

# Refining your plots

*Daniel Anderson*  
*Week 6. Class 1*

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# Agenda

- Axes and aspect ratios
- Annotations
- Themes

## *What we won't get to*

Each of the following are pretty fundamental to good data viz, but we won't have time to go over them today. Please make sure to read the corresponding chapters:

- Handling high data density (lots of overlapping points)
- Compound figures
  - See `{patchwork}` and `{cowplot}`
- Exporting figures

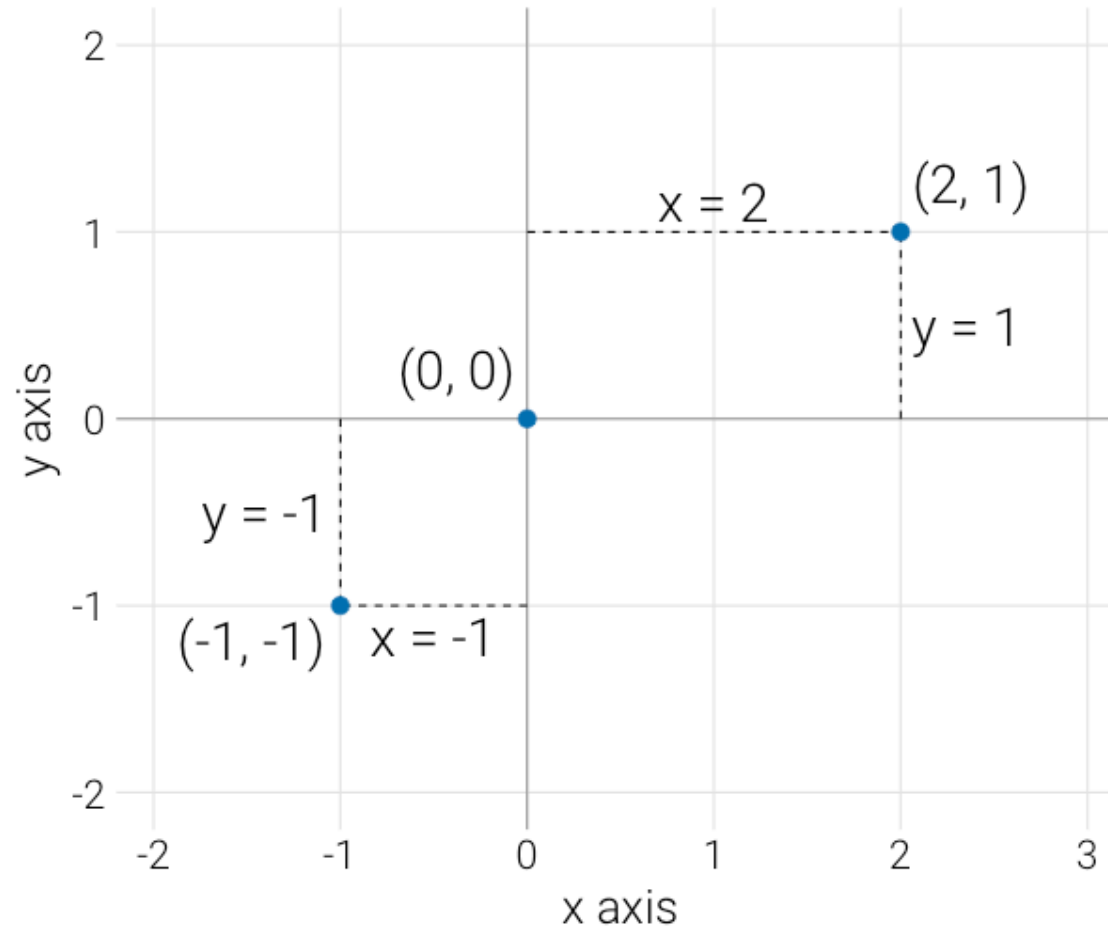
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# Learning Objectives

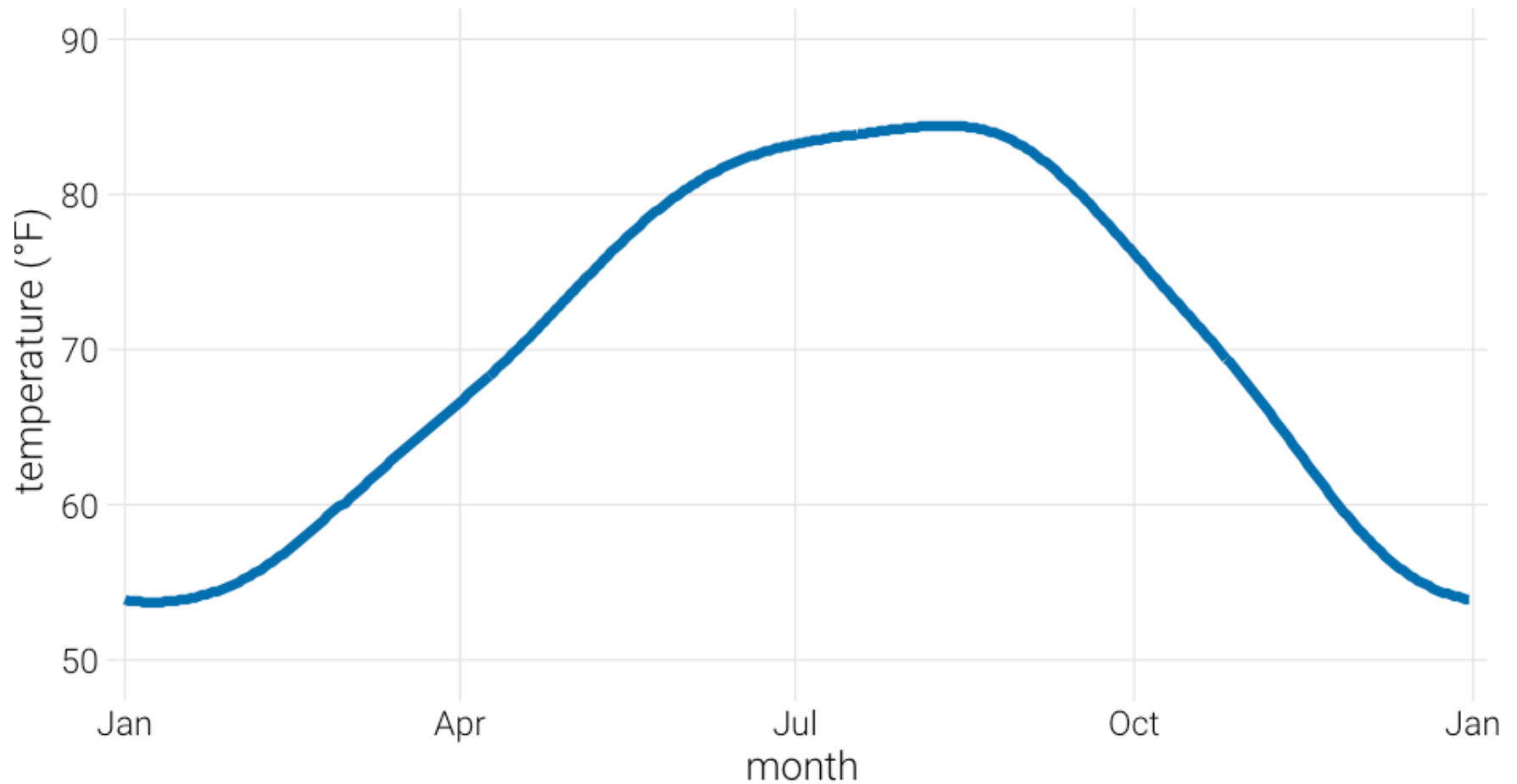
- Understand how to make a wide variety of tweaks to ggplot to essentially make it look however you want it to.
- Understand common modifications to plots to make them more clear and reduce cognitive load

# Axes

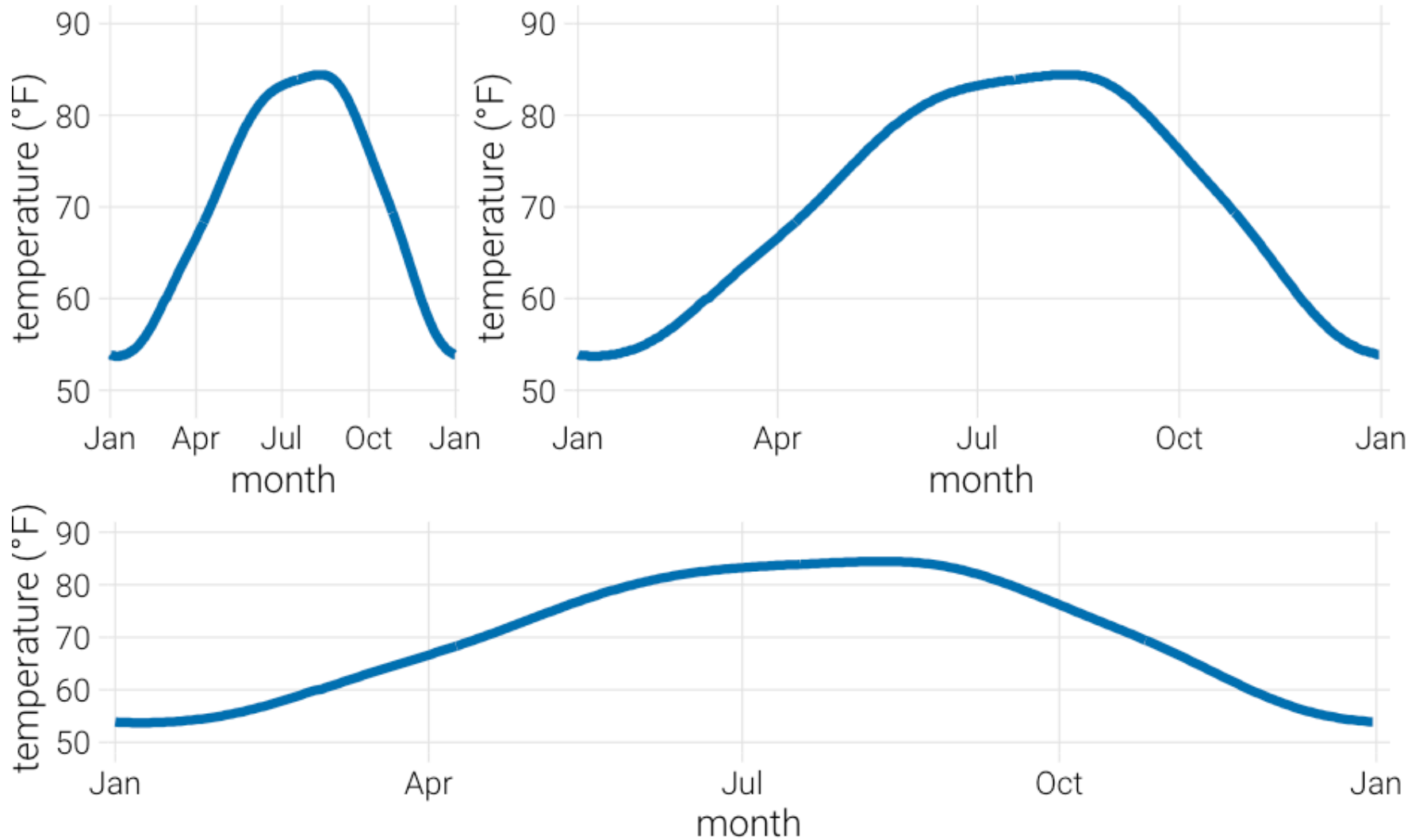
- Cartesian coordinates - what we generally use

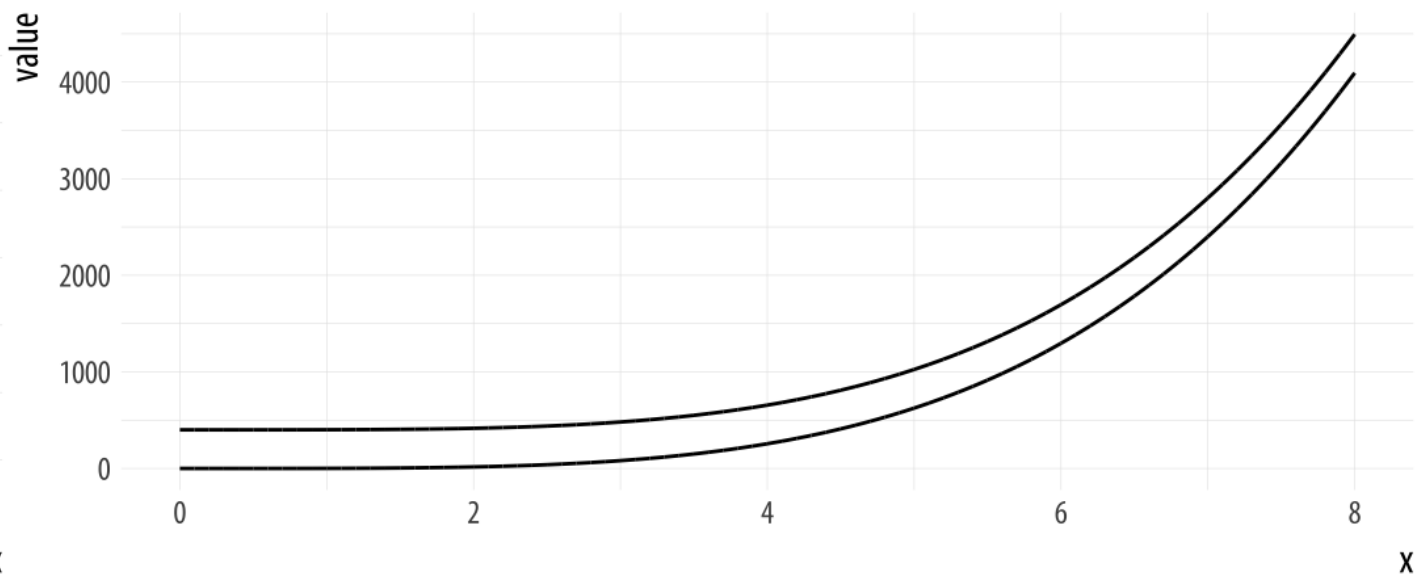
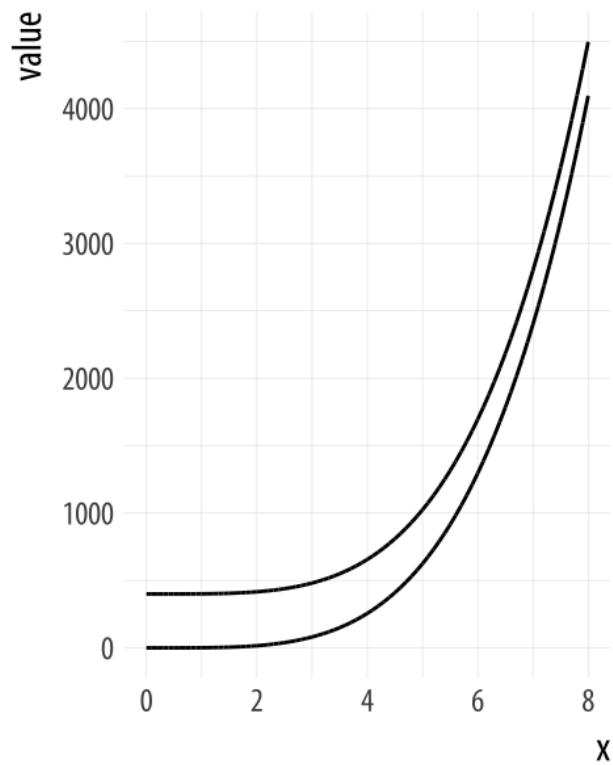


# Different units



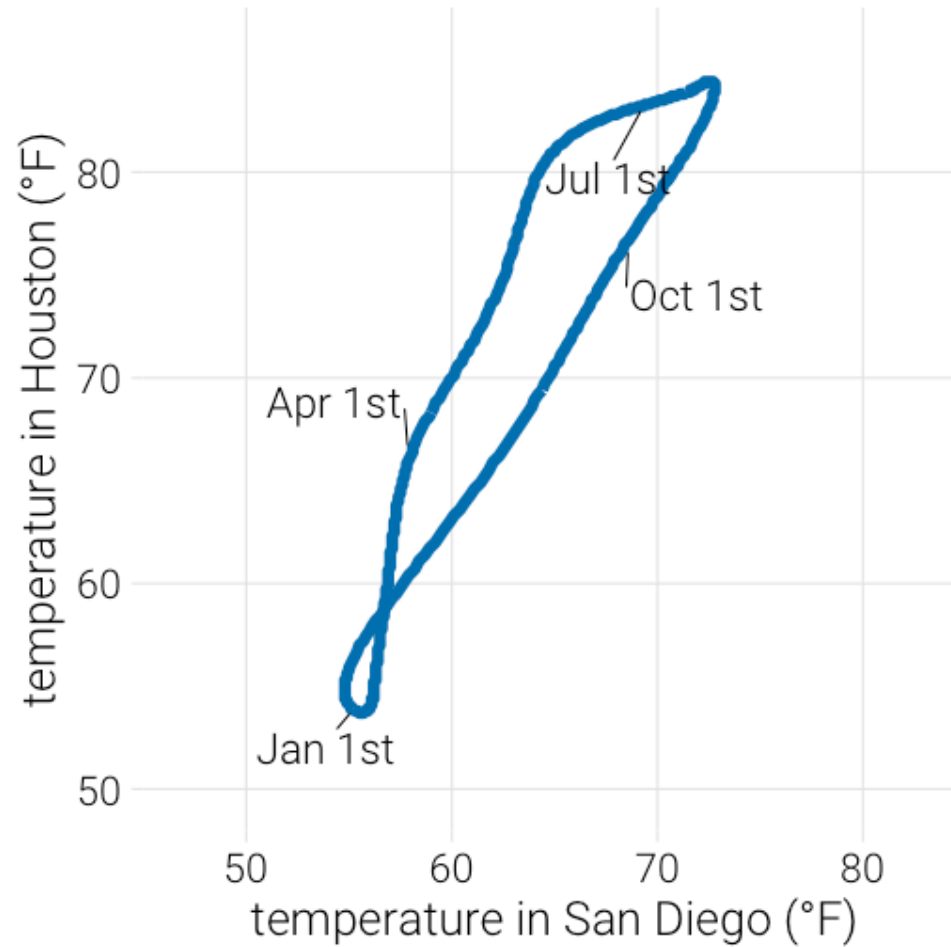
# Aspect ratio





# Same scales

Use `coord_fixed()`





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# Changing aspect ratio

- Explore how your plot will look in its final size
- No hard/fast rules (if on different scales)
- Not even really rules of thumb
- Keep visual perception in mind
- Try your best to be truthful - show the trend/relation, but don't exaggerate/hide it

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# Handy function

(from an apparently deleted tweet)

here's my favorite helper [#rstats](#) function. preview `ggsave()` output

```
ggpreview <- function (... , device = "png") {  
  fname <- tempfile(fileext = paste0(".", device))  
  ggplot2::ggsave(filename = fname, device = device, ...)  
  system2("open", fname)  
  invisible(NULL)  
}
```

— tj mahr 🍕🍍 (@tjmahr) [January 9, 2019](#)

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# Gist

(side note: gists are a good way to share things)

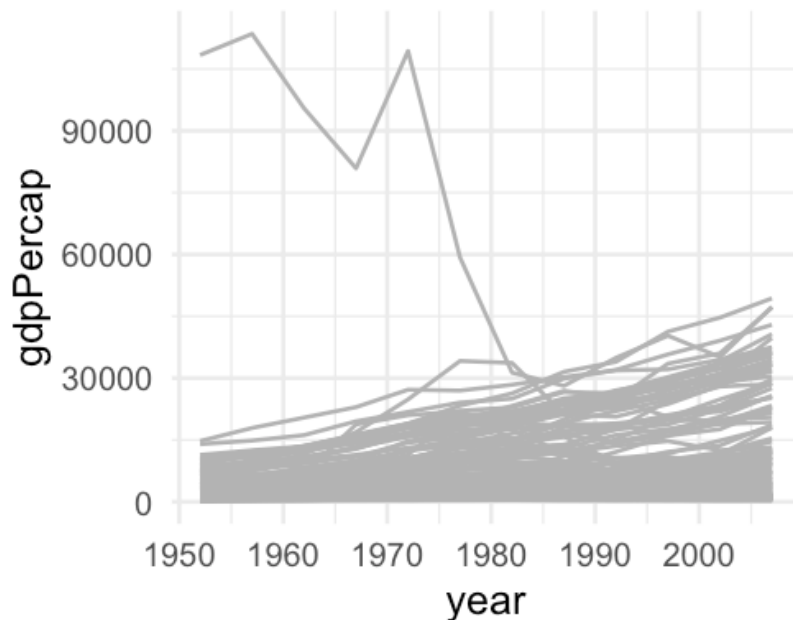
- See the full code/example [here](#)
- Let's take 7 minutes to play around:
  - Create a plot (could even be the example in the gist)
  - Try different aspect ratios by changing the width/length

07:00

# Scale transformations

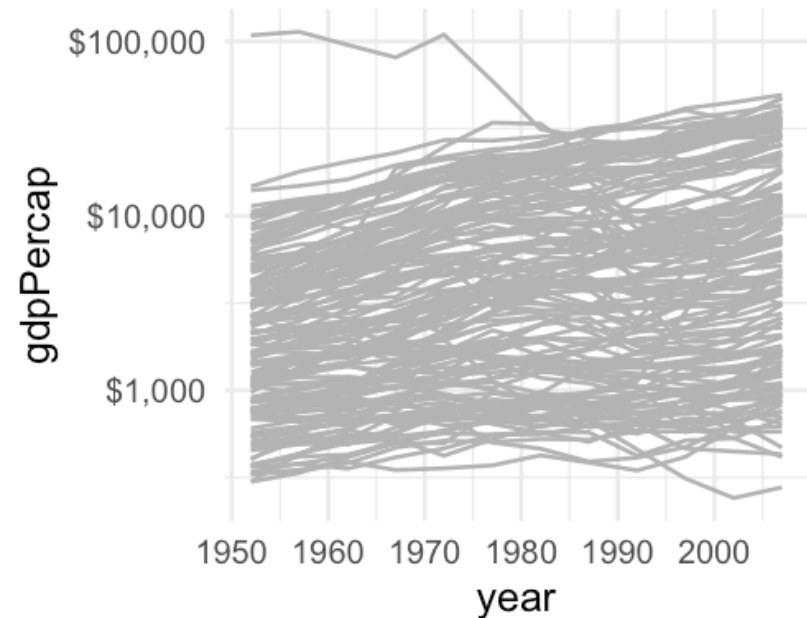
*Raw scale*

```
library(gapminder)
ggplot(gapminder, aes(year, gdpPerc
  geom_line(aes(group = country),
    color = "gray70")
```

