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## Preserve order of match query based on input array

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2

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```
UNWIND ['3','1','2'] AS id
MATCH (director:Director)-[:DIRECTED]->(movie:Movie {id:id})
return movie, director
```

★

1

Movies come in order [3, 1, 2] but when I change my query and try to get more information like below

```
UNWIND ['3','1','2'] AS id
MATCH (director:Director)-[:DIRECTED]->(movie:Movie {id:id})
with director, movie
OPTIONAL MATCH (movie)--[actors:ACTED_IN]-()
return movie, director, count(actors)
```

order gets something different than [3, 1, 2]. How should change second query so that I can preserve the order of input array?

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[edited Mar 25 at 22:50](#)

[asked Mar 25 at 20:39](#)



[user3415585](#)

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Never depend on any default ordering with cypher queries. When you match, the results come back in any order that suits cypher, and there's no guarantee the language would provide you there. This is actually a good feature, not a bug - it frees cypher to go get things in whichever order might be most efficient. You haven't explicitly specified an order, so whatever cypher does is I think correct against the spec of what the language is supposed to do.

Now to answer your direct question, if you *wanted* your results ordered a particular way, you should use an [ORDER BY clause](#).

That would be easy with your first query, just tack on `ORDER BY movie.id DESC` at the end, and you're done.

What's odd about your second query though is that you don't include `movies` in the return clause. You'd need to be more specific about what you mean by ordering things in terms of a value that isn't implicated in the `return` clause.

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[answered Mar 25 at 20:45](#)



[FrobberOfBits](#)

8,397 • 7 • 29

I want to get movies in the order of [3, 1, 2] (or whatever array input I give). I do not want to order them based on any property, order should be based on the input array. – [user3415585](#) Mar 25 at 22:50

I don't think that's possible. You can probably only `ORDER BY` things that are actually implicated in the query. You could `UNWIND` the collection and then order by that variable perhaps, but then you wouldn't get the ordering of the original collection, you'd get the sorted ordering of the unwound variable. If your input collection is out of any reasonable order, like `[1, 4, 2, 5, -5]` then you may be stuck. – [FrobberOfBits](#) Mar 26 at 0:49

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I tried similar situation and it works. You can try something like this:

```
1 UNWIND ['3','1','2'] AS id
MATCH (director:Director)-[:DIRECTED]->(movie:Movie {id:id})
WITH id, director, movie
OPTIONAL MATCH (movie)<-[actors:ACTED_IN]-()
RETURN id, movie, director, count(actors)
```

It fixes final order by the UNWIND order. There is very important placement in RETURN clause.  
`id` has to be the first.

share improve this answer

edited Mar 26 at 0:56

answered Mar 26 at 0:50

 Richard Günzl  
104 ● 5

Richard, I've tried it but it did not work – [user3415585](#) Mar 28 at 11:17


I'm sorry but it works for my test data and I haven't another idea. – [Richard Günzl](#) Mar 28 at 11:26


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