

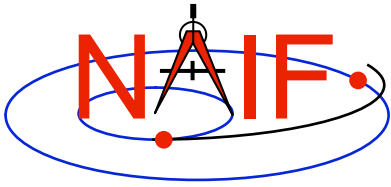


---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

# **“High Accuracy” Orientation and Body-fixed Frames for the Moon and Earth**

**September 2009**



# Topics

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- **Introduction**
- **Earth binary PCKs**
- **Lunar binary PCKs**
- **Lunar Frames Kernel**
  - Frame specifications
  - Frame alias names
- **Binary PCK file format**
- **Using Binary PCKs**
- **Backup**
  - Earth and Moon frame association kernels



# Introduction-1

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- Now that you are an expert in “standard” PCKs and FKs you may want to learn about several “special” PCKs and FKs dealing with the Earth and the Moon.
- While it is ultimately up to you, **in most cases you should use the PCK and FK kernels described here when working with the Moon or the Earth.**



# Introduction-2

## Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

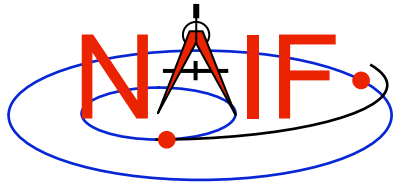
- **NAIF provides “High accuracy” orientation data for the Earth and Moon in binary PCKs.**
  - **For the Earth**
    - » **High accuracy, frequently updated file**
      - Contains high accuracy historical data and fairly accurate, short-term predict data
    - » **High accuracy, infrequently updated historical file**
    - » **Lower accuracy long term predict file**
  - **For the Moon, there’s a long-term file for each JPL “Developmental Ephemeris” (DE).**
    - » **Contains accurate historical and predict data**
- **To use these kernels:**
  - **Select binary PCKs having time coverage that meet your needs**
    - » Unlike text PCKs, the time span covered by binary PCKs is limited
  - **Load the PCK(s) via FURNISH**
  - **For the Moon, also load the Lunar FK**
  - **Reference the Earth body-fixed frame using the name ‘ITRF93’**
  - **Reference the high-accuracy Lunar body-fixed frames using one of these names:**
    - » **MOON\_ME (Moon Mean Earth/Rotation axis frame)**
    - » **MOON\_PA (Moon Principal Axes frame)**
  - **CAUTION: IAU\_MOON can not be used to reference high-accuracy lunar orientation data**



---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

## Earth Binary PCKs



# **“High Accuracy” Earth Rotation Model**

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

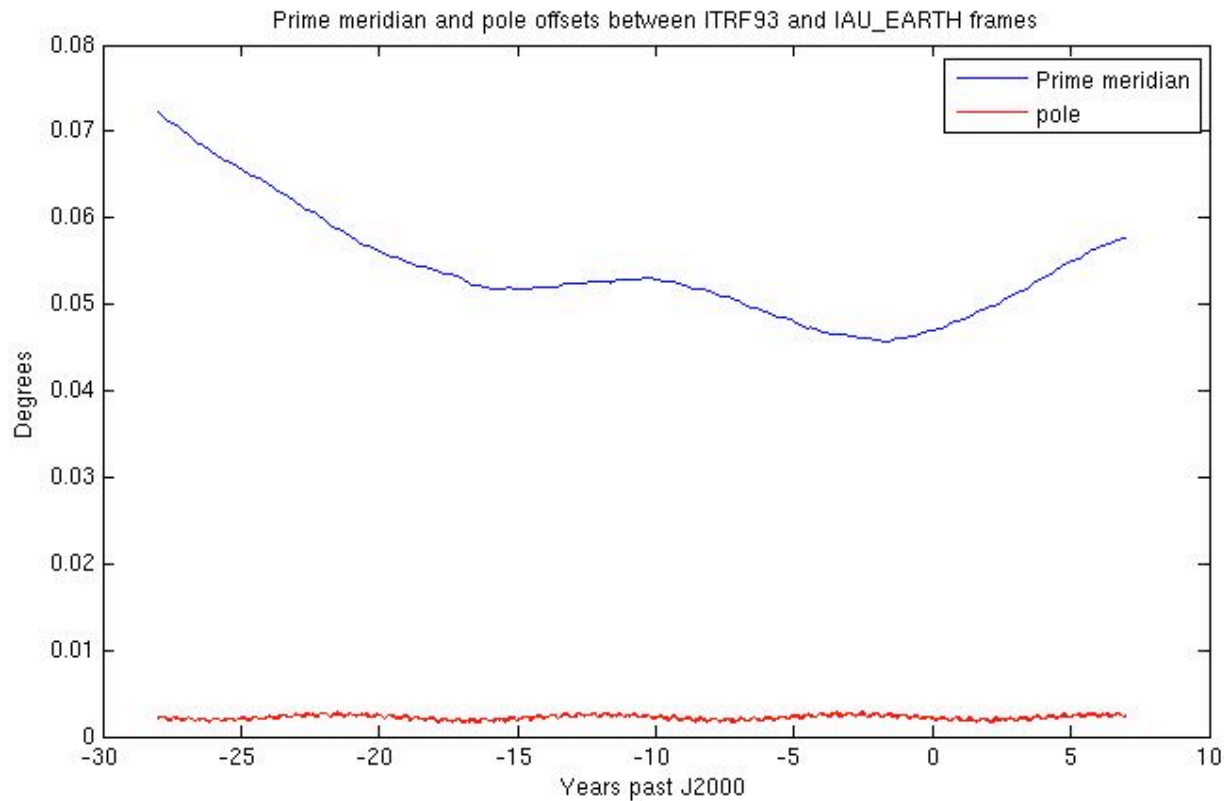
- **The ITRF93 high accuracy Earth rotation model takes into account:**
  - Precession: 1976 IAU model due to Lieske.
  - Nutation: 1980 IAU model, with IERS corrections due to Herring et al.
  - True sidereal time using accurate values of TAI-UT1
  - Polar motion
- **It is more accurate than the IAU rotation models found in text PCKs.**
  - See the plot on the next slide comparing orientation of the ITRF93 frame to that of the IAU\_EARTH frame.
    - » IAU\_EARTH frame orientation error is ~1 milliradian, or ~6km on a great circle!
- **The highest accuracy is obtainable only for past epochs.**
  - Unpredictable variations of UT1-TAI and polar motion limits the accuracy of predicted Earth orientation. See plot on page 8.