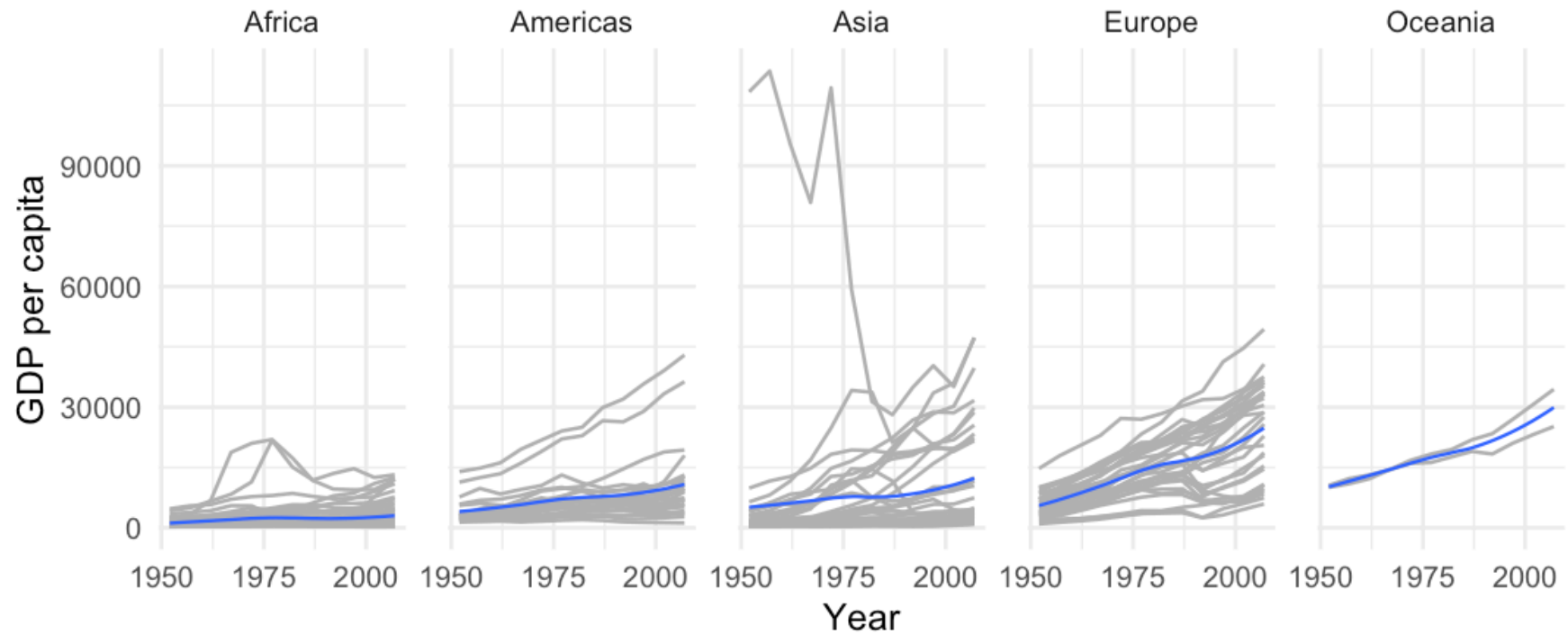


*Log10 scale*

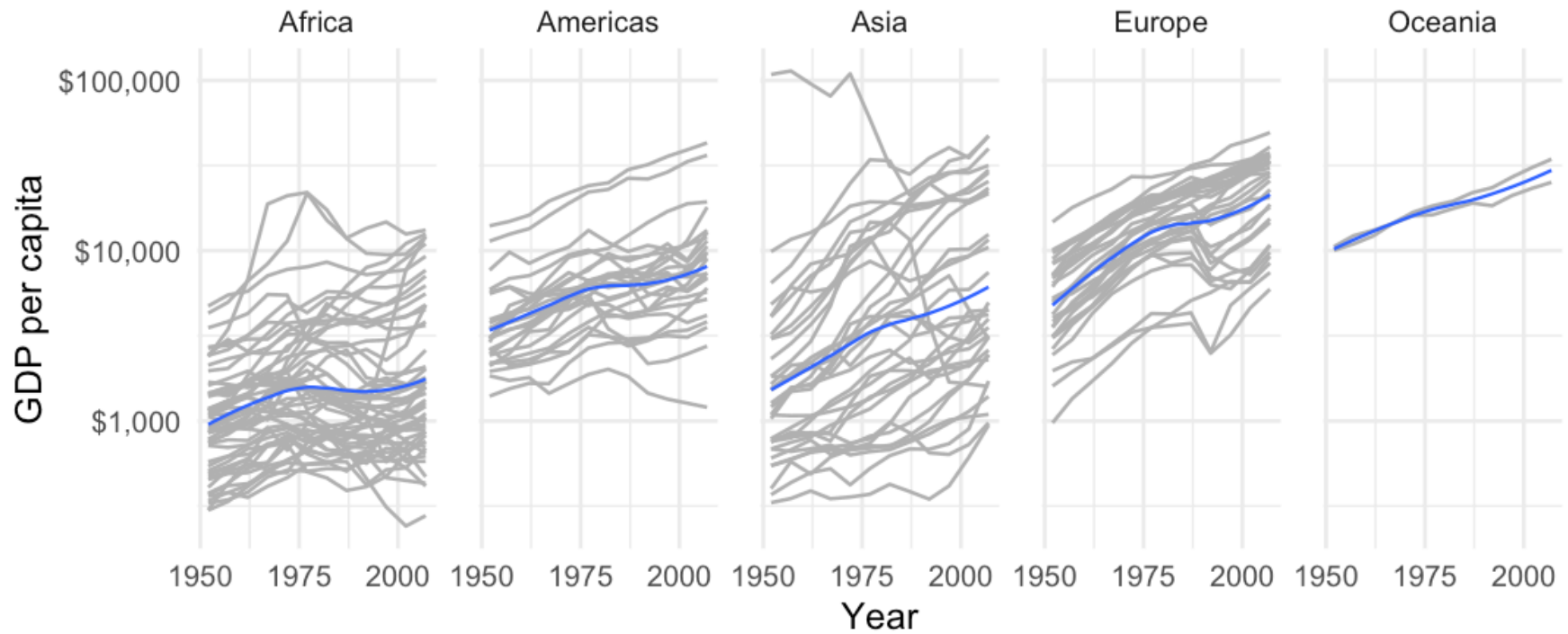
```
ggplot(gapminder, aes(year, gdpPerc
  geom_line(aes(group = country),
    color = "gray70") +
  scale_y_log10(
    labels = scales::dollar
  )
```



## GDP per capita on Five Continents



## GDP per capita on Five Continents



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# Scales

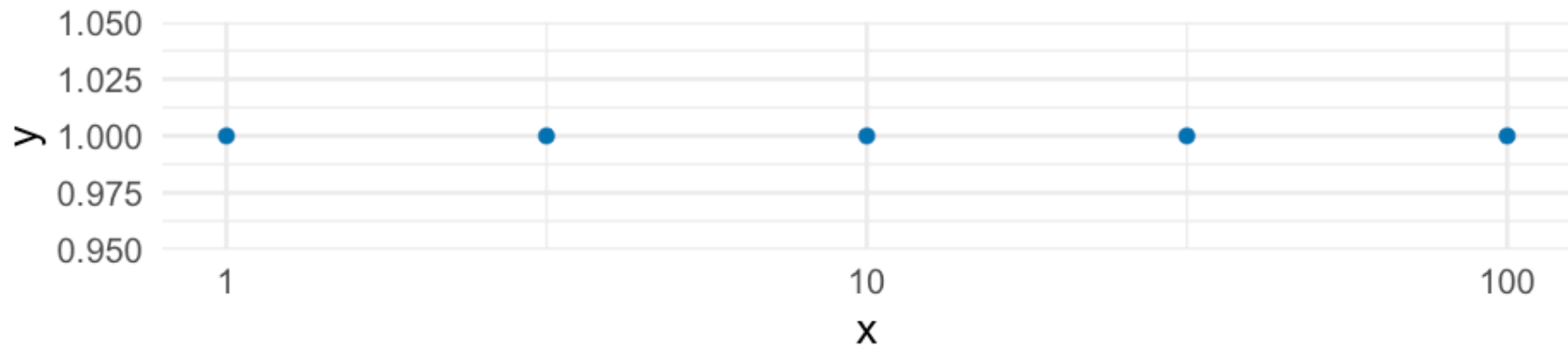
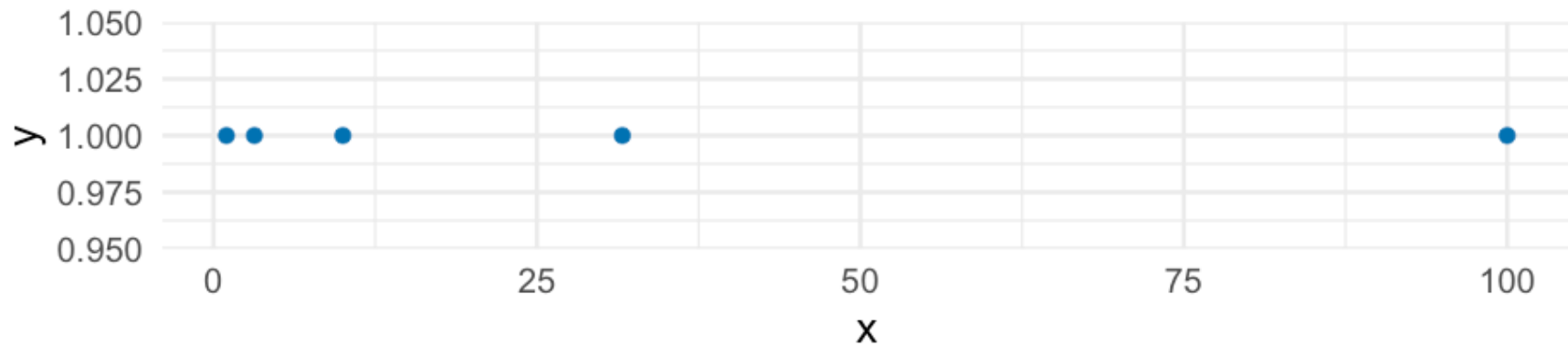
```
d <- tibble(x = c(1, 3.16, 10, 31.6, 100),  
            log_x = log10(x))
```

```
ggplot(d, aes(x, 1)) +  
  geom_point(color = "#0072B2")
```

```
ggplot(d, aes(x, 1)) +  
  geom_point(color = "#0072B2") +  
  scale_x_log10()
```

```
ggplot(d, aes(log_x, 1)) +  
  geom_point(color = "#0072B2")
```

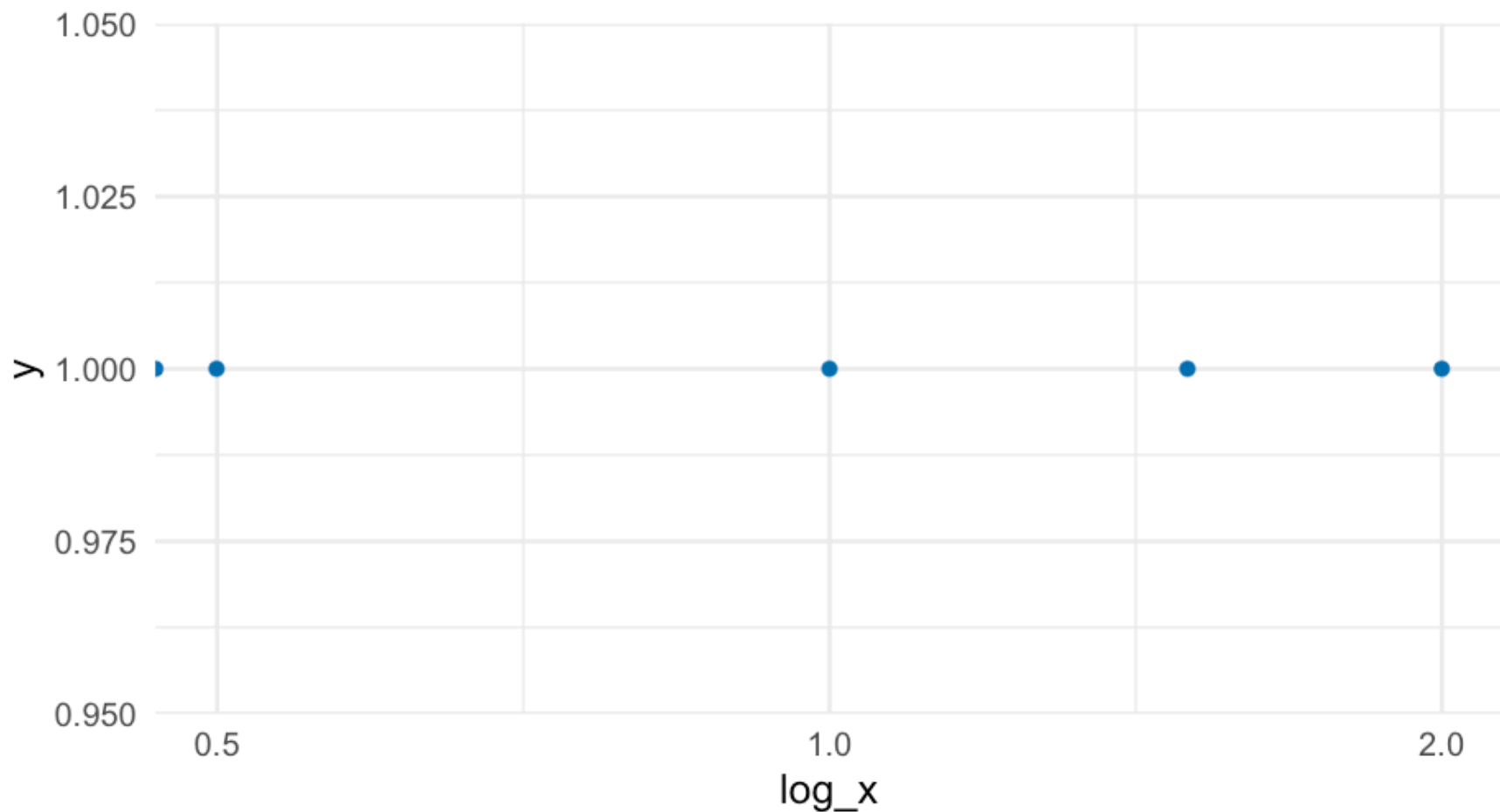
# Scales





# Don't transform twice

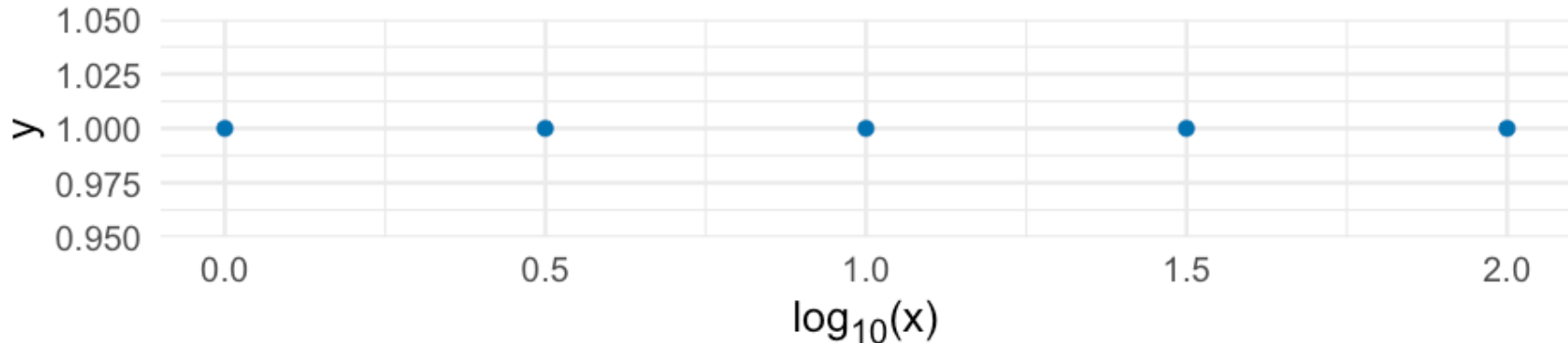
```
ggplot(d, aes(log_x, 1)) +  
  geom_point(color = "#0072B2") +  
  scale_x_log10()
```



# Careful with labeling

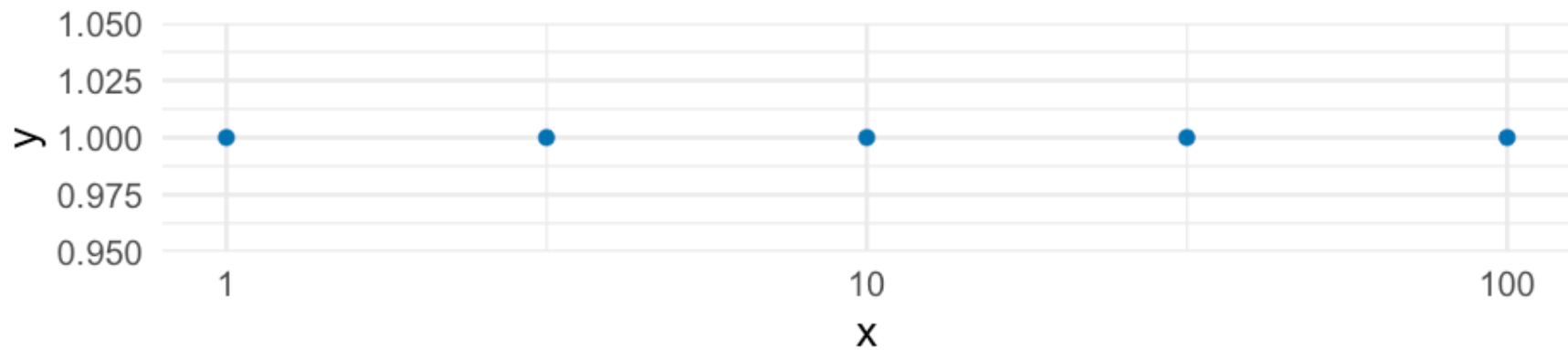
- Has the scale or the data been log transformed?
- Specify the base

```
library(ggtext)
ggplot(d, aes(log_x, 1)) +
  geom_point(color = "#0072B2") +
  labs(x = "log<sub>10</sub>(x)") +
  theme(axis.title.x = element_markdown())
```



Labels should denote the data, not the scale of the axis

```
ggplot(d, aes(x, 1)) +  
  geom_point(color = "#0072B2") +  
  scale_x_log10()
```



Labeling the above with  $\log_{10}(x)$  would be ambiguous and confusing

# Labels and captions

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# Disclaimer

- APA style requires the labels be made in specific ways
- Much of the following discussion still applies
- Our book (Wilke) uses a similar style throughout

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# Title

*What is the point of your figure?*

*What are you trying to communicate*

- Figures should have only one title
- Use integrated title/subtitles for sharing with a broad audience
  - Blog posts
  - Social media
  - Reports to stakeholders
- Keep figures in subtext when there's a designated format you must adhere to
- Make sure your figure has a title
  - Should not start with "This figure displays/shows..."

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# Caption

Consider stating the data source

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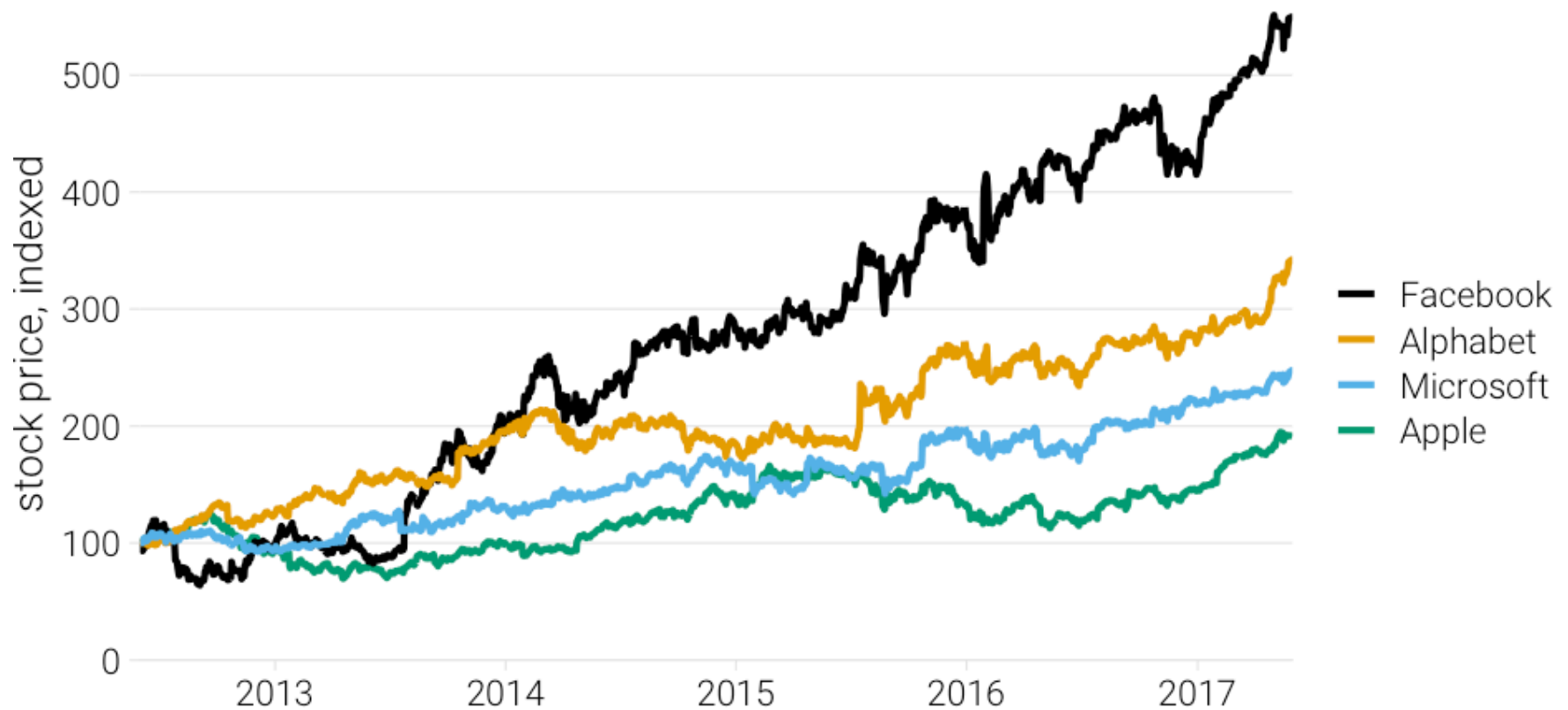
# Axis labels

- The title for the axis
- Critical for communication
- **Never** use variable names (very common and very poor practice)
- State the measure and the unit (if quantitative)
  - e.g., "Brain Mass (grams)", "Support for Measure (millions of people)", "Dollars spent"
  - Categorical variable likely will not need to the measurement unit



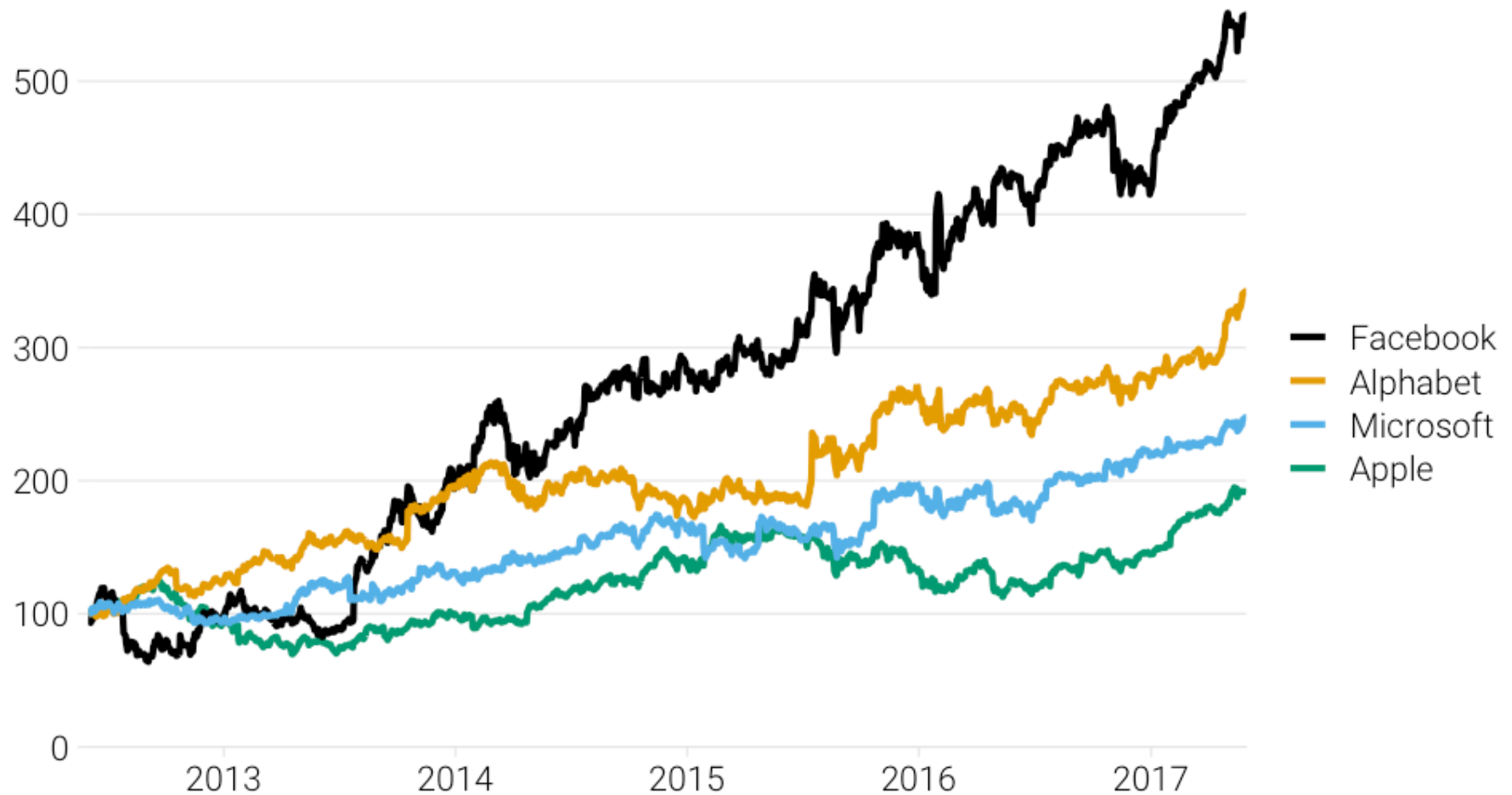
# Omission

- Consider omitting obvious or redundant labels
  - Use `labs(x = NULL)` or `labs(x = "")`

