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Subject: Re: i need to use this idl function. but how ?  
Posted by [Dick Jackson](#) on Fri, 19 Jun 2015 18:31:38 GMT  
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On Friday, 19 June 2015 10:02:49 UTC-7, David Fanning wrote:

> Cibi Raj writes:

>  
>> This is the notes given in the read\_wind\_mfi.pro and it should be called by  
>>  
>> IDL> test = read\_wind\_mfi([arguments],KEYWORDS=[keywords])  
>>  
>> this. Now I need to know what to put in the place of arguments and keywords ?  
>>  
>> Can you please provide me an example of it , so i could just change the value and put it on  
IDL. ?  
>  
> Why don't you just keep reading? The documentation will explain the  
> arguments to you, the order in which they should be placed after the  
> name of the command, and the purpose and name of each of the keywords  
> you can use.  
>  
> Honestly, if you can't figure this out on your own (perhaps with a bit  
> of experimentation), you will never be able to use IDL. You should give  
> up now and save yourself immense frustration. I say this in the kindest  
> way possible. :-)  
>  
> Cheers,  
>  
> David

It looks like Cibi Raj has given all the documentation that was available, but needs a hand to connect the dots. If they had added an EXAMPLE section to the documentation, it might look like this:

```
; EXAMPLE  
; result = read_wind_mfi(DATE='123199', TRANGE=[startTime, endTime])  
;   (where startTime and endTime are numbers in "Unix time")  
;   (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unix\_time)
```

Don't give up hope! I think you first need to know the basics of IDL procedure and function calling. This page, describing how IDL routines are documented, may give some helpful examples:  
[http://www.exelisvis.com/docs/idl\\_syntax.html](http://www.exelisvis.com/docs/idl_syntax.html)

Can anyone offer a link to a better "orientation" for someone who is thrown into the waters of IDL, perhaps as a first-time programmer without access to a mentor or even a good book? I will point out David's fine book (in PDF form), for those who have the option of buying it:  
[http://www.idlcoyote.com/coyotestore/index.php?main\\_page=product\\_info&cPath=66&products\\_id=183](http://www.idlcoyote.com/coyotestore/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=66&products_id=183)

Cheers,  
-Dick

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