
Subject: Re: How does one read in simple binary files?

Posted by [hahn](#) on Mon, 15 Jan 1996 08:00:00 GMT

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Several good examples were given but

thompson@achilles.nascom.nasa.gov (William Thompson) wrote:

> Yep.

> All you would need to do for your example of a 128x128 array would be the
> following:

> IDL> OPENR, UNIT, 'filename1', /GET_LUN

As the poster of the original question didn't not mention which programming language was used to write the binary data I want to point to an additional keyword for IDL's open procedures. It is /fortran_77 which takes care of extra words the run time system of Fortran adds for binary files. Binary Fortran files have the record length of transferred record prepended and appended to the record, *if the operating system is some Unix flavor*. In following Fortran chunk will read 10 elements of a real array from standard input and write it as one binary record on unit 27:

```
real x(10)
read(*,*) x
write(27) x
end
```

will result in 48 bytes being written: 4 bytes contain the record length (40) as integer value, 40 data bytes follow, and then the header is repeated.

> William Thompson

Norbert Hahn
