How do I import a whitespace-delimited text file into MySQL?

Asked 16 years, 2 months ago   Modified 13 years, 7 months ago   Viewed 15k times

5

I need to import largish (24MB) text files into a MySQL table. Each line looks like this:

```
1 1 0.008  0  0  0  0  0
```

There are one or more spaces after each field, and the last field is tailed by about 36 spaces before the newline.

How do I import such a file into MySQL? From the documentation it seems that LOAD DATA expects all fields to be terminated by exactly the same string. I have tried

```
LOAD DATA INFILE 'filename' INTO TABLE mytable FIELDS TERMINATED BY ' ';
```

but MySQL will interpret a sequence of more than one space as delimiting an empty field.

Any ideas?

mysql   load-data-infile   mysqlimport

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edited Dec 27, 2009 at 3:27
OMG Ponies
332k ● 85 ● 534 ● 507

asked Oct 1, 2008 at 7:13
lindelof
35.2k ● 31 ● 102 ● 144

4 Answers

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If you're on unix/linux then you can put it through sed.

open a terminal and type:

```
sed 's/ \+/ /g' thefile > thefile.new
```

this replaces all sequences of multiple spaces with one space.

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answered Oct 1, 2008 at 7:19

Jauco
1,319 ● 13 ● 23

If you're on Windows, just use Excel.

Excel will import a whitespace-delimited file (check the 'treat subsequent delimiters as one' box from the import menu).

Then you can simply save the file as a CSV from Excel and import into MySQL using:

```
LOAD DATA INFILE 'filename' INTO TABLE mytable FIELDS TERMINATED BY ',';
```

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answered Mar 28, 2011 at 17:44

Felix
29 ● 1

You can also use the same command posted by Jauco to change the delimiter to ';' or \n. That would also help.

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answered Oct 1, 2008 at 7:26

Swanand
12.4k ● 7 ● 47 ● 62

Not really; MySQL is quite happy with spaces as field delimiters, it's only the multiple ones that are a problem here. And using LFs would make it worse as they'd then be the same as the record delimiters! – Mark Baker Oct 1, 2008 at 9:52

Is there no way you can do this pragmatically? A simple PHP script would be able to load the file in, split by spaces, and do an insert in no time at all:

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```php
<?php

$db = mysql_connect('host', 'user', 'password')
or die('Failed to connect');
mysql_select_db('database', $db);

$fileHandle= @fopen("import.file", "r");
if ($fileHandle) {
    while (!feof($fileHandle)) {
        $rawLine = fgets($fileHandle, 4096);

        $columns = preg_split("/\s+/", $rawLine);

        //Construct and run an INSERT statement here ...

    }
    fclose($fileHandle);
}

?>
```

Edit That being said, Jakal's suggestion is far neater ;)

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edited May 23, 2017 at 12:13

Community Bot
1 ● 1

answered Oct 1, 2008 at 7:31

Ian
4,258 ● 23 ● 33