
Subject: Re: Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming Update

Posted by [davidf](#) on Tue, 22 Sep 1998 07:00:00 GMT

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I appreciate Kevin Ivory's (Kevin.Ivory@linmpi.mpg.de) kind comments about my web page, and I always look forward to his suggestions. He writes:

```
> I know you are already expecting my usual "drop the FOR loops" comment
> to your pages. Here is a small one for
> http://www.dfanning.com/tips/sort_columns.html
> You write:
> FOR j=0,2 DO data[j, *] = data[j, sortIndex]
> The same is easier without the FOR loop:
> data = data[*, sortIndex]
```

I thought I was in real trouble when about 10 seconds after I posted the update article yesterday I got an e-mail from Eddie Haskell pointing out how one of my 25 line programs could have been written in a single line!

My persistent use of FOR loops stems mainly from two sources: (1) I am often writing these programs to explain a concept and the code is clearer (I think) using a FOR loop, and (2) I am not clever enough to think of these wonderfully concise non-loop constructs on my own. :-)

In any case, I appreciate the suggestions. To my credit I can usually figure out how and why these suggestions work after only an hour or so of complete befuddlement. (Although I am still working on the "baroque" piece of code Eddie posted the other day.)

```
> Thanks for the wonderful summary of tips. With all those objects tips,
> I figure I should soon be able to figure out what an object is. ;-)
> (Or perhaps I'll just wait for your next book.)
```

Uh, I wouldn't be waiting for the book. Today starts the first day of an absolutely brutal teaching schedule. You may not hear a word from me until some time next year. :-(

Cheers,

David

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