





Understanding reactivity

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Reactivity 101



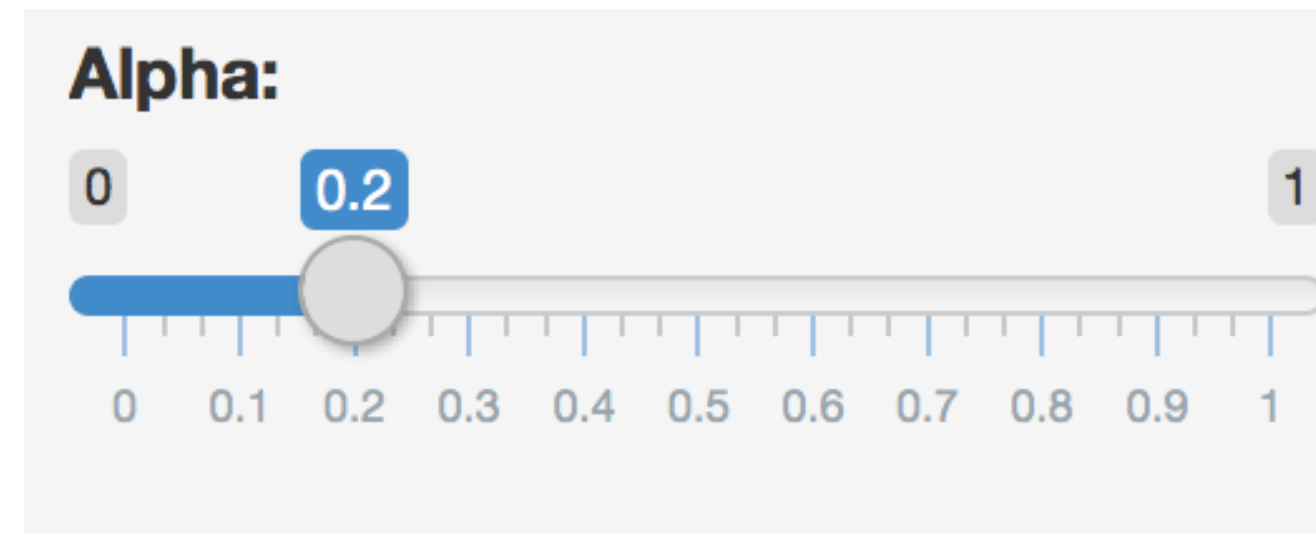
Reactions

The **input\$** list stores the current value of each input object under its name.

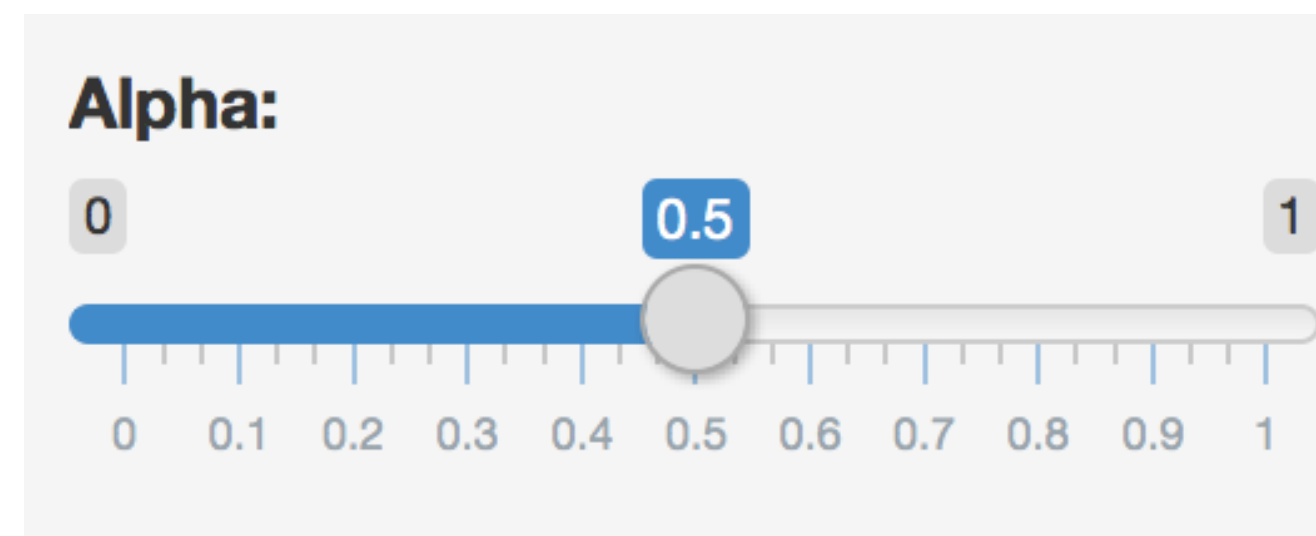
```
# Set alpha level
```

```
sliderInput(inputId = "alpha",  
            label = "Alpha:",  
            min = 0, max = 1,  
            value = 0.5)
```

