
Subject: Re: Q: IDL and endianness issues

Posted by [John-David T. Smith](#) on Tue, 11 Apr 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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Ossi Vaananen wrote:

>
> Hi!
>
> Let's say I have a binary file with known structure, and
> the file is written on a little-endian machine. Then I want
> to read it again on a big-endian machine. How do I do it?
>
> If endianness was no problem, I could do this simply by
> creating a structure with contents that match the alignment
> of the different data types in the binary file, and then
> read data to it from the file with READU.
>
> In Matlab, files can be opened with the endianness of the
> file explicitly given as an argument to fopen. In IDL manuals
> I saw no reference to such a feature in IDL.
>
> The question is, does there exist a built-in feature in IDL
> that somehow allows endianness-specified file I/O?
>

Take a look at `byteorder()` or `swap_endian()`. For best results, use the nasa routines `ieee_to_host` and `host_to_ieee`.

Good luck,

JD

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