
Subject: Re: Unsatisfactory 'file_test()' behavior
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 17 Dec 2001 15:01:41 GMT
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Matt Feinstein (mfein@clark.net) writes:

```
> If I do
>
> e = file_test("")
>
> that is, test for the existence of a file whose name is a zero-length
> string, I get e = 1. This is not good ! (Using IDL v5.4 WinNT 4.0).
```

The reasons for this are obscure, but have to do with the quantum properties of vacuums. It turns out that you can never say that a particular unit of space is "empty", since quantum fluctuations cause physical elements to appear, however briefly. IDL is frequently used to solve this type of cutting-edge problem.

Cheers,

David

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