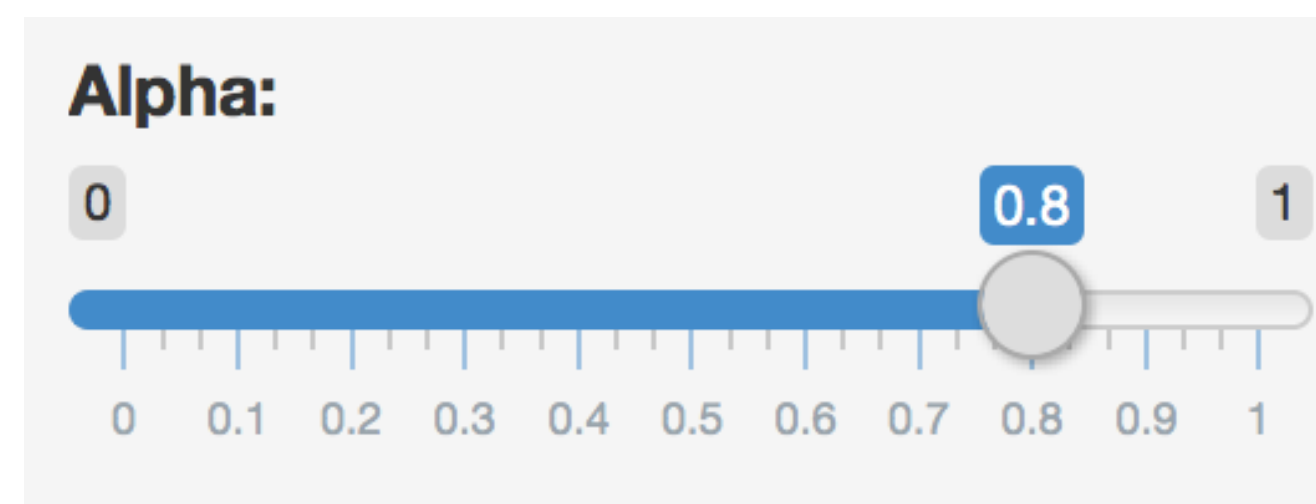
input\$alpha



input\$alpha = 0.2



input\$alpha = 0.5



input\$alpha = 0.8



Reactivity 101

Reactivity automatically occurs when an input value is used to render an output object

```
# Define server function required to create the scatterplot
server <- function(input, output) {
  # Create the scatterplot object the plotOutput function is expecting
  output$scatterplot <- renderPlot(
    ggplot(data = movies, aes_string(x = input$x, y = input$y,
                                     color = input$z)) +
    geom_point(alpha = input$alpha)
  )
}
```



Your turn

- Start with `movies_05.R`
- Add a new `sliderInput` defining the size of points (ranging from 0 to 5)
- Use this variable in the `geom_` of the `ggplot` function as the size argument
- Run the app to ensure that point sizes react when you move the slider
- Compare your code / output with the person sitting next to / nearby you

