
Subject: Re: ? Number of lines in a file
Posted by [derekfox](#) on Thu, 06 Feb 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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In article <1997Feb5.160127.7541@queens-belfast.ac.uk>, D.Kennedy@qub.ac.uk (David Kennedy) writes:

```
> In article <5ctkah$rq@uwm.edu>,
> gunter@alpha1.csd.uwm.edu (David Gunter) writes:
>> I need to know how many lines are in a file so I use:
>>
>> spawn, "fgrep -cv 'gbrsh' "+filename, n_lines
>>
>> Is there a more efficient way to do this? I've searched the manuals with no
>> luck.
>>
>> BTW, I'm running on a UNIX system for those confused by the above line. ;)
>
> Well, this isn't much easier but 'wc -l'(UNIX) returns the number of lines
> in a file, it simplifies things if nothing else.
> --
```

If you're willing to have another one-trick pony sitting in your \$IDL_PATH, using IDL-only routines will be much faster (factor of 50 improvement on my machine), after compilation, than any "spawn".

Try this "n_lines.pro".

One warning: results seem to differ from those of `wc -l` for non-ascii files.

--Derek Fox

```
function n_lines,file

on_ioerror,ioerr
openr,unit,file,/get_lun,error=err
if err ne 0 then begin
    ioerr:
    message,'Error reading file '+file,/inform
    return,-1
endif

nlines=0l & line=""
while not eof(unit) do begin
    readf,unit,line
    nlines=nlines+1
endwhile
```

free_lun,unit

return,nlines

end