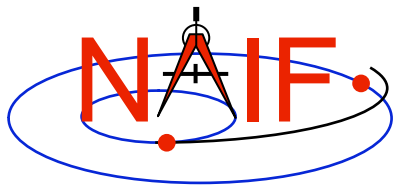


# IAU\_EARTH vs ITRF93 Comparison Plot

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

Difference between the IAU\_Earth frame and the ITRF93 frame

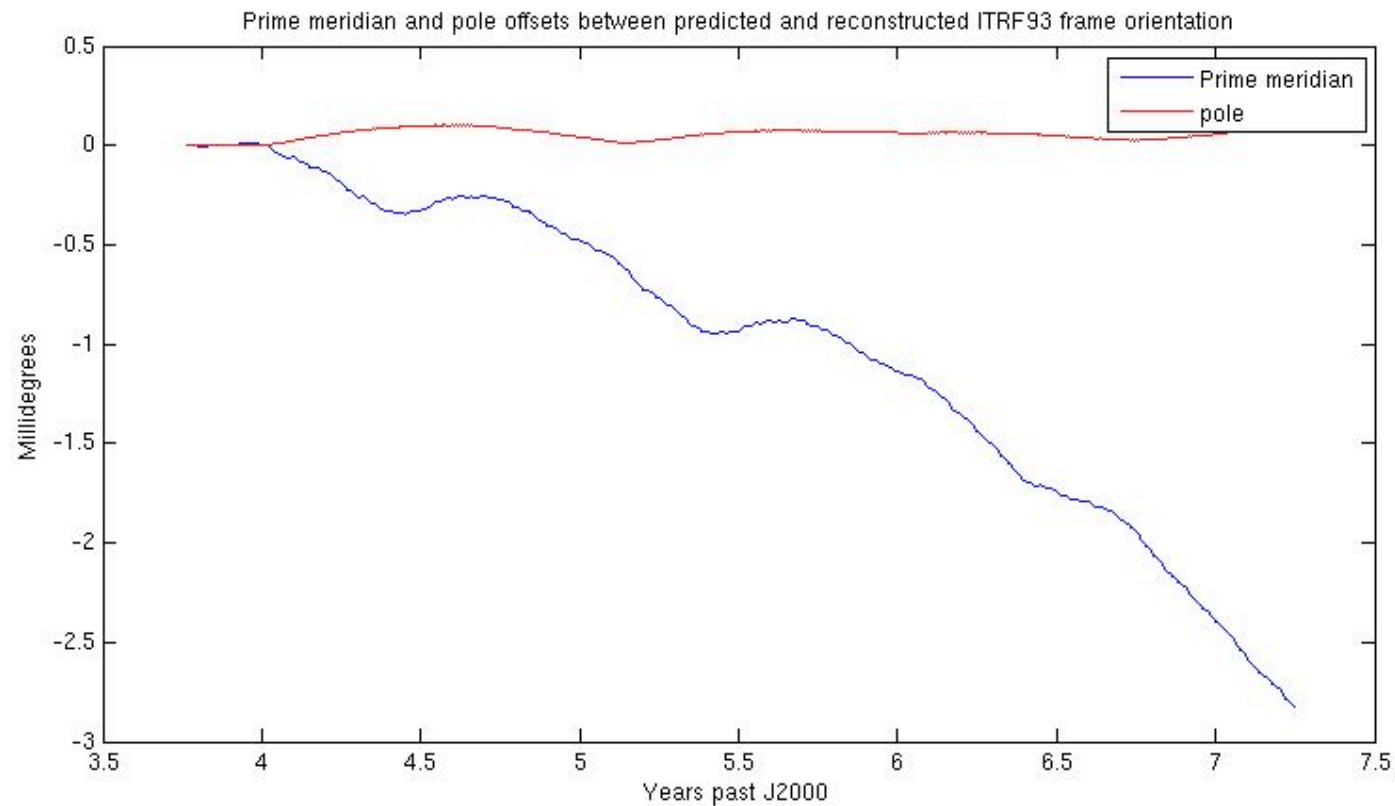




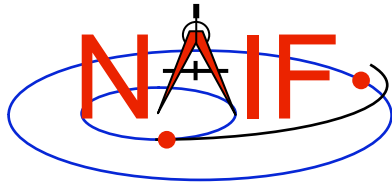
# Earth Predicted vs Reconstructed ITRF93 Plot

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

Difference between predicted and reconstructed orientation of ITRF93 frame







## Data Source for Earth “High Accuracy” Model

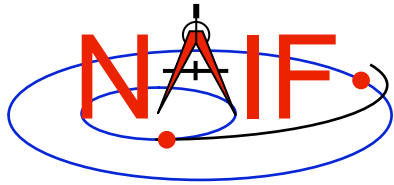
---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- **Data for the Earth come from a JPL Earth Orientation Parameters file (EOP).**
  - **Binary Earth PCKs represent the orientation of an Earth ITRFxx body-fixed reference frame relative to the ICRF\*.**
    - » **ITRF\* frames are defined by the International Earth Rotation Service (IERS).**
    - » **Currently only the ITRF93 frame is supported within SPICE.**

ICRF = International Celestial Reference Frame, often referred to in SPICE as the “J2000” frame, and also often referred to as the EME 2000 frame. This is an inertial frame.

ITRF = International Terrestrial Reference Frame

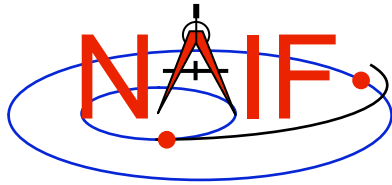


# Earth PCK Production Scheme

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- **Three versions of the “high accuracy” binary Earth PCK are produced**
  - **“The latest,”** using each new release of a reconstructed EOP file by JPL
    - » Covers well into the past and approximately two months into the future beyond the production date
    - » Accuracy of the future data degrades rapidly past the production date
    - » Produced several times per week using an automatic script
  - **Long term predict,** for future uses not requiring high accuracy
    - » Produced infrequently
    - » Covers several years into the past and approximately 30 years into the future
