

Writing R functions

Arni Magnusson

Statistical Modeling in R

Universidad de Concepción

19–23 January 2026

Outline

Functions

arguments, function body, output, coding style

Objects

atomic elements, arrays, composite objects, class

Control flow

if, for, apply

Documentation

header comments, roxygen, help pages

Anatomy of a function

```
## Comment header  
twice <- function(x)  
{  
  out <- 2 * x  
  out  
}
```

Arguments, function body, output, scope, coding style

Objects in R

Atomic

integer

numeric (double)

character

logical

Composite

list

data.frame

special class

Arrays

vector

matrix

array

if

If construct

```
if (cond) {  
  ...  
}
```

```
if (cond) {  
  ...  
}  
else {  
  ...  
}
```

Conditions

```
pi == 3  
pi != 3  
pi < 3  
pi <= 3
```

```
A && B  
A || B  
!A
```

```
is.na  
is.null
```

for, apply

For loops

```
for (i in 1:10) {  
  ...  
}
```

Apply

```
apply(tab, 2, mean)
```

```
sapply(list, mean)
```

```
tapply(vec, grp, mean)
```

```
aggregate(vec ~ grp, mean)
```

Documentation

Header comments

```
## Purpose  
## Input  
## Output  
foo <- function(...)
```

Roxygen comments

```
#' Title  
#' Description  
#' @param  
#' @return  
#' @examples  
foo <- function(...)
```

Outline

Functions

arguments, function body, output, coding style

Objects

atomic elements, arrays, composite objects, class

Control flow

if, for, apply

Documentation

header comments, roxygen, help pages