
Subject: Re: converting strings into numerical or string data depending on the contents

Posted by [wlandsman](#) on Tue, 02 Oct 2012 23:26:24 GMT

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On Tuesday, October 2, 2012 7:09:23 PM UTC-4, M. Katz wrote:

> I'm looking for a way to elegantly transform string values:

>

> (a) keeping it as string-type when the string does not contain only numbers

>

> (b) convert into numeric-type data when appropriate.

>

You could look at the functions http://idlastro.gsfc.nasa.gov/ftp/pro/misc/valid_num.pro
and <http://idlastro.gsfc.nasa.gov/ftp/pro/misc/strnumber.pro>

The first uses stregex to identify a valid number, while the second traps a conversion error. They could be used like

if strnumber(x,value) then x = value

if valid_num(x,value) then x = value
