
Subject: Re: readcol procedure

Posted by [Wayne Landsman](#) on Wed, 11 Sep 2002 14:54:10 GMT

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Reimar Bauer wrote:

- > this routine is platform dependent because it uses a unix shell command.
- > I like unix but it's not a problem for idl to determine this itself.

numlines.pro (<http://idlastro.gsfc.nasa.gov/ftp/pro/misc/numlines.pro> called by readcol.pro) only spawns to the Unix 'wc' command if !VERSION.OS equals 'unix' (for speed). Otherwise it counts the number of lines.

- > Perhaps you can try the routine file_line I have defined in 1996 and
- > which was improved later by Paul Krummel. You can find this routine by
- > David at http://www.dfanning.com/tip_examples/file_line.pro

Hmm, I would have thought that reading the entire file into a byte array simply to count the number of lines would be overkill. But in my quick tests, file_line.pro does seem to be faster than counting the number of lines, and almost as fast (on Unix) as spawning to 'wc'.

I have heard a rumor that there may be a standardized way of counting the number of lines in a file in the next release of IDL ;-)

--Wayne