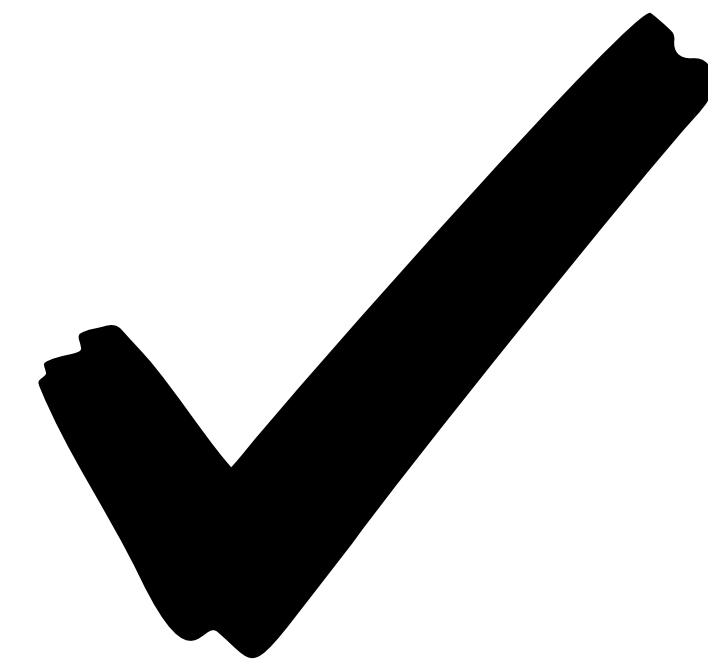


5_m 00_s



Solution to the previous exercise

`apps/movies/movies-06.R`



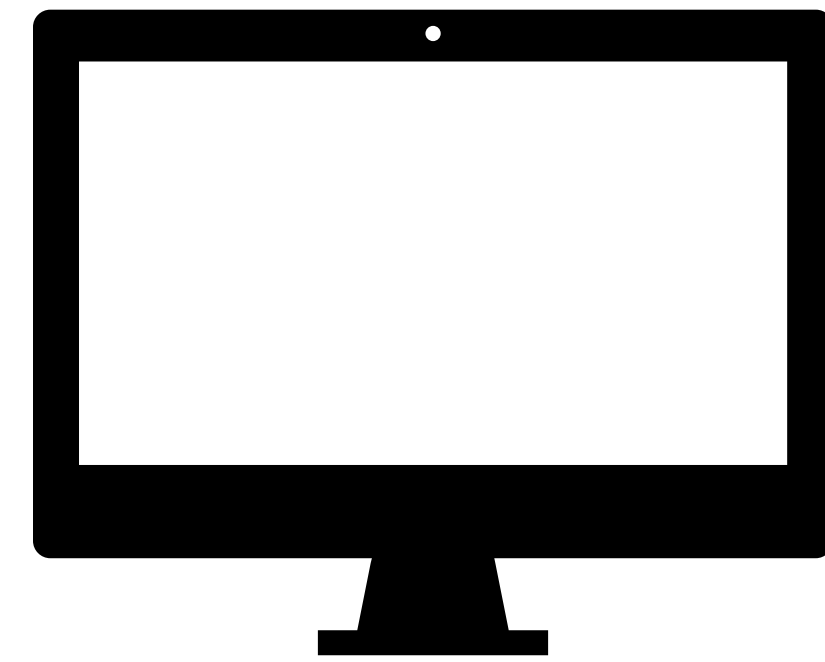
SOLUTION

Reactive flow



Suppose you want the option to plot only certain types of movies as well as report how many such movies are plotted:

1. Add a UI element for the user to select which type(s) of movies they want to plot
2. Filter for chosen title type and save as a new (reactive) expression
3. Use new data frame (which is reactive) for plotting
4. Use new data frame (which is reactive) also for reporting number of observations



DEMO

1. Add a UI element for the user to select which type(s) of movies they want to plot

```
# Select which types of movies to plot
checkboxGroupInput(inputId = "selected_type",
               label = "Select movie type(s):",
               choices = c("Documentary", "Feature Film", "TV Movie"),
               selected = "Feature Film")
```



2. Filter for chosen title type and save the new data frame as a reactive expression

```
# Before app  
library(tidyverse)
```

```
# Server  
# Create a subset of data filtering for chosen title type  
movies_subset <- reactive({  
  req(input$selected_type)  
  filter(movies, title_type %in% input$selected_type)  
})
```

Creates a **cached expression** that knows it is out of date when input changes



3. Use new data frame (which is reactive) for plotting

```
# Create the scatterplot object the plotOutput function is expecting
output$scatterplot <- renderPlot({
  ggplot(data = movies_subset(), aes_string(x = col
    geom_point(...) +
    ...
  })
```

