
Subject: Re: Problem with "~" in Unix FINDFILE, still?
Posted by [thompson](#) on Thu, 09 Jun 1994 13:04:39 GMT
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pendleton@ossenu.astro.nwu.edu (Jim Pendleton) writes:

> Could someone verify the following Unix IDL "bug" for me in a more recent
> version of IDL than 3.0.0?

> The problem I am seeing is that the FINDFILE function doesn't properly
> interpret a "~" as a symbol for the home directory.

> For instance

> IDL> A = FINDFILE("-F ~ | grep /")

> results in zero entries for me in both Ultrix and SunOS versions of IDL 3.0.0.

> However,

> IDL> SPAWN, "ls -F ~ | grep /", OUTPUT
> IDL> PRINT, OUTPUT

> produces output as I would expect. Note that the use of a "." for current
> directory rather than a "~" does work properly.

I'm not sure that one can describe it as a *bug* exactly. :^) The ~ symbol is a function of the C shell (and some others such as tcsh and ksh). However, the Bourne shell does not appear to recognize ~ as \$HOME. Probably, IDL spawns out to the Bourne shell to find files.

These days, though, most people use some other shell than the Bourne shell. It would be nice if IDL interpreted ~ as they expect it to. I never thought to try something as fancy as Jim Pendleton did, but I would expect to be able to say something like

```
IDL> A = FINDFILE('~/*.dat')
```

Bill Thompson
