
Subject: Re: signed character

Posted by [Mark Rivers](#) on Thu, 25 Apr 2002 13:24:52 GMT

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Carmen <cambicambi@hotmail.com> wrote in message
news:8128b197.0204250239.509a20fb@posting.google.com...

> Hello,

>

> I am trying to access information stored in a matrix, byte per byte.

> If I were using C, I should read every byte as SIGNED CHARACTERS.

> But, IDL has not that definition.

>

> I would appreciate a lot if you can tell me what should I do in order

> to read the data correctly.

If A is the matrix containing an IDL byte array (which IDL assumes is unsigned) then you could do

```
; First convert A to a signed 16-bit integer array
```

```
a = fix(a)
```

```
; Find the indices of the negative elements (MSB of 8-bit value set)
```

```
negs = where(a and '80'x)
```

```
; Extended the sign to 16 bits
```

```
a[negs]=a[negs] or 'ff80'x
```

The drawbacks of this approach are that your matrix is twice as big (16 bits vs 8 bits), and that you need to create the temporary array "negs". If your matrix is only 2-D and not terribly huge then this should be fine.

Mark Rivers
