
Subject: Re: GETHELP function -- where can I find it?
Posted by [Fergus Gallagher](#) on Thu, 04 May 1995 07:00:00 GMT
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Russ Welti <rwelti@u.washington.edu> wrote:

```
> Last week I posted asking about a way to get HELP info on a
> variable returned as a string array:
>
>> Does anyone know if I can get the normal HELP info on
>> just a simple variable back similarly, as in:
>
>> help,var=var or maybe help,/stru,struct=some_struct
>
> I found my own answer, in the GETHELP function, in 3.6.1.
>
> HOWEVER, it won't run. Does anyone have a working GETHELP
> function?
>
> The documentation says I can do this, but:
>
> IDL> a=gethelp()
>
> a=gethelp()
>      ^
> % Syntax error.
> IDL> print,filepath('gethelp')
> % Compiled module: FILEPATH.
> /opt/idl/gethelp
> IDL> $ls /opt/idl/gethelp*
> /opt/idl/gethelp*: No such file or directory
>
> The 4.0 beta help system says the file is in "the lib subdirectory
> of the IDL distribution". I can find no source file for GETHELP
> *anywhere* on my machine.
>
> Does anyone have a copy of it I can get?
>
> Thanks much,
>
```

Firstly, FILEPATH('xxxx') returns \$IDL_DIR/xxxx even if xxxx doesn't exist.

Secondly, GETHELP could be a IDL primitive, and hence it need not have a file associated with it.

Lastly, I said that I was TOLD that GETHELP would be included in IDL 4.0.

In the meantime, try the following:

```
function gethelp,x
  if breakdown(x)='imminent' then begin
    print,'Please do not rely on beta versions'
  end
  return,string(randomu(seed,100))
end
```

You're welcome much.

Fergus

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=====
| Fergus Gallagher          |
| Remote Sensing Applications Development Unit |
| British National Space Centre      |
| Monks Wood                      |
| Huntingdon PE17 2LS / UK          |
|                                |
| F.Gallagher@nerc.ac.uk          |
| http://uh.nmt.ac.uk/bnsc/fgg.html |
=====
```
