

# Sfinx Packages

Originally, the [Sfinx](#) environment offered a standardized way to initialize various packages. Where usually the install instructions of a piece of software tell you, to add a couple of lines to your `.login`, `.bashrc` or something like that, we like to provide a default login environment without package-specific settings, and a set of tools to initialize the packages when needed. Not only does this keep your environment clean, it also avoids some unexpected interactions between the various setups.

In the 3rd rewrite of [Sfinx](#), most of these setups have been converted to [environment modules](#). When a package file existed previously, this file has been modified to load the module. So e.g. package `intel` is now equivalent to `module load intel`, and if you were used to use the `package` command, you can continue to do so.

For some software, the environment module alone is not sufficient. In these cases, a `package` command is still used to initialize the environment and do further setup (eg software that needs to create files on startup, something that cannot be done by the environment modules).

## IRAF

For `iraf`, such an initialization is only needed to compile your own `iraf` tasks, or if you want to run `iraf` task from a shell script, outside IRAF's `c1`. To run `iraf`, no special setup is needed, so a casual `iraf` user can just use `i iraf` or `c1` to start the program without any further setup.

## MIRIAD

We have several versions of Miriad installed. In all cases, it is possible to start the miriad shell without special setup. So as with IRAF, a casual user doesn't need the environment module or the package file. Only if you want to use Miriad task in shell scripts, add your own tasks, or any such advanced use, will you need to do the full setup using `package miriad_atnf` or `package miriad_carma`. Note that there is currently no way to switch between Miriad versions in a single shell. If you need both versions, open a separate window and initialize the other Miriad in that window.

## Newstar

The Newstar setup creates temporary files, and has some conditional environment settings that are hard to convert to an environment module. It is currently being investigated. Please contact us if you use newstar and are interested in an updated setup.

## PyBDSM

Part of the LOFAR software. To be discussed with the LOFAR group whether to integrate this somewhere else, update it, or remove it.

## SciSoft

The SciSoft software collection has its own set of setup scripts. May be converted to an environment module in the near future.

## Starlink

The Starlink software collection is huge, and no attempt has been made to convert the whole setup to an environment module. For some commonly used tools, a startup script is provided, so e.g. if you want to run Specx, just type 'specx' without worrying about package files.

PS: more scripts like that can be provided when needed, ask if you encounter such a situation.

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