Exploring “change blindness”

The human visual system can be “blind” to changes in a scene, unless we draw our attention to the area undergoing change.

This GUI-based program displays a pair of alternating images on the left, until the user notices the change and presses the stop button.

The user can select which pair to view, the amount of time each image is displayed, and the time between image frames.

Results on the total time needed to detect the change for each pair can be viewed on the right.
Functions defined in blindGUI.m

blindGUI: top-level function at the beginning of the file that is called from the Command Window. This function initializes the GUI program and opens the GUI window. This function is not modified.

blindGUI_OpeningFcn: executed just before the GUI window is made visible. Code is added to this function to set up an initial pair of images for testing, and to create a vector to store the experimental results.

blindGUI_OutputFcn: returns outputs to the Command Window. This function is not modified.

Changes to blindGUI_OpeningFcn

% --- Executes just before blindGUI is made visible.
function blindGUI_OpeningFcn(hObject, eventdata, handles, varargin)

% variables to store image pair, initialized to airplane images
handles.im1 = imread('plane1.bmp');
handles.im2 = imread('plane2.bmp');
% results of tests: number of repeats needed to detect change, for % each pair of images (currently four image pairs)
handles.results = zeros(1,4);
% Choose default command line output for blindGUI
handles.output = hObject;
% Update handles structure
guida(hObject, handles);
imagesMenu_Callback

function imagesMenu_Callback(hObject, eventdata, handles)
% loads selected image pair
imageChoice = get(handles.imagesMenu, 'Value');
if (imageChoice == 1)
    handles.im1 = imread('plane1.bmp');
    handles.im2 = imread('plane2.bmp');
elseif (imageChoice == 2)
    handles.im1 = imread('dinner1.bmp');
    handles.im2 = imread('dinner2.bmp');
elseif (imageChoice == 3)
    handles.im1 = imread('farm1.bmp');
    handles.im2 = imread('farm2.bmp');
else
    handles.im1 = imread('market1.bmp');
    handles.im2 = imread('market2.bmp');
end
% update handles structure
guidata(hObject, handles);

Don’t forget to update global handles structure!

demoButton_Callback (part 1)

function demoButton_Callback(hObject, eventdata, handles)
% create blank frame of the same size as the image pair
[rows cols rgb] = size(handles.im1);
blank = 0.8*ones(rows, cols, rgb);
% get presentation and gap times from the GUI
presentTime = str2double(get(handles.presentTextbox, 'String'));
gapTime = str2double(get(handles.gapTextbox, 'String'));
% switch to testAxes display area and enable the stop button
axes(handles.testAxes);
set(handles.stopButton, 'Enable', 'on');
% initialize number of repetitions needed to detect change
nreps = 0;

...
demoButton_Callback (part 2)

% keep alternating between the two images, with blank frame in
% between, until the user clicks on the stop button
while (get(handles.stopButton, 'Value') == 0)
    imshow(handles.im1);
    pause(presentTime);
    imshow(blank);
    pause(gapTime);
    imshow(handles.im2);
    pause(presentTime);
    imshow(blank);
    pause(gapTime);
    nreps = nreps + 1;
end
% record results (number of repeats needed to detect change)
handles.results(get(handles.imagesMenu, 'Value')) = nreps;
% reset and disable the stop button
set(handles.stopButton, 'Value', 0);
set(handles.stopButton, 'Enable', 'off');
% update handles structure
guidata(hObject, handles);

resultsButton_Callback

function resultsButton_Callback(hObject, eventdata, handles)
% display results of tests as a bar graph of the number of
% repeats needed to detect change for each image pair
axes(handles.resultsAxes);
bar(handles.results);
axis([0 5 0 max(handles.results)])
set(gca, 'XTickLabel', {'plane' 'dinner' 'farm' 'market'});
ylabel('number of repeats');
title('time needed to detect change');
Bells and whistles

Other things you may want to explore in a GUI for your final project:

- adding animation
- other GUI components
  - Slider
  - Listbox
  - Radio Buttons
- dialog boxes
- pull-down menus
- mouse control
- multi-line text boxes