
Subject: Re: floats from strings... duh!

Posted by [zowie](#) on Fri, 26 May 1995 07:00:00 GMT

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Pete Clinch (pjclinch@dux.dundee.ac.uk) wrote:

: I'm sure I'm missing something obvious... want to do the equivalent of a
: C sscanf or atof on a string I've got in a PV-Wave program that has a
: floating point number in string form.

: Rather than write my own function to convert "1.234" to 1.234, is there a
: way in the system to do it easily?

Yeah -- just cast it. If you don't bother, IDL will usually cast it for
you, ie 'A = 5 + "3.14"' will set A to 8.14. This is (IMAO) the Wrong
Thing, because IDL will cast strings to numbers in contexts where you
don't want it, ie

```
mydata = indgen(30)
plotno = 5
plot,mydata,title="Plot number "+plotno
```

will screw up by attempting to cast "Plot number " to an integer, and generate
an error message. You have to say

```
plot,mydata,title="Plot number "+string(plotno)
```

which won't look right because the title will be "Plot number 5"
instead of "Plot number 5", so you need to tack another bag on that:

```
plot,mydata,title="Plot number "+strtrim(string(plotno),2)
```

which is a lot of verbiage for text formatting that you could do more
elegantly on an Apple][in 1978.

All this is a long winded way of saying not to worry, IDL will convert
your strings for you whether you want it to or not!

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Craig DeForest "My research group launched a rocket into space, and all I
got was this lousy T-shirt"
