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Subject: Reading tab delimited string data  
Posted by [Andy Loughe](#) on Thu, 12 Oct 2000 07:00:00 GMT  
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Hello,

I have some output from a MySQL dump that looks like this...

```
id date height coverage yy yn ny nn
1388 2000-07-01 all all 114 404 240 28452
1388 2000-07-01 all low 114 404 240 28452
1388 2000-07-01 high all 114 404 240 28452
1388 2000-07-01 all all 114 404 240 28452
```

I get the data into IDL via this command...

```
spawn, 'mysql < sql_script.sql', data
IDL> help, data
DATA    STRING = Array[5] ; 5 rows of string data (tabs inserted).
```

Basically, I am working with tab delimited data with a varying number of columns and a varying number of rows, depending upon the sql query.

I am able to store the data from each column into a separate IDL vector, `id=[ ] date=[ ] height=[ ]`, etc. but the approach is to LOOP through all rows, do a `str_sep(row, string(9B))`, and then direct the result into the proper index of the IDL vector.

Looping through all the rows and manipulating each line of string data can't be the fastest approach. Can someone suggest a faster method?

I thought of ASSOC, and also wondered about `str_sep` on arrays, or maybe some of the new `str` routines. Any thoughts?

Your kind suggestions are appreciated.

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