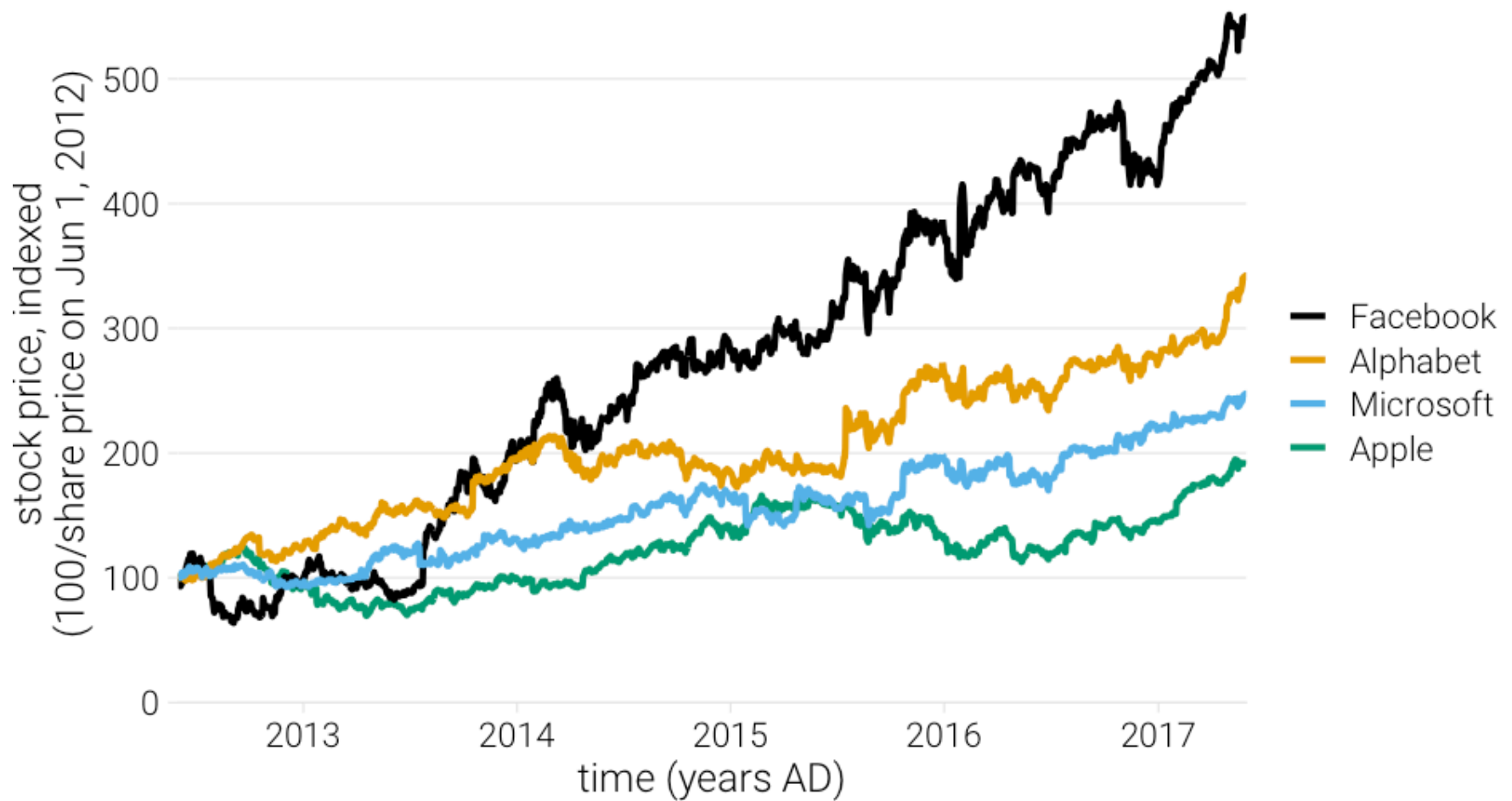


# Omission

- Do not omit title that are not obvious



# Don't overdo it



# Annotations

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# Among the most effective

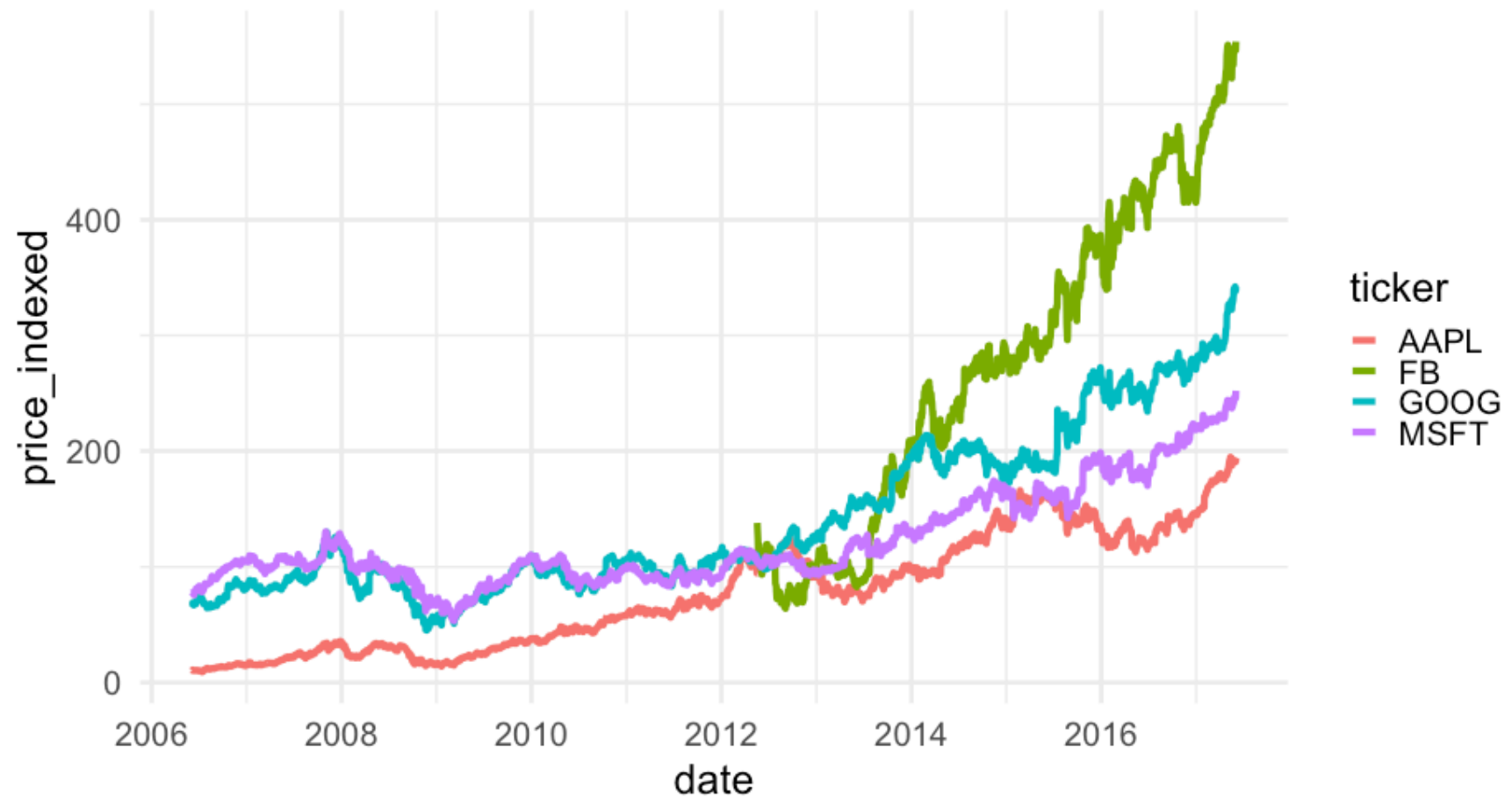
- If possible, try to remove legends, and just include annotations

# Building up a plot

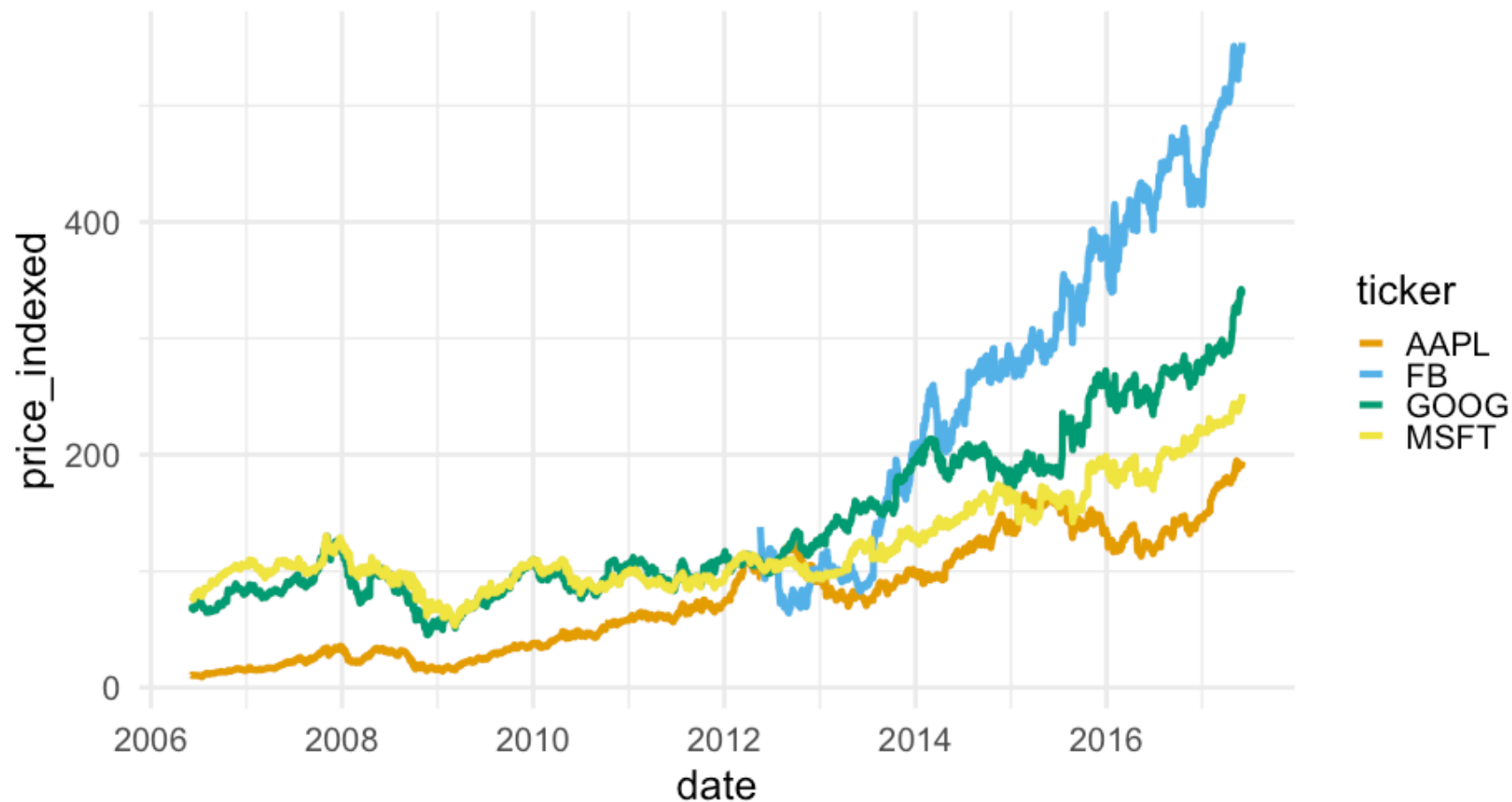
```
remotes::install_github("clauswilke/dviz.supp")  
head(tech_stocks)
```

```
## # A tibble: 6 x 6  
## # Groups:   ticker [1]  
##   company  ticker date          price index_price price_indexed  
##   <chr>    <chr> <date>         <dbl>      <dbl>         <dbl>  
## 1 Alphabet GOOG  2017-06-02  975.6        285.2        342.0757  
## 2 Alphabet GOOG  2017-06-01  966.95       285.2        339.0428  
## 3 Alphabet GOOG  2017-05-31  964.86       285.2        338.3100  
## 4 Alphabet GOOG  2017-05-30  975.88       285.2        342.1739  
## 5 Alphabet GOOG  2017-05-26  971.47       285.2        340.6276  
## 6 Alphabet GOOG  2017-05-25  969.54       285.2        339.9509
```

```
ggplot(tech_stocks, aes(date, price_indexed, color = ticker)) +  
  geom_line()
```



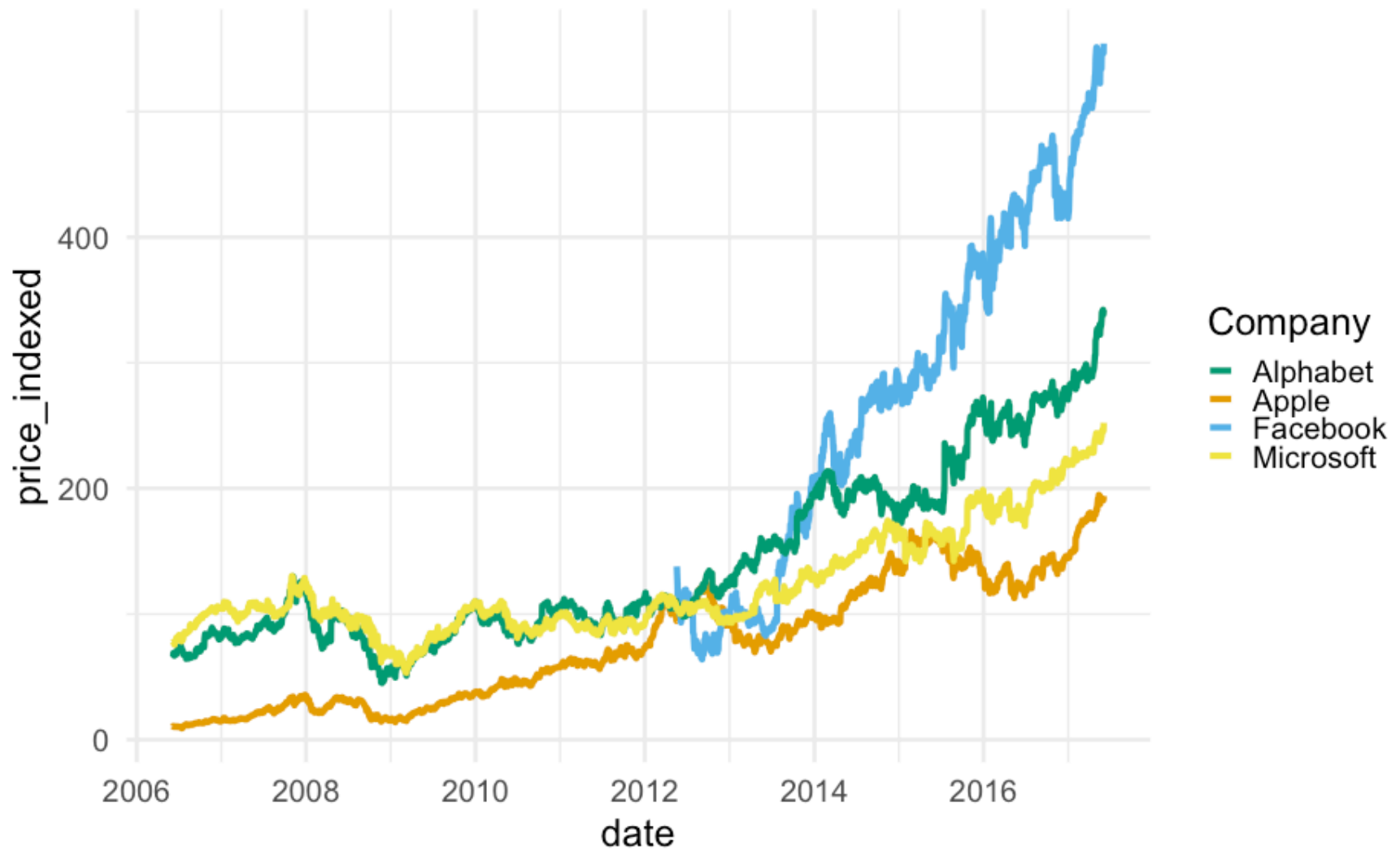
```
ggplot(tech_stocks, aes(date, price_indexed, color = ticker)) +  
  geom_line() +  
  scale_color_0kabeIto()
```





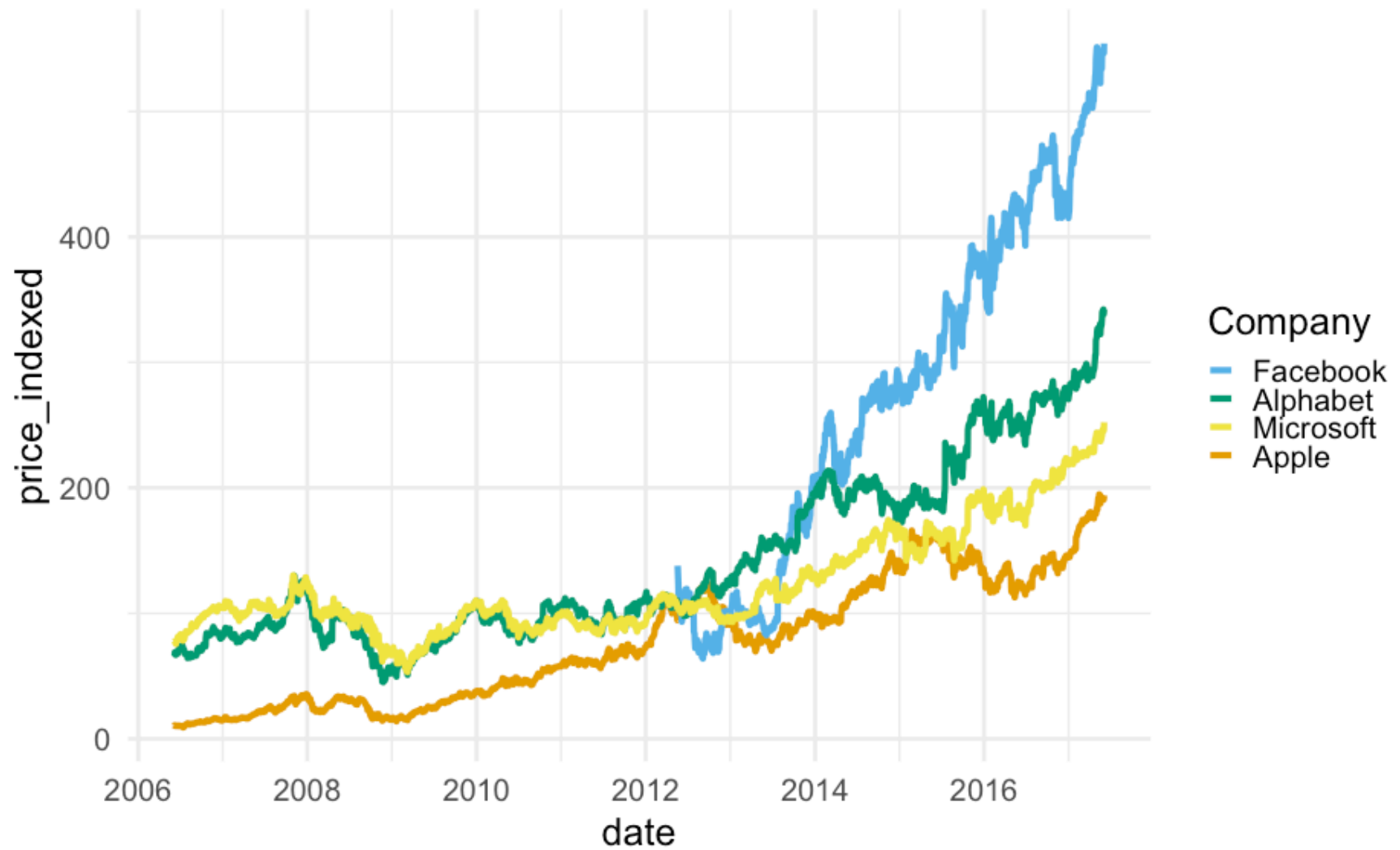
```
ggplot(tech_stocks, aes(date, price_indexed, color = ticker)) +  
  geom_line() +  
  scale_color_OkabeIto(name = "Company",  
                        breaks = c("GOOG", "AAPL", "FB", "MSFT"),  
                        labels = c("Alphabet", "Apple", "Facebook", "Microsoft"))
```

# Bad

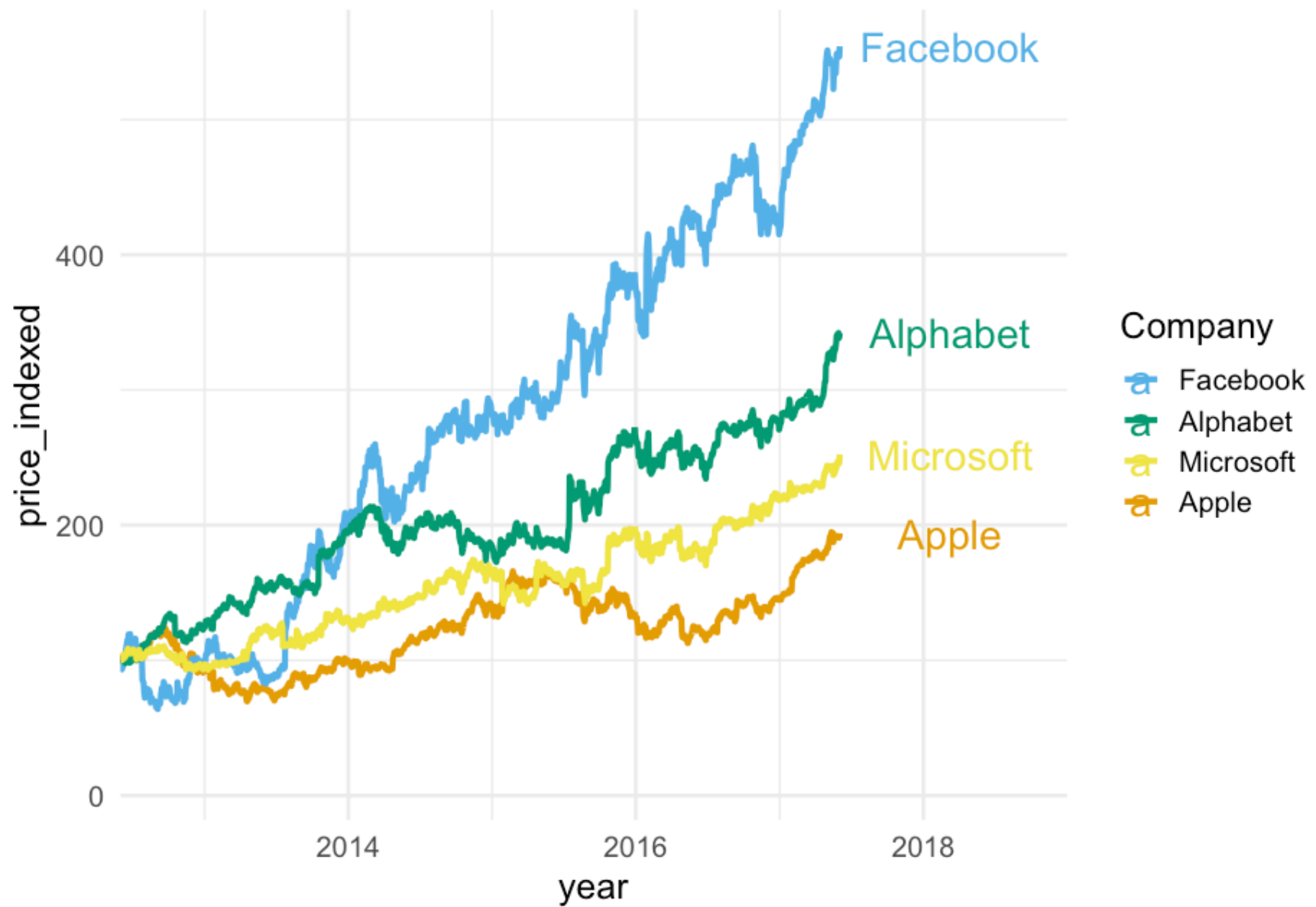


```
ggplot(tech_stocks, aes(date, price_indexed, color = ticker)) +  
  geom_line() +  
  scale_color_OkabeIto(name = "Company",  
                        breaks = c("FB", "GOOG", "MSFT", "AAPL"),  
                        labels = c("Facebook", "Alphabet", "Microsoft", "Apple"))
```

