
Subject: FILEPATH, FILE_MKDIR and portability
Posted by [weitkamp](#) on Sat, 22 Sep 2001 14:12:08 GMT
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Dear people,

Generally using IDL on Unix systems, I thought I'd be nice and try to write my next routine in a way that would allow to run it on other OS families. Now at a certain point in the code, I need to create a scratch subdirectory. In Unix this would be called, say, "/tmp/mydir". Of course in other OSs the name is different. I understand that FILEPATH(/TMP, SUBDIR='mydir', 'myfile') will get me the full path name of a file named "myfile" in such a directory. But to create the directory, I need its name alone.

I know that on my Unix or Linux machines, I get a correct result when I do

```
IDL> tmpdir = FILEPATH(/TMP, 'mydir')  
IDL> FILE_MKDIR, tmpdir
```

But nothing tells me that this will work on just any other operating system, e.g., one that makes a cleaner distinction between files and directories than Unix does. It'd probably work on Windows (though I'd appreciate if someone out there could test and confirm this); I don't know if it would work on a Mac, and am quite sure it would fail on VMS. So what is the correct general way of creating a directory, if not one that starts with "CASE !VERSION.OS_FAMILY OF ..."?

Thanks,

Timm

PS. Also, I wonder if it is a bug or a feature that when using FILEPATH with the keyword TMP, the SUBDIRECTORY keyword does not seem to work:

```
IDL> tmpfile = FILEPATH(/TMP, SUBDIRECTORY='subdir', 'file.dat')  
IDL> HELP, tmpfile  
IDL> TMPFILE      STRING    = '/usr/tmp/file.dat'
```

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