

# finding words in binary files

In Unix the `strings -a` command will output all the text strings in a binary file.

Solaris man page for `strings` says: “The `strings` utility looks for ASCII strings in a binary file. A string is any sequence of 4 or more printing characters ending with a newline or a null character.”

This was extremely helpful just now while trying to debug a program where we didn't have the source code. In this case it let us find all references to `spss`.

```
strings -a subsda3 | grep -i spss
```

Apple OS/X also seems to have the “`string`” command.

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