
Subject: Re: How do you sort an array in IDL?
Posted by [davidf](#) on Thu, 02 Apr 1998 08:00:00 GMT
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Hi Folks,

> Here is a little example in which a two-column array is
> sorted by the values in the second column, it can
> easily be converted to a function that returns an
> array sorted by any column.

I'm in procrastination mode today. Here is my SortByColumn function. As you can see, most of it is error checking. :-)

Call it like this:

```
sortedArray = SortByColumn(array, 3)
```

Cheers,

David

```
-----  
FUNCTION SortByColumn, array, column  
  
; This function returns a sorted array of the same size and  
; type as ARRAY, sorted over the values of the specified COLUMN.  
  
; ARRAY -- 2D array to sort  
; COLUMN -- The column to sort over.  
  
On_Error, 1  
  
; Required positional parameters.  
  
IF N_Params() NE 2 THEN $  
  Message, 'ARRAY and COLUMN parameters are required'  
  
; Get size of the array. Check parameters.  
  
s = Size(array)  
IF s[0] NE 2 THEN Message, 'Input array must be 2D. Returning...'  
  
ncolumns = s[1]  
IF column GT ncolumns THEN $  
  Message, "Specified COLUMN doesn't exist. Returning..."  
  
; Sort the data by the specified column.
```

```
sortIndex = Sort(array[column,*])
```

```
RETURN, array[:,sortIndex]
```

```
END
```

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>
