
Subject: Re: formatting array output?

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Fri, 31 Jan 2003 16:41:20 GMT

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Murat Maga (maga@mail.utexas.edu) writes:

- > I have an integer array (2000x1000) which I would like to write in file
- > in the typical matrix convention. I think IDL breaks the line at 80th
- > column and everything starts to look quite messy.
- > To format an array output, do I use the print/printf, or are there any
- > other tricks good to know?

Years ago, before all of us were born (circa 1875), computer programs weren't written in a text editor. They were written on punch cards. You hammered away at a big typewriter-like console with really big keys. You had to slam them pretty good, because the arms of the keys had to punch a chad out of the card. Hanging chads were quite a serious problem in those days (I.e., it wasn't just the future of our country that depended upon it, it was an extra day or two running back and forth to the computer center that was at stake!).

Anyway, those cards had 80 columns and the number 80 has been indelibly imprinted on computer operations ever since. If you want your output "line" to have, say, 20000 columns (suitable for 2000 values, each having a width of 10 characters), you would use the WIDTH keyword when you open the file:

```
OPENW, 1, 'myfile.txt', Width=20000
```

Now you can put your data into the file in the way you like:

```
FOR j=0,999 DO PRINTF, 1, data[:,j], Format='(I10)'
```

When you look at it in a text editor, however, you might find that the editor word-wraps at 80 characters. :-(

Cheers,

David

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David W. Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

Phone: 970-221-0438, E-mail: david@dfanning.com

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