BST02: Using R for Statistics in Medical Research

Part C: Functions and Programming

Nicole Erler   Eleni-Rosalina Andrinopoulou

Department of Biostatistics, Erasmus Medical Center

✉ n.erler@erasmusmc.nl   ✉ e.andrinopoulou@erasmusmc.nl

24 - 28 February 2020

Erasmus MC
University Medical Center Rotterdam

Recap Part B

Objects

- ▶ `vector`
- ▶ `matrix`
- ▶ `data.frame`
- ▶ `list`

Data Structures

- ▶ `numeric`
- ▶ `character`
- ▶ `integer`
- ▶ `logical`
- ▶ `factor`

Recap Part B

Objects

- ► `vector`
- ► `matrix`
- ► `data.frame`
- ► `list`

Operators

- ► +, -, *, /
- ► <-, =
- ► <, >, ==

Data Structures

- ► `numeric`
- ► `character`
- ► `integer`
- ► `logical`
- ► `factor`

Special Values

- ► `NA`
- ► `NaN`
- ► `Inf, -Inf`

Recap Part B

Objects
- ▶ `vector`
- ▶ `matrix`
- ▶ `data.frame`
- ▶ `list`

Operators
- ▶ +, -, *, /
- ▶ <-, =
- ▶ <, >, ==

Data Structures
- ▶ `numeric`
- ▶ `character`
- ▶ `integer`
- ▶ `logical`
- ▶ `factor`

Special Values
- ▶ `NA`
- ▶ `NaN`
- ▶ `Inf, -Inf`

Data Transformations
- ▶ rounding (`format()`)
- ▶ convert to factor (`factor()`)

Recap Part B

Objects
► vector
► matrix
► data.frame
► list

Operators
► +, -, *, /
► <-, =
► <, >, ==

Data Structures
► numeric
► character
► integer
► logical
► factor

Special Values
► NA
► NaN
► Inf, -Inf

Data Transformations
► rounding (format())
► convert to factor (factor())

Data Exploration
► mean(), median(), sd(), IQR(), …

Data Visualizations
► plotting packages
► plot types (plot(), barplot(), …)

Recap Part B

Objects
► vector
► matrix
► data.frame
► list

Operators
► +, -, *, /
► <-, =
► <, >, ==

Data Structures
► numeric
► character
► integer
► logical
► factor

Special Values
► NA
► NaN
► Inf, -Inf

Data Transformations
► rounding (format())
► convert to factor (factor())

Data Exploration
► mean(), median(), sd(), IQR(), …

Data Visualizations
► plotting packages
► plot types (plot(), barplot(), …)

Subsetting
► [[...]], [...], $, …

In this Section

- ► What are functions?
- ► Useful functions for data exploration
- ► Useful functions for data manipulations
- ► Writing functions
- ► Control-flow constructs
- ► The `apply` family
- ► Lots of practising

Functions

Sometimes we want to perform the same action / manipulation on several objects.

- ▶ Option 1: copy & paste
  - ▶ a lot of work
  - ▶ susceptible to mistakes

Functions

Sometimes we want to perform the same action / manipulation on several objects.

- ▶ Option 1: copy & paste
  - ▶ a lot of work
  - ▶ susceptible to mistakes

- ▶ Option 2: **functions**

Functions

Sometimes we want to perform the same action / manipulation on several objects.

- ► Option 1: copy & paste
  - ► a lot of work
  - ► susceptible to mistakes

- ► Option 2: **functions**

What are functions?

- ► a group of (organized) R commands
- ► a (small) program with flexible (= not pre-specified) input

Almost all commands in R are functions!

Functions

Some examples:

▶ mean()
▶ sum()
▶ plot()
▶ ...

```
class(mean)
## [1] "function"
class(sum)
## [1] "function"
class(plot)
## [1] "function"
```

Functions

Some examples:

- mean()
- sum()
- plot()
- …

```
class(mean)
## [1] "function"
class(sum)
## [1] "function"
class(plot)
## [1] "function"
```

Even class() is a function:

```
class(class)
```

```
## [1] "function"
```

Useful Functions for Data Exploration

Demos
- ► Functions for Data Exploration
  `R` `html`

Practicals
- ► Exploring and Summarizing Data `html`

Useful Functions for Data Exploration

Dimension
- `dim()`
- `nrow()`, `ncol()`
- `length()`

Data Structure
- `str()`
- `names()`,
- `head()`, `tail()`
- `is.data.frame()`,
  `is.list()`,
  `is.matrix()`
  `is.numeric()`,
  `is.ordered()`,...

