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Subject: Re: Test if variable is a string  
Posted by [R.Bauer](#) on Mon, 17 Feb 2003 10:36:07 GMT  
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M. Katz wrote:

Did you recognize the tname keyword of size?

```
IDL> print,size(10L,/tname)
LONG
```

regards  
Reimar

> Here's a handy little function I've been using for years.  
> var\_type.pro  
> I think I added a number of new type names back in 2001.  
> If RSI adds more types in the future, they'll probably  
> be appended to the list rather than change the existing list.  
> In that case, you'll have to modify the list.  
>  
> So the function returns the type as a number. But if  
> you set the /string keyword, you'll get a string containing  
> the name of the type.  
>  
> For example:  
> IDL> print, var\_type(10L)
> 3
> IDL> print, var\_type(10L, /s)
> Longword Integer
>
> ;+
> ; IDL function: var\_type.pro
> ; for a given input variable, this function returns
> ; the type of that variable. The returned value is a number 0-15
> ; similar to the second-to-last field in the "size" function,
> ; or if the keyword "string" is used, a string.
> ;-
>
> function var\_type, a, string=string
>
> s = ['Undefined','Byte','Integer','Longword
> Integer','Floating-point', \$
> 'Double-precision floating','Complex
> floating','String','Structure', \$
> 'Double-precision complex','Pointer','Object reference', \$
> 'Unsigned Integer','Unsigned Longword Integer','64-bit

```
> Integer',$  
>      'Unsigned 64-bit Integer']  
>  
> return, Keyword_set(string) ? s(size(a, /type)):size(a, /type)  
> end  
>  
> I also have a closely related function called defined.pro that tests  
> true-or-false, if a given variable is defined or not. It also uses  
> size(x, /type), that's why I'm including it here.  
>  
> ;+  
> ; IDL function: defined.pro  
> ; For a given input variable, this function returns  
> ; 1b if the variable is defined  
> ; 0b if the variable is undefined  
> ;-  
>  
> function defined, a  
> return, (size(a, /type) NE 0)  
> end  
>  
>  
> Hope this helps,  
>  
> M. Katz
```

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a IDL library at ForschungsZentrum Juelich  
[http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg-i/idl\\_icglib/idl\\_lib\\_intro.html](http://www.fz-juelich.de/icg/icg-i/idl_icglib/idl_lib_intro.html)

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