
Subject: Re: what's wrong with this? --- ' vs " problem
Posted by [JD Smith](#) on Wed, 05 May 2004 22:44:09 GMT
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On Tue, 04 May 2004 19:49:45 +0200, Norbert Hahn wrote:

```
> mmiller3@iupui.edu (Michael A. Miller) wrote:
>
>> Ok, this I don't get. Is it a 'feature' or a "bug"? I vote for
>> bug in how IDL parses octal numbers.
>
> It's a poor feature. A string starting with " followed by a digit
> starts an octal input, not necessarily a number. Thus your input
>
>> IDL> file=" 040301_0932_2004-00005_mouse1_12x10s-4x30s-3x120s-4x300s-pro j.jpg "
>
> make file a variable of type Int and a value of octal 040301, decimal
> 16577.
>
> If you enter file="0403010932 then the variable type is long and the
> value in decimal is 543213431.
>
> The underline character is not a valid octal digit, hence "Syntax error".
```

I vote for a COMPILE_OPT option turning off this "feature". Whoever decided to use unpaired string delimiters for octal constants probably hadn't yet written the interpreter to actually recognize those constants. A much better syntax, should you have a need for octals, is:

```
angstrom=string('305'OB)
```

which has the advantage that it matches the hexadecimal notation:

```
angstrom=string('C5'XB)
```

I guess we should be thankful they didn't offer 'HHH as a hexadecimal shorthand.

JD

P.S. Use of "NNN octal notation in IDLWAVE tends to wreak havoc with the fontification.