Descriptives for Continuous Variables
- `summary()`
- `min()`, `max()`,
  `range()`
- `mean()`, `median()`,
  `quantile()`, `IQR()`
- `sd()`, `var()`
- `ave()`

Tables
- `table()`,
  `prop.table()`
- `addmargins()`,
  `ftable()`

for `matrix` & `data.frame`
- `summary()`
- `var()`, `cor()`, `cov2cor()`
- `colSums()`, `colMeans()`,
  `rowSums()`, `rowMeans()`

Duplicates & Comparison
- `duplicated()`
- `unique()`

Useful functions for Data Manipulation

Demo
- ► Functions for Data Manipulation `R` `html`

Practicals
- ► Merging Datasets `html`

Useful functions for Data Manipulation

Transformations
- ► `log()`, `log2()`, `log10()`
- ► `exp()`, `sqrt()`, `plogis()`

Splitting & Combining
- ► `split()`, `cut()`
- ► `cbind()`, `rbind()`
- ► `merge()`
- ► `subset()`
- ► `c()`
- ► `paste()`

Sorting
- ► `sort()`, `order()`, `rev()`, `rank()`

Repetition & Sequence
- ► `rep()`, `seq()`
- ► `expand.grid()`

Converting Objects
- ► `t()`
- ► `unlist()`, `unname()`
- ► `as.numeric()`, `as.matrix()`, `as.data.frame()`

Writing Functions

To write your own function:

```
myfun <- function(arguments) {
  syntax
}
```

Writing Functions

To write your own function:

```
myfun <- function(arguments) {
  syntax
}
```

For example:

```
square <- function(x) {
  x^2
}
```

```
square(3)
```

```
## [1] 9
```

Writing Functions

Functions do not always need an argument:

```
random <- function() {
  rnorm(n = 1)
}
```

```
random()
## [1] 1.275093
random()
## [1] 0.2180059
random()
## [1] 0.4628862
```

Writing Functions

Functions can use **multiple arguments**:

```
subtract <- function(x, y) {
  x - y
}
```

```
subtract(x = 5.2, y = 3.3)
```

```
## [1] 1.9
```

Writing Functions

Multiple arguments are interpreted in the **pre-defined order**, unless they are named:

```r
subtract(5.2, 1.2)
```

[1] 4

is equivalent to

```r
subtract(x = 5.2, y = 1.2)
```

[1] 4

Writing Functions

Multiple arguments are interpreted in the **pre-defined order**, unless they are named:

```
subtract(5.2, 1.2)
```

[1] 4

is equivalent to

```
subtract(x = 5.2, y = 1.2)
```

[1] 4

But this is different:

```
subtract(y = 5.2, x = 1.2)
```

[1] -4

Writing Functions

We can also define **default values** for arguments.

```
multiply <- function(x, y = 2) {
  x * y
}
```

The default value is used when the user does not specify a value for that argument:

```
multiply(x = 3, y = 3)
```

```
## [1] 9
```

```
multiply(x = 3)
```

```
## [1] 6
```

Writing Functions

Practical

▶ Rolling the Dice `html`

Control-flow Constructs: `if()`

Sometimes, we may want to execute code only **if a certain condition is fulfilled**.

To do this, we can use an `if` statement

```
if (condition) {expression}
```

Control-flow Constructs: `if()`

Sometimes, we may want to execute code only **if a certain condition is fulfilled**.

To do this, we can use an `if` statement

```
if (condition) {expression}
```

For example:

```
x <- c(0.3, -1.2, 0.8,  1.7,  0.7, -0.1, -0.4, -0.1, -0.2,  0.6)
if (length(x) > 5) {mean(x)}
```

```
## [1] 0.21
```

Control-flow Constructs: `if()`

Sometimes, we may want to execute code only **if a certain condition is fulfilled**.