Cached - only re-run
when inputs change



4. Use new data frame (which is reactive) also for printing number of observations

```
# UI
mainPanel(
  ...
  # Print number of obs plotted
  uiOutput(outputId = "n"),
  ...
)

# Server
utput$n <- renderUI({
  types <- movies_subset()$title_type %>%
    factor(levels = input$selected_type)
  counts <- table(types)

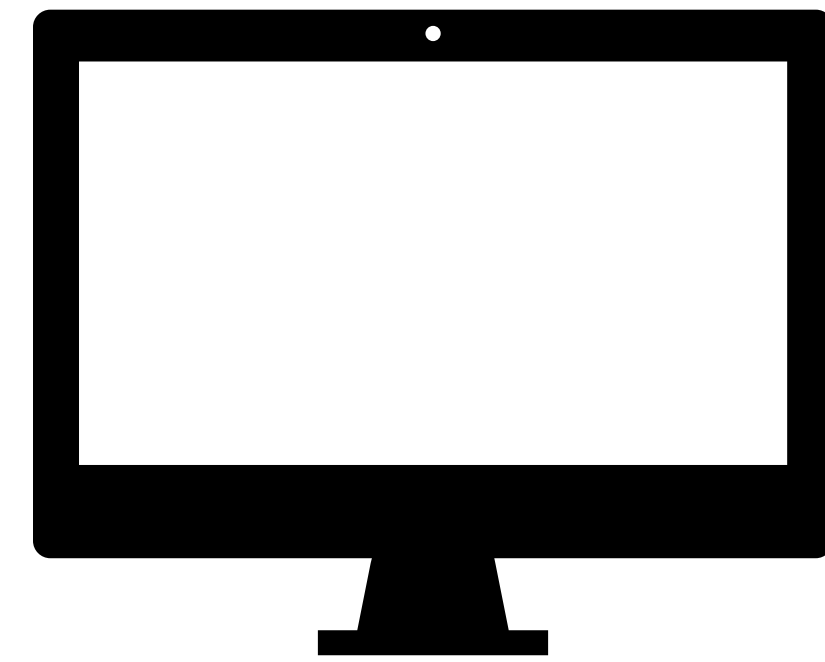
  HTML(paste("There are", counts, input$selected_type, "movies in this
dataset.<br>"))
})
```



Putting it altogether

`apps/movies/movies-07.R`

(also notice the HTML tags,
added for visual separation, in the mainPanel)



DEMO

When to use reactive

- By using a reactive expression for the subsetted data frame, we were able to get away with subsetting once and then using the result twice
- In general, reactive conductors let you
 - not repeat yourself (i.e. avoid copy-and-paste code) which is a maintenance boon)
 - decompose large, complex (code-wise, not necessarily CPU-wise) calculations into smaller pieces to make them more understandable
- These benefits are similar to what happens when you decompose a large complex R script into a series of small functions that build on each other



Your turn

- For consistency, in `movies_07.R`, there should be at least one more spot on the app where the new `movies_subset` dataset should be used, instead of the full `movies` dataset
 - Hint: Does the data table match the plotted data?
- Find and fix
- Run the app to confirm your fix is working
- Compare your code / output with the person sitting next to / nearby you