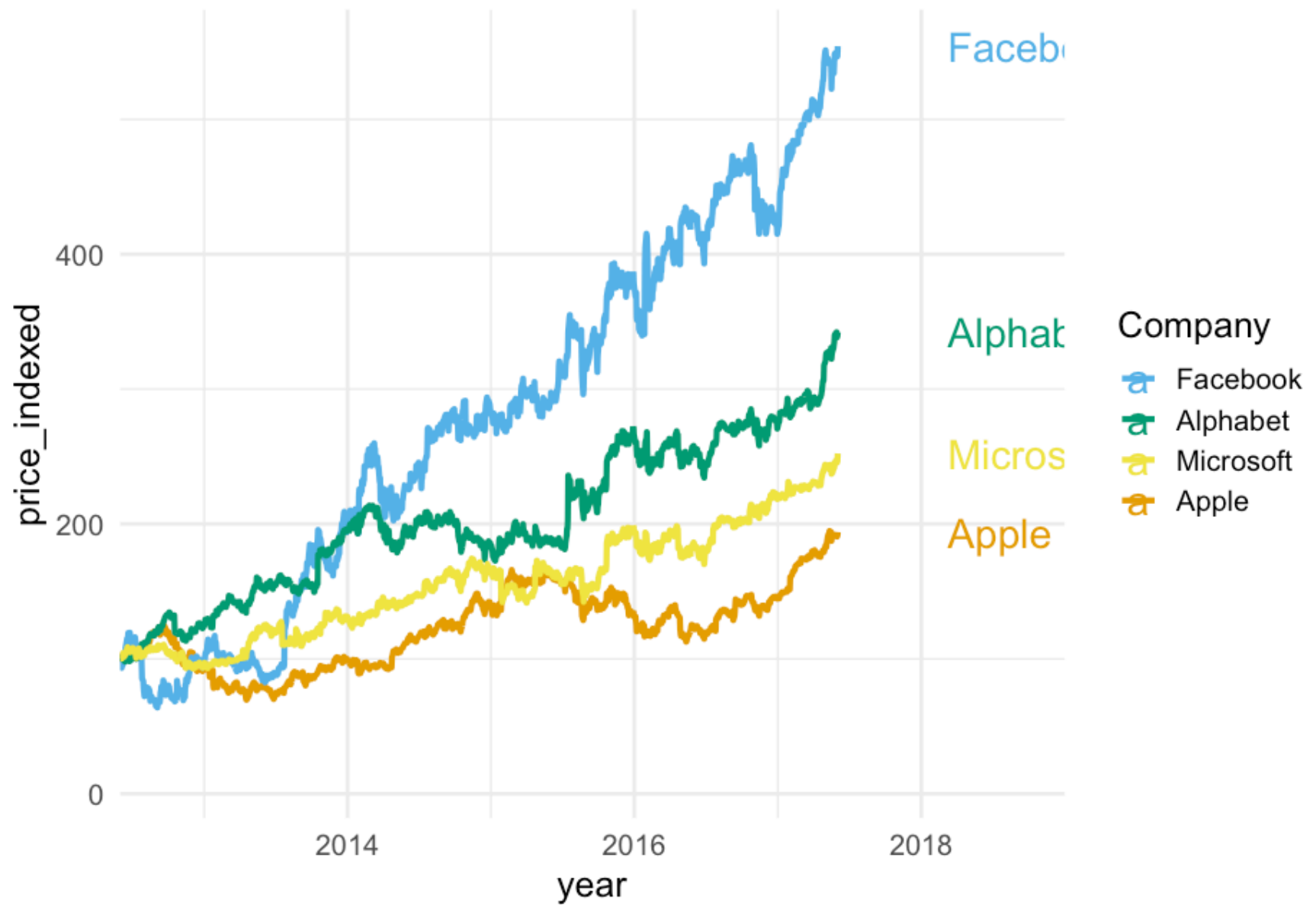
# Good



```
ggplot(tech_stocks, aes(date, price_indexed, color = ticker)) +  
  geom_line() +  
  scale_color_OkabeIto(name = "Company",  
                        breaks = c("FB", "GOOG", "MSFT", "AAPL"),  
                        labels = c("Facebook", "Alphabet", "Microsoft", "Apple"),  
                        position = "right") +  
  scale_x_date(name = "year",  
              limits = c(ymd("2012-06-01"), ymd("2018-12-31")),  
              expand = c(0,0)) +  
  geom_text(data = filter(tech_stocks, date == "2017-06-02"),  
            aes(y = price_indexed, label = company),  
            nudge_x = 280)
```

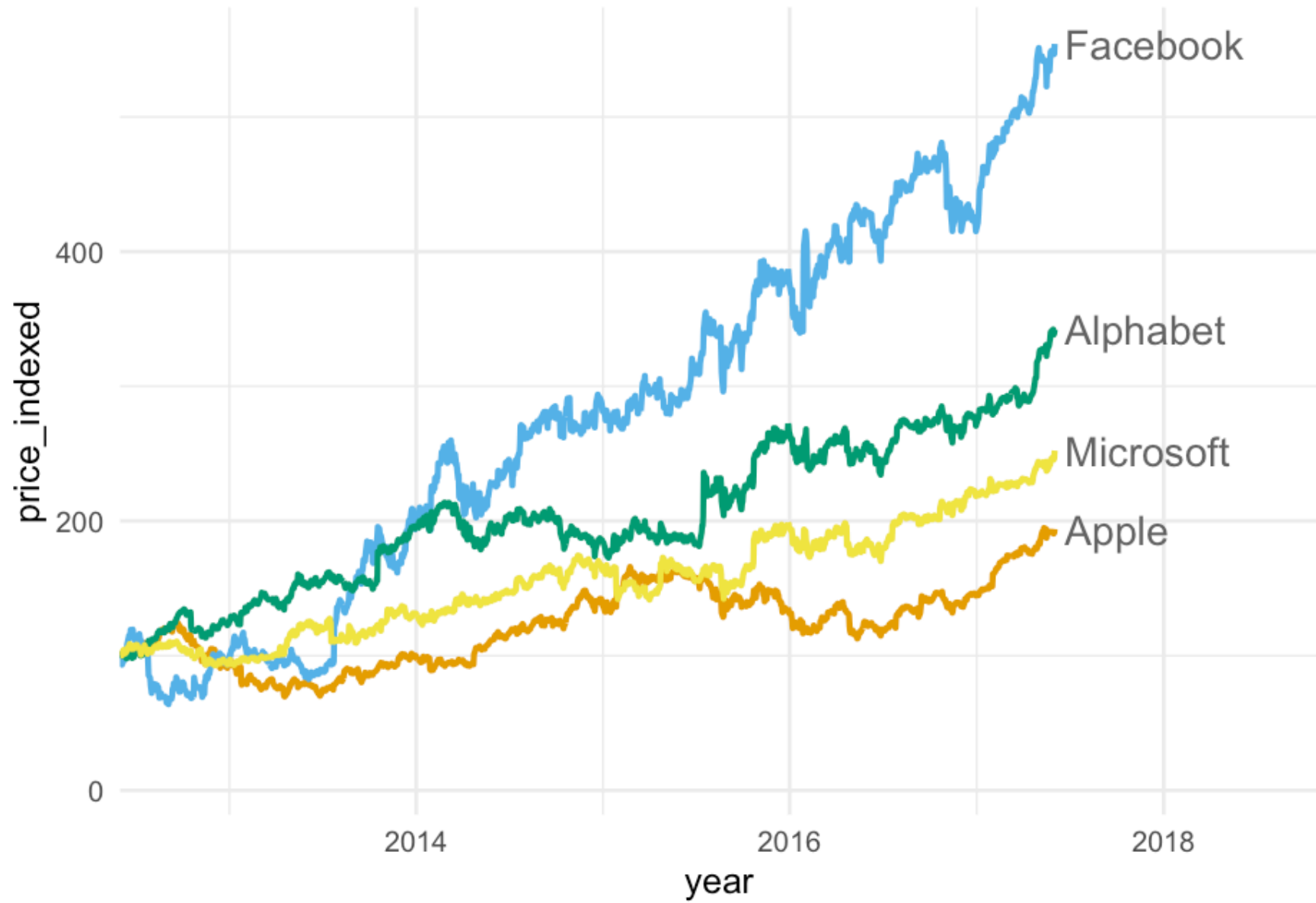


```
ggplot(tech_stocks, aes(date, price_indexed, color = ticker)) +  
  geom_line() +  
  scale_color_OkabeIto(name = "Company",  
                        breaks = c("FB", "GOOG", "MSFT", "AAPL"),  
                        labels = c("Facebook", "Alphabet", "Microsoft", "Apple"),  
                        color = c("red", "blue", "green", "black")) +  
  scale_x_date(name = "year",  
               limits = c(ymd("2012-06-01"), ymd("2018-12-31")),  
               expand = c(0,0)) +  
  geom_text(data = filter(tech_stocks, date == "2017-06-02"),  
            aes(y = price_indexed, label = company),  
            nudge_x = 280,  
            hjust = 0)
```





```
ggplot(tech_stocks, aes(date, price_indexed, color = ticker)) +  
  geom_line() +  
  scale_color_OkabeIto(name = "Company",  
                        breaks = c("FB", "GOOG", "MSFT", "AAPL"),  
                        labels = c("Facebook", "Alphabet", "Microsoft", "Appl  
  scale_x_date(name = "year",  
               limits = c(ymd("2012-06-01"), ymd("2018-10-31")),  
               expand = c(0,0)) +  
  geom_text(data = filter(tech_stocks, date == "2017-06-02"),  
            aes(y = price_indexed, label = company),  
            color = "gray40",  
            nudge_x = 20,  
            hjust = 0) +  
  guides(color = "none")
```

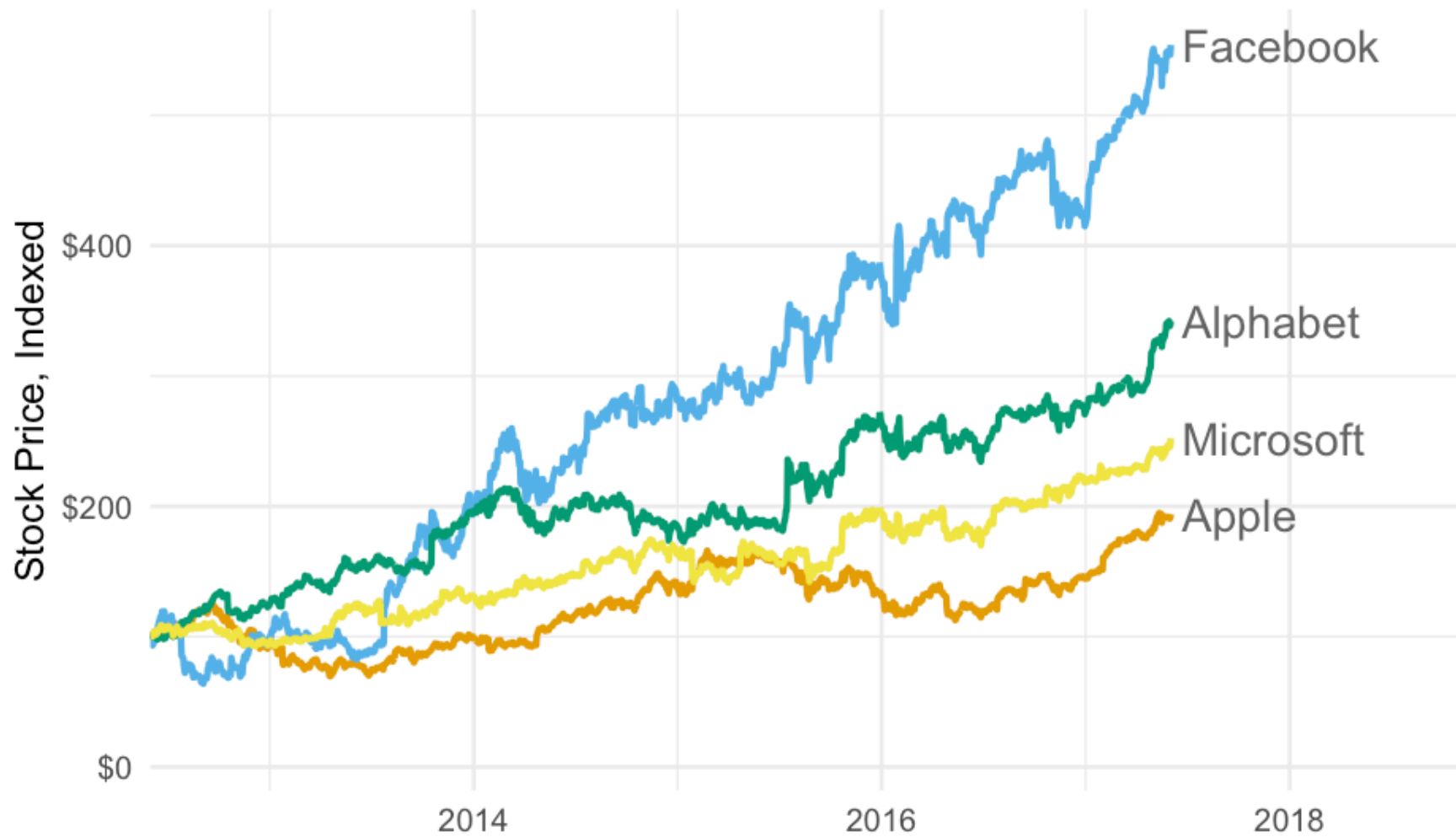


```

ggplot(tech_stocks, aes(date, price_indexed, color = ticker)) +
  geom_line() +
  scale_color_OkabeIto(name = "Company",
                        breaks = c("FB", "GOOG", "MSFT", "AAPL"),
                        labels = c("Facebook", "Alphabet", "Microsoft", "Apple"),
  scale_x_date(name = "",
               limits = c(ymd("2012-06-01"), ymd("2018-10-31")),
               expand = c(0,0)) +
  scale_y_continuous(name = "Stock Price, Indexed",
                     labels = scales::dollar) +
  geom_text(data = filter(tech_stocks, date == "2017-06-02"),
            aes(y = price_indexed, label = company),
            color = "gray40",
            nudge_x = 20,
            hjust = 0,
            size = 10) +
  guides(color = "none") +
  labs(title = "Tech growth over time",
       caption = "Data from Wilke (2019): Fundamentals of Data Visualization")

```

## Tech growth over time



Data from Wilke (2019): Fundamentals of Data Visualization

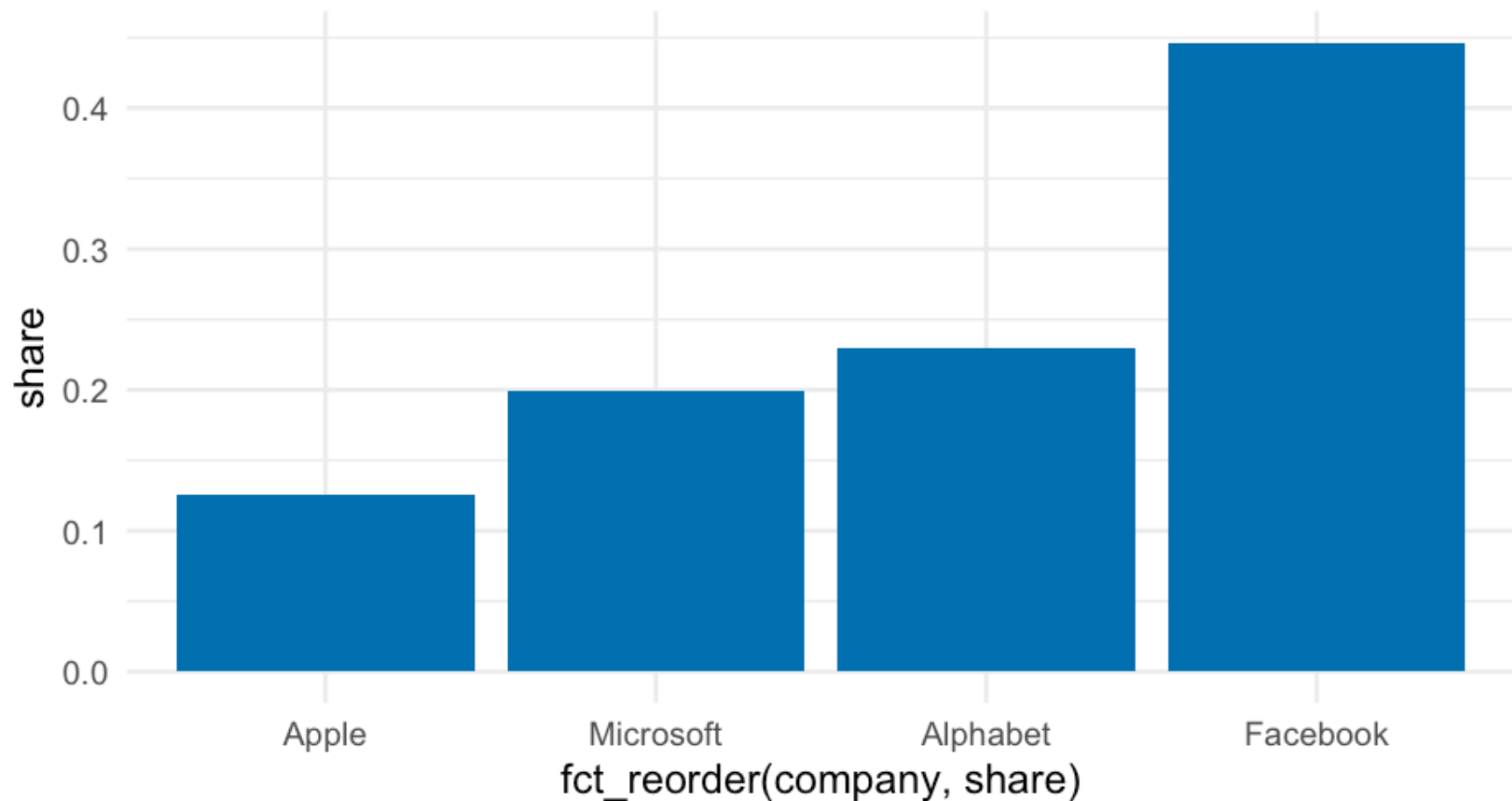
# Labeling bars

```
avs <- tech_stocks %>%  
  group_by(company) %>%  
  summarize(stock_av = mean(price_indexed)) %>%  
  ungroup() %>%  
  mutate(share = stock_av / sum(stock_av))  
avs
```

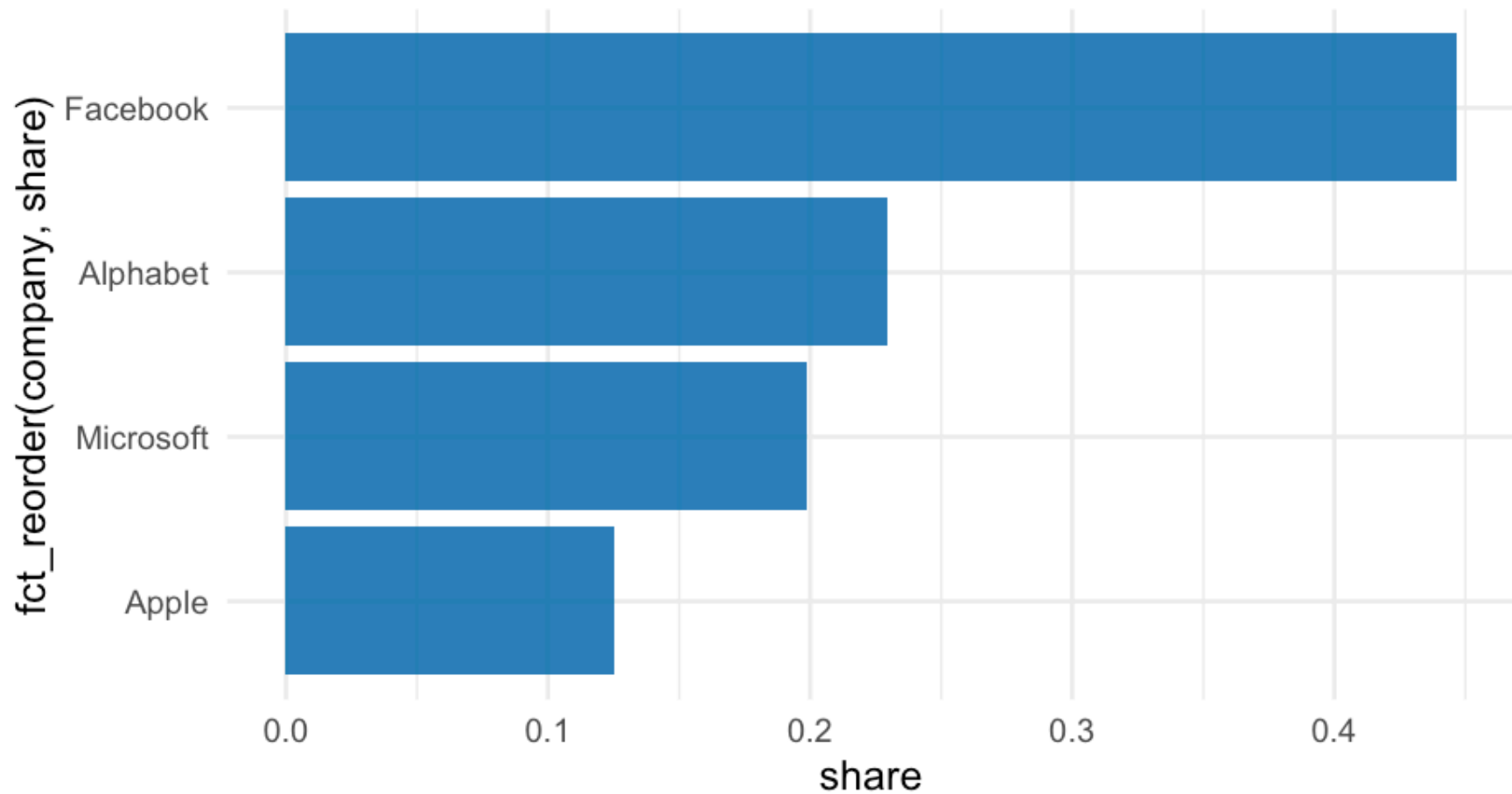
```
## # A tibble: 4 x 3  
##   company      stock_av      share  
##   <chr>         <dbl>     <dbl>  
## 1 Alphabet    141.0205  0.2292441  
## 2 Apple        77.08241  0.1253058  
## 3 Facebook    274.7427  0.4466240  
## 4 Microsoft   122.3088  0.1988261
```

# Bar plot

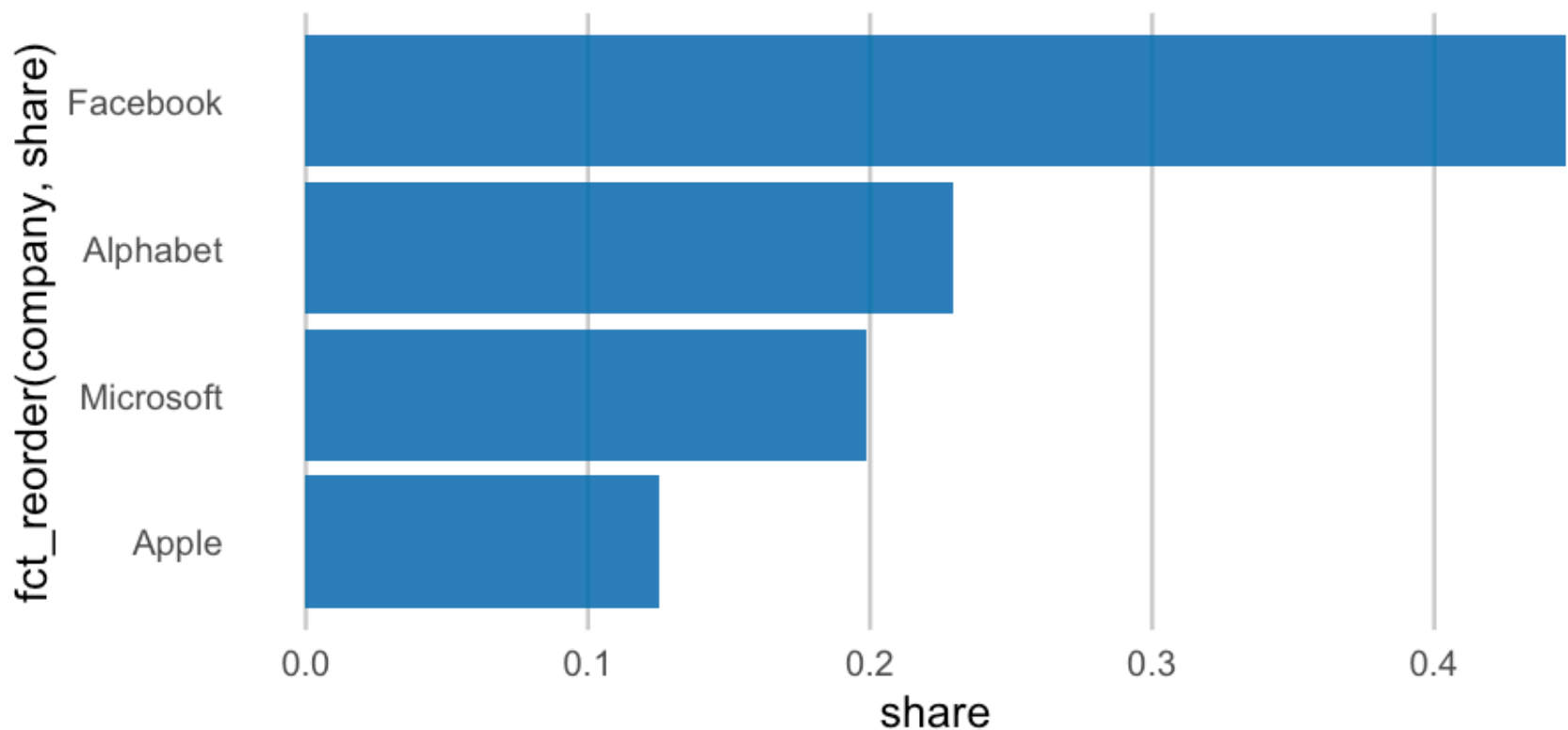
```
ggplot(avs, aes(fct_reorder(company, share), share)) +  
  geom_col(fill = "#0072B2")
```



```
ggplot(avs, aes(fct_reorder(company, share), share)) +  
  geom_col(fill = "#0072B2",  
           alpha = 0.9) +  
  coord_flip()
```



```
ggplot(avs, aes(fct_reorder(company, share), share)) +  
  geom_col(fill = "#0072B2",  
           alpha = 0.9) +  
  coord_flip() +  
  theme(panel.grid.major.y = element_blank(),  
        panel.grid.minor.x = element_blank(),  
        panel.grid.major.x = element_line(color = "gray80"))
```





