

"Details": more details than you usually need about how the function does what it does



Details

This function is the principal means of reading tabular data into **R**.

Unless `colClasses` is specified, all columns are read as character columns and then converted using [type.convert](#) to logical, integer, numeric, complex or (depending on `as.is`) factor as appropriate. Quotes are (by default) interpreted in all fields, so a column of values like "42" will result in an integer column.

A field or line is 'blank' if it contains nothing (except whitespace if no separator is specified) before a comment character or the end of the field or line.

If `row.names` is not specified and the header line has one less entry than the number of columns, the first column is taken to be the row names. This allows data frames to be read in from the format in which they are printed. If `row.names` is specified and does not refer to the first column, that column is discarded from such files.

The number of data columns is determined by looking at the first five lines of input (or the whole input if it has less than five lines), or from the length of `col.names` if it is specified and is longer. This could conceivably be wrong if `fill` or `blank.lines.skip` are true, so specify `col.names` if necessary (as in the 'Examples').

`read.csv` and `read.csv2` are identical to `read.table` except for the defaults. They are intended for reading 'comma separated value' files (`' .csv '`) or

Value: What does this function return to you? What is the output?



Value

A data frame ([data.frame](#)) containing a representation of the data in the file.

Empty input is an error unless `col.names` is specified, when a 0-row data frame is returned: similarly giving just a header line if `header = TRUE` results in a 0-row data frame. Note that in either case the columns will be logical unless `colClasses` was supplied.

Character strings in the result (including factor levels) will have a declared encoding if `encoding` is "latin1" or "UTF-8".