    - » Accuracy at epochs in the future is low compared to that for past epochs, but any of it is far better than what is obtained from the IAU rotation model for the Earth provided in any text PCK
  - **History file,** containing only high accuracy historical data
- **All are in the pck directory under generic\_kernels on the NAIF server:** `ftp://naif.jpl.nasa.gov/pub/naif/generic_kernels/pck/`
  - Read the “aareadme” file to see the file naming schema and more details



# Accurate Earth Surface Locations

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- **High accuracy determination of surface locations relative to an inertial frame involves motions in addition to Earth rotation, including:**
  - tectonic plate motion
  - tidal effects
  - ocean and atmospheric loading
  - relativistic effects
- **Tectonic plate motion is accounted for in NAIF's DSN and some non-DSN station SPK files.**
- **The other non-rotational effects affecting surface locations are NOT accounted for by a PCK or any other SPICE component.**



# Kernel Usage Summary: Earth

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

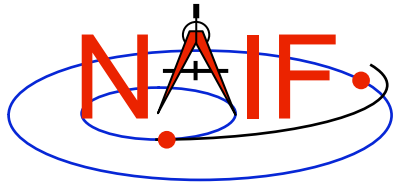
- **To use high accuracy Earth orientation data**
  - Load one or more binary Earth PCKs
    - » If a long-term predict is used, load this kernel **\*before\*** loading any kernel containing reconstructed data so that the reconstructed data have precedence during the overlap period.
  - If your application uses any of the old, pre-N0062 APIs that make use of the default Earth body-fixed frame (see Backup slides), load an Earth frame association kernel making ITRFxx the default earth body-fixed frame.
    - » **But best to switch to use the “new” APIs that require you to specify which frame to use.**
      - New APIs: ILUMIN, SINCPT, SUBPNT, SUBSLR
- **If you’re using SPICE to access Earth size and shape information, you’ll also need to load a text PCK file containing these data.**
  - Typically use the latest generic text PCK: pck000xx.tpc