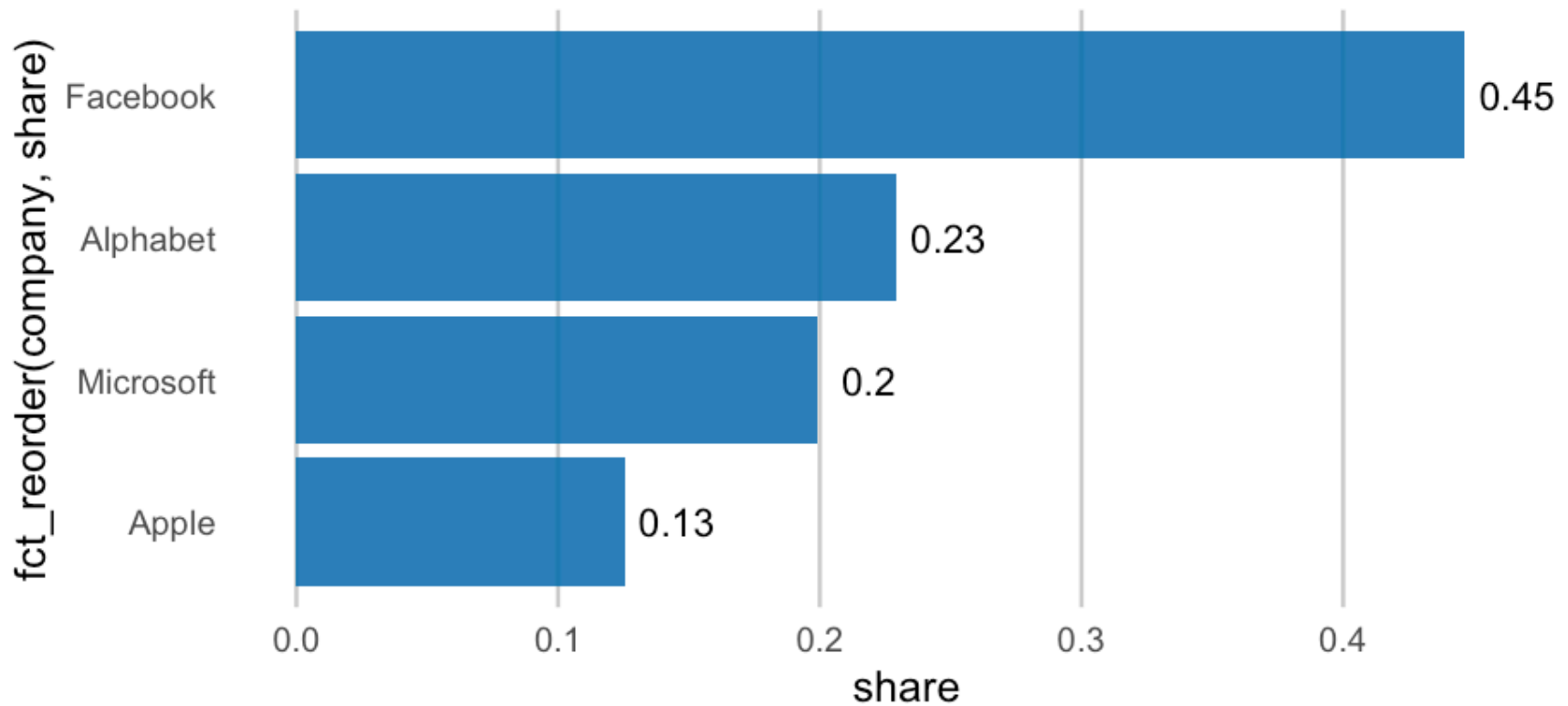
---

# Quick aside

Let's actually make a bar plot theme

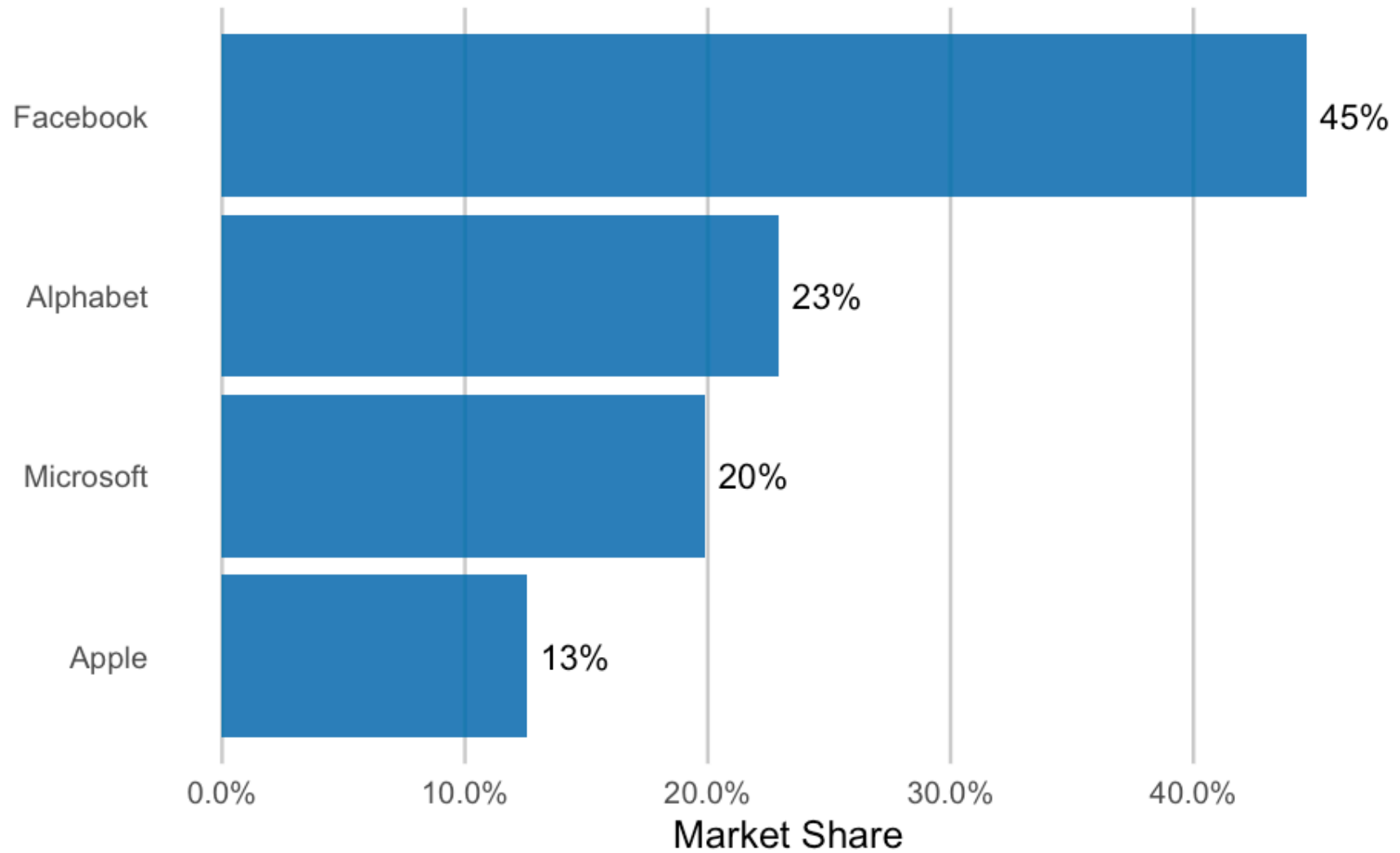
```
bp_theme <- function(...) {  
  theme_minimal(...) +  
    theme(panel.grid.major.y = element_blank(),  
          panel.grid.minor.x = element_blank(),  
          panel.grid.major.x = element_line(color = "gray80"),  
          plot.title.position = "plot")  
}
```

```
ggplot(avs, aes(fct_reorder(company, share), share)) +  
  geom_col(fill = "#0072B2",  
           alpha = 0.9) +  
  geom_text(aes(company, share, label = round(share, 2)),  
            nudge_y = 0.02,  
            size = 8) +  
  coord_flip() +  
  bp_theme(base_size = 25)
```



```
ggplot(avs, aes(fct_reorder(company, share), share)) +  
  geom_col(fill = "#0072B2",  
           alpha = 0.9) +  
  geom_text(aes(company, share, label = paste0(round(share*100), "%")),  
            nudge_y = 0.02,  
            size = 8) +  
  coord_flip() +  
  scale_y_continuous("Market Share", labels = scales::percent) +  
  labs(x = NULL,  
       title = "Tech company market control",  
       caption = "Data from Clause Wilke Book: Fundamentals of Data Visualiz  
bp_theme(base_size = 25)
```

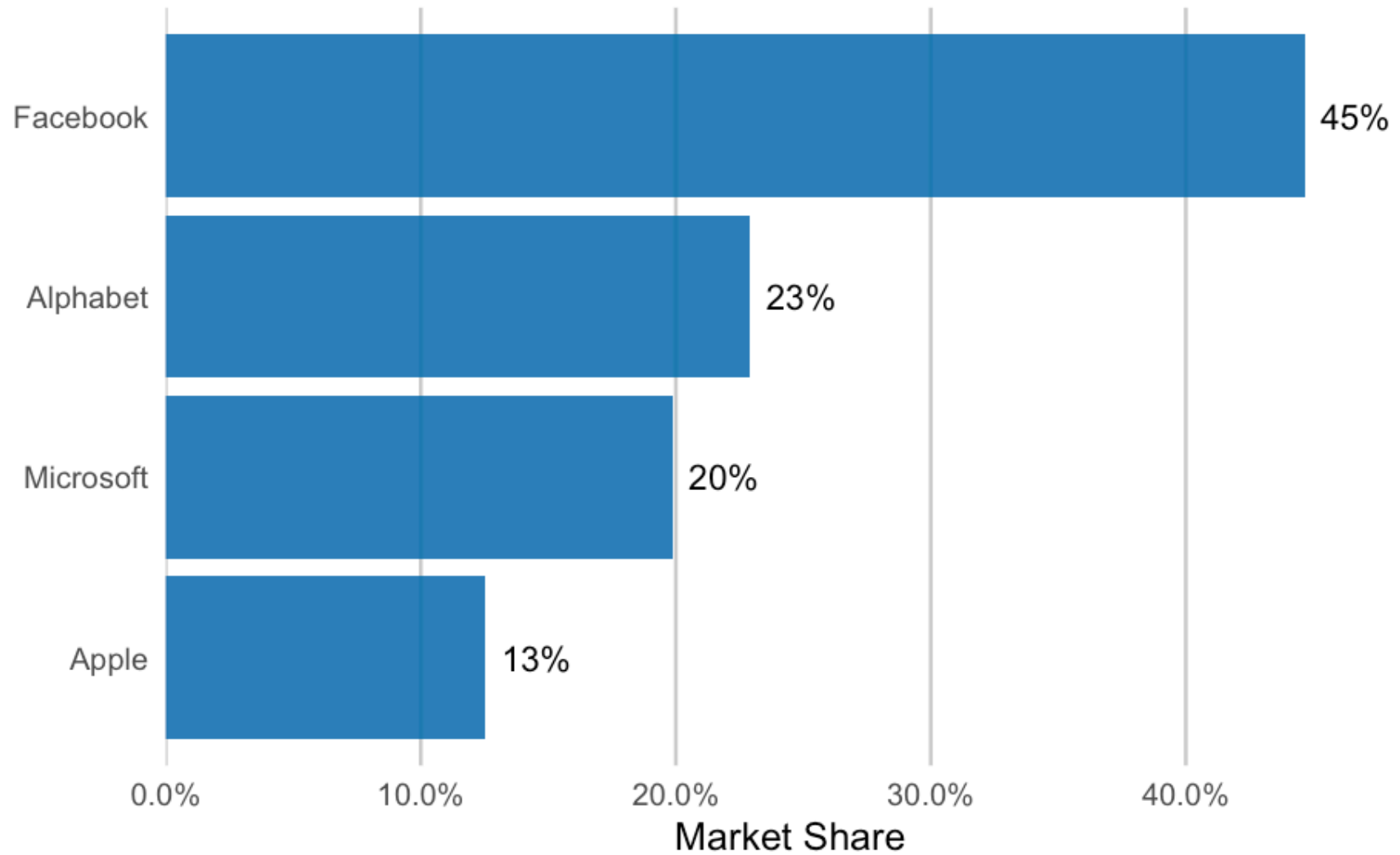
## Tech company market control



Data from Clause Wilke Book: Fundamentals of Data Visualizations

```
ggplot(avs, aes(fct_reorder(company, share), share)) +  
  geom_col(fill = "#0072B2",  
           alpha = 0.9) +  
  geom_text(aes(company, share, label = paste0(round(share*100), "%")),  
           nudge_y = 0.02,  
           size = 8) +  
  coord_flip() +  
  scale_y_continuous("Market Share",  
                    labels = scales::percent,  
                    expand = c(0, 0, 0.05, 0)) +  
  labs(x = NULL,  
       title = "Tech company market control",  
       caption = "Data from Clause Wilke Book: Fundamentals of Data Visualiz  
bp_theme(base_size = 25)
```

## Tech company market control

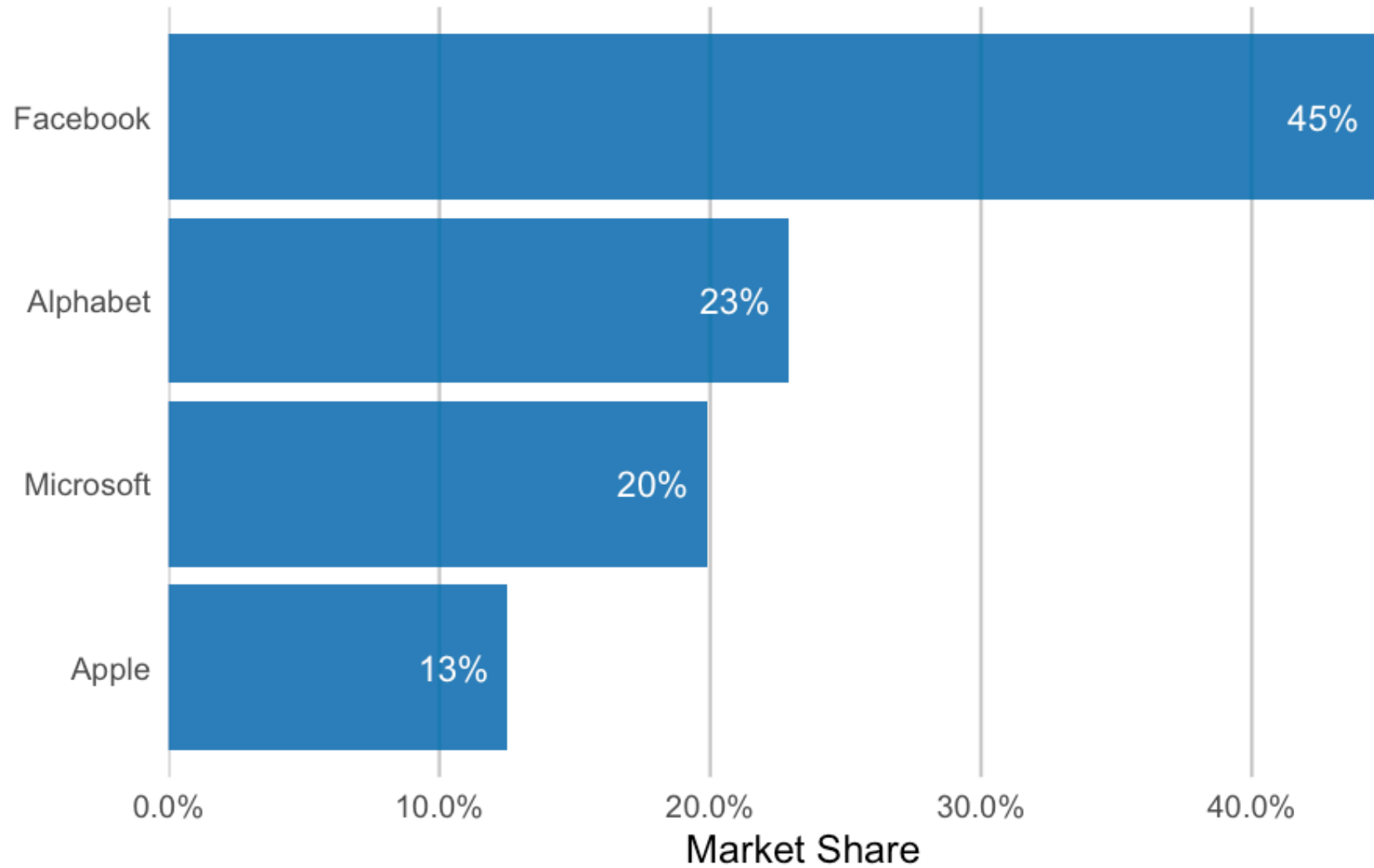


Data from Clause Wilke Book: Fundamentals of Data Visualizations

# Last alternative

```
ggplot(avs, aes(fct_reorder(company, share), share)) +  
  geom_col(fill = "#0072B2",  
           alpha = 0.9) +  
  geom_text(aes(company, share, label = paste0(round(share*100), "%")),  
            nudge_y = -0.02,  
            size = 8,  
            color = "white") +  
  coord_flip() +  
  scale_y_continuous("Market Share",  
                    labels = scales::percent,  
                    expand = c(0, 0, 0.05, 0)) +  
  labs(x = NULL,  
       title = "Tech company market control",  
       caption = "Data from Clause Wilke Book: Fundamentals of Data Visualiz  
bp_theme(base_size = 25)
```

## Tech company market control

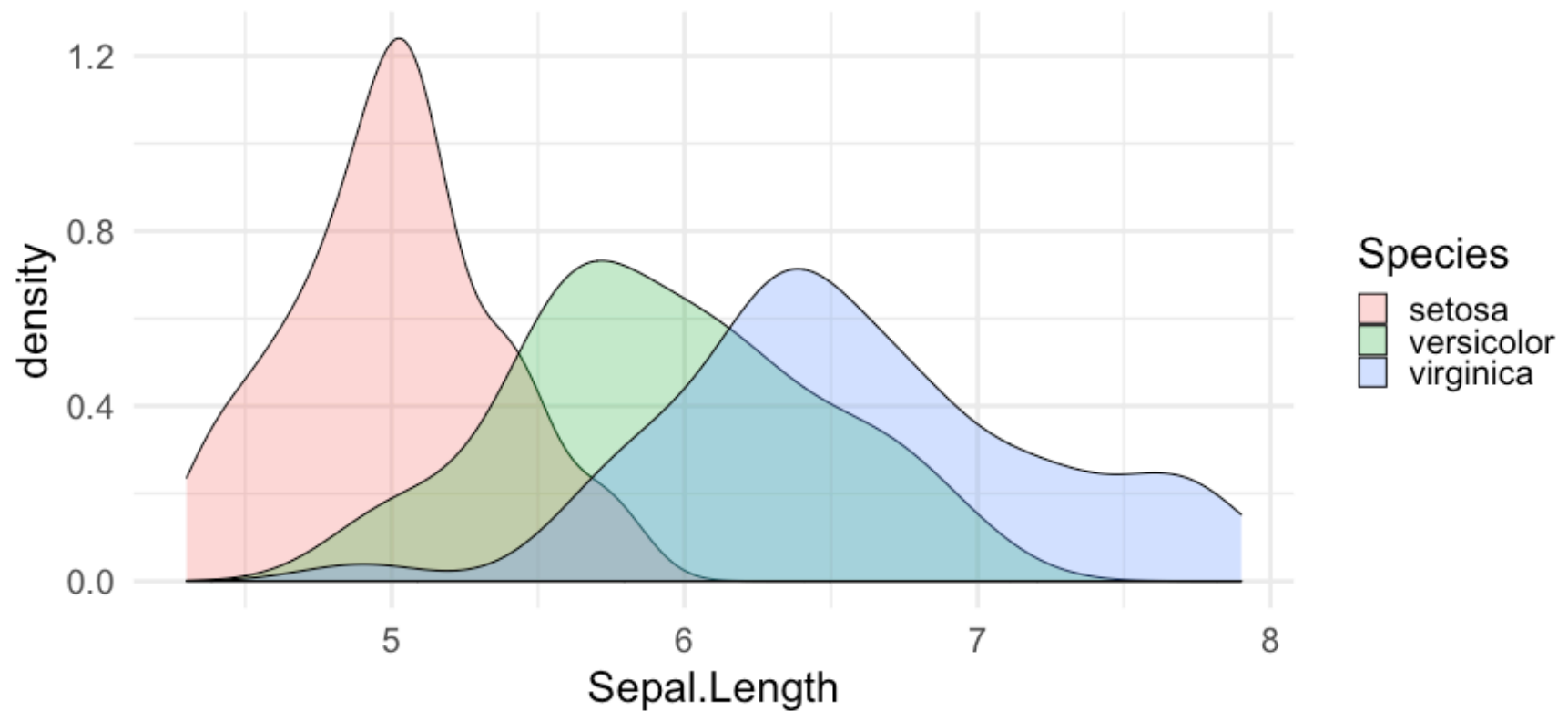


Data from Clause Wilke Book: Fundamentals of Data Visualizations

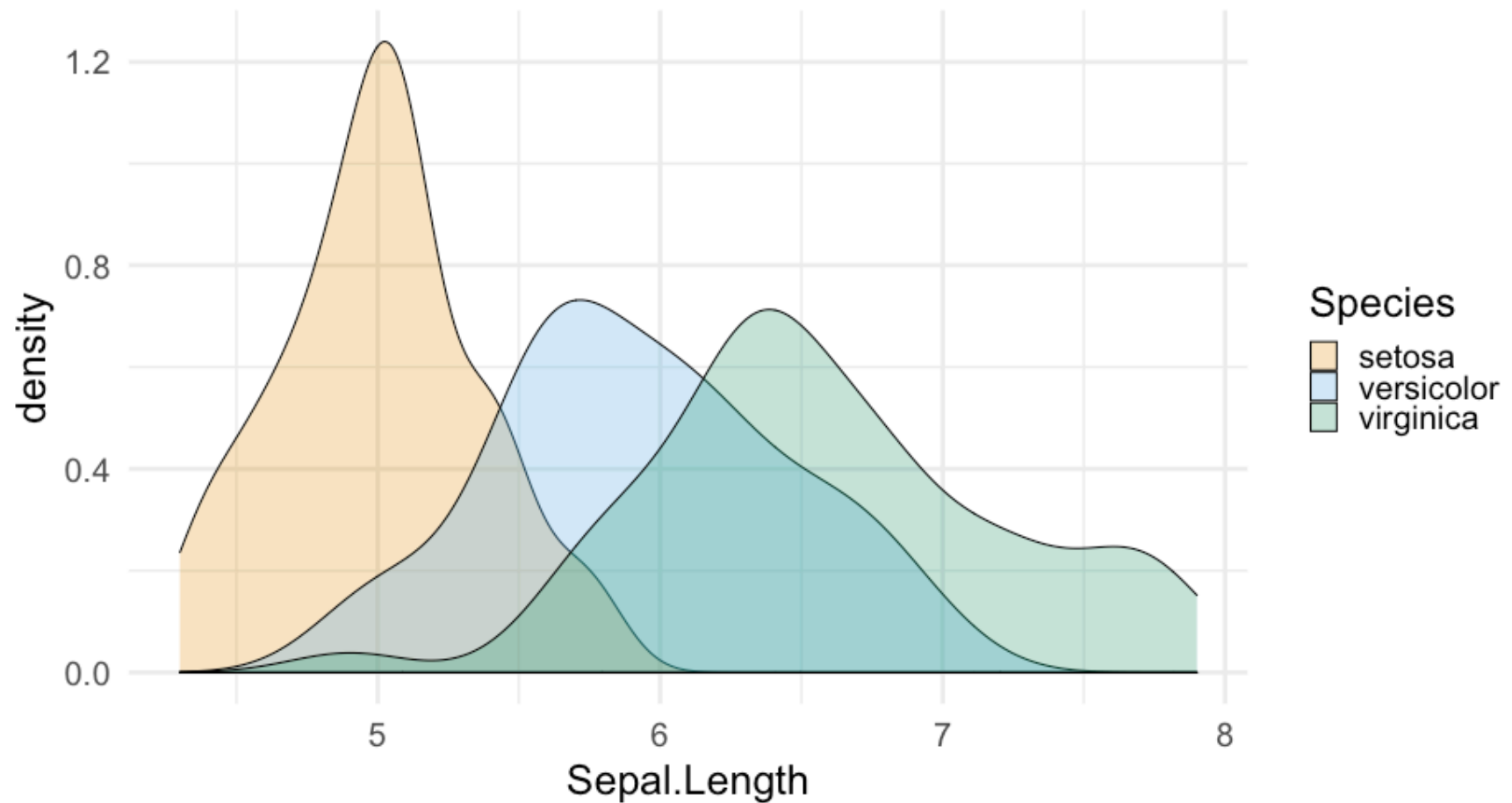


# Distributions

```
ggplot(iris, aes(Sepal.Length, fill = Species)) +  
  geom_density(alpha = 0.3)
```



```
ggplot(iris, aes(Sepal.Length, fill = Species)) +  
  geom_density(alpha = 0.3) +  
  scale_fill_0kabeIto()
```