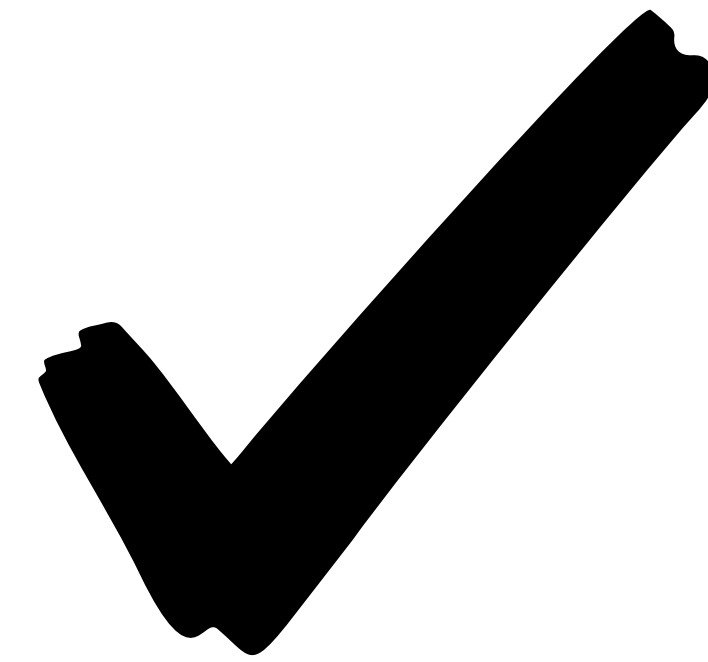


3_m 00_s



Solution to the previous exercise

`apps/movies/movies-08.R`




SOLUTION



Suppose we want to plot only a random sample of movies, of size determined by the user. What is wrong with the following?

```
# Server
# Create a new data frame that is a sample of n_samp
# observations from movies
movies_sample <- reactive({
  req(input$n_samp)      # ensure availability of value
  sample_n(movies_subset(), input$n_samp)
})

# Plot the sampled movies
output$scatterplot <- renderPlot({
  ggplot(data = movies_sample(),
    aes_string(x = input$x, y = input$y, color = input$z)) +
    geom_point(...)
})
```



Solution can also be found in `movies_09.R`.
Note that `output$n` and `output$datatable` are also updated in the script.

Implementation



Implementation of reactives

- **Reactive values** – `reactiveValues()`:
 - e.g. `input`: which looks like a list, and contains many individual reactive values that are set by input from the web browser
- **Reactive expressions** – `reactive()`: they depend on reactive values and observers depend on them
 - Can access reactive values or other reactive expressions, and they return a value
 - Useful for caching the results of any procedure that happens in response to user input
 - e.g. reactive data frame subsets we created earlier
- **Observers** – `observe()`: they depend on reactive expressions, but nothing else depends on them
 - Can access reactive sources and reactive expressions, but they don't return a value; they are used for their side effects
 - e.g. output object is a reactive observer, which also looks like a list, and contains many individual reactive observers that are created by using reactive values and expressions in reactive functions




Suppose we want the user to provide a title for the plot. What is wrong with the following, and how would you fix it? See `movies_10.R`.

```
# UI
textInput(inputId = "plot_title",
           label = "Plot title",
           placeholder = "Enter text"),

# Server
pretty_plot_title <- reactive({ toTitleCase(input$plot_title) })

output$scatterplot <- renderPlot({
  ggplot(data = movies_sample(),
         aes_string(x = input$x, y = input$y, color = input$z)) +
    geom_point(alpha = input$alpha, size = input$size) +
    labs(title = pretty_plot_title())
})
```




Suppose we want the user to provide a title for the plot. What is wrong with the following, and how would you fix it? See `movies_10.R`.

```
# UI
textInput(inputId = "plot_title",
           label = "Plot title",
           placeholder = "Enter text"),

# Server
pretty_plot_title <- reactive({ toTitleCase(input$plot_title) })

output$scatterplot <- renderPlot({
  ggplot(data = movies_sample(),
         aes_string(x = input$x, y = input$y, color = input$z)) +
    geom_point(alpha = input$alpha, size = input$size) +
    labs(title = pretty_plot_title())
})
```



`apps/movies/movies-11.R`

Reactive expressions vs. observers

- Similarities: Both store expressions that can be executed
- Differences:
 - Reactive expressions return values, but observers don't
 - Observers (and endpoints in general) eagerly respond to reactives, but reactive expressions (and conductors in general) do not
 - Reactive expressions must not have side effects, while observers are only useful for their side effects



Render functions

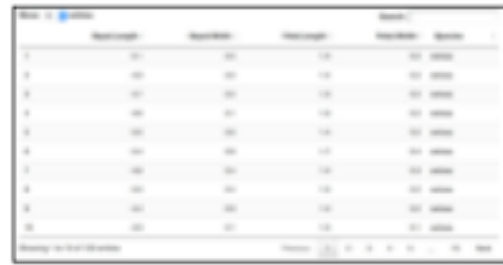


Render functions

```
render*({ [code_chunk] })
```

- Provide a code chunk that describes how an output should be populated
- The output will update in response to changes in any reactive values or reactive expressions that are used in the code chunk





