

Week 3: Prior work – Swirl in R

About Swirl

Swirl is a collection of online introductory courses in R and statistics. Before attending the R sessions in week 3 you are required to complete lessons 1 to 6 of the R Programming session.

Loading Swirl into R

1. Login to a PC workstation.
2. Find and start R in the start menu programs. You should be faced with a window like Figure 1 below. This is what is known as the workspace or console in R.

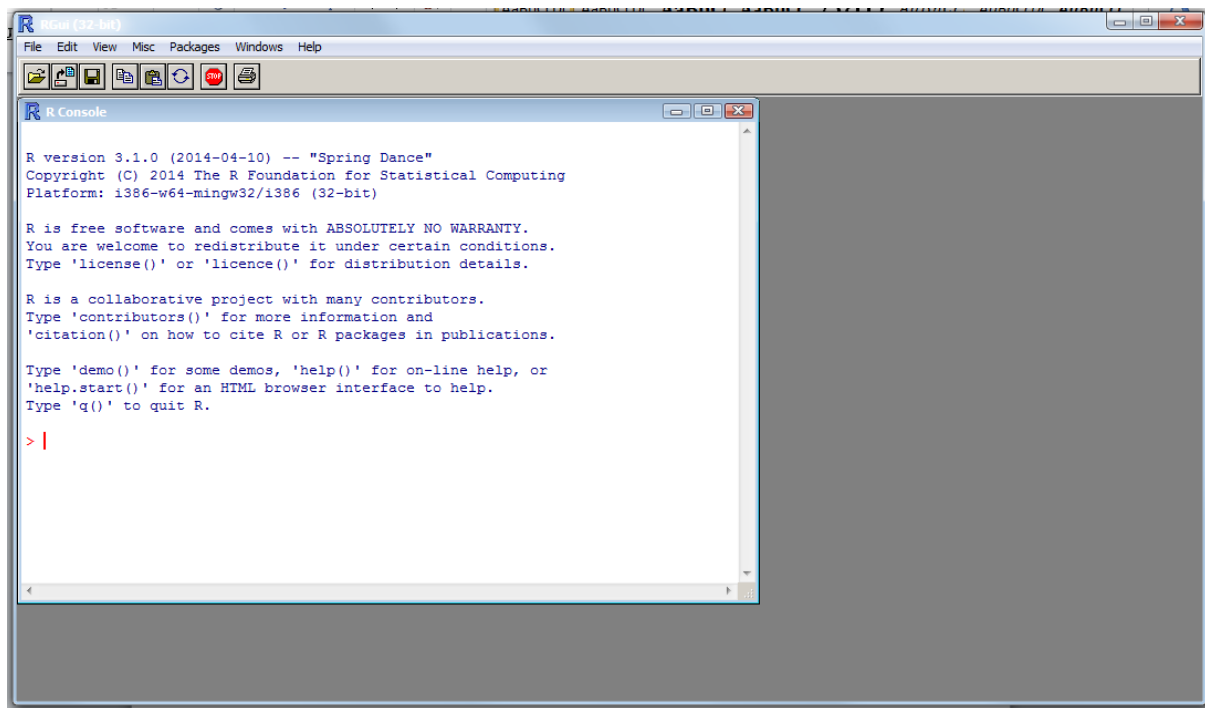


Figure 1. Initial R workspace window

3. It is first necessary to install the Swirl package into R. Packages are distinct functions that you load and use in your R session as required. Copy the below text into your workspace at the prompt and press return:

```
install.packages("swirl", repos = "http://www.stats.bris.ac.uk/R/")
```

The red text in the workstation window (Figure 2) is the text that you entered. The rest is R telling you that the library is installed and where it is installed to. This only concerns you if you get an Error message. Which you won't.