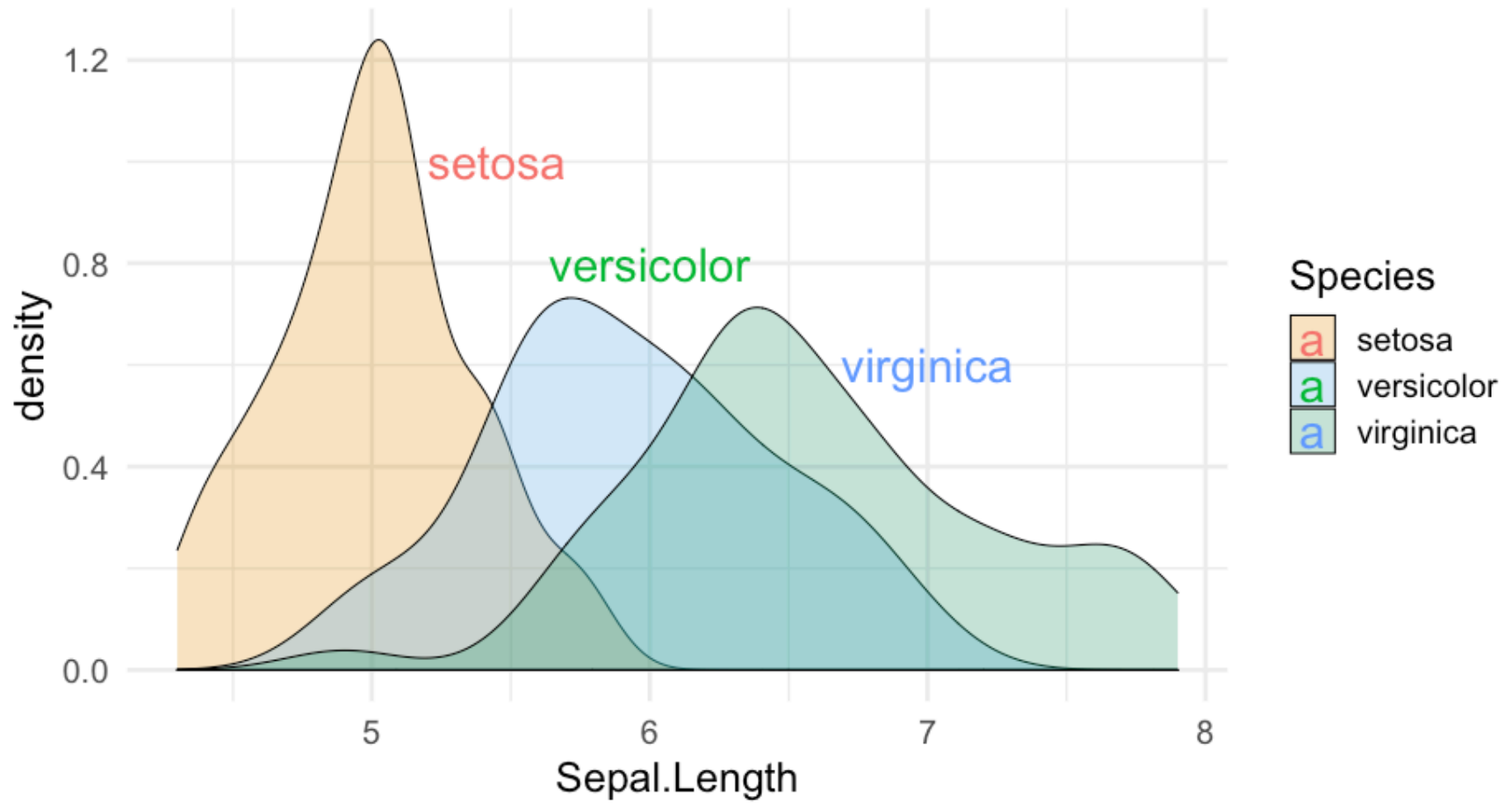


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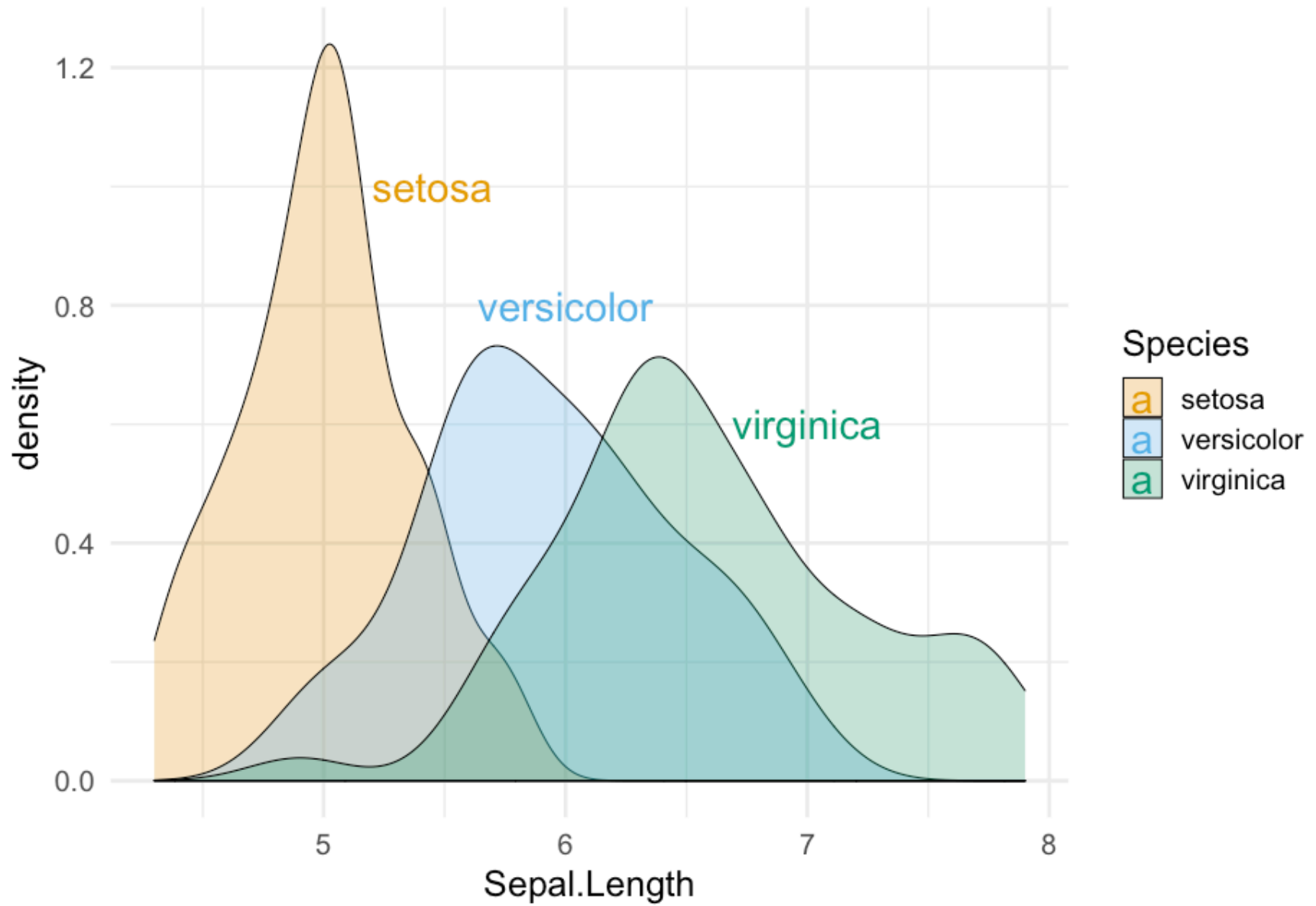
# Labeling

*One method*

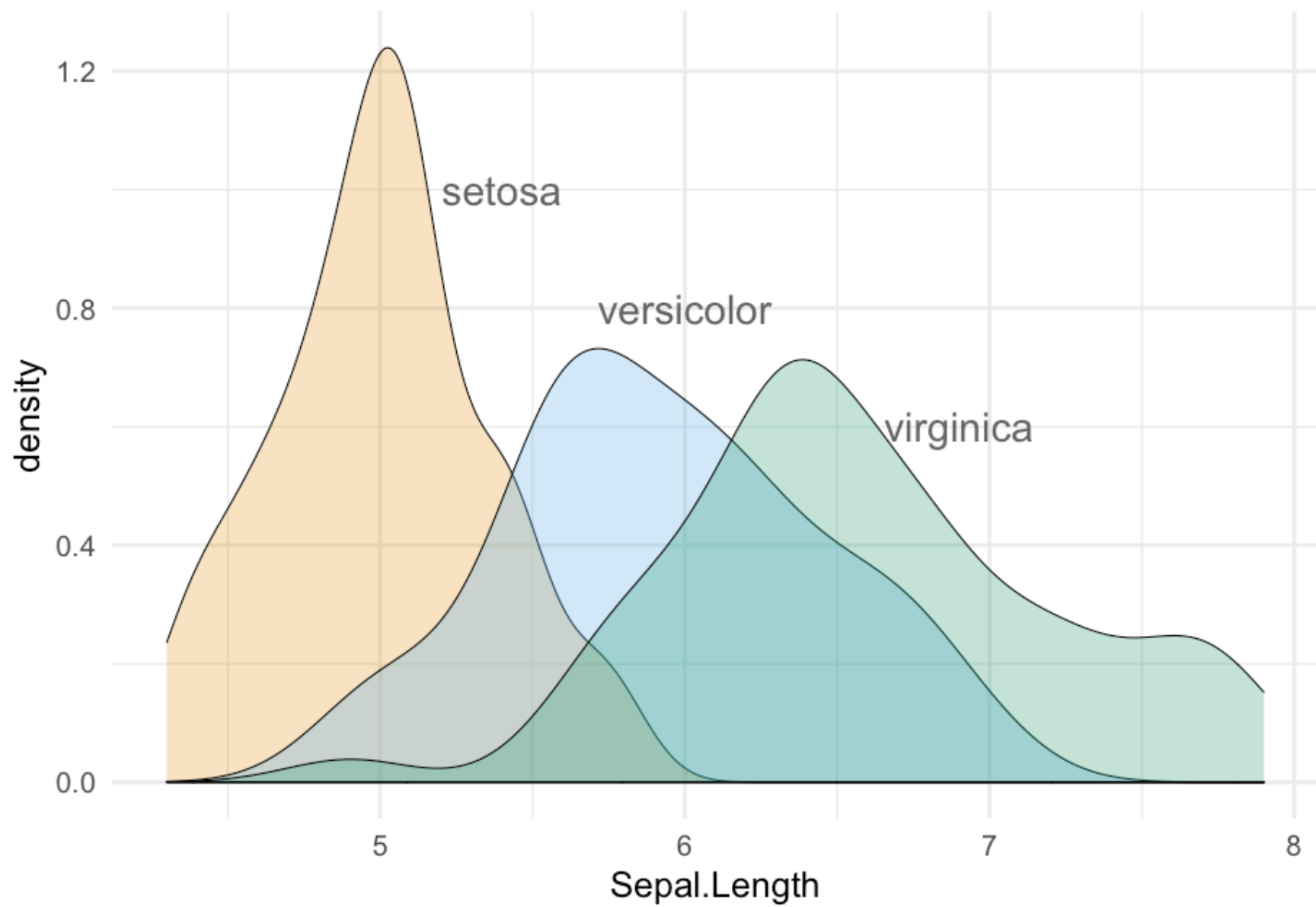
```
label_locs <- tibble(Sepal.Length = c(5.45, 6, 7),  
                     density = c(1, 0.8, 0.6),  
                     Species = c("setosa", "versicolor", "virginica"))  
  
ggplot(iris, aes(Sepal.Length, fill = Species)) +  
  geom_density(alpha = 0.3) +  
  scale_fill_okabeIto() +  
  geom_text(aes(label = Species, y = density, color = Species),  
            data = label_locs)
```



```
ggplot(iris, aes(Sepal.Length, fill = Species)) +  
  geom_density(alpha = 0.3) +  
  scale_fill_okabeIto() +  
  scale_color_okabeIto() +  
  geom_text(aes(label = Species, y = density, color = Species),  
            data = label_locs) +  
  guides(color = "none",  
         fill = "none")
```



```
label_locs <- tibble(Sepal.Length = c(5.4, 6, 6.9),  
                     density = c(1, 0.75, 0.6),  
                     Species = c("setosa", "versicolor", "virginica"))  
  
ggplot(iris, aes(Sepal.Length, fill = Species)) +  
  geom_density(alpha = 0.3) +  
  scale_fill_okabeIto() +  
  scale_color_okabeIto() +  
  geom_text(aes(label = Species, y = density),  
            color = "gray40",  
            data = label_locs) +  
  guides(fill = "none")
```





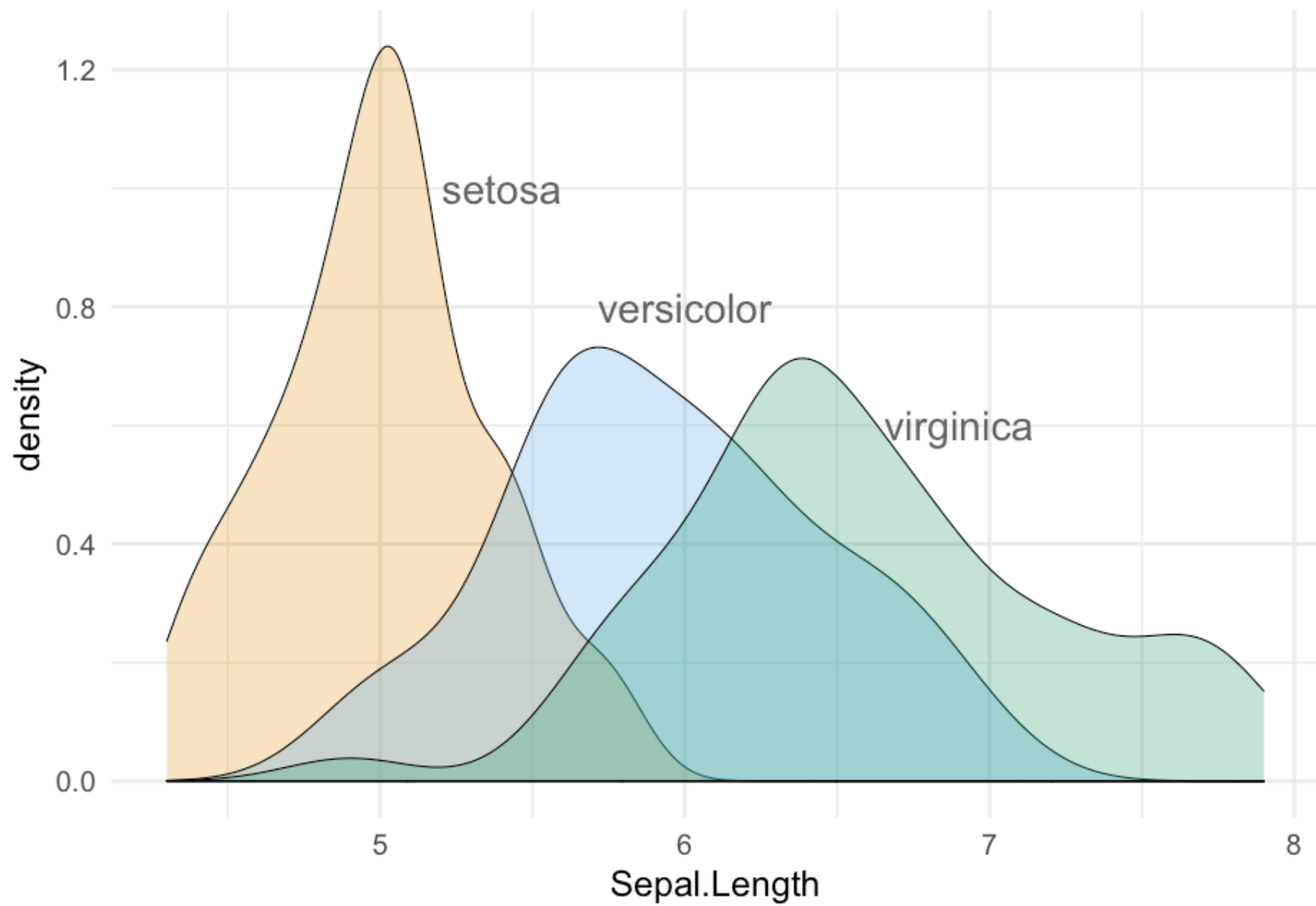
---

# Other options

- Rather than using a new data frame, you could use multiple calls to `annotate`.
- One is not necessarily better than the other, but I prefer the data frame method
- Keep in mind you can **always** use multiple data sources within a single plot
  - Each layer can have its own data source
  - Common in geographic data in particular

# Annotate example

```
ggplot(iris, aes(Sepal.Length, fill = Species)) +  
  geom_density(alpha = 0.3) +  
  scale_fill_okabeIto() +  
  scale_color_okabeIto() +  
  annotate("text", label = "setosa", x = 5.45, y = 1, color = "gray40") +  
  annotate("text", label = "versicolor", x = 6, y = 0.8, color = "gray40") +  
  annotate("text", label = "virginica", x = 7, y = 0.6, color = "gray40") +  
  guides(fill = "none")
```

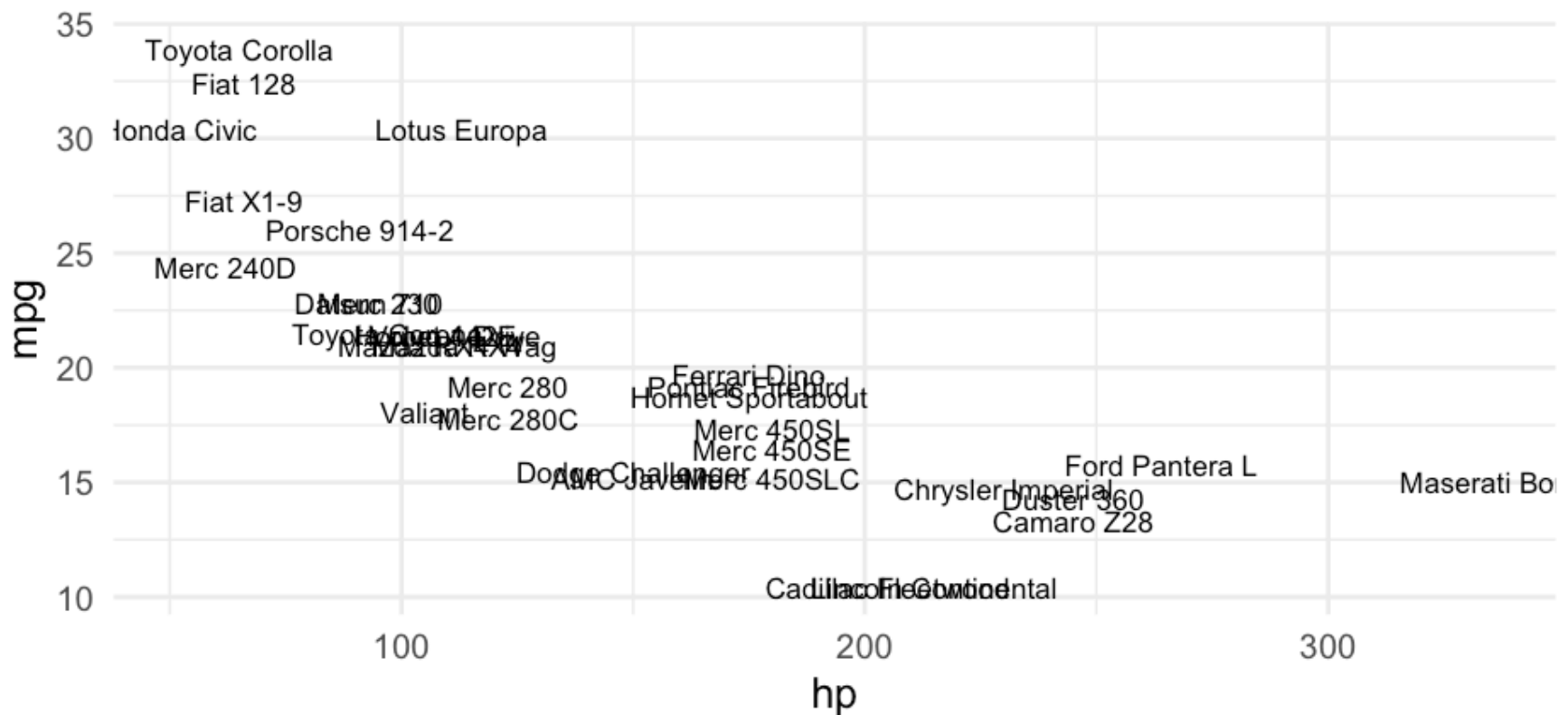


ggrepel

# Plot text directly

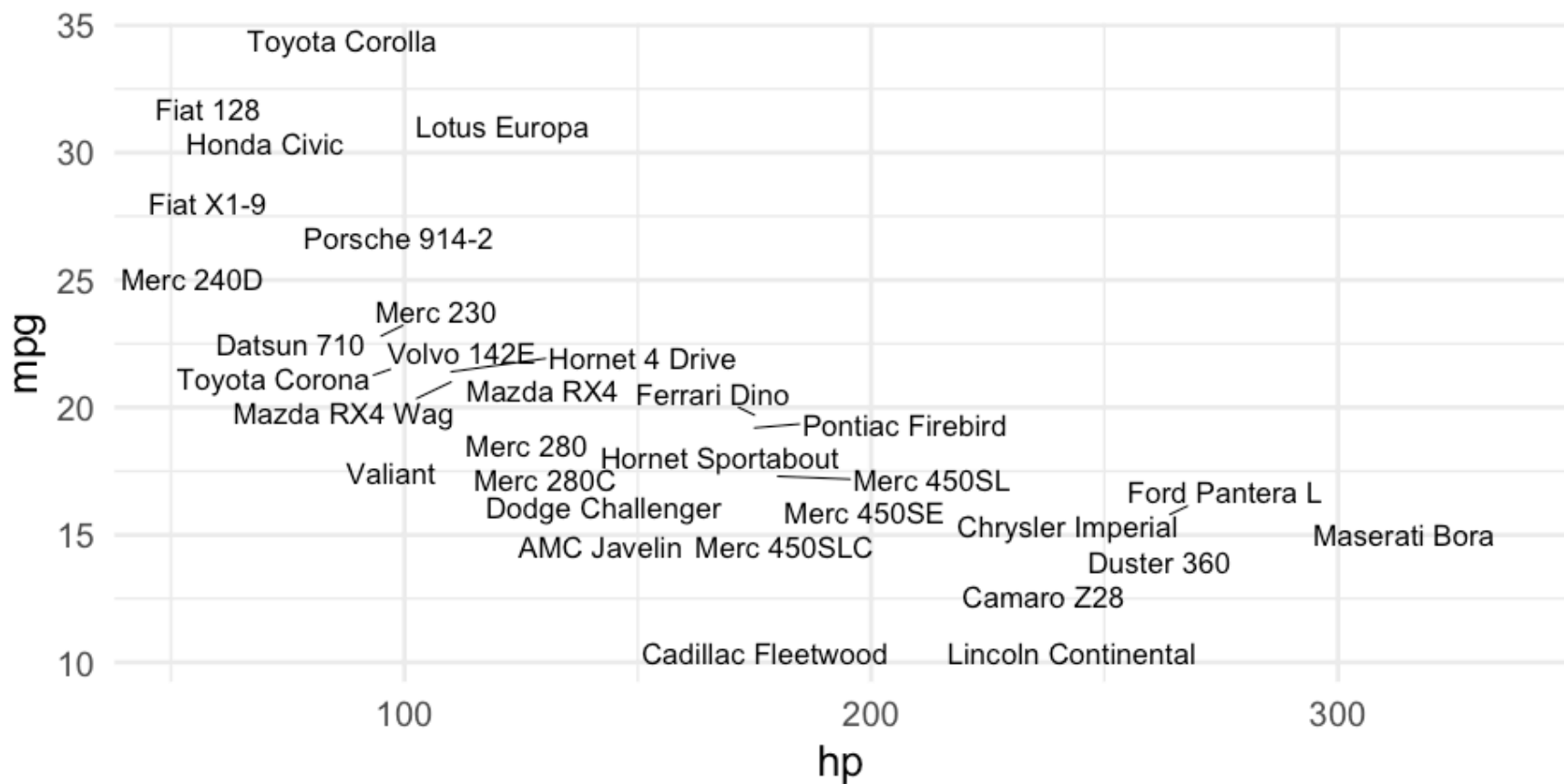
```
cars <- rownames_to_column(mtcars)

ggplot(cars, aes(hp, mpg)) +
  geom_text(aes(label = rowname))
```



