




The R-versus-Python debate

People often wonder which programming language they should learn first. You might be wondering about this, too. This program teaches the open-source programming language, R, which is used for statistical analysis, visualization, and other data analysis. R is a great starting point for foundational data analysis, and it has helpful packages that beginners can apply to projects. Python is a general-purpose programming language that isn't covered in the curriculum. However, we encourage you to explore Python after completing this program. If you're curious about other programming languages, make every effort to continue learning.

Any programming language a beginner starts to learn will have some advantages and challenges. Explore this by examining the characteristics of R and Python in the following table, which provides a high-level overview based on a sampling of articles and opinions of those in the field. You can review the information without necessarily picking a side in the R versus Python debate. In fact, if you explore Posit's [blog article](#)  in the Resources for more information section, it's actually more about working together than winning a debate.

Programming Language	R	Python
Common features	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open-source• Data stored in data frames	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open-source• Data stored in data frames