e+000 | 2 0.00000 -7.27814e-001 |

- final statistics:
2 variables; iteration 7; function evaluation 19
Function value 1.4964e+001; maximum gradient component mag -7.0014e-005
Exit code = 1; converg critter 1.0000e-004
Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient |Var Value Gradient
1 1.90909 -7.00140e-005 | 2 4.07818 -2.08982e-005 |
Estimating row 1 out of 2 for hessian
Estimating row 2 out of 2 for hessian
[]

Num Type Disp Enb Address What
1 breakpoint keep y 0x00403c4b in main at simple.cpp:78
breakpoint already hit 1 time
2 breakpoint keep y 0x00403c4b in main at simple.cpp:77
3 breakpoint keep y 0x00403ba3 in main at simple.cpp:65
breakpoint already hit 1 time
[]

simple.cpp 623 (78,0) (C++/1 kbrev)













```


4 Interface

4.1 Menu

Menu label	Purpose	Emacs command
Translate	Translate TPL to C++	<code>admb-tpl2cpp</code>
Compile	Compile C++ to object code	<code>admb-compile</code>
Link	Link object code to exe	<code>admb-link</code>
Build	Build executable from TPL	<code>admb-make</code>
Run	Run executable	<code>admb-run</code>
Run with Args	Run executable with args	<code>admb-run-args</code>
Run Makefile	Run Makefile in current dir	<code>admb-run-makefile</code>
View Report	Open .rep file	<code>admb-rep</code>
View Estimates	Open .cor file	<code>admb-cor</code>
View Point Estimates	Open .par file	<code>admb-par</code>
View Initial Values	Open .pin file	<code>admb-pin</code>
View C++	Open C++ file	<code>admb-cpp</code>
View Any	Open model file	<code>admb-open</code>
Clean Directory	Remove temporary files	<code>admb-clean</code>
Outline	Navigate with outline	<code>admb-outline</code>
Imenu	Navigate with imenu	<code>imenu</code>
Template	Insert template	<code>admb-template</code>
Mini Template	Insert minimal template	<code>admb-template-mini</code>
Toggle Section	Toggle section indicator	<code>admb-toggle-section</code>
Toggle Window	Toggle secondary window	<code>admb-toggle-window</code>
Target	Choose what to build	<code>admb-set-flags</code>
Help	Show help page	<code>admb-help</code>
ADMB Mode Version	Show ADMB Mode version	<code>admb-mode-version</code>

4.2 Toolbar

Icon	Purpose	Emacs command
	New buffer	<code>new-buffer</code>
	Open file	<code>find-file</code>
	Save file	<code>save-buffer</code>
	Cut	<code>kill-region</code>
	Copy	<code>copy-region-as-kill</code>
	Paste	<code>cua-paste</code>
	Undo/redo	<code>undo</code>
	Close	<code>kill-this-buffer</code>
	Translate TPL to C++	<code>admb-tpl2cpp</code>
	Build executable from TPL	<code>admb-make</code>
	Run executable	<code>admb-run</code>
	Open .rep file	<code>admb-rep</code>

4.3 Shortcut keys

In combinations, ‘S-’ means Shift, ‘C-’ means Ctrl, and ‘M-’ means the Alt key.

Keystroke	Purpose	Emacs command
f1	Help	admb-help
S-f1	Show ADMB-IDE version	admb-ide-version
f2	ADMB mode	admb-mode
f3	Data mode	conf-unix-mode
f4	Toggle secondary window	admb-toggle-window
C-f4	Close	kill-buffer-maybe-window
M-f4	Quit	save-buffers-kill-emacs
f5	Reload	revert-buffer
f6	Other window	other-window
C-f6	Next buffer	next-buffer
f7	Translate TPL to C++	admb-tpl2cpp
f8	Build executable from TPL	admb-make
f9	Run executable	admb-run
f10	Open .rep file	admb-rep
S-f10	Open .cor file	admb-cor
f11	Navigate with outline	admb-outline
f12	Insert template	admb-template
S-f12	Insert minimal template	admb-template-mini
C--	Toggle compilation flags	admb-toggle-flag
C-,	Toggle trailing whitespace	toggle-trailing-whitespace
C-.	Toggle section indicator	admb-toggle-section
C-a	Select all	mark-whole-buffer
C-b	Next buffer	next-buffer
C-c	Copy	cua--prefix-override-handler
C-f	Find, find next	isearch-forward
C-g	Goto line	goto-line
C-h	Emacs help system	help
C-l	Recenter	recenter
C-n	New	new-buffer
C-o	Open	find-file
