



WORKING WITH WEB DATA IN R

JSON

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Instructor



JSON (JavaScript Object Notation)

<http://www.json.org/>

- Plain text format
- Two structures:
 - objects: `{"title" : "A New Hope", "year" : "1977"}`
 - arrays: `[1977, 1980]`
- Values: "string", 3, true, false, null, or another object or array



An example JSON data set

```
[
  {
    "title" : "A New Hope",
    "year" : 1977
  },
  {
    "title" : "The Empire Strikes Back",
    "year" : 1980
  }
]
```

Identifying a JSON response

```
> library(httr)
> url <- "http://httpbin.org/get"
> r <- GET(url)
```

- You know API returns JSON. E.g. from <https://httpbin.org/> *"All endpoint responses are JSON-encoded"*
- Check the type returned based on the header:

```
> http_type(r)
[1] "application/json"
```

Identifying a JSON response

- View the contents as "text"

```
> writeLines(content(r, as = "text"))
No encoding supplied: defaulting to UTF-8.
{
  "args": {},
  "headers": {
    "Accept": "application/json, text/xml, application/xml, */*",
    "Accept-Encoding": "gzip, deflate",
    "Connection": "close",
    "Host": "httpbin.org",
    "User-Agent": "libcurl/7.54.0 r-curl/2.8.1 httr/1.2.1"
  },
  "origin": "98.232.182.170",
  "url": "http://httpbin.org/get"
}
```



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Let's practice!



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Manipulating JSON

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Movies example

```
[  
  {  
    "title" : "A New Hope",  
    "year" : 1977  
  },  
  {  
    "title" : "The Empire Strikes Back",  
    "year" : 1980  
  }  
]
```




Movies example

```
> movies_json <- '  
+ [  
+   {  
+     "title" : "A New Hope",  
+     "year" : 1977  
+   },  
+   {  
+     "title" : "The Empire Strikes Back",  
+     "year" : 1980  
+   }  
+ ]'
```



Movies example

```
> fromJSON(movies_json, simplifyVector = FALSE)
[[1]]
[[1]]$title
[1] "A New Hope"

[[1]]$year
[1] 1977

[[2]]
[[2]]$title
[1] "The Empire Strikes Back"

[[2]]$year
[1] 1980
```



Simplifying the output

- `simplifyVector = TRUE` - arrays of primitives become vectors
- `simplifyDataFrame = TRUE` - arrays of objects become data frames

```
> fromJSON(movies_json, simplifyDataFrame = TRUE)
      title year
1  A New Hope 1977
2 The Empire Strikes Back 1980
```

Extracting data from JSON

- Rely on `fromJSON()` to simplify

```
> fromJSON(movies_json, simplifyDataFrame = TRUE)$title  
[1] "A New Hope"           "The Empire Strikes Back"
```

- Or iterate over list: `rlist`, `base` or `tidyverse`



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XML structure

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Movies in XML

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <movie>
    <title>A New Hope</title>
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie>
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>
```

- Tags: <tagname>... </tagname>.
- E.g. <movies>, <movie>, <title>, <year>



Tags can have attributes

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <movie>
    <title year = "1977">A New Hope</title>
  </movie>
  <movie>
    <title year = "1980">The Empire Strikes Back</title>
  </movie>
</movies>
```




The hierarchy of XML elements

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <movie>
    <title>A New Hope</title>
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie>
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>
```



The hierarchy of XML elements

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
```

```
<movies>
```

```
<movie>
```

```
<title>A New Hope</title>
```

```
<year>1977</year>
```

```
</movie>
```

movie element

```
<movie>
```

```
<title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
```

```
<year>1980</year>
```

```
</movie>
```

```
</movies>
```



The hierarchy of XML elements

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <movie>
    <title>A New Hope</title>
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie>
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>
```

title element

year element



The hierarchy of XML elements

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <movie>
    <title>A New Hope</title>  text
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie>
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>
```

