

Functions

Introduction to R for Public Health Researchers

Writing your own functions

This is a brief introduction. The syntax is:

```
functionName = function(inputs) {  
< function body >  
return(value)  
}
```

Then you would run the 4 lines of the code, which adds it to your workspace.

Writing your own functions

Here we will write a function that returns the second element of a vector:

```
> return2 = function(x) {  
+   return(x[2])  
+ }  
> return2(c(1, 4, 5, 76))
```

```
[1] 4
```

Writing your own functions

Note that your function will automatically return the last line of code run:

```
> return2a = function(x) {  
+   x[2]  
+ }  
> return2a(c(1, 4, 5, 76))
```

```
[1] 4
```

And if your function is really one line or evaluation, like here, you do not need the curly brackets, and you can put everything on one line:

```
> return2b = function(x) x[2]  
> return2b(c(1, 4, 5, 76))
```

```
[1] 4
```

Writing your own functions

Also note that functions can take multiple inputs. Maybe you want users to select which element to extract

```
> return2c = function(x,n) x[n]  
> return2c(c(1,4,5,76), 3)
```

```
[1] 5
```

Writing a simple function

Let's write a function, `sqdif`, that:

1. takes two numbers `x` and `y` with default values of 2 and 3.
2. takes the difference
3. squares this difference
4. then returns the final value

Writing a simple function

```
> sqdif <- function(x=2, y=3) {  
+   (x-y)^2  
+ }  
>  
> sqdif()
```

```
[1] 1
```

```
> sqdif(x=10, y=5)
```

```
[1] 25
```

```
> sqdif(10, 5)
```

```
[1] 25
```

Writing your own functions

Try to write a function called `top()` that takes a `matrix` or `data.frame`, and returns the first `n` rows and columns, with the default value of `n=5`.

Writing your own functions

Try to write a function called `top()` that takes a `matrix` or `data.frame`, and returns the first `n` rows and columns

```
> top = function(mat,n=5) mat[1:n,1:n]  
> my.mat = matrix(1:1000,nr=100)  
> top(my.mat) #note that we are using the default value for n
```

	[,1]	[,2]	[,3]	[,4]	[,5]
[1,]	1	101	201	301	401
[2,]	2	102	202	302	402
[3,]	3	103	203	303	403
[4,]	4	104	204	304	404
[5,]	5	105	205	305	405

Custom functions in `apply`

You can also designate functions "on the fly"

```
> matList = list(x = matrix(1:25,nc=5),y=matrix(26:50,nc=5))  
> lapply(matList, function(x) x[1:2,1:2])
```

```
$x  
      [,1] [,2]  
[1,]    1    6  
[2,]    2    7
```

```
$y  
      [,1] [,2]  
[1,]   26   31  
[2,]   27   32
```

Simple apply

`sapply()` is a user-friendly version and wrapper of `lapply` by default returning a vector, matrix, or array

```
> sapply(matList, dim)
```

```
      x y  
[1,] 5 5  
[2,] 5 5
```

```
> sapply(matList, class)
```

```
      x      y  
"matrix" "matrix"
```

```
> myList = list(a=1:10, b=c(2,4,5), c = c("a","b","c"),  
+              d = factor(c("boy","girl","girl")))  
> tmp = lapply(myList,function(x) x[1])  
> tmp
```

```
$a  
[1] 1
```

```
$b  
[1] 2
```

```
$c  
[1] "a"
```

```
$d  
[1] boy  
Levels: boy girl
```

```
> sapply(tmp, class)
```

a	b	c	d
"integer"	"numeric"	"character"	"factor"

apply can also be applied to columns of data frames

```
> library(readr)
> circ = read_csv(paste0("http://johnmuschelli.com/intro_to_r/",
+   "data/Charm_City_Circulator_Ridership.csv"))
> sapply(circ, class)
```

day	date	orangeBoardings	orangeAlightings
"character"	"character"	"integer"	"integer"
orangeAverage	purpleBoardings	purpleAlightings	purpleAverage
"numeric"	"integer"	"integer"	"numeric"
greenBoardings	greenAlightings	greenAverage	bannerBoardings
"integer"	"integer"	"numeric"	"integer"
bannerAlightings	bannerAverage	daily	
"integer"	"numeric"	"numeric"	

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