C-p	Open in other window	admb-open
C-q	Quit	save-buffers-kill-emacs
C-r	Replace	query-replace
C-s	Save	save-buffer
C-S	Save as	write-file
C-v	Paste	cua-paste
C-w	Close	kill-buffer-maybe-window
C-x	Cut	cua--prefix-override-handler
C-x 2	Split window above/below	split-window-vertically
C-x 3	Split window left/right	split-window-horizontally
C-z	Undo/redo	undo
C-return	Rectangle functions	cua-set-rectangle-mark
C-space	Expand recognized words	dabbrev-expand

C-M-space	Open recent files	<code>recentf-open-files</code>
M-,	Delete trailing whitespace	<code>delete-trailing-spc-tab-m</code>
M-;	Comment/uncomment region	<code>comment-dwim</code>
escape	Cancel dialog, maximize window	<code>keyboard-escape-quit</code>

Mouse button	Purpose	Emacs command
C-left	Switch buffers	<code>mouse-buffer-menu</code>
right	Navigate with imenu	<code>imenu</code>

ADMB-IDE does not emulate perfectly the way many editors open menus with the **Alt** key. To open the *Edit* menu, for example, it is not enough to press **Alt** and **e** simultaneously. ADMB-IDE provides four ways to open the *Edit* menu:

1. Mouse click on the menu bar
2. Tap **Alt** first and then **e** (Windows)
3. Hold **Alt** and tap **e** twice (Windows)
4. Hold **Alt** and tap **f**, then release **Alt** and tap **right** arrow (Linux)

The idea behind ADMB-IDE, however, is that users can memorize intuitive keystrokes to undo, cut, copy, paste, find, replace, and goto line, without opening the *Edit* menu. Also don't forget that ADMB-IDE is open source, so users are free to modify any part of the program, including the keybindings defined in the `.emacs` file.

Longtime users of the Vi editor can turn on Emacs `evil-mode` or `viper-mode`, which are full-featured Vi emulators for Emacs.

5 Configuration

Personal .emacs file

ADMB-IDE is intended for people who don't know Emacs, are not interested in learning it, and will only use it to work with ADMB. The design goal is that ADMB-IDE should work out of the box and get the job done with minimum fuss.

It is, however, in the nature of modellers to experiment and improve. Users who modify the original .emacs file are no longer using ADMB-IDE, but Emacs with `admb-mode` and a personal .emacs file. One reason to modify the .emacs file or write a new one from scratch is to install additional Emacs packages. Another reason is to redefine the keybindings, probably closer to the Emacs defaults. Other reasons include setting fonts and colors, setting user variables, or defining new user functions. Users with a personal .emacs file can update ADMB, Emacs, GCC, GDB, and `admb-mode` independently, or salvage pieces from a recent ADMB-IDE zip bundle.

Note that it is not advisable to configure Emacs by clicking *Options* → *Save Options* or *Options* → *Customize Emacs*. Editing the .emacs file directly is a more reliable and transparent approach. See <http://admb-project.org/tools/editors/emacs> for guidelines.

Example

The `f10` key in ADMB-IDE runs `admb-rep` to open a report file:

```
(local-set-key [f10] 'admb-rep ) ; menu-bar-open
```

The semicolon starts a comment, reminding that the default behavior of Emacs is to run `menu-bar-open` when `f10` is pressed. In ADMB-IDE, it is easy to activate the menu bar with the mouse or the `Alt` key, so `f10` can be used for something else. The liberal spacing is to align surrounding lines of code, but neither the comment nor multiple spaces are necessary.

Some users may find it practical to open the report file in an external browser, rather than inside ADMB-IDE. The report file is often best viewed in a large window, and the ADMB-IDE windows are somewhat busy showing other things. It is easy to rebind the `f10` key,

