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Subject: Re: last array index subscript

Posted by [James Kuyper](#) on Thu, 23 Jan 2003 18:40:38 GMT

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Chad Bender wrote:

>  
> Hi --  
>  
> Is there a way in IDL to directly reference the last element of a vector  
> without first determining how many elements the vector contains?  
>  
> For example, something like:  
>  
> n=N\_Elements(my\_array)  
> value=my\_array[n-1]  
>  
> except without having to make the call to N\_Elements. Granted, avoiding  
> the N\_Elements call probably doesn't save a lot of time. But I figured  
> that with all of the complicated syntax that IDL accepts, there might be a  
> direct way to do this. The Bldg Apps guide says you can extract a  
> subarray from some element e to the end of the array like this:  
>  
> subarray=my\_array[e:]\*]  
>  
> So it seems to me that IDL knows what that last index is. I tried  
> something like:  
>  
> value=my\_array[\*-1], but (not unexpectedly) this caused a syntax error.  
>  
> I figure that what I want is probably impossible, but if anyone knows how  
> to do it your advice is appreciated.

This doesn't have any advantages that I can see over the N\_ELEMENTS  
method; in fact, it's quite a bit less efficient; but it does work:

```
(reverse(my_array))[0]
```

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