



# Downloading files

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# Get/set your working directory

- A basic component of working with data is knowing your working directory
- The two main commands are `getwd()` and `setwd()`.
- Be aware of relative versus absolute paths
  - **Relative** - `setwd("./data")`, `setwd("../")`
  - **Absolute** - `setwd("/Users/jtleek/data/")`
- Important difference in Windows `setwd("C:\\Users\\Andrew\\Downloads")`

# Checking for and creating directories

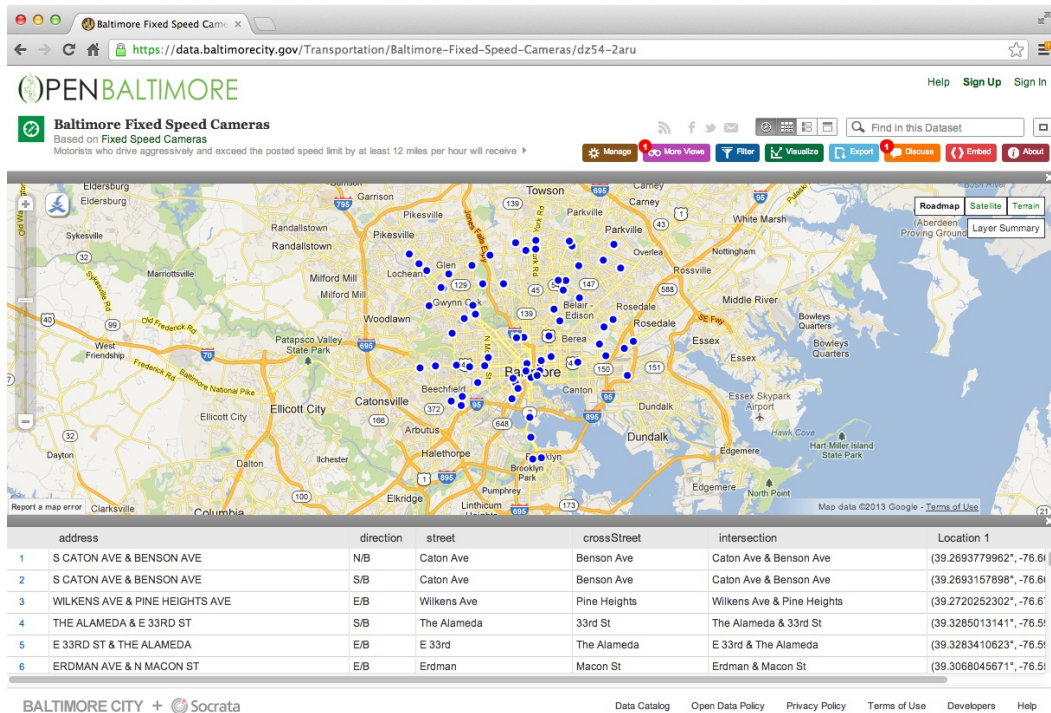
- `file.exists("directoryName")` will check to see if the directory exists
- `dir.create("directoryName")` will create a directory if it doesn't exist
- Here is an example checking for a "data" directory and creating it if it doesn't exist

```
if (!file.exists("data")) {  
  dir.create("data")  
}
```

# Getting data from the internet - `download.file()`

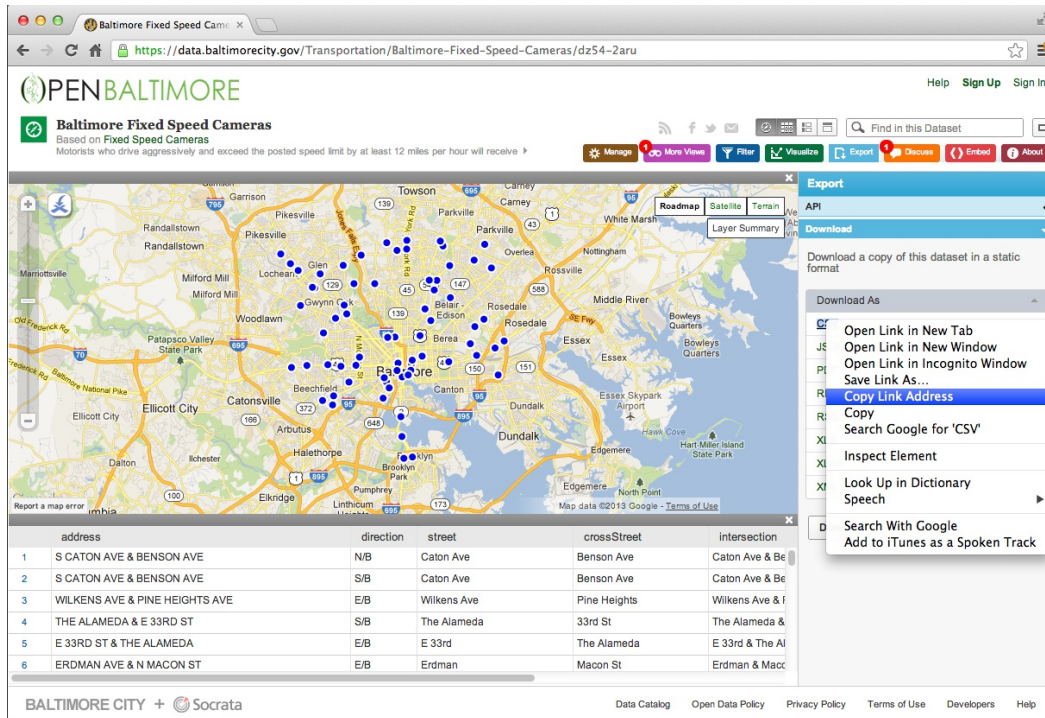
- Downloads a file from the internet
- Even if you could do this by hand, helps with reproducibility
- Important parameters are *url*, *destfile*, *method*
- Useful for downloading tab-delimited, csv, and other files

# Example - Baltimore camera data



<https://data.baltimorecity.gov/Transportation/Baltimore-Fixed-Speed-Cameras/dz54-2aru>

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# Download a file from the web

```
fileUrl <- "https://data.baltimorecity.gov/api/views/dz54-2aru/rows.csv?accessType=DOWNLOAD"  
download.file(fileUrl, destfile = "./data/cameras.csv", method = "curl")  
list.files("./data")
```

```
## [1] "cameras.csv"
```

```
dateDownloaded <- date()  
dateDownloaded
```

```
## [1] "Sun Jan 12 21:37:44 2014"
```

# Some notes about `download.file()`

- If the url starts with *http* you can use `download.file()`
- If the url starts with *https* on Windows you may be ok
- If the url starts with *https* on Mac you may need to set *method="curl"*
- If the file is big, this might take a while
- Be sure to record when you downloaded.