



# Tech Info Library

## MAE: Explanation of Color Flashing (5/96)

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TOPIC -----

Whenever I run a color intensive application on MAE (like Canvas or JPEGView) on my Sparc5 (Solaris 2.5, CDE 1.0.1), the non-MAE windows on my screen explode into a festive assortment of colors. Clicking out of the MAE window and back onto the CDE Workspace returns CDE to its proper colors, but causes the MAE images to go crazy. I've tried resetting the colormap (xstdcmap -all), which took care of some ghostview problems, but nothing has worked for MAE. Any suggestions?

DISCUSSION -----

This is called color flashing, and it is sometimes unavoidable. You apparently have an 8-bit display on your workstation. This means the hardware supports 256 simultaneous colors out of a possible 16 million.

As an example, what happens if MAE is using 256 colors and your other X applications are using some combination of 256 different colors? The X server notices which window has the colormap focus and loads the hardware colormap with the corresponding set of colors. Change the focus to a different window, and the server loads that window's set of colors.

To avoid this, use fewer colors or get a 24-bit framebuffer. Note also that the MAE General control panel has an option to help reduce flashing, but it has limitations.

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