To do this, we can use an `if` statement

```
if (condition) {expression}
```

For example:

```
x <- c(0.3, -1.2, 0.8,  1.7,  0.7, -0.1, -0.4, -0.1, -0.2,  0.6)
if (length(x) > 5) {mean(x)}
```

```
## [1] 0.21
```

```
x <- c(0.7, -0.1, -0.4, -0.1)
if (length(x) > 5) {mean(x)}
```

If the condition is not fulfilled, `NULL` is returned.

Control-flow Constructs: `if()` **and** `else`

We can also specify an expression that is evaluated **if the condition is not fulfilled**:

```
if (condition) {expression} else {alternative expression}
```

Control-flow Constructs: `if()` and `else`

We can also specify an expression that is evaluated **if the condition is not fulfilled**:

```
if (condition) {expression} else {alternative expression}
```

For example:

```
if (length(x) > 5) {
  mean(x)
} else {
  x
}
```

```
## [1]  0.7 -0.1 -0.4 -0.1
```

Conditional Element Selection: `ifelse()`

A similar function is `ifelse()`, which performs **conditional element selection**:

```
ifelse(test, yes, no)
```

Conditional Element Selection: `ifelse()`

A similar function is `ifelse()`, which performs **conditional element selection**:

```
ifelse(test, yes, no)
```

For example:

```
x <- c(0.3, -1.2, 0.8,  1.7,  0.7, -0.1, -0.4, -0.1, -0.2,  0.6)
ifelse(x > 0, ">0", "<0")
```

```
## [1] ">0" "<0" ">0" ">0" ">0" "<0" "<0" "<0" "<0" ">0"
```

Conditional Element Selection: `ifelse()`

A similar function is `ifelse()`, which performs **conditional element selection**:

```
ifelse(test, yes, no)
```

For example:

```
x <- c(0.3, -1.2, 0.8,  1.7,  0.7, -0.1, -0.4, -0.1, -0.2,  0.6)
ifelse(x > 0, ">0", "<0")
```

```
##  [1] ">0" "<0" ">0" ">0" ">0" "<0" "<0" "<0" "<0" ">0"
```

Note:

- ▶ if() expects **one** condition
- ▶ ifelse() expects a **vector of conditions**

Control-flow Constructs: `for()`-loop

To perform an operation multiple times, we can use a `for`-**loop**

```
for (variable in sequence) {expression}
```

For example:

```
for (i in 1:5) {
  print(2 * i)
}
```

```
## [1] 2
## [1] 4
## [1] 6
## [1] 8
## [1] 10
```

Control-flow Constructs: `for()`-loop

In a for-**loop**, the `variable` does not need to be used in the `expression`:

```r
for (i in 1:5) {
  print('test')
}
```

```
## [1] "test"
## [1] "test"
## [1] "test"
## [1] "test"
## [1] "test"
```

Note that when using for(), always the full `sequence` is used, i.e., we cannot skip iterations.

Control-flow Constructs: `while()`-loop

The function `while()` repeatedly evaluates an expression as long as a condition is fulfilled:

```
while (condition) {expression}
```

Careful:
If your condition is never `FALSE` this will run forever!!!
(or until you stop it manually)

Note:
`for()` and `while()` loops will not print output, unless we specifically use the function `print()`.

Control-flow Constructs: `while()`-loop

For example:

```
s <- 1
while (s < 5) {
  s <- s + s/2
  print(s)
}
```

```
## [1] 1.5
## [1] 2.25
## [1] 3.375
## [1] 5.0625
```

Control-flow Constructs

Demo

► Control Flow `R` `html`

Practicals

► Control Flow and Functions `html`

► Custom Subset Function `html`

Summary: Writing Functions

```
function_name <- function(arguments) {
  "function body"
}
```

- ► can have 0, 1, 2, … arguments
- ► arguments are interpreted in the **pre-specified order**, unless the **names are used**
- ► we can specify **default values**

Summary: Control-flow Constructs

▶ **if (condition) expression**:
   evaluates the expression only if the condition is TRUE

▶ **if (condition) expression1 else expression2**:
   evaluates expression1 if the condition is TRUE and expression2 if the condition is FALSE