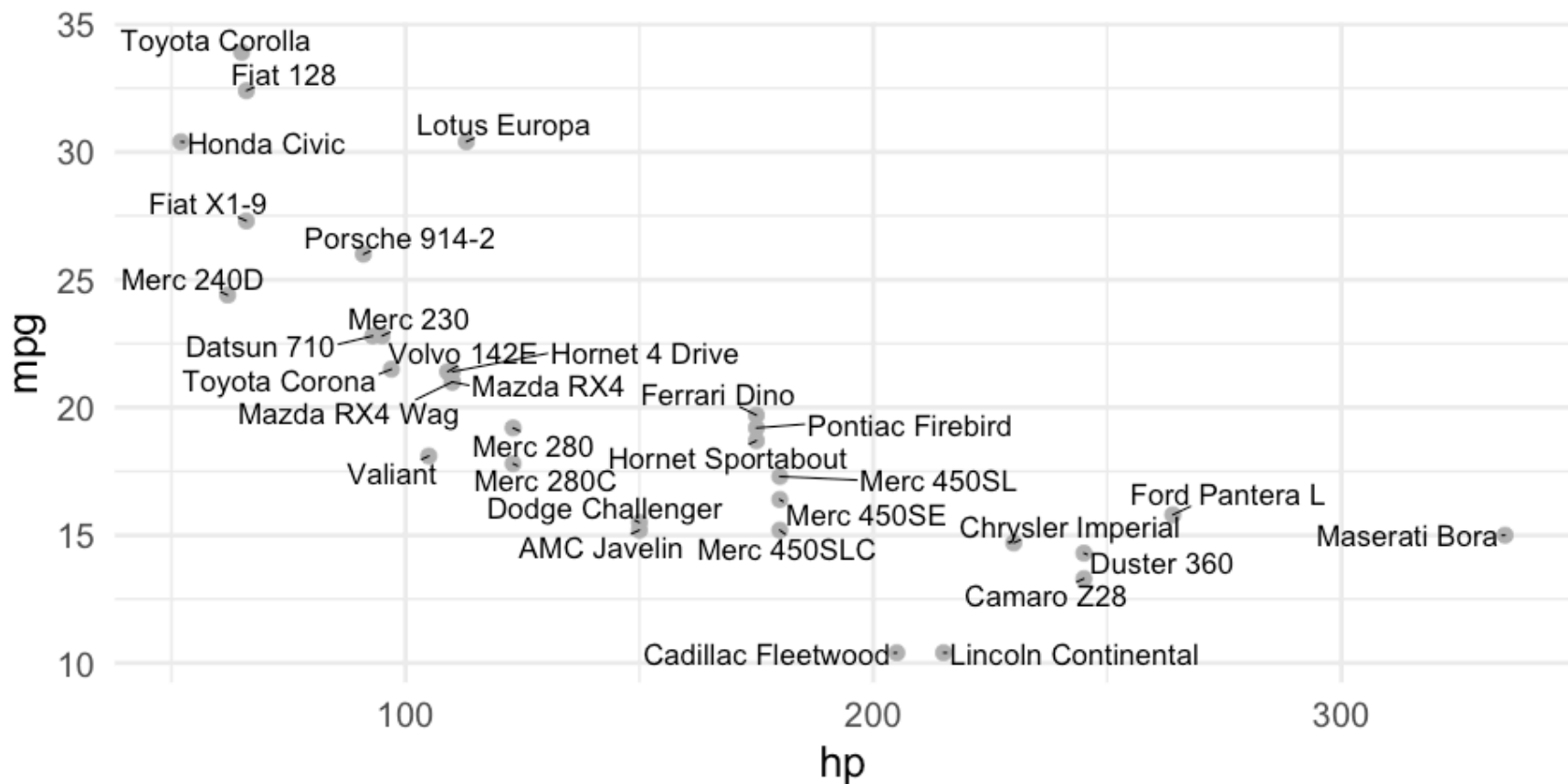
# Repel text

```
library(ggrepel)  
ggplot(cars, aes(hp, mpg)) +  
  geom_text_repel(aes(label = rowname))
```



# Slightly better

```
ggplot(cars, aes(hp, mpg)) +  
  geom_point(color = "gray70") +  
  geom_text_repel(aes(label = rowname),  
    min.segment.length = 0)
```



---

# Common use cases

- Label some sample data that makes some theoretical sense (we've seen this before)
- Label outliers
- Label points from a specific group (e.g., similar to highlighting - can be used in conjunction)



---

# Some new data

```
remotes::install_github("kjhealy/socviz")  
library(socviz)
```

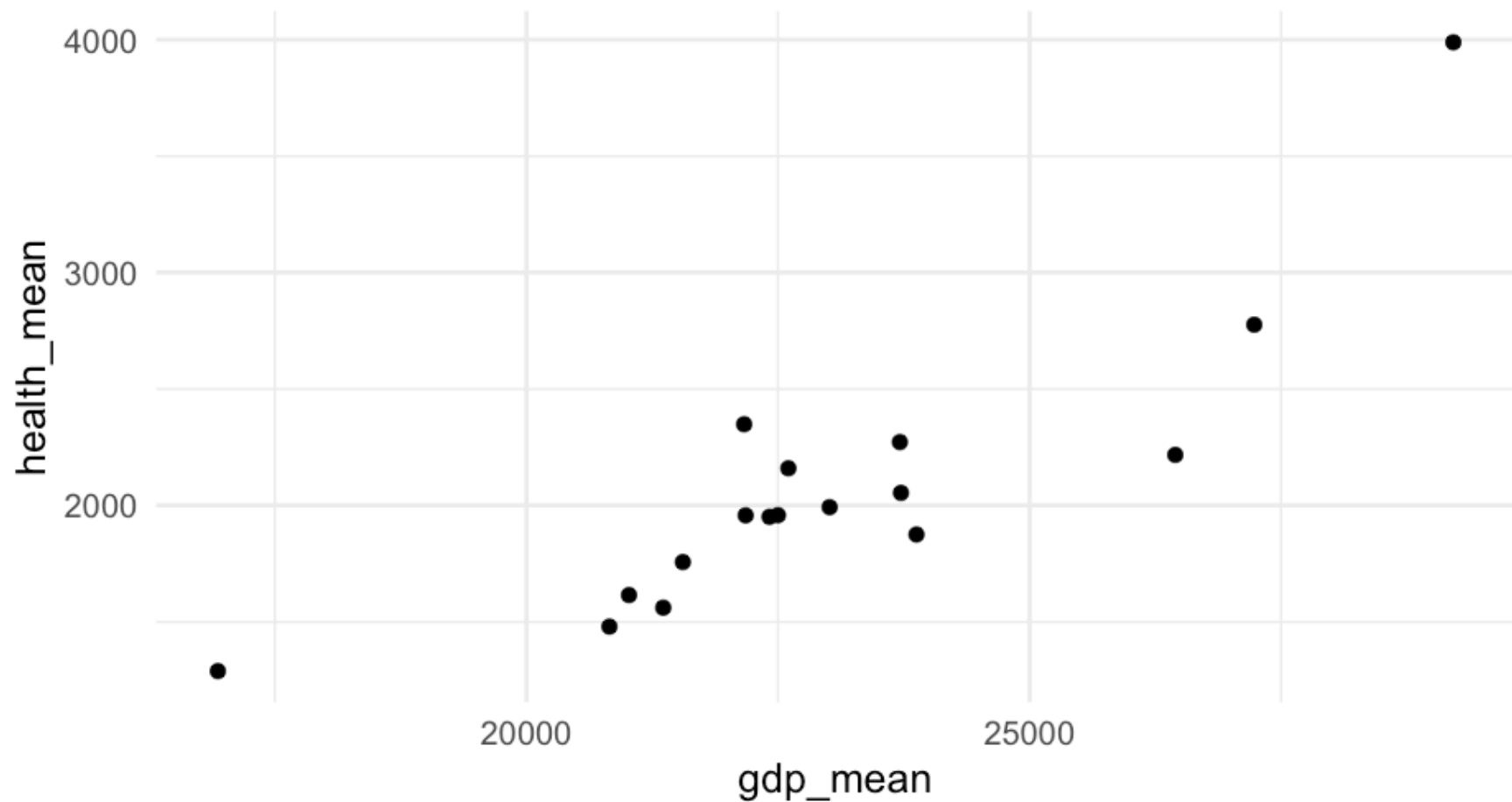
```
by_country <- organdata %>%  
  group_by(consent_law, country) %>%  
  summarize(donors_mean= mean(donors, na.rm = TRUE),  
            donors_sd = sd(donors, na.rm = TRUE),  
            gdp_mean = mean(gdp, na.rm = TRUE),  
            health_mean = mean(health, na.rm = TRUE),  
            roads_mean = mean(roads, na.rm = TRUE),  
            cerebvas_mean = mean(cerebvas, na.rm = TRUE))
```

```
by_country
```

```
## # A tibble: 17 x 8
## # Groups:   consent_law [2]
##   consent_law country donors_mean donors_sd gdp_mean health_mean roads_mean
##   <chr>        <chr>      <dbl>    <dbl>    <dbl>    <dbl>    <dbl>
## 1 Informed     Austra...    10.635    1.142808  22178.54  1957.5    104.8757
## 2 Informed     Canada      13.96667  0.7511607 23711.08  2271.929  109.2601
## 3 Informed     Denmark     13.09167  1.468121  23722.31  2054.071  101.6363
## 4 Informed     Germany     13.04167  0.6111960 22163.23  2348.75   112.7887
## 5 Informed     Ireland     19.79167  2.478437  20824.38  1479.929  117.7742
## 6 Informed     Nether...    13.65833  1.551807  23013.15  1992.786   76.09357
## # ... with 11 more rows, and 1 more variable: cerebvas_mean <dbl>
```

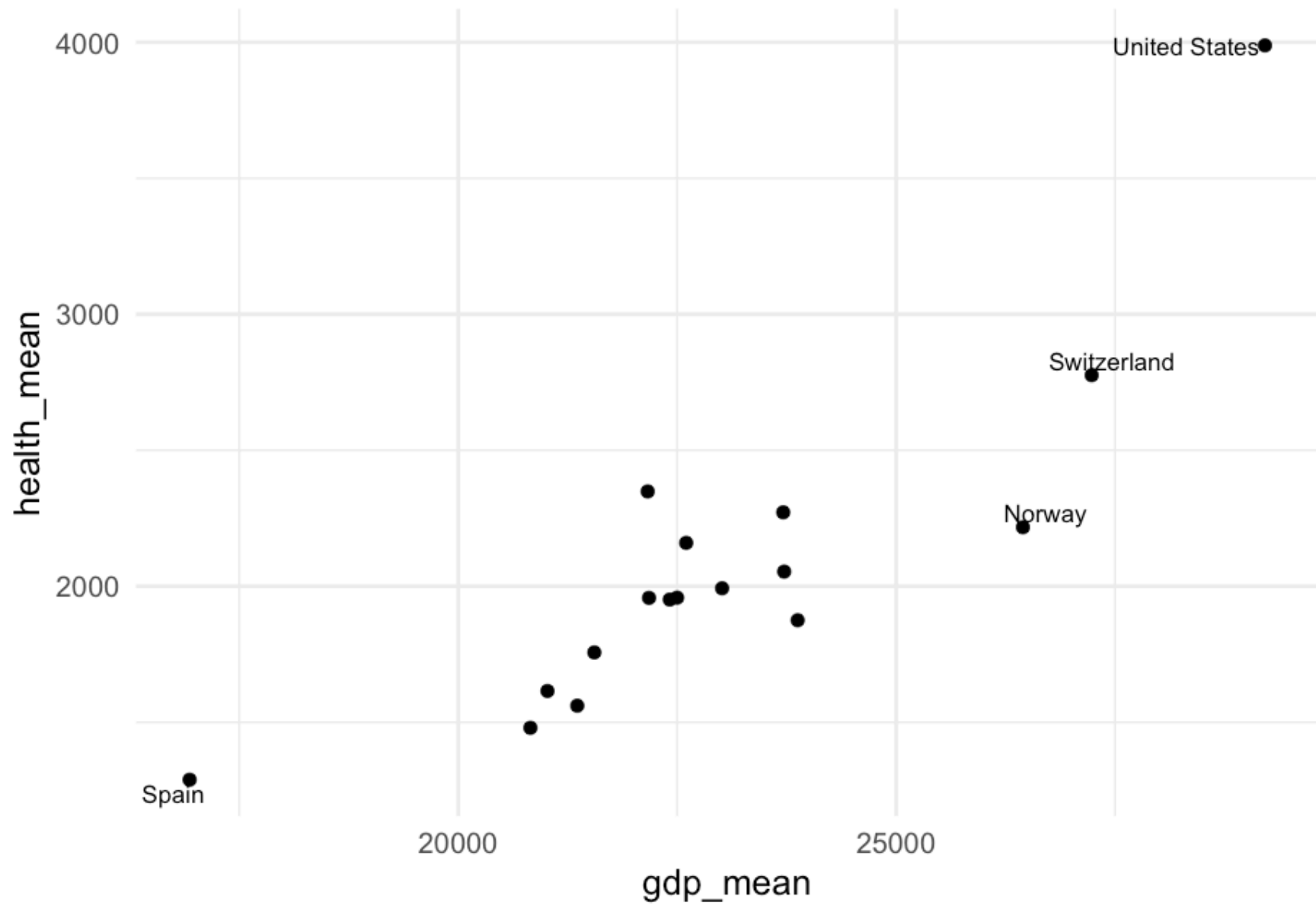
# Scatterplot

```
ggplot(by_country, aes(gdp_mean, health_mean)) +  
  geom_point()
```



# Outliers

```
ggplot(by_country, aes(gdp_mean, health_mean)) +  
  geom_point() +  
  geom_text_repel(data = filter(by_country,  
                                gdp_mean > 25000 |  
                                gdp_mean < 20000),  
                  aes(label = country))
```

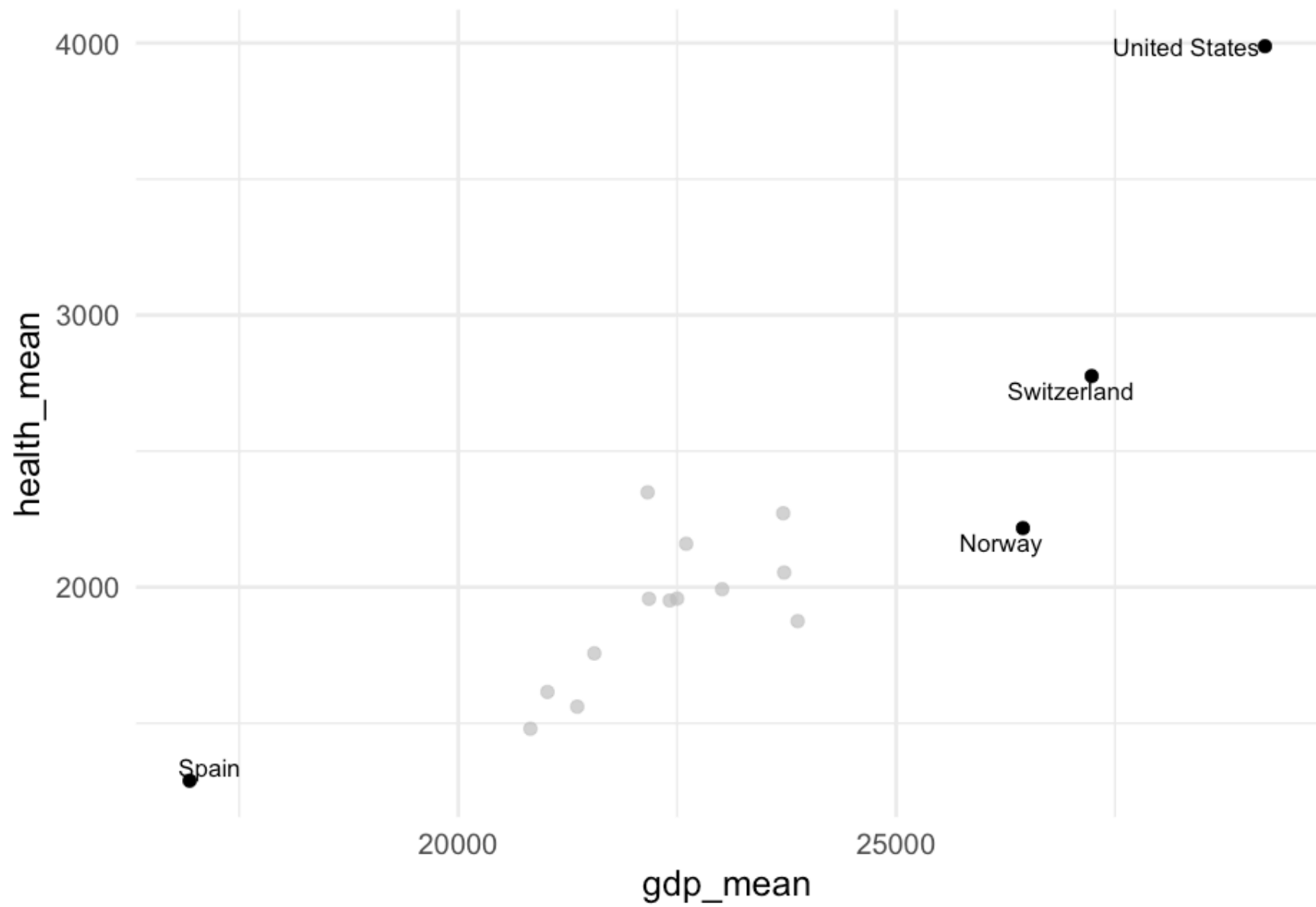


---

# Combine with highlighting

```
library(gghighlight)
ggplot(by_country, aes(gdp_mean, health_mean)) +
  geom_point() +
  gghighlight(gdp_mean > 25000 | gdp_mean < 20000) +
  geom_text_repel(aes(label = country))
```

- Notice you only have to specify the points to highlight and `geom_text_repel` will then only label those points



---

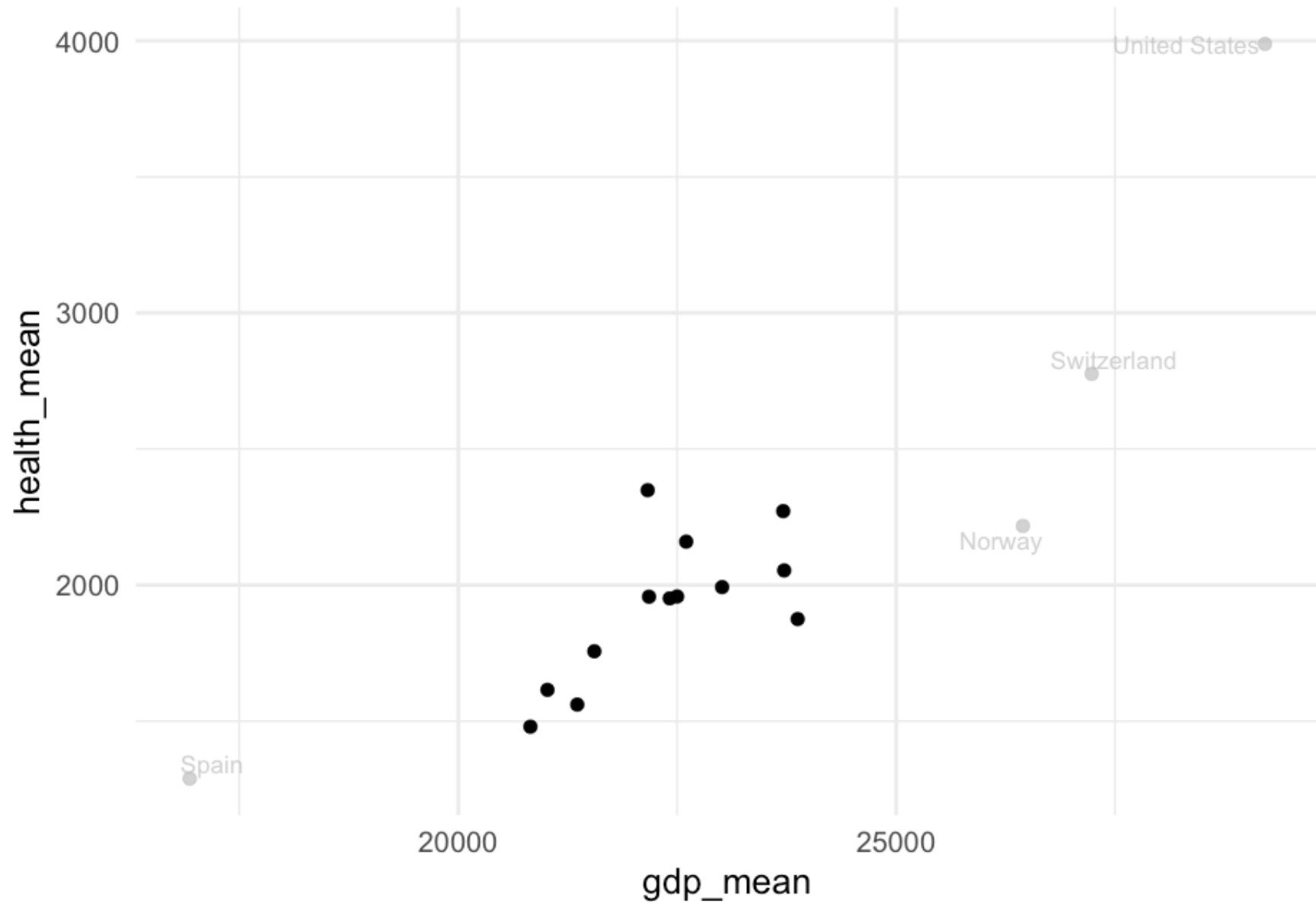
# Combine with highlighting

Switch to make outliers grayed out and labeled

```
ggplot(by_country, aes(gdp_mean, health_mean)) +  
  geom_point() +  
  gghighlight(gdp_mean > 20000 & gdp_mean < 25000 ) +  
  geom_text_repel(data = filter(by_country,  
                                gdp_mean > 25000 |  
                                gdp_mean < 20000),  
                 aes(label = country),  
                 color = "#BEBEBEB3")
```