---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

## Lunar Binary PCKs

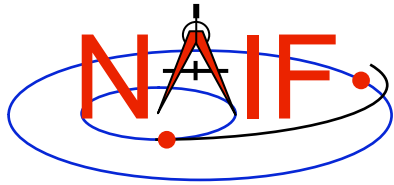


# **“High Accuracy” Lunar Rotation Model**

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

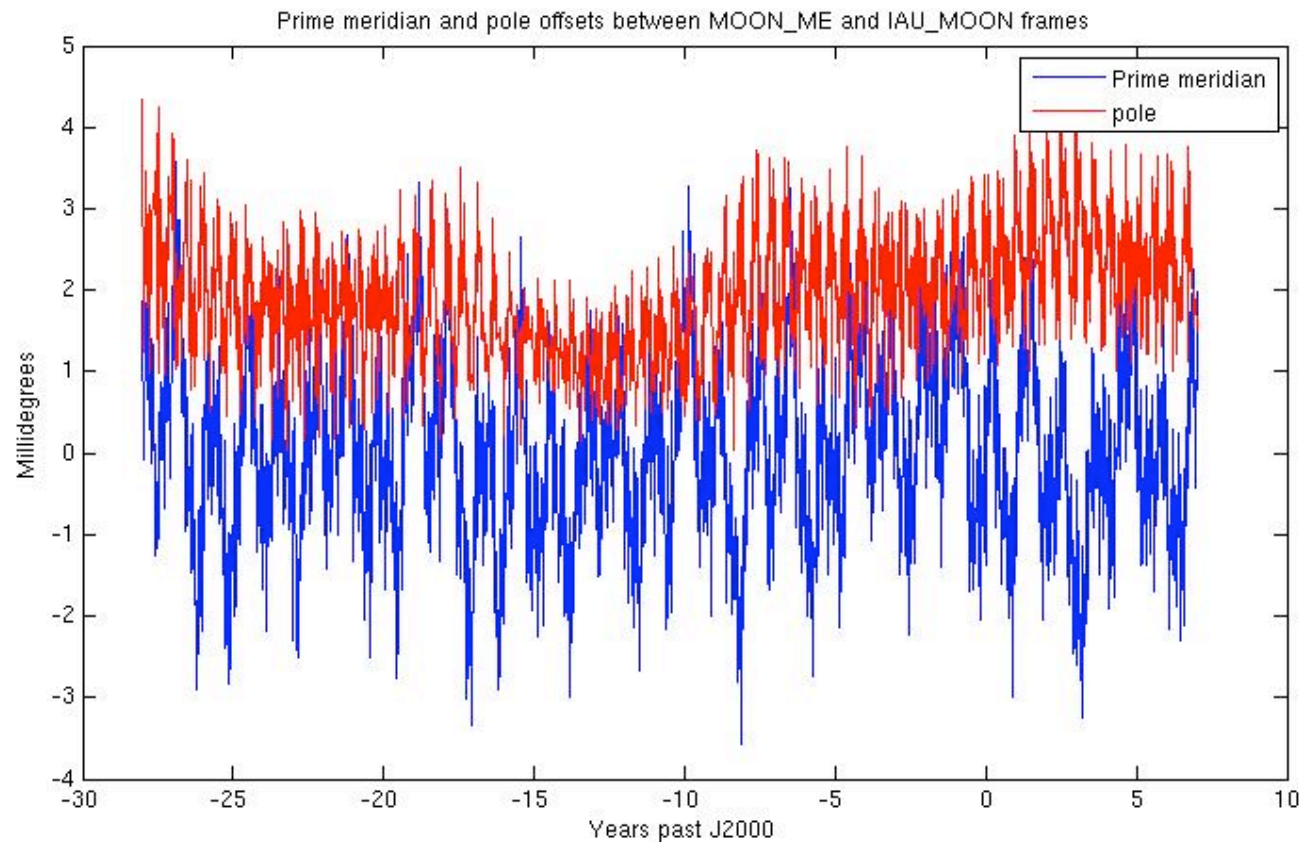
- **The high accuracy lunar rotation model is more accurate than the IAU rotation model found in a text PCK.**
  - **Rotation error between IAU\_MOON and the corresponding “high accuracy” MOON\_ME (mean Earth/rotation axis) frame for the DE-421 and 2000 IAU data sets and the time period of 2000-2020 is approximately:**
    - » **Worst case: ~0.0051 degrees, or ~155m on a great circle**
    - » **Average: ~0.0025 degrees, or ~76m on a great circle**
  - **Error is due to truncation of the libration series in the IAU model**
  - **Error is not nearly as large as that for IAU\_EARTH vs ITRF93**
  - **See the plot in the following chart comparing the IAU lunar rotation model to the integrated DE-421 model.**
    - » **Note that the IAU\_MOON model was developed in 2000, published in 2002 (see documentation in pck00008.tpc).**



