
Subject: Re: read_ascii for many rows / possible to create automatic names for variables

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Sat, 05 Jan 2008 15:56:12 GMT

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Britta writes:

> a Happy New Year and a new question concerning this stuff. I'd like to
> use a for loop to use this routine for many files of the same type,
> but i end alway up in errors (loops are really one of my
> infirmnesses).
>
> How can i deal with this?

Ah, yes. Well, you need a doctor. You have come to the right place if you want a loopy one. :-)

> Where do i have to use the indices for the
> different files?

The best thing for you to do is to probably learn how to put a breakpoint in your code so you can walk through it a couple of times, understanding how it works. Once you do that, I can't imagine you ever having trouble with loop indices again. It might help to have a piece of paper and a pencil handy, as well as a clear idea of what it is you *expect* the program to do.

```
> #####  
>  
> files = FILE_SEARCH('E:\Dissertation\field_campaigns  
> \Megacities07\spectrometer  
> \Megacities07_2\PC1_VIS_VN3_VN1\cosinus_vn1\90\normal\VISA-  
> CH2_VIS2\ALBEDO*.dat',count=nfiles)  
> files_dif= FILE_SEARCH('E:\Dissertation\field_campaigns  
> \Megacities07\spectrometer  
> \Megacities07_2\PC1_VIS_VN3_VN1\cosinus_vn1\90\dark\VISA-  
> CH2_VIS2\ALBEDO*.dat',count=nfiles_dif)  
>  
> for i=0,nfiles-1 do begin  
>  
> rows = File_Lines(files)
```

Your immediate problem is here. The purpose of the line above is to find out how many rows there are in the file you are about to read. You have passed it the whole list of files.

Naturally, FILE_LINES is confused. :-)

Since files is a long list, and since you are doing this is a loop, with the index I, you will want to subscript this list with the index in order to find the right file:

```
rows = File_Lines(files[I])
```

Or, if I wanted this code to be even clearer, I might write something like this:

```
FOR j=0,nfiles-1 to BEGIN  
  thisfile = files[j]  
  rows = File_Lines(thisfile)
```

It is not clear to me from your code what you expect to do with this data you are collecting from all these files, but perhaps we can solve that problem later. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

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Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")
