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Subject: Re: exporting table data to a CSV file  
Posted by [K. Bowman](#) on Wed, 17 Sep 2003 13:49:12 GMT  
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In article <faf44c99.0309170518.45b76bff@posting.google.com>,  
timothy.williams@nvl.army.mil (Tim Williams) wrote:

```
> Hi.  
>  
> I want to output the contents of a table to a CSV file for import to  
> Excel, or perhaps something else. I don't know in advance the data  
> type of the cells, so I can't use the FORMAT= keyword. I've coded up  
> something, but I know FOR loops are "bad" and was wondering if there  
> is a better way.  
>  
> Here's what I have (coding from memory here)  
>  
> widget_control, table, get_value=values  
> labels=tag_names(values)  
>  
> ;write header  
> printf, lun, strjoin(labels, ', ')  
> outarr=strarr(n_tags(values))  
> ;write out each row  
> for i=0, n_elements(values)-1 do begin  
>   for j=0, n_tags(values)-1 do outarr[j]=values[i].(j)  
>   printf, lun, strjoin(outarr, ', ')  
> endfor  
>  
>  
> Is there a better way to do this?  
>  
> I also saw David Fannings code about writing CSV files, and learned  
> about the WIDTH keyword to OPEN. What's a good way to get the max  
> width of the table so my output won't get truncated?  
>  
> Thanks.
```

It is probably easier to simply write the output file using free-form output. When you want to import into Excel, use the Excel Text-to-columns tool to split the input lines into columns. You can select, 'Space' as a delimiter when splitting the columns.

If you have strings in your output, it can cause problems. If the strings do not contain internal blanks, pad them with blanks at the beginning and end of each string. If they do have internal blanks, try adding quotes (") at the beginning and end.