# IAU\_Moon vs MOON\_ME Comparison Plot

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

Difference between the IAU\_Moon frame and the Moon\_ME frame (equivalent to the Moon\_ME\_DE421 frame)





# Lunar Rotation Model Effects

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- The DE421 high accuracy lunar orientation model represents the result of a simultaneous numerical integration of lunar rotation and orbit, and of orbits of the planets.
  - The DE421 integration model includes\*:
    - » A “solid Moon”
    - » Torques on Moon from the static gravity field of degree 2-4. Torque is due to Earth, Sun, Venus, and Jupiter.
    - » Torques on Moon and moments of inertia due to (degree 2) tides raised by Earth
    - » Dissipation effects on torques and moments due to tides on the Moon.
    - » Torques due to Earth J2 interacting with Moon degree 2 (J2 and C22).
  - Lunar quantities fit for DE421 include
    - » Initial conditions for lunar orbit and rotation of body
    - » Moment of inertia difference  $(C-A)/B$  and  $(B-A)/C$
    - » Third-degree gravity field coefficients
    - » Tidal Love numbers and dissipation
    - » Locations of four laser retroreflector arrays
- It is anticipated that further improvements in the orientation of the moon will become available in new Dexxx-based kernels in the future.

\*Description provided by James G. Williams (JPL)





## Data Sources for “High Accuracy” Models

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- **Data for the Moon come from JPL’s DExxx planet/lunar ephemeris (e.g. DE421).**
  - Binary lunar PCKs represent the orientation of the Moon’s “principal axis” reference frame, MOON\_PA\_DExxx, relative to the ICRF\*.

ICRF = International Celestial Reference Frame, often referred to in SPICE as the “J2000” frame, and also often referred to as the EME 2000 frame. This is an inertial frame.

ITRF = International Terrestrial Reference Frame



---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

## Lunar Frames Kernel



# Lunar Frames Kernel

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- **A lunar frames kernel is maintained and available from NAIF. It has four functions.**
  1. **Make two lunar frames—Principal Axes (PA) and Mean Earth/Polar Axis (ME)—known to the SPICE system.**
    - » Within SPICE their names are MOON\_PA\_DExxx and MOON\_ME\_DExxx
    - » These frames are unique to a particular JPL-produced lunar and planetary ephemeris (DE/Lexxx, which is often referred to as simply DExxx).
  2. **Connect the MOON\_PA\_DExxx frame name to the high accuracy lunar orientation PCK data that implement the PA orientation (relative to the ICRF).**
  3. **Provide specifications, in the SPICE context, for implementing the rotation between the PA frame and the ME frame.**
    - » Makes the MOON\_ME\_DExxx frame available to SPICE.
  4. **Provide generic frame names, aliased to the MOON\_PA\_DExxx and MOON\_ME\_DExxx frame names.**
    - » The generic frame names are simply **MOON\_PA** and **MOON\_ME**.
    - » The generic names need not be changed in your programs when the MOON\_PA\_DExxx and MOON\_ME\_DExxx names change due to use of new defining data.
      - » The DE-specific frames to which these aliases “point” will be updated by NAIF whenever a new binary lunar orientation PCK is produced. NAIF will release a new lunar FK at that time.
- **To access the PA or ME frame you must load the lunar FK into your program in addition to the lunar binary PCK that implements the lunar PA frame orientation.**

