

The strncpy Function

The possibly safer `strncpy()` function copies only a specified number of characters from `src` to `dest`. Here's how it works:

- Call `strncpy()` with a `dest`, a `src`, and a `count` of characters.
- If the `'\0'` in `src` is found **before** the specified number of characters have been copied, then `strncpy()` will fill the remainder with `'\0'`.
- If the **NUL** character is not found in `src` before the number of characters have been copied, then **you must manually append a terminating NUL**.

Here is a **semi-safe copy**, given the previous example that avoids overflow (although it doesn't ensure that all of `src` was actually copied; for that you need a loop).

```
dest[kMaxLen - 1] = '\0';    // pre-terminate
strncpy(dest, src, kMaxLen - 1);
```

If I've seemed somewhat equivocal about using `strncpy`, you should know that it's widely regarded as a still unsafe function. If you want to know more, here are some links:

- [Stop Using strncpy already!](#)
- [strncpy? Just say no](#)
- [strncpy: Not the function you are looking for](#)



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