
Subject: Re: strmid()

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 11 Jan 2006 14:31:49 GMT

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Sheldon writes:

```
> Can someone check this out and explain it to me because I don't get it
> at all:
> *****
> a = "some_ordinaryfile.h5"
> IDL> print, strmid(a,0,2,/reverse_offset)
> 5
> IDL> print, strmid(a,0,3,/reverse_offset)
> 5
> IDL> print, strmid(a,0,1)
> s
> IDL> print, strmid(a,0,2)
> so
> IDL> print, strmid(a,0,3)
> som
> IDL>
> Now according to the instruction book the keyword: REVERSE_OFFSET
> forces IDL to start counting from the end of the file so it should work
> like this:
> print, strmid(a,0,2,/reverse_offset)
> h5
```

Reverse_Offset means that instead of counting from the left, you now count from the right. It doesn't have anything to do with which direction the LENGTH is taken in. The length is always counted in the direction to the right of the starting point.

So, if you position yourself to the right of your string and take an offset of 0, you position yourself at the "5". No matter what length you ask for, there is only one character to read from that position.

What you want is this:

```
IDL> Print, strmid(2,3, /reverse_offset)
.h5
```

You were thinking of offsets as if we had reversed the string. But, of course, we can't do that unless we want to also start reading text right to left. :-)

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>