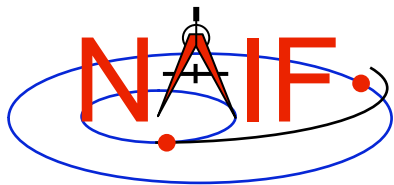


# Kernel Usage Summary: Moon

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

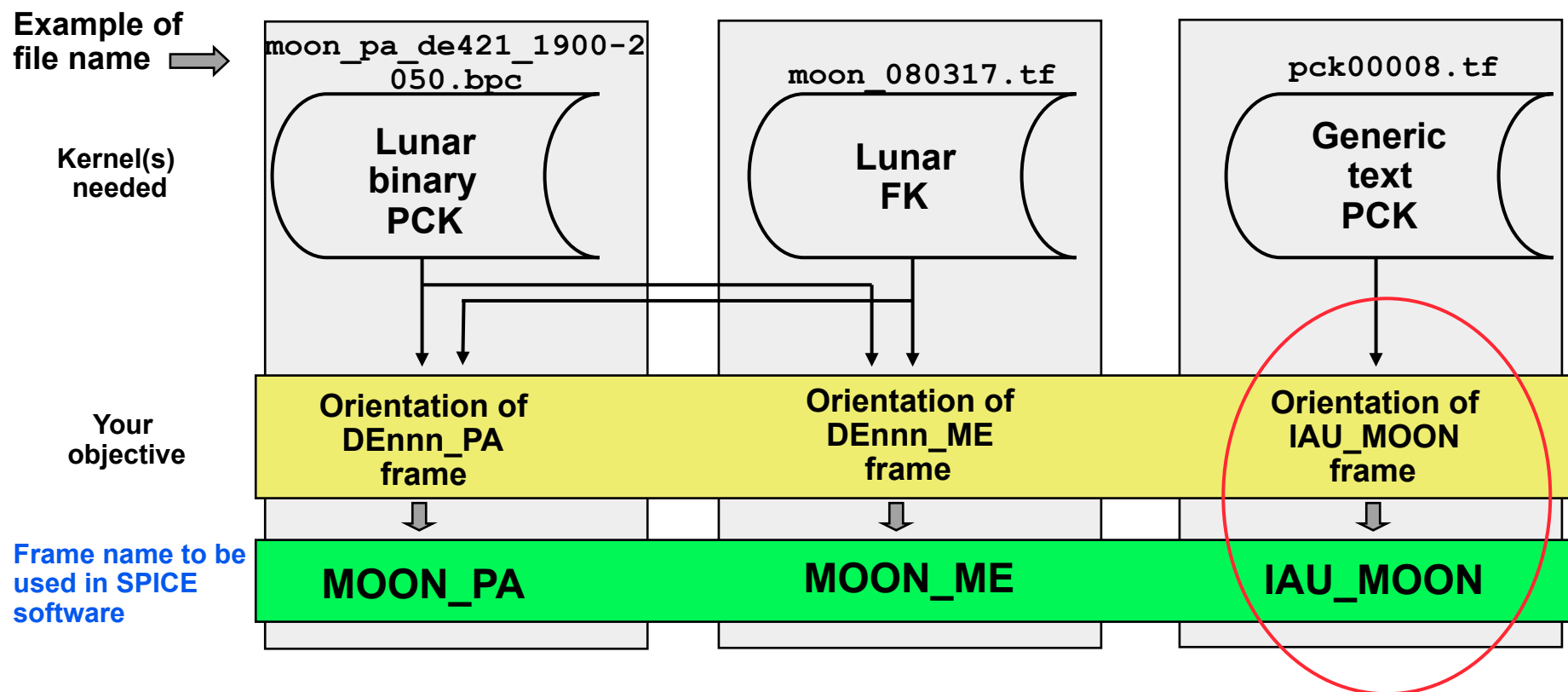
- **To use high accuracy Moon orientation data**
  - Load the current binary lunar PCK
  - Load the current lunar FK
  - If your application uses any of the old, pre-N0062 APIs that make use of the default lunar body-fixed frame (see Backup), load a moon frame association kernel making either MOON\_ME or MOON\_PA the default lunar body-fixed frame.
    - » **But best to switch to use the “new” APIs that require you to specify which frame to use.**
      - The new APIs are ILUMIN, SINCPT, SUBPNT, SUBSLR
- **If you’re using SPICE to access Moon size and shape information, you’ll also need to load a text PCK file containing these data.**
  - Typically use the latest generic text PCK, such as pck00008.tpc



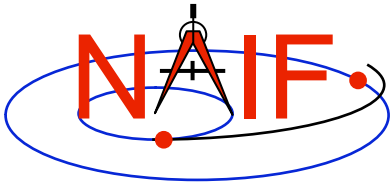
# Lunar PCK/FK Summary

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

**Which kernels are needed to access each of the three lunar body-fixed reference frames providing lunar orientation?**



Usually a bad choice for the moon!



Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

# Binary PCK File Format



# Binary PCK File Format

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

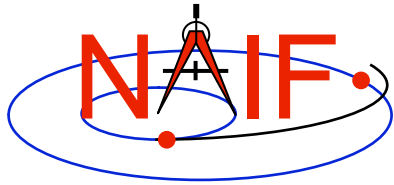
- **SPICE binary PCK files are used to accommodate “high accuracy” rotation models.**
  - Just as for SPKs and CKs, the data are held in SPICE Double Precision Array files (DAF)
  - Multiple types are supported
    - » Type 2: Chebyshev polynomials are used to represent Euler angles giving orientation as a function of time. Rates are obtained by differentiating polynomials. Coverage intervals have fixed length.
      - Used for the Earth and the Moon
    - » Type 3: Separate sets of Chebyshev polynomials are used to represent Euler angles and their rates. Coverage intervals have variable length.
      - Not currently used for Earth or Moon
  - Binary PCKs include a “comment area” for storing descriptive metadata
    - » Access the comment area using the Toolkit’s *commnt* utility program
  - Binary PCKs support high-speed direct access
    - » Cheby polynomials are fit to source Euler angles; these evaluate very quickly



Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

## Using Binary PCKs



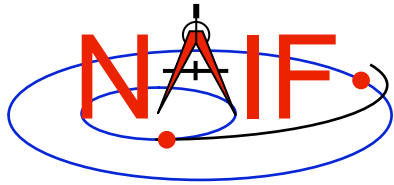


# Precedence Rules for Text and Binary PCKs

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- If two (or more) binary PCKs with functionally equivalent data are loaded, a later loaded file takes precedence.
- Loading one text PCK that supersedes another can lead to errors if data from the “old” PCK remain in the kernel pool.
  - It’s essential to unload the old text PCK before loading the new one.
    - » Use UNLOAD or KCLEAR to unload the old text PCK.
  - This problem doesn’t apply to binary PCKs.
- If both a binary and a text PCK provide orientation for the same frame, data available from the binary PCK **always** take precedence over data available from the text PCK.
  - This is independent of file loading order
  - The binary PCKs discussed in this tutorial define earth-fixed and moon-fixed frames different from those defined by a NAIF text PCK (e.g. pck00008.tpc), so there is no conflict.



# Tools for use with Binary PCKs

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- Use the *commnt* utility to access a binary PCK comment area
  - Read, extract or insert metadata
- Use the *brief* or *spacit* utility to summarize a binary PCK
  - *brief* is easier to use; *spacit* provides more information
- Non-native binary PCKs can be read **without** first being converted to the native binary form
  - If you need to write to a non-native binary PCK you must first convert it to native binary form using *bingo* or the pair of *toxfr* and *tobin*
    - » *toxfr* and *tobin* are available in each Toolkit; *bingo* is available only from the NAIF website
  - Converting a non-native binary PCK to native form will also speed up data access somewhat



---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

## Backup

**Association Frames Kernels  
for the Earth and the Moon**



# Association FKs: Introduction

---

## Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- In most SPICE modules that deal with one or more reference frames the name(s) of that/those frame(s) must be provided as input argument(s), for example:
  - CALL SPKEZR (target,time, **frame**, observer, correction, state, lighttime)
- NAIF's SPICE developers assumed there would be only one body-fixed reference frame associated with each natural body during a program run.
  - Thus a specific body-fixed frame name would rarely be needed as an input to modules dealing with body-fixed frames
  - Instead, SPICE could use the body-fixed frame associated with a given body simply by knowing the body name or ID
    - » For most bodies SPICE associates the body with a body-fixed frame named IAU\_<body name> (example: IAU\_MOON)
    - » This is known as the default body-fixed frame
- This was a bad assumption... at least for the Earth and the Moon!
  - Multiple body-fixed frames exist for the Moon and Earth
  - The default body-fixed frames for the Moon and the Earth, for which the defining data are provided in a generic text PCK (taken from an IAU report) are very inaccurate representations of the actual orientations of these bodies



# Better Choice for the Default

---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- For the Earth and the Moon there are other choices for body-fixed frame that are almost certainly better than the default body-fixed frame conjured up by SPICE

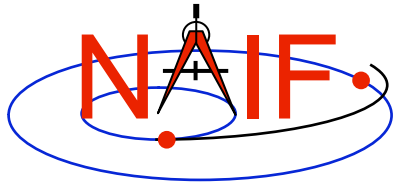
<u>Body</u>	<u>SPICE Default Body-fixed Frame</u>	<u>Better choice</u>
Earth	IAU_Earth	ITRF93 ITRFxx (in the future)
Moon	IAU_Moon	Moon_PA or Moon_ME



# The Problem

## Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- The SPICE modules that make use of the default body-fixed reference frame are these
  - LSPCN, ET2LST, **ILLUM, SRFXPT, SUBPT, SUBSOL** (and their C, Icy and Mice equivalents) *← Old: still available, but better to use those noted below*
  - Your code might overtly call one of these, or it could call one indirectly through use of a parameterized dynamic frame
- NAIF rules regarding stability of our software offerings prevent us from changing the designs of those modules
  - So we must provide you means to change the default body-fixed frame associated with any solar system body of interest to you. See the next several pages.
- However, starting with the version N62 Toolkits, a new set of modules is available for those calculations where precision body orientation is important.
  - These modules require the user to name the desired body-fixed frame, rather than using a default body-fixed frame
  - The new N62 modules are these
    - » **ILUMIN, SINCPT, SUBPNT, SUBSLR** *← New: safer to use, and offer improved accuracy in some cases*



# Changing the Default Body-Fixed Frame Name

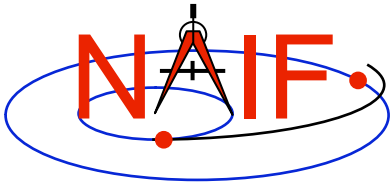
---

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- All bodies for which a body-fixed frame is defined by the IAU, and where the defining data are found in a SPICE text PCK file, have an associated default body-fixed frame name within SPICE:
  - The name pattern is: `IAU_<body name>`
  - Examples: `IAU_MARS`, `IAU_MOON`, `IAU_EARTH`
- A different default body-fixed frame name can be assigned within a program by placing the following assignment in any text kernel that is loaded into the program:

```
OBJECT_<body name>_FRAME = '<new default frame name>'
```

  - Example: `OBJECT_MOON_FRAME = 'MOON_ME'`
- NAIF offers three “association FKs” to accomplish this.
  - See next page.