▶ **ifelse(test, yes, no)**:
   expects a vector of tests

▶ **for()** and **while()** loops:
   can be used to repeatedly perform the same action

▶ to print output from within for() and while() we need to use print()

What is the apply Family

Manipulate **vectors** or slices of data from **matrices**, **data frames** and **lists** in a repetitive way avoiding explicit use of loop-constructs

- ► An aggregating function, like for example the mean, or the sum
- ► Other transforming or subsetting functions
- ► Other vectorized functions, which return more complex structures like lists, vectors and matrices

What is the apply Family (cont'd)

apply(), lapply() , sapply(), tapply(), mapply()

But how and when should we use these?

How To Use apply() in R

- ▶ Operates on `matrix` and `data.frame`

- ▶ By column

```
mat <- matrix(1:6, 3, 3)
mat
     [,1] [,2] [,3]
[1,]    1    4    1
[2,]    2    5    2
[3,]    3    6    3
apply(mat, 2, sum)
[1]  6 15  6
```

How To Use apply() in R

► Operates on `matrix` and `data.frame`

► By column

```
mat <- matrix(1:6, 3, 3)
mat
     [,1] [,2] [,3]
[1,]    1    4    1
[2,]    2    5    2
[3,]    3    6    3
apply(mat, 2, sum)
[1]  6 15  6
```

► By row

```
apply(mat, 1, sum)
[1]  6  9 12
```

How To Use apply() in R (cont'd)

► Operates on `matrix` and `data.frame`

► By column

```
mat <- matrix(1:6, 3, 3)
mat
     [,1] [,2] [,3]
[1,]    1    4    1
[2,]    2    5    2
[3,]    3    6    3
apply(mat, 2, mean)
[1] 2 5 2
```

How To Use apply() in R (cont'd)

- ► Operates on `matrix` and `data.frame`

- ► By column

```
mat <- matrix(1:6, 3, 3)
mat
```

```
     [,1] [,2] [,3]
[1,]    1    4    1
[2,]    2    5    2
[3,]    3    6    3
```

```
apply(mat, 2, mean)
```

```
[1] 2 5 2
```

- ► By row

```
apply(mat, 1, mean)
```

```
[1] 2 3 4
```

How To Use apply() in R (cont'd)

▶ You can also apply your own functions

▶ By column

```
mat <- matrix(1:6, 3, 3)
mat
     [,1] [,2] [,3]
[1,]    1    4    1
[2,]    2    5    2
[3,]    3    6    3
apply(mat, 2, function(x)
          sum(x)/(length(x)-1))

[1] 3.0 7.5 3.0
```

How To Use apply() in R (cont'd)

► You can also apply your own functions

► By column

```
mat <- matrix(1:6, 3, 3)
mat
```
```
     [,1] [,2] [,3]
[1,]    1    4    1
[2,]    2    5    2
[3,]    3    6    3
```
```
apply(mat, 2, function(x)
        sum(x)/(length(x)-1))
```
```
[1] 3.0 7.5 3.0
```

► By row

```
apply(mat, 1, function(x)
        sum(x)/(length(x)-1))
```
```
[1] 3.0 4.5 6.0
```

How To Use lapply() in R

- ▶ Apply a given function to every element of a `list` and return a `list`

- ▶ The difference with `apply()`:
  - ▶ It can be used for other objects like `vector`, `data.frame` or `list`
  - ▶ The output returned is a list

How To Use lapply() in R (cont'd)

```r
myList <- list(x = c(1:6),
               y = c("m", "f"),
               z = c(30, 4, 23))
myList
```
```
$x
[1] 1 2 3 4 5 6

$y
[1] "m" "f"

$z
[1] 30  4 23
```

How To Use lapply() in R (cont'd)

```
myList <- list(x = c(1:6),
               y = c("m", "f"),
               z = c(30, 4, 23))
myList
```

```
$x
[1] 1 2 3 4 5 6

$y
[1] "m" "f"

$z
[1] 30  4 23
```

▶ Use pre-specified functions

```
lapply(myList, length)
```

```
$x
[1] 6

$y
[1] 2

$z
[1] 3
```

How To Use lapply() in R (cont'd)

```r
myList <- list(x = c(1:6),
               y = c("m", "f"),
               z = c(30, 4, 23))
myList
```

```
$x
[1] 1 2 3 4 5 6

$y
[1] "m" "f"

$z
[1] 30  4 23
```

► Use pre-specified functions

```r
lapply(myList, median)
```

```
$x
[1] 3.5

$y
[1] NA

$z
[1] 23
```

► You can also apply your own functions!

