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HyperCard: How To Determine HyperCard Field Line Count

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On occasion, HyperCard programmers need to know how many lines are in a field. There are two ways of looking at this question. One is how to determine the number of display lines in a field due to word wrap. The other thing you might want to know is how many return characters are in a field. HyperCard tells you this, if you ask how many lines are in the given field. The question of how many display lines are in a field is a bit more difficult. The script at the end of this article can get this information for you.

The script works by taking the given field, changing it to a scrolling field (if it isn't already), and then making the height of it the smallest multiple of the size of the text height greater than 50 pixels. This is done because the next step it does is to scroll from the top of the field to the bottom. If field is not at least 50 pixels high, it will not scroll.

Once HyperCard has scrolled to the bottom of the field, it can tell you how much text has been scrolled off. With this information, the size of the window, and the height of the text, you can calculate the number of lines.

The height of the field is made smaller, because if the visible field is not filled enough to scroll, there is no way to determine how much of the field (number of lines) has text in it. However, as stated above, the field also has to be tall enough to scroll. The combination of these two requirements means that the script below can determine the number display lines, if that number is greater than 3. If there are less than three lines, it tells you there are 3, anyway. Here's the script:

```
on mouseUp
    put empty
    lock screen

put the style of fld test into holdStyle
-- so you can reset the style
```

```
get the rect of fld test
put it into holdRect
-- so you can reset the rect

if the style of fld test does not "scrolling"
then
  set the style of fld test to "scrolling"
  add 15 to item 3 of it
  -- to account for the scroll bar
end if

set the scroll of fld test to 0
-- get to the top
put (item 2 of the rect of fld test + 50) into item 4 of it
-- make the field as small as possible to account for small amounts
-- data and still scroll
set the rect of fld test to it

drag from item 3 of the rect of fld test - 8,item 2 of the rect of
fld test + 20 to item 3 of the rect of fld test - 8,item 4 of
the rect of fld test - 20
-- grab the thumb and drag to the end of the field

put the scroll of fld test + (item 4 of the rect of fld test - item
2 of the rect of fld test) into fldHeight
-- gives the height of the field in pixels
put fldHeight / the textHeight of fld test into numLines
-- gives the number of displayed lines
-- NOTE! this does not account for carriage returns in the field
put "the number of lines is" && numLines

set the style of fld test to holdStyle
set the rect of fld test to holdRect
unlock screen
end mouseUp
```

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