```
(local-set-key [f10] 'admb-rep-browser ) ; menu-bar-open
```

but as mentioned in the documentation of `admb-rep-browser`, the .rep file ending in Windows may need to be associated with the desired browser program, Firefox or the like.

Canned ADMB-IDE

It can be practical to make a canned version of ADMB-IDE available, while using a different .emacs file for most Emacs sessions. For example, an experienced Emacs user may want to test how ADMB-IDE works, or demonstrate it to colleagues, without constantly shuffling .emacs files. In Windows, one can place the ADMB-IDE .emacs file in `c:/admb/ide` and then start ADMB-IDE with the shell command:

```
c:/gnu/emacs/bin/runemacs.exe -Q -l c:/admb/ide/.emacs -f admb-mode
```

The `-Q` option tells Emacs to ignore the default startup file(s), the `-l` tells it to load a Lisp file, and the `-f` tells it to call a function. This command can be used in a start menu or desktop shortcut, with the `c:/~/icons/admb64.ico` decorative icon, and similar tricks can be used in Linux and Mac OS.

6 Troubleshooting

6.1 General usage

The ADMB menu and toolbar icons disappear

These only appear when the current buffer is in `admb-mode`. Either switch to a `.tpl` buffer that is already in `admb-mode`, or press `f2` to switch to `admb-mode` in the current buffer. Other modes may have special menus and toolbar icons that are useful for that mode, see for example the [\[GDB screenshot\]](#), page 13.

Undo/redo

The undo command in ADMB-IDE does both undo and redo. When undo is performed repeatedly, it goes further back in the undo history. Any command other than undo will interrupt this sequence, and from that point the previous undo commands become ordinary changes that can be undone, equivalent to redo. Try, for example, copying some text and then paste it three times. Now undo three times, interrupt with a harmless key like the `up` arrow, and then undo again to redo. To undo all changes since last save, it's easiest to reload using the `f5` key.

The Tab key does not indent code properly

ADMB-IDE does not know the appropriate indentation of every line, so generally users indent their code manually using `Space` and `Backspace`. The `Tab` key is programmed to insert a number of spaces, as suggested by the previous line, which is sometimes useful.

Lines end with strange `^M` characters

This is how Emacs shows Dos line endings, although in most cases Dos line endings are handled more gracefully. It could be that the file contains mixed line endings (both Dos and Unix), and the simplest solution is to delete all `^M` characters. It could also be that the Emacs variable `file-name-buffer-file-type-alist` matches the `.tpl` file ending, and the simplest solution is to set that variable to `nil`.

Clicking *ADMB* → *Run Makefile* returns an error

Makefiles are a sophisticated build automation tool, not required for general ADMB usage. This command invokes the `make` program that looks for a file called `Makefile`. If the `make` program or the makefile is not found, an error is returned. This feature is provided for advanced users who have prepared a makefile in the working directory.

6.2 Configuration

Double-clicking a `.tpl` file does not open it in Emacs

The `.tpl` file ending needs to be associated with Emacs. This can be done with registry entries or in Windows Explorer folder options.

Emacs cannot load `admb-mode`

The directory containing the `admb.el` file needs to be in the Emacs variable `load-path`, and the `admb-mode` command needs to be autoloaded in the `.emacs` configuration file.

Compilation commands are not recognized

The `PATH` environment variable needs to point to the directories containing the compilation programs (`tpl2cpp`, `tpl2rem`), scripts (`admb`, `adcomp`, `adlink`), and the `g++` program. Likewise, the `ADMB_HOME` environment variable needs to point to the main `ADMB` directory. Windows environment variables can be set using Dos scripts like `c:/~/bat/admb-set.bat`, or by right-clicking the My Computer icon, then *Properties* → *Advanced* → *Environment Variables* → *User variables* → *New*.

Limited user (i.e., non-administrator) accounts in Windows can also prevent the `ADMB-IDE` installer from setting the environment variables `ADMB_HOME` and `PATH`. In those cases, the right-click-properties method described above can be used to set the variables after the installation. Many Linux distributions include only the C component of GCC, so users need to install the optional C++ component before using `ADMB`.

7 References

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