How To Use sapply() in R

▶ `sapply()` is similar to `lapply()`, but it tries to simplify the output

```
myList <- list(x = c(1:6),
               y = c("m", "f"),
               z = c(30, 4, 23))
myList
```
```
$x
[1] 1 2 3 4 5 6

$y
[1] "m" "f"

$z
[1] 30  4 23
```

How To Use sapply() in R

▶ `sapply()` is similar to `lapply()`, but it tries to simplify the output

```
myList <- list(x = c(1:6),
               y = c("m", "f"),
               z = c(30, 4, 23))
myList
```

```
$x
[1] 1 2 3 4 5 6


$y
[1] "m" "f"


$z
[1] 30  4 23
```

▶ Use pre-specified functions

```
sapply(myList, length)
```

```
x y z
6 2 3
```

```
sapply(myList, median)
```

```
   x    y    z
 3.5   NA 23.0
```

▶ You can also apply your own functions!

How To Use tapply() in R

► Apply a function to subsets of a `vector` - The subsets are defined by some other `vector`, usually a factor

```
tapply(pbc$bili, pbc$sex, mean)
```

```
       m        f
2.865909 3.262567
```

```
tapply(pbc$age, pbc$sex, median)
```

```
       m        f
54.00137 50.19302
```

How To Use tapply() in R (cont'd)

► You can also apply your own functions

```r
tapply(pbc$bili, pbc$sex, function(x) sum(x)/(length(x)-1))
```

```
       m        f
2.932558 3.271314
```

How To Use mapply() in R

- ▶ Multivariate apply
- ▶ Its purpose is to be able to vectorize arguments to a function that is not usually accepting **vectors** as arguments
- ▶ **mapply()** applies a function to multiple **list** or multiple **vector** arguments

```
mapply(length, pbc)
      id      time    status       trt       age       sex   ascites
     418       418       418       418       418       418       418
  hepato   spiders      edema      bili      chol   albumin    copper
     418       418       418       418       418       418       418
alk.phos       ast      trig  platelet   protime     stage
     418       418       418       418       418       418
```

How To Use mapply() in R (cont'd)

► Overlapping between functions

```
myList <- list(x = c(1:6),
               y = c("m", "f"),
               z = c(30, 4, 23))
mapply(length, myList,
       SIMPLIFY = FALSE)
```

```
$x
[1] 6

$y
[1] 2

$z
[1] 3
```

How To Use mapply() in R (cont'd)

► Overlapping between functions

```r
myList <- list(x = c(1:6),
               y = c("m", "f"),
               z = c(30, 4, 23))
mapply(length, myList,
       SIMPLIFY = FALSE)
```

```
$x
[1] 6

$y
[1] 2

$z
[1] 3
```

```r
lapply(myList, length)
```

```
$x
[1] 6

$y
[1] 2

$z
[1] 3
```

► You can also apply your own functions!

Useful Summary: Apply Family

Vectors
- `tapply()`
- `mapply()`

Matrices
- `apply()`
- `tapply()`
- `lapply()`
- `sapply()`
- `mapply()`

Data frames
- `apply()`
- `tapply()`
- `lapply()`
- `sapply()`
- `mapply()`

Lists
- `lapply()`
- `sapply()`
- `mapply()`

Useful Summary: Apply Family

▶ Use the following webpage to further investigate the apply family
https://emcbiostatistics.shinyapps.io/the_apply_family/

▶ The **R** code for the shiny app is also available:

> **Demos**
> ▶ Shiny app apply family **R**

In order to run the app you will need to install the packages:

▶ `survival`
▶ `shiny`

Useful Summary: Apply Family (cont'd)

Demos
- ► The Apply Family `R` `html`

Practicals
- ► The Apply Family `html`