WORKING WITH WEB DATA IN R

GET and POST requests in theory

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HTTP requests

- Conversation between your machine and the server
- First: what you want to happen
- "methods" - different requests for different tasks

GET and POST

- GET: 'get me something'
- POST: 'have something of mine'

Other types

- HEAD - just like `head()`
- DELETE - 'remove this thing'
- Many others! But GET and POST are the big ones

Making requests with httr

- GET requests: GET()

```
> response <- GET(url = "https://httpbin.org/get")
> content(response)
$args
named list()

$headers
$headers$Accept
[1] "application/json, text/xml, application/xml, */*"

...
```

- POST requests: POST()

```
> response <- POST(url = "https://httpbin.org/post")
```

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Let's practice!

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Graceful httr

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Error handling

- A response includes a HTTP **status code**

```
> response <- GET("https://httpbin.org/get")
> response
Response [https://httpbin.org/get]
  Date: 2017-08-24 20:29
  Status: 200
  Content-Type: application/json
  Size: 330 B
{ ...
```

Understanding status codes

- Code starts with:
  - 2 - great!
  - 3 - great!
  - 4 - your code is broken
  - 5 - their code is broken
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_HTTP_status_codes
- Check for bad codes with `http_error()`

URL construction

- Most of URL doesn't change
- Stitch URLs together from bits that don't change with the bits that do
- Saves thinking and typing

Directory-based URLs

- Slash-separated, like directories
- https://fakeurl.com/api/peaches/thursday
- Use `paste()`, with `sep = "/"`

Parameter-based URLs

- Uses URL parameters (`a=1&b=2`)
- https://fakeurl.com/api.php?fruit=peaches&day=thursday
- Use `GET()` to construct the URL with `query` argument

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Respectful API Usage

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User agents

- Bits of text that ID your browser (or software)
- Gives the server some idea of what you're trying to do
- You can set one with your requests with `user_agent()`
- Add an email address so they can contact you.

Rate limiting

- Too many requests makes for a sad server
- Deliberately slows down your code to keep under a desired 'rate'
- Slows you, but avoids getting you banned from the server

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