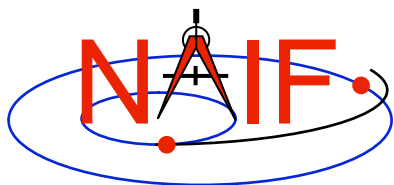


# Using Association FKs to Change the Default

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

- For the Earth and the Moon, changing the default body-fixed frame name as described on the previous page can be accomplished by loading the appropriate “association” frame kernel provided by NAIF. The association kernels available are shown below
  - For the Earth:
    - » `earth_assoc_itrf93.tf`
  - For the Moon: **(pick one or the other—not both)**
    - » `moon_assoc_me.tf`
    - » `moon_assoc_pa.tf`
- These kernels are available on the NAIF server
  - For the Earth:
    - » `ftp://naif.jpl.nasa.gov/pub/naif/generic_kernels/fk/planets/`
  - For the Moon:
    - » `ftp://naif.jpl.nasa.gov/pub/naif/generic_kernels/fk/satellites/`

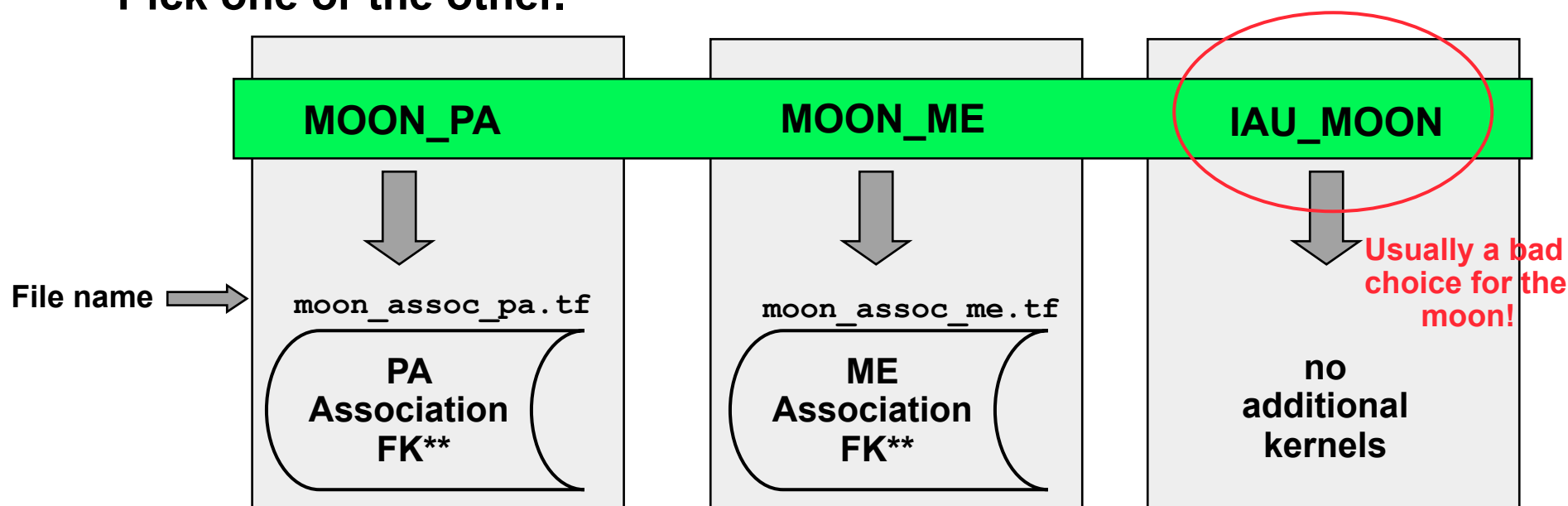




# Lunar FK/PCK/Association FK Usage

Navigation and Ancillary Information Facility

Which **additional** kernel is needed to use the indicated frame in those (older) SPICE APIs\* that use a default (assumed) frame? Pick one or the other.



\* ET2LST, ILLUM, SRFXP, SUBPT, SUBSOL  
(and their C, Icy and Mice equivalents)

\*\*Any version of one or the other of these kernels is good indefinitely; you do not need to use the latest instance offered on the NAIF server.

But best to use the N62 replacements for these four, which don't use a default body-fixed frame:

- ILUMIN
- SINCPT
- SUBPNT
- SUBSLR