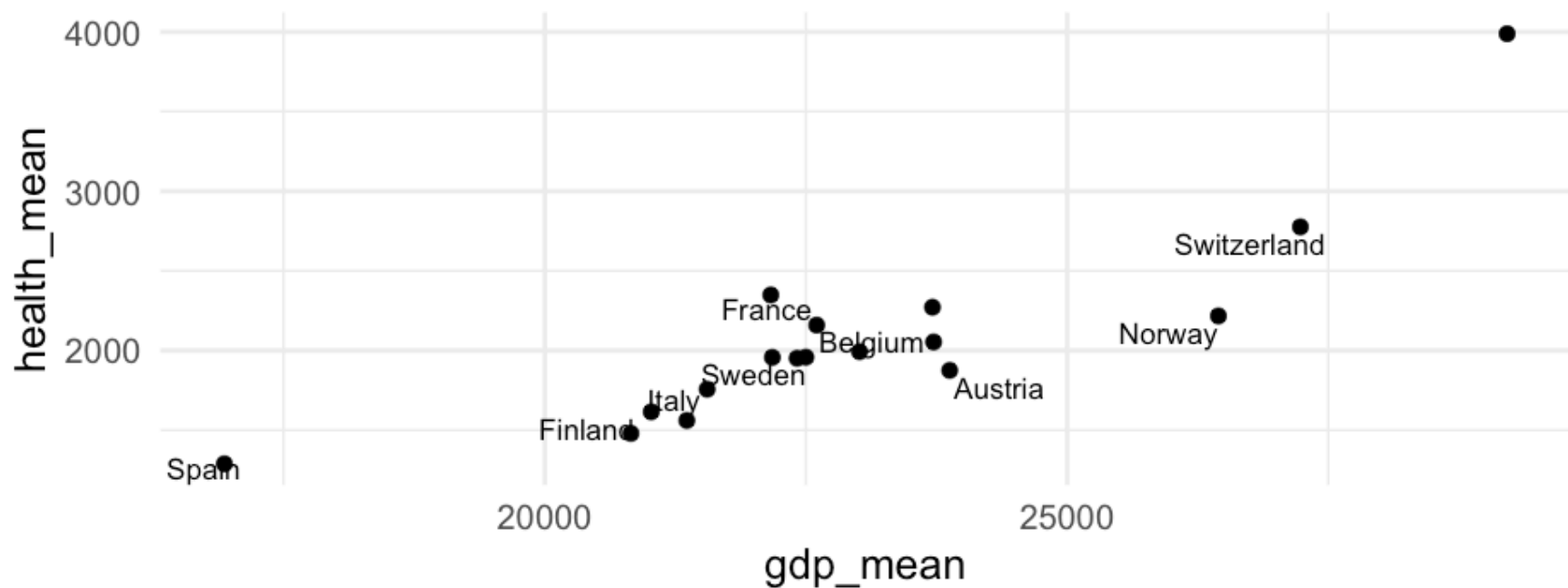
Note I found the exact gray color by looking at the source code. Specifically, it is the output from `ggplot2::alpha("grey", 0.7)`





# By group

```
ggplot(by_country, aes(gdp_mean, health_mean)) +  
  geom_point() +  
  geom_text_repel(data = filter(by_country, consent_law == "Presumed"),  
    aes(label = country))
```

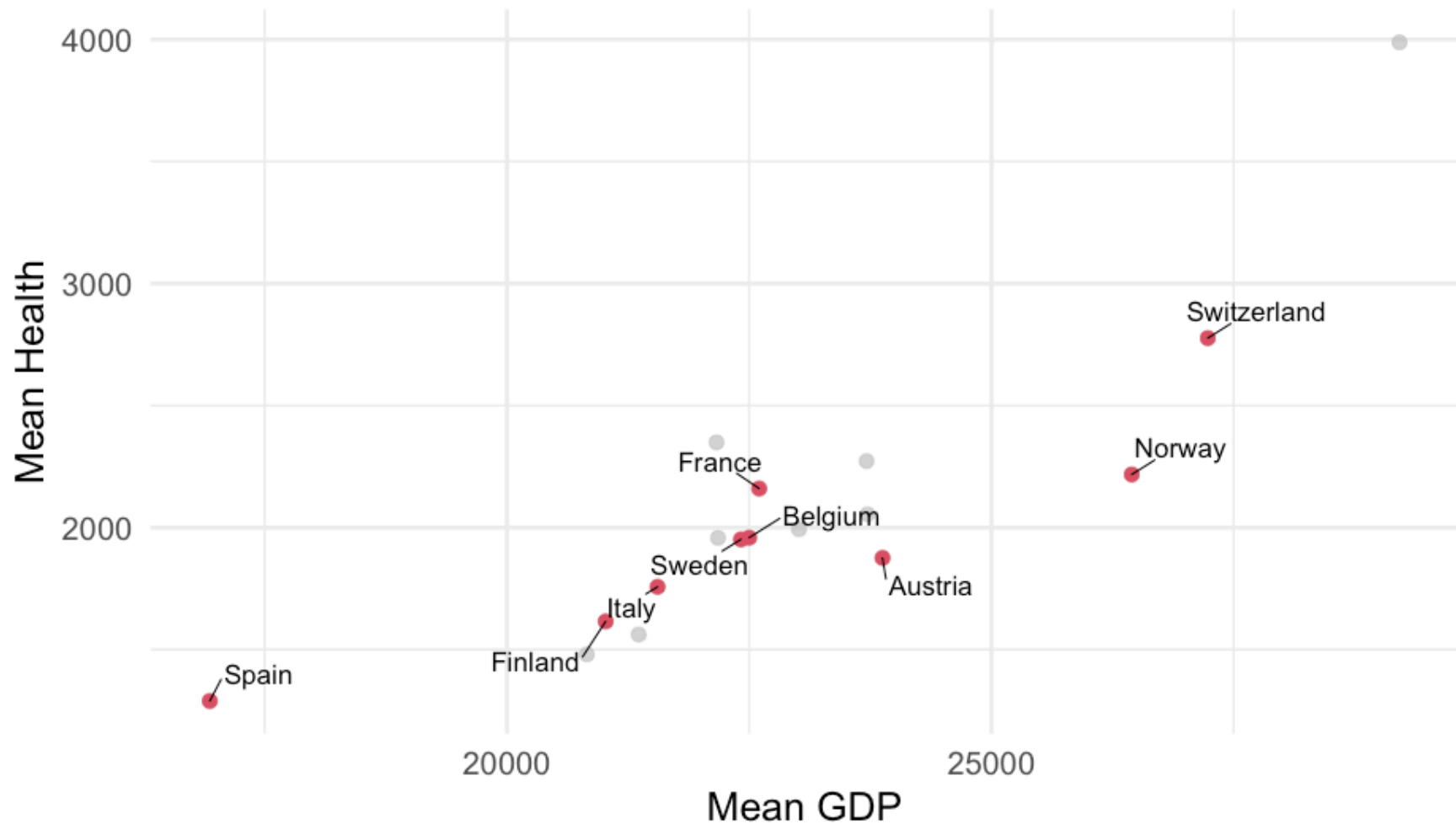


# By group

```
ggplot(by_country, aes(gdp_mean, health_mean)) +  
  geom_point(color = "#DC5265") +  
  gghighlight(consent_law == "Presumed") +  
  geom_text_repel(aes(label = country),  
                  min.segment.length = 0,  
                  box.padding = 0.75) +  
  labs(title = "GDP and Health",  
        subtitle = "Countries with a presumed organ donation consent are hi  
        caption = "Data from the General Social Science Survey, Distributed  
        x = "Mean GDP",  
        y = "Mean Health")
```

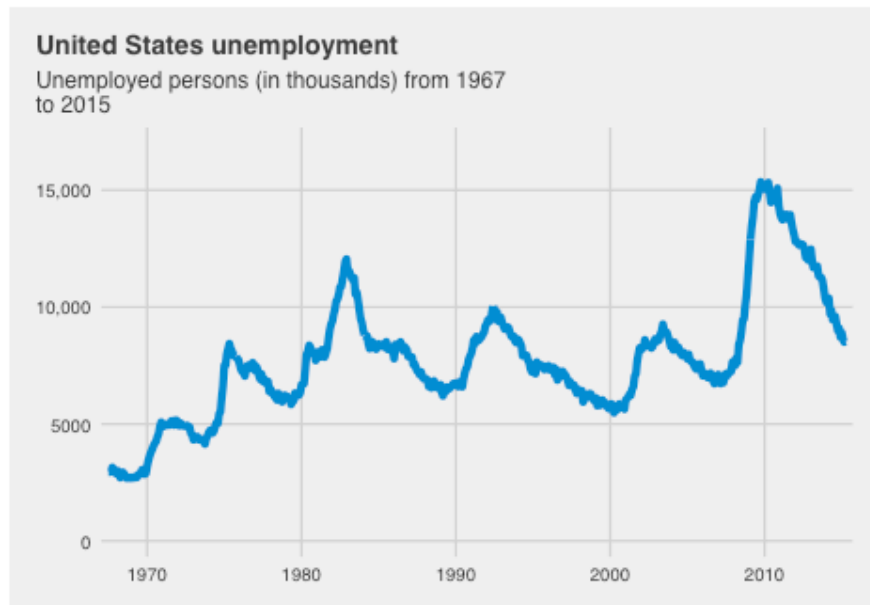
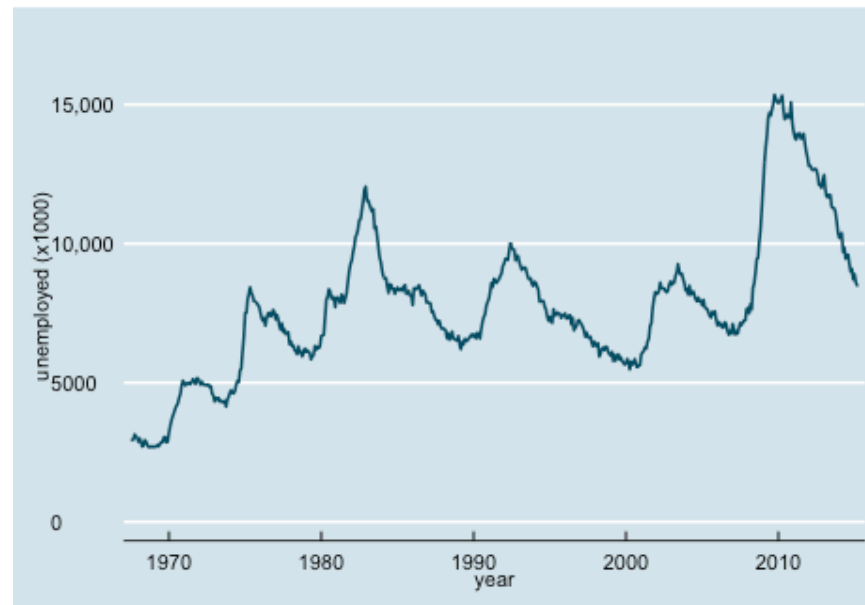
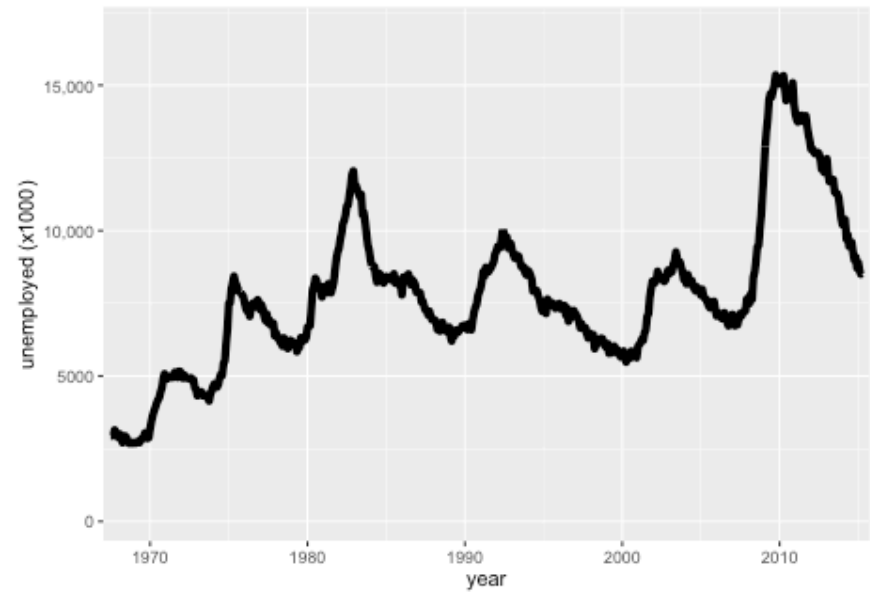
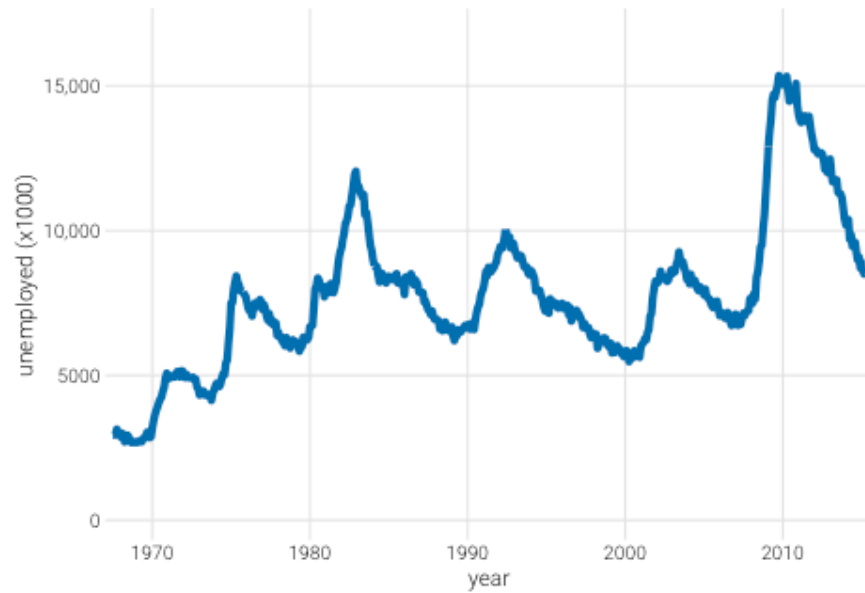
## GDP and Health

Countries with a presumed organ donation consent are highlighted



Data from the General Social Science Survey, Distributed through the socviz R package

# Themes (quickly)



---

# ggthemes

- Great place to start. All sorts of themes.
- Includes color scales, etc., that align with themes
- You can even conform with other software
  - fit into an economics conference with `theme_stata`

See the themes [here](#)

---

# ggthemeassist

- Another great place to start with making major modifications/creating your own custom theme
- Can't do everything, but can do a lot
- See [here](#)

[demo]



---

# theme() for everything else

- You can basically change your plot to look however you want through `theme`
- Generally a bit more complicated
- I've used ggplot for *years* and only really now gaining fluency with it

---

# Quick example

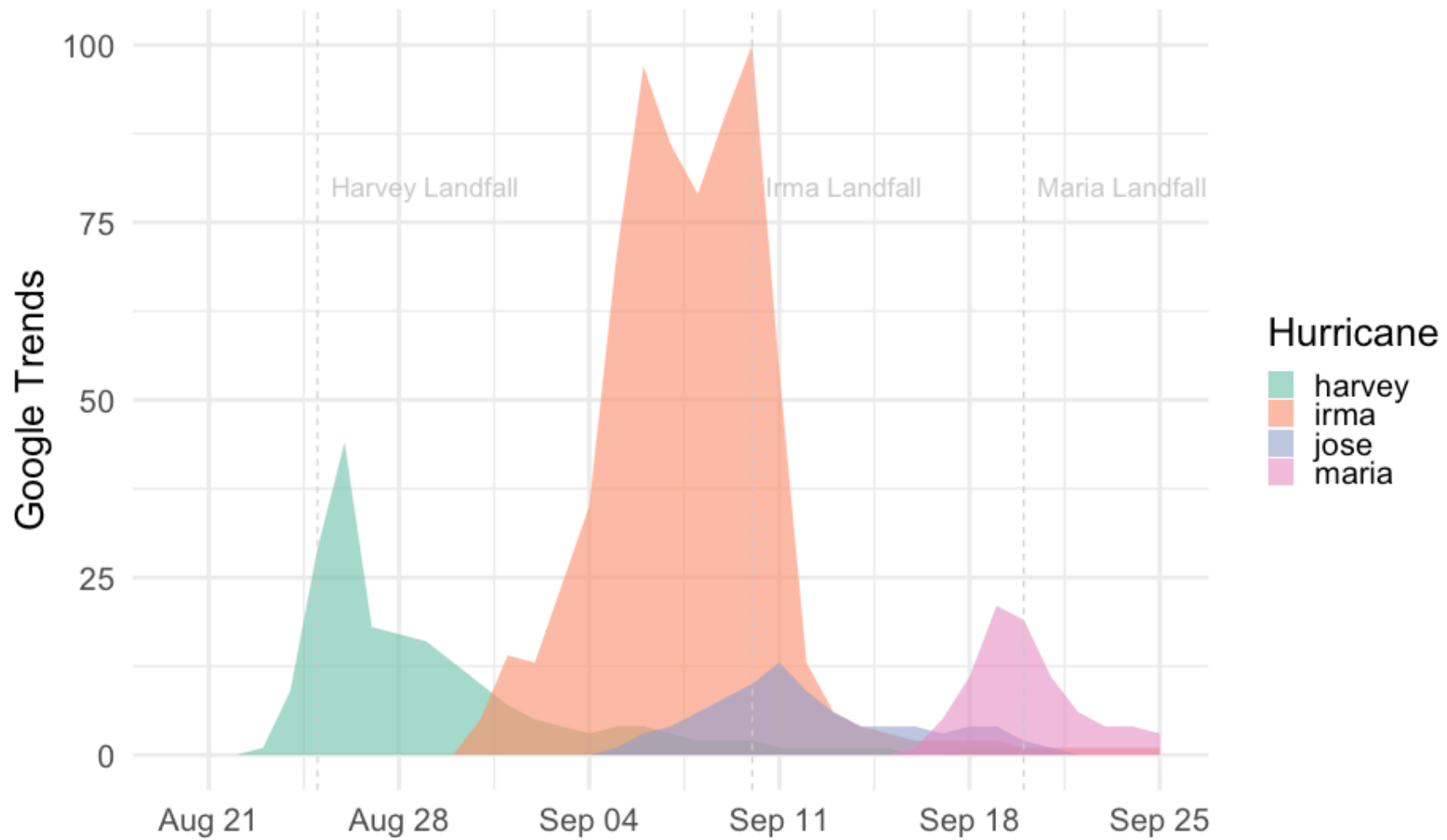
*From Lab 3*

```
library(fivethirtyeight)
g <- google_trends %>%
  pivot_longer(starts_with("hurricane"),
               names_to = "hurricane",
               values_to = "interest",
               names_pattern = "_(.+)_")

landfall <- tibble(date = lubridate::mdy(c("August 25, 2017",
                                           "September 10, 2017",
                                           "September 20, 2017")),
                  hurricane = c("Harvey Landfall",
                                "Irma Landfall",
                                "Maria Landfall"))
```

```
p <- ggplot(g, aes(date, interest)) +  
  geom_ribbon(aes(fill = hurricane, ymin = 0, ymax = interest),  
             alpha = 0.6) +  
  geom_vline(aes(xintercept = date), landfall,  
             color = "gray80",  
             lty = "dashed") +  
  geom_text(aes(x = date, y = 80, label = hurricane), landfall,  
            color = "gray80",  
            nudge_x = 0.5,  
            hjust = 0) +  
  labs(x = "",  
       y = "Google Trends",  
       title = "Hurricane Google trends over time",  
       caption = "Source: https://github.com/fivethirtyeight/data/tree/master",  
       scale_fill_brewer("Hurricane", palette = "Set2")
```

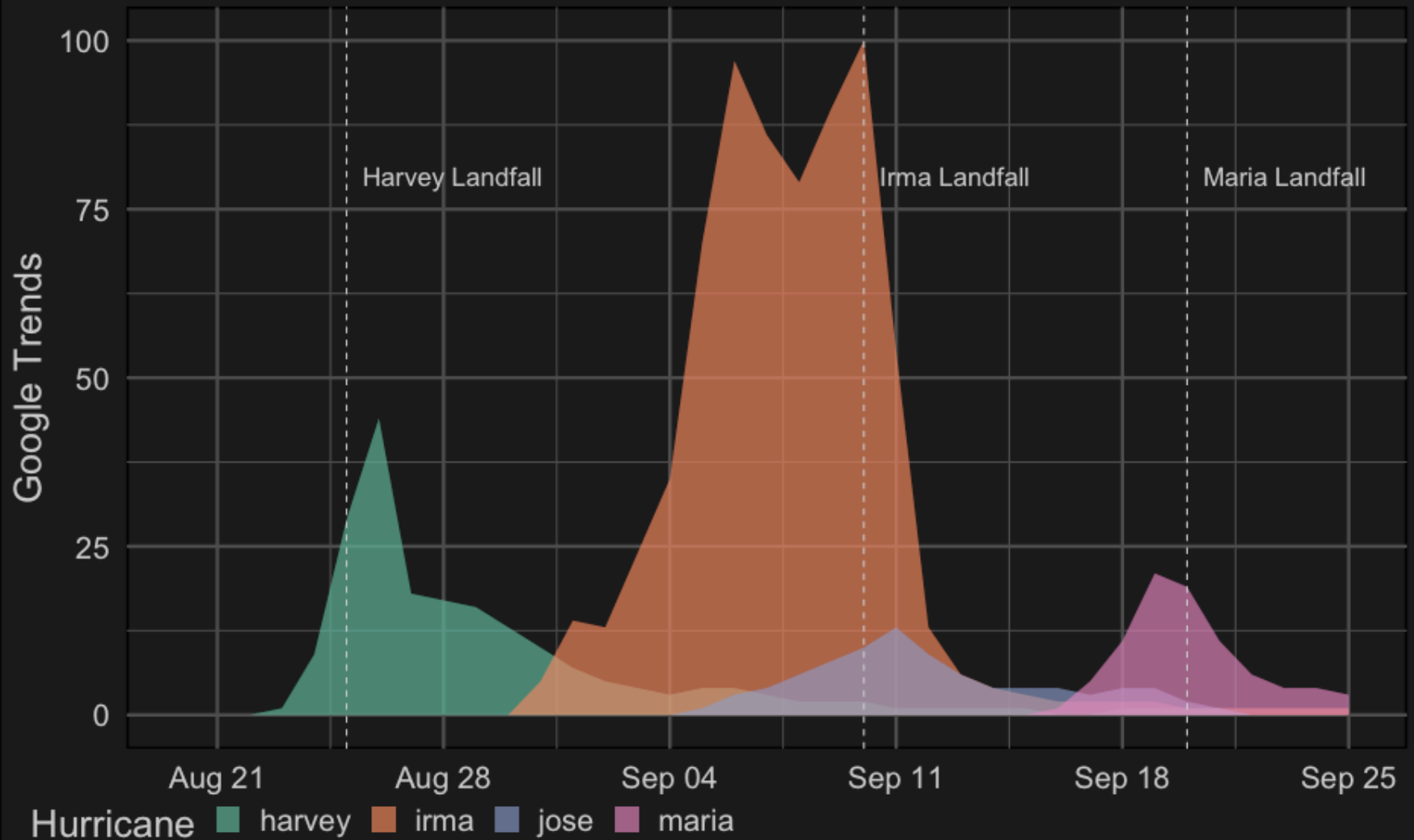
## Hurricane Google trends over time



Source: <https://github.com/fivethirtyeight/data/tree/master/puerto-rico-media>

```
p + theme(panel.grid.major = element_line(colour = "gray30"),
          panel.grid.minor = element_line(colour = "gray30"),
          axis.text = element_text(colour = "gray80"),
          axis.text.x = element_text(colour = "gray80"),
          axis.text.y = element_text(colour = "gray80"),
          axis.title = element_text(colour = "gray80"),
          legend.text = element_text(colour = "gray80"),
          legend.title = element_text(colour = "gray80"),
          panel.background = element_rect(fill = "gray10"),
          plot.background = element_rect(fill = "gray10"),
          legend.background = element_rect(fill = NA, color = NA),
          legend.position = c(0.20, -0.1),
          legend.direction = "horizontal",
          plot.margin = margin(10, 10, b = 20, 10),
          plot.caption = element_text(colour = "gray80", vjust = 1),
          plot.title = element_text(colour = "gray80"))
```

## Hurricane Google trends over time



Source: <https://github.com/fivethirtyeight/data/tree/master/puerto-rico-media>

Next time  
*Our final lab!*