
Subject: Re: David: for your book ?

Posted by [landsman](#) on Wed, 16 Aug 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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In article <399937D2.8C0A52A2@dkrz.de>,

Martin Schultz <martin.schultz@dkrz.de> wrote:

```
>
> What would you expect to get out of the following:
>
> test = [ 'dir1/', 'directory2/', 'another_directory/' ]
> print, strmid(test, 0, strlen(test)-1)
>
> ??
>
> Well, I at least had expected to get the directory names without the
> trailing '/'.
> But, no!
> help, strmid(test, 0, strlen(test)-1)
> reveals that the result is a 3x3 array!!
```

When IDL added vector capabilities to STRMID in V5.3, they allowed for both (1) the extraction of multiple substrings from each element of a string, and (2) having the first character position and substring length differ for each element of a string array. Unfortunately, adding all this power has made the syntax awkward. According to the documentation

"If First_Character or Length is an array, the size of their first dimension determines how many substrings are extracted from each element of <expression>"

So the solution is to REFORM the string length (or position) array to two dimensions:

```
IDL> test = [ 'dir1/', 'directory2/', 'another_directory/' ]
IDL> print, strmid(test, 0, reform( strlen(test)-1, 1, 3 ) )
==>dir1 directory2 another_directory
```

By reforming the string length array into a 1 x 3 size, STRMID now knows to extract only 1 substring from each element of test.

A simple program to extract a string array up to a specified character using the vector capabilities of STRMID is available at

<http://idlastro.gsfc.nasa.gov/ftp/v53/gettok.pro>

--Wayne Landsman

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