	Variable1	Variable2	Variable3	Variable4	Variable5
1	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	100	100	100	100
9	100	100	100	100	100
10	100	100	100	100	100

DT::renderDataTable(expr,
options, callback, escape,
env, quoted)

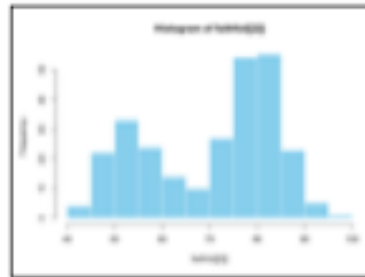


dataTableOutput(outputId, icon, ...)



renderImage(expr, env, quoted, deleteFile)

imageOutput(outputId, width, height, click,
dblclick, hover, hoverDelay, hoverDelayType,
brush, clickId, hoverId, inline)



renderPlot(expr, width, height, res, ..., env,
quoted, func)

plotOutput(outputId, width, height, click,
dblclick, hover, hoverDelay, hoverDelayType,
brush, clickId, hoverId, inline)

```
'data.frame': 3 obs. of 2 variables:
 $ Sepal.Length: num 5.1 4.9 4.7
 $ Sepal.Width : num 3.5 3 3.2
```

renderPrint(expr, env, quoted, func,
width)

verbatimTextOutput(outputId)



	Sepal.Length	Sepal.Width	Petal.Length	Petal.Width	Species
1	5.10	3.50	1.40	0.25	setosa
2	4.90	3.00	1.60	0.25	setosa
3	5.10	3.20	1.30	0.25	setosa
4	5.00	3.10	1.50	0.25	setosa
5	5.00	3.40	1.60	0.25	setosa
6	5.00	3.00	1.70	0.45	setosa

renderTable(expr,..., env, quoted, func)

tableOutput(outputId)

foo

renderText(expr, env, quoted, func)

textOutput(outputId, container, inline)



renderUI(expr, env, quoted, func)

uiOutput(outputId, inline, container, ...)
& **htmlOutput**(outputId, inline, container, ...)



Recap

```
render*({ [code_chunk] })
```

- These functions make objects to display
- Results should always be saved to `output$`
- They make an observer object that has a block of code associated with it
- The object will rerun the entire code block to update itself whenever it is invalidated



Your turn

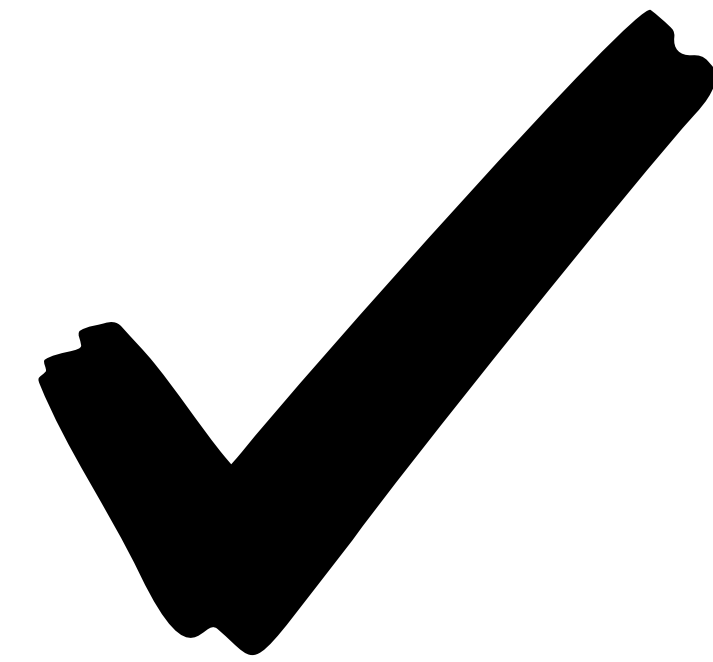
- Run the app in `movies_12.R`.
- Try entering a few different plot titles and observe that the plot title updates however the sampled data that is being plotted does not.
- Given that the `renderPlot()` function reruns each time `input$plot_title` changes, why does the sample stay the same?



3_m 00_s



Because the data frame that is used in the plot is defined as a reactive expression with a code chunk that does not depend on `input$plot_title`.



SOLUTION