
Subject: Re: filename check

Posted by [Craig Markwardt](#) on Tue, 24 Oct 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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Stuart Colley <src@star.ucl.ac.uk> writes:

> Can anyone suggest a way to check that a file exists before attempting to
> read from it, since the error messages obtained from trying to read from a
> non-existing file, don't make it clear that file doesn't exist.

Use the ERROR keyword to OPENR to detect an error condition quietly.
The value returned in this keyword will be non-zero if the file could
not be opened. Also the !ERROR_STATE system variable will contain
helpful information describing the error:

```
NAME      STRING  'IDL_M_CNTOPNFIL'  
MSG       STRING  'OPENR: Error opening file: snorg.'  
SYS_MSG   STRING  'No such file or directory'
```

According to RSI, the error conditions in !ERROR_STATE.NAME are
guaranteed to remain constant in future versions of IDL. To implement
it in practice, consider this:

```
get_lun, unit  
openr, unit, filename, error=err
```

```
if err NE 0 then begin  
  free_lun, unit  
  message, 'ERROR: could not open '+filename  
endif  
; Read file ...
```

I tend to use GET_LUN explicitly so that the unit is guaranteed to be
valid when it is freed. I've nit-picked about this on the newsgroup
before.

Craig

--

```
-----  
Craig B. Markwardt, Ph.D.    EMAIL:  craigmnet@cow.physics.wisc.edu  
Astrophysics, IDL, Finance, Derivatives | Remove "net" for better response  
-----
```

Subject: Re: filename check

Posted by [mole6e23](#) on Tue, 24 Oct 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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In article

<Pine.OSF.3.96.1001024143333.20360F-100000@zuexp7.star.ucl.ac.uk>, Stuart Colley <src@star.ucl.ac.uk> wrote:

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> read from it, since the error messages obtained from trying to read from a
> non-existing file, don't make it clear that file doesn't exist.

>

> cheers,

> S

```
;; The following requires IDL 5.3 or higher...
```

```
;; if you don't have it, you'll have to figure
```

```
;; out the type yourself using the normal size
```

```
;; function
```

```
function file_exists, fileName
```

```
    if( size( fileName, /type ) ne 7 ) then return, 0
```

```
    fileList = findfile( fileName )
```

```
    if( fileList[0] eq " ) then return, 0 else return, 1
```

```
end ;; file_exists
```

--

Good luck!

Todd

Subject: Re: filename check

Posted by [Martin Schultz](#) on Tue, 24 Oct 2000 07:00:00 GMT

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Stuart Colley wrote:

>

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> read from it, since the error messages obtained from trying to read from a
> non-existing file, don't make it clear that file doesn't exist.

>

> cheers,

> S

No, but the error message you get when you try to open the file with OPENR will tell you this. You may want to try out my open_file procedure which adds a couple of additional features such as seamless integration of the dialog_pickfile routine if you specify a name with wildcards (or no name at all). And this does error checking...