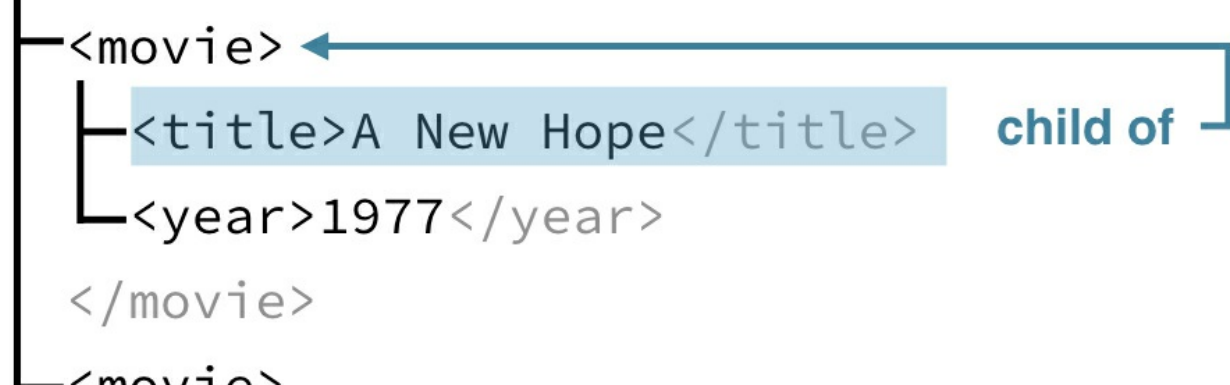
Understanding XML as a tree

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <movie>
    <title>A New Hope</title>
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie>
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>
```



Understanding XML as a tree

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <movie>
    <title>A New Hope</title>
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie>
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>
```



child of



Understanding XML as a tree

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <movie>
    <title>A New Hope</title>
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie>
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>
```

siblings



Understanding XML as a tree

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
```

```
<movies>
```

```
<movie>
```

```
  <title>A New Hope</title>
```

```
  <year>1977</year>
```

```
</movie>
```

```
<movie>
```

```
  <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
```

```
  <year>1980</year>
```

```
</movie>
```

```
</movies>
```

siblings



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XPATHS

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Movies example

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <title>"Star Wars"</title>
  <movie episode = "IV">
    <title>A New Hope</title>
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie episode = "V">
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>
```



Movies example

```
movies_xml <- read_xml('
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<movies>
  <title>"Star Wars"</title>
  <movie episode = "IV">
    <title>A New Hope</title>
    <year>1977</year>
  </movie>
  <movie episode = "V">
    <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
    <year>1980</year>
  </movie>
</movies>')
```



XPATHS

- Specify locations of nodes, a bit like file paths: `/movies/movie/title`
- `xml_find_all(x = ____, xpath = ____)`

XPATHS

- Specify locations of nodes, a bit like file paths: `/movies/movie/title`
- `xml_find_all(x = ____, xpath = __)`

```
> xml_find_all(movies_xml, xpath = "/movies/movie/title")
{xml_nodeset (2)}
[1] <title>A New Hope</title>
[2] <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
```

XPATHS

- Specify locations of nodes, a bit like file paths: `/movies/movie/title`
- `xml_find_all(x = ____, xpath = __)`

```
> xml_find_all(movies_xml, xpath = "/movies/movie/title")
{xml_nodeset (2)}
[1] <title>A New Hope</title>
[2] <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>

# Store the title nodeset
> title_nodes <- xml_find_all(movies_xml,
+   xpath = "/movies/movie/title")

# Extract contents with xml_text()
> xml_text(title_nodes)
[1] "A New Hope"           "The Empire Strikes Back"
```

Other XPATH Syntax

- // - a node at any level below

```
> xml_find_all(movies_xml, "//title")
{xml_nodeset (3)}
[1] <title>"Star Wars"</title>
[2] <title>A New Hope</title>
[3] <title>The Empire Strikes Back</title>
```

- //title
- @ - to extract attributes
- //movie/@episode

```
> xml_find_all(movies_xml, "//movie/@episode")
{xml_nodeset (2)}
[1] episode="IV"
[2] episode="V"
```




Wrap Up

XPATH	Meaning
/node	Elements with tag node at this level
//node	Elements with tag node anywhere at or below this level
@attr	Attribute with name attr

- Get nodes with `xml_find_all()`
- Extract contents with `xml_double()`, `xml_integer()` or `as_list()`.



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