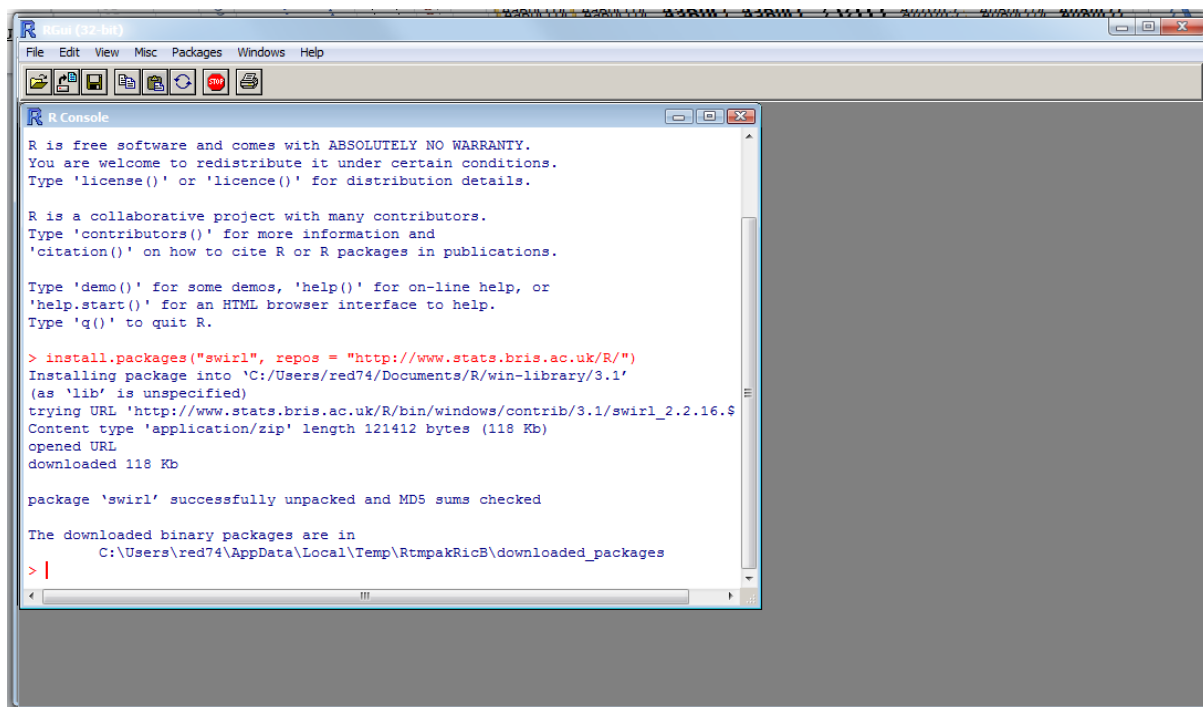


Figure 2. R workstation window with Swirl package recently installed.

4. The next step is to load Swirl into the workspace as it is only currently stored on your computer. The command for this, again cut and paste to the prompt (>), is:

library(swirl)

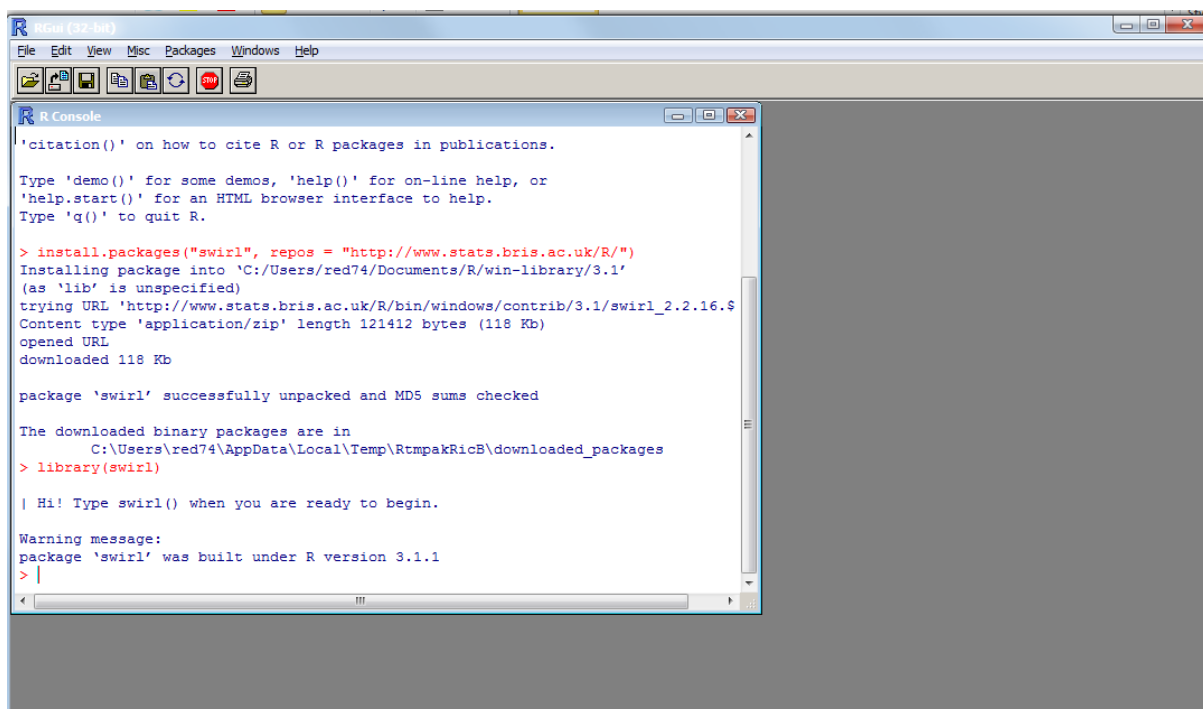


Figure 3. R workstation window with Swirl package library imported to the workspace.

