
Subject: Re: bug? or how to distinguish between a Hash and an array of Hashes ?
Posted by [markb77](#) on Mon, 04 Mar 2013 14:39:35 GMT

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I've updated this a bit. It seems that the HELP command can distinguish between the two cases, but SIZE(), even with the /STRUCTURE keyword specified, cannot.

pro test

```
a = hash('first', 1, 'second', 2)
b = hash('third', 3, 'fourth', 4, 'fifth', 5)

print, 'Output of SIZE() for a HASH variable:'
print, size(a, /STRUCTURE)

c = [a,b]
print, 'Output of SIZE() for an array of HASHes:'
print, size(c, /STRUCTURE)

help, a, output=ahelp
help, c, output=chelp

print, ahelp
print, chelp
```

end

IDL> test

Output of SIZE() for a HASH variable:

```
{ OBJREF      11      0      0      2
 1         2      0      0      0
 0         0      0      0
}
```

Output of SIZE() for an array of HASHes:

```
{ OBJREF      11      0      0      2
 1         2      0      0      0
 0         0      0      0
}
```

```
A      HASH <ID=18 NELEMENTS=2>
C      OBJREF  = Array[2]
```

so I could solve this by parsing the output of HELP, but this is

strongly discouraged in the documentation for the IDL Help command itself, as the text formatting of the output from this command may change...
