

"BREAK" IDIOSYNCRASIES

This Application Note discusses three issues relating to the use of the "break" key with the MIRAGE system:

1. Why "break" may not appear to work properly;
2. How to send a break to the host system; and
3. What a break means to CP/M.

"Break doesn't work!"

The break keys on some terminals (including many Data General terminals) may appear not to function correctly in the MIRAGE development mode. In this mode, pressing the break key should result in a cold-start of CP/M. However, pressing the break key may switch the terminal from local to pass-through processing (or vice versa), instead of causing a cold start.

The solution is simply to hold the break key down until the "Loading..." message is seen on the screen.

Why does this work?

Some terminals transmit a "standard" length break signal no matter how long you press the break key. On these terminals the break signal will be the same length of time whether you just tap the key or hold it down for a long time. But other terminals only send the break signal for as long as you hold down the break key. If you tap the break key on one of these terminals, the terminal will transmit a break signal which is too short to cause the cold start, but is long enough to cause switching from local to pass-through (or vice versa).

Note that the switching from pass-through to local and vice versa always takes place when the beginning of the break condition is detected.

"How do I send a 'break' to my DG computer?"

If it is necessary to get a break through to the host system, simply hit the break key twice. The first break will be sent through to the host, but will also switch you to the MIRAGE Processor. The second break will just switch you back to the host.

"What does CP/M do when I press 'break'?"

Breaks are never transmitted to CP/M. When switching to MIRAGE via the break key, a carriage return is passed to CP/M instead. This is why you get the CP/M prompt when switching from pass-through mode to local mode with the break key. You should bear in mind, however, that many CP/M programs (like PIP) will terminate when any key (including the break key) is struck.