It is possible that you will get a 'Warning message' when loading the library. This is purely informing you that you have a different version of R installed to the one that Swirl was constructed under.

Running Swirl

5. We can see from the text after the loaded library (Figure 3) that to start the swirl program you need to type:

swirl()

Do that now, or as previously cut and paste the above text.

6. Then follow the on-screen prompts until you reach the window asking you to select a course to install (Figure 4):

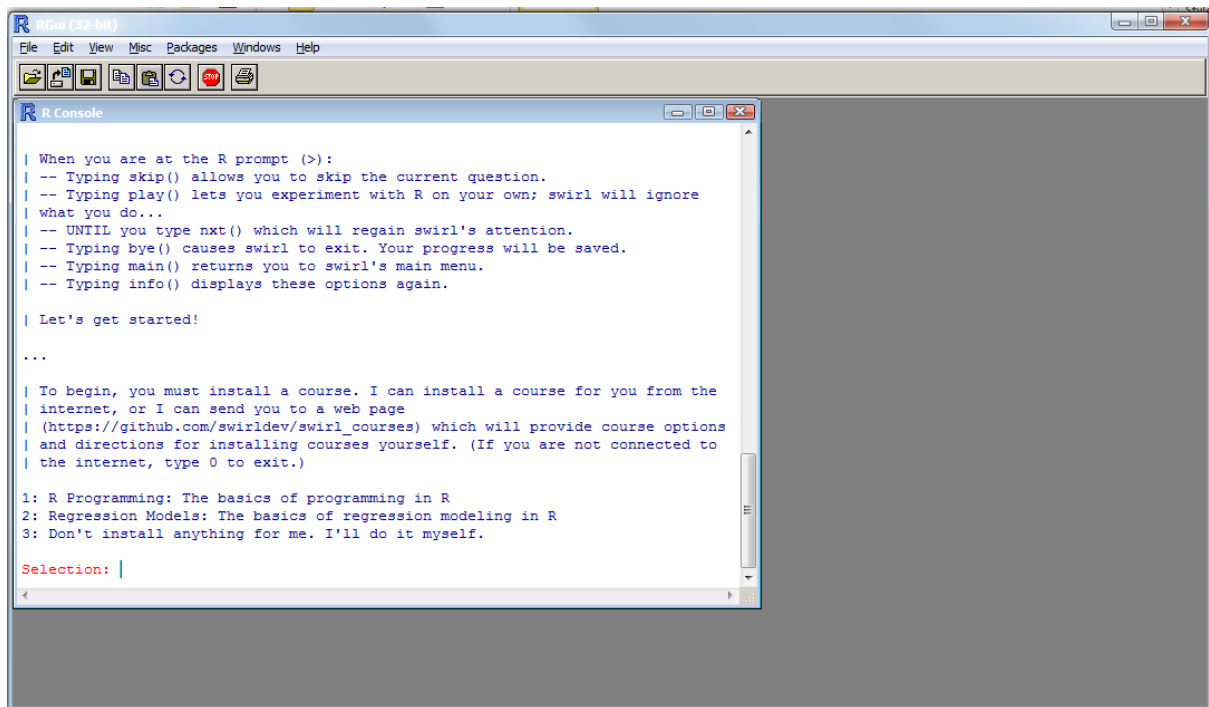


Figure 4: R workstation window showing Swirl course selection

7. Select the option titled “R Programming: The basics of programming in R”. You will then be given a second menu to choose a course. Choose “R Programming”.

Prior to the start of the R sessions in week 3 you are required to complete lessons:

1. Basic building blocks
2. Sequence of numbers
3. Vectors
4. Missing Values
5. Subsetting vectors
6. Matrices and Data frames

To stop-and-start

Swirl can be exited at any point. To continue, re-open the R session and enter the commands :

library(swirl)

swirl()

It is not necessary to go through all the previous steps in this document every time