
Subject: Re: the difference between ' and "
Posted by [Tim Patterson](#) on Mon, 17 Feb 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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It's a bug. The current IDL compiler doesn't check for a matching pair of ""'s, but just sees the first " followed by a number and immediately interprets it as an octal number instead.

Wonder if they'll fix this in IDL Version 5? Is there a list of the bug fixes they are doing for version 5, or is there just the glossy flyer about all the new features?

Tim

R. Bauer wrote:

```
>  
> I found that's there is a difference for using ' or " to sign numbers as  
> strings.  
>  
> IDL> a='1'  
> IDL> a="1"  
>  
> a="1"  
>   ^  
> % Syntax error.  
>  
> The users guide said that both ' and " have the same useabilty.  
>  
> It's not true.  
>  
> --  
> R.Bauer  
>  
> Institut fuer Stratosphaerische Chemie (ICG-1)  
> Forschungszentrum Juelich  
> email: R.Bauer@kfa-juelich.de
```

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<http://condor.lpl.arizona.edu/~tim/>

Subject: Re: the difference between ' and "
Posted by [davidf](#) on Mon, 17 Feb 1997 08:00:00 GMT
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R. Bauer <r.bauer@kfa-juelich.de> writes:

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>
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>
> It's not true.
```

IDL has trouble with a="1" because it thinks you are trying to make the variable "a" the octal value 1. In other words,

```
a = "1
```

This is a result of using the same alphanumeric characters to designate octal and hexadecimal number as for the quote characters.

If you weren't trying to make strings of numbers, whether you used single or double quotes wouldn't matter. At least as long as you use them consistently. :-)

Cheers!

David

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E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com
Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: http://www.dfanning.com
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