



**Level:** Intermediate  
**Works with:** All  
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## Create your own formula debugger

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When trying to resolve formula coding issues, developers typically use @Prompts to display information at different points in the formula. You then need to remove all those @Prompts when all the debugging work is done, or when you want to see how the formula is working without the debug prompts.

You make using the @Prompts easier by creating your own formula debugger. You can use an environment variable to tell formulas to display or ignore the prompts. Also, on a system where the environment variable is not set at all, your debug prompts do not appear.

**Note:** This formula debugger will work in all versions of Notes. If you have Notes R5, you can also try an undocumented, beta version formula debugger within the Notes client. To try it, press and hold down Ctrl-Shift, then choose File - Tools - Debug LotusScript.

### Set the environment variable using a SmartIcon

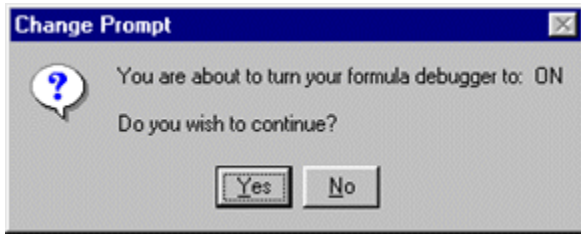
You can create a SmartIcon to set the environment variable, which allows you to toggle your formula debugger.

Create a SmartIcon (File - Preferences -SmartIcon Settings) that uses the following formula:

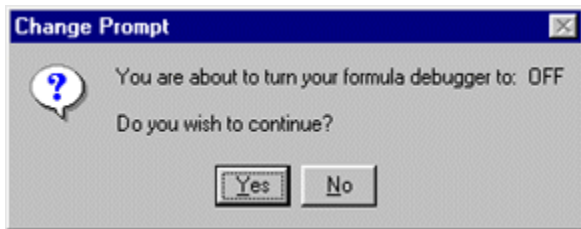
```
list1 := "Yes" : "No" : "";
list2 := "No" : "Yes" : "Yes";
list := "OFF" : "ON" : "ON";
status := @Environment("AllDebug");
neg := status = "No" : "";
choice := @Prompt([YESNO]; "Change Prompt"; "You are about to turn your formula debugger to: " +
@Replace(status; list1; list) + @Char(13) + @Char(13) + "Do you wish to continue?");
@if(choice;
    @SetEnvironment("AllDebug"; @Replace(status; list1; list2));
```

"")

Once the SmartIcon is created, clicking it produces the following message:



If you turn the debugger on, you can click the SmartIcon again to shut it off:



### Using the environment variable in your formulas

In your formula codes, begin with:

```
debug := @Environment("AllDebug") = "Yes";
```

Then, whenever the you need to check values, create a section similar to the following:

```
@If(debug;  
    @Do(  
        @Prompt([OK]; "variable1"; variable1);  
        @Prompt([OK]; "variable2"; variable2);  
        @Prompt([OK]; "variable3"; variable3);  
        ...);  
    "");
```

When the formula debugger is "On", the prompts will display. When it is "Off", they won't.

### ABOUT THE SUBMITTER

Robert Albritton is from [Solutions By Design, Inc.](#), a Lotus Business Partner and 1999 Lotus Beacon Award winner.