
Subject: Re: Reading a set of data with string type entries
Posted by [Peter Clinch](#) on Fri, 30 Nov 2007 13:08:50 GMT
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mystea wrote:

- > I need to read in a large set of data. Each entry is started with a
- > name, followed by many numbers.
- > The numbers are separated by spaces, but the length of each number is
- > not fixed.
- >
- > My problem is like this: Since the data starts with a string, I can't
- > use free-format readf (because by default, the string slot will read
- > the whole line.) and due to the unknown length of numbers, I can't use
- > a format code, either.
- >
- > What should I do?

In this sort of situation I usually write a quick hack in Perl to turn the input file into something that's easy to process. Perl deals with any text you can find pretty much /any/ pattern in remarkably well and it's often easier to pre-process that and leave IDL for the pictures and number crunching.

(Also very handy for going through verbose data files and binning all the shite you're not interested in before you read it into IDL)

Pete.

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