Subject: Identify largish array with a shortish string
Posted by Mark[1] on Wed, 28 May 2008 22:28:43 GMT
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When writing functions that take a long time to execute, it is my custom to add some simple code to store the results in a temporary file, this file being saved the first time the function is invoked with a given set of inputs, and restored on any subsequent invocation with the same inputs.

So obviously I need to encode the inputs in the file name. This is not a problem when the inputs are small, as they might be when the function is processing data from some dataset, and the input to the function is just a couple of 2-element vectors specifying the longitude and latitude range. Or whatever, the point is that I have used this approach successfully and (surprisingly) never run into the problem I have now.

I now want to use the approach for a function in which the input is a big numeric array. So I need a way to represent each big numeric array (its dimensions and values) in the file name with a low probability of another big numeric array having the same representation and hence causing the function to retrieve the same file by mistake. Obviously I can't have a zero probability, but a reasonably low probability will be fine.

So do such functions exist and are there any implementations in IDL?