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Subject: how to sort data based on other sorted data  
Posted by [placebo](#) on Wed, 09 Jan 2008 19:24:27 GMT  
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Hello all,

I have an input file containing coordinate data (three columns) with a couple thousand rows. In order to keep this post short lets say the data file has 8 coordinates scrambled in the list, and I want to sort it first by the 'z' coordinate (3rd column) then by the 'y' coordinate (2nd column) then finally by the 'x' column. for example:

unsorted:

```
x y z
- - -
2 1 2
1 2 2
2 1 1
1 1 1
1 2 1
2 2 2
1 1 2
2 2 1
```

sorted:

```
1 1 1
2 1 1
1 2 1
2 2 1
1 1 2
2 1 2
1 2 2
2 2 2
```

I've already written a routine that will perform this calculation but it involves using 3 nested FOR loops. So, here's a challenge to you all. Can you figure out a way to do this without using any FOR loops?

Cheers,

Placebo

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