File I/O In R programming

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1. Reading & Writing Data Files

File Type	Read Function	Write Function	Package(s)
CSV (.csv)	read.csv("file.csv")	write.csv(df, "file.csv")	base R, readr
Text (.txt)	read.table("file.txt", header=TRUE)	write.table(df, "file.txt")	base R, readr
Excel (.xlsx)	readxl::read_excel("file.xlsx")	writexl::write_xlsx(df, "file.xlsx")	readxl, writexl
RData (.RData)	load("file.RData")	save(df, file="file.RData")	base R
RDS (.rds)	readRDS("file.rds")	saveRDS(df, "file.rds")	base R

2. Useful Packages for Data I/O

readr: Fast reading of CSV and TXT files

```
readr::read_csv("file.csv")
readr::write_csv(df, "file.csv")
```

readxl: Reading Excel files

```
readxl::read_excel("file.xlsx")
```

writexl: Writing Excel files

```
writexl::write_xlsx(df, "file.xlsx")
```

data.table: Fast reading and writing, especially large data

```
data.table::fread("file.csv")
data.table::fwrite(df, "file.csv")
```

rio: A unified interface for importing/exporting many formats

```
rio::import("file.xlsx")
rio::export(df, "file.xlsx")
```

3. Working with File Paths & Directories

Get current working directory

```
getwd()
```

Set working directory

```
setwd("path/to/your/folder")
```

Construct file path (platform-independent)

```
file.path("folder", "subfolder", "file.csv")
```

4. Example Code Snippets

```
# Read CSV with readr
library(readr)
df <- read_csv("data/my_data.csv")

# Write data frame to Excel with writexl
library(writexl)
write_xlsx(df, "output/my_data.xlsx")

# Load RData file
load("data/my_saved_data.RData")

# Save object as RDS
saveRDS(df, "data/my_data.rds")

# Set working directory
setwd("/Users/yourname/Documents/RProjects")
```

5. Sink()

Redirect R output (like console messages, print outputs, summaries) to a file instead of the console.

```
# Start redirecting output to a file
sink("output.txt")

# Any output printed here goes to output.txt
print(summary(mtcars))
cat("This text goes into the file.\n")

# Stop redirecting output; return output to console
sink()
```

10 Simple Problems to Practice

1. Read a CSV file named students.csv into R using **base R** and **readr** packages.
2. Write a data frame df to a text file output.txt with tab-delimited columns.
3. Read an Excel file sales_data.xlsx into R using the **readxl** package.
4. Save the built-in dataset mtcars as an RDS file named mtcars_data.rds.
5. Load an RData file my_workspace.RData that contains several objects.
6. Use data.table package to read a large CSV file named bigdata.csv.
7. Export a data frame df to an Excel file report.xlsx using **rio** package.

8. Change your current working directory to "C:/Users/YourName/Documents".
9. Combine folder and file name to create a path to "data/file.csv" using file.path().
10. Read a tab-separated text file log.txt without a header into R.

5. Advanced Topics

1. Handling Compressed Files

Read compressed CSV files (.gz, .bz2, .zip)
Using **data.table** or **readr** (automatic decompression):

```
data <- data.table::fread("data.csv.gz")
data <- readr::read_csv("data.csv.bz2")
```

Manually unzip and read

```
utils::unzip("archive.zip", exdir = "folder")
df <- read.csv("folder/data.csv")
```

2. Reading/Writing JSON Files

Using jsonlite package

```
library(jsonlite)

# Read JSON file
data <- fromJSON("data.json")

# Write JSON file
toJSON(data, pretty = TRUE, auto_unbox = TRUE) %>%
  writeLines("output.json")
```

3. Reading/Writing XML Files

```
library(xml2)

# Read XML
xml_data <- read_xml("data.xml")

# Extract content
texts <- xml_text(xml_find_all(xml_data, "//tagname"))
```

4. Database Connections

Using DBI and RSQLite

```
library(DBI)
library(RSQLite)

# Connect to SQLite database
con <- dbConnect(RSQLite::SQLite(), "my_database.sqlite")

# List tables
dbListTables(con)

# Read a table
df <- dbReadTable(con, "my_table")

# Write a data frame as a new table
dbWriteTable(con, "new_table", df)
```

```
# Query with SQL
res <- dbGetQuery(con, "SELECT * FROM my_table WHERE column > 100")

# Disconnect
dbDisconnect(con)
```

5. Reading/Writing from URLs and APIs

Read CSV directly from a URL

```
df <- read.csv("https://example.com/data.csv")
```

Download files from web

```
download.file("https://example.com/data.csv", destfile = "data.csv")
```

API call and parse JSON

```
library(httr)
library(jsonlite)

res <- httr::GET("https://api.example.com/data")
json_data <- content(res, "text")
data <- fromJSON(json_data)
```

6. Parallel and Chunked File Reading for Large Files

Using **data.table::fread** for fast reading

```
bigdata <- data.table::fread("large_file.csv")
```

Reading large files in chunks using **readr**

```
library(readr)
chunk_callback <- function(df, pos) {
  print(paste("Read chunk starting at", pos))
  # Process df chunk here
}

read_csv_chunked("large_file.csv", DataFrameCallback$new(chunk_callback), chunk_size = 1000)
```

7. Saving and Loading R Objects with Compression

Save R objects compressed with save()

```
save(df, file = "data.RData", compress = "gzip")
```

Read compressed RDS files

```
df <- readRDS("data_compressed.rds")
```