

Re: problem with spaces in quoted string arguments

Source: <http://unix.derkeiler.com/Newsgroups/comp.unix.shell/2007-10/msg00604.html>

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 - *Date:* Fri, 26 Oct 2007 03:54:49 +0200
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Janis Papanagnou wrote:

rec.woodworking wrote:

I am passing a list of file records to awk in an attempt to extract the 2nd field of each record. The records consist of strings separated by a space. Some of the strings themselves contain spaces and these are in double quotes. For example:

```
10.1.1.2 "testserver" 128.8.183.2
10.1.2.2 "photon hub" 128.8.181.2
10.1.1.7 "voltserver" 128.8.187.4
```

I simply cat the file into gawk and I was hoping to extract the name fields:

```
cat test2 | awk '{print $2}'
"testserver"
"photon
"voltserver"
```

As can be seen in the output, the server called "photon hub" did not extract properly, since the space was detected in the argument to awk. I have looked for an option to ignore spaces within double quotes and can find none. The easy thing to do is write a quick C program to do this, but perhaps there is a simple work around that I do not know about.

If your data is as shown above and you just want to extract the one field then you can redefine the field separator...

```
awk -F" '{print $2}' test2
```

```
awk -F" '{print "\"" $2 "\"}'
```

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....if you want to keep the quotes.

Janis

Thanks
Fritz