



## 1.3.1: Introduction to R and R Studio

(Asynchronous-Online)

### Session Objectives

1. Get acquainted with R and R Studio
  2. Write simple R code in Console
  3. Create your first R script
  4. Install and load R packages (understand R session)
  5. Create your first R Markdown report and produce output files in different formats (HTML, PDF, or DOCX)
- 

### 0. Prework - Before You Begin

Note

Note: **R** is the name of the programming language itself and **RStudio** is an integrated development environment (IDE) which is an enhanced interface for better organization, files management and analysis workflows.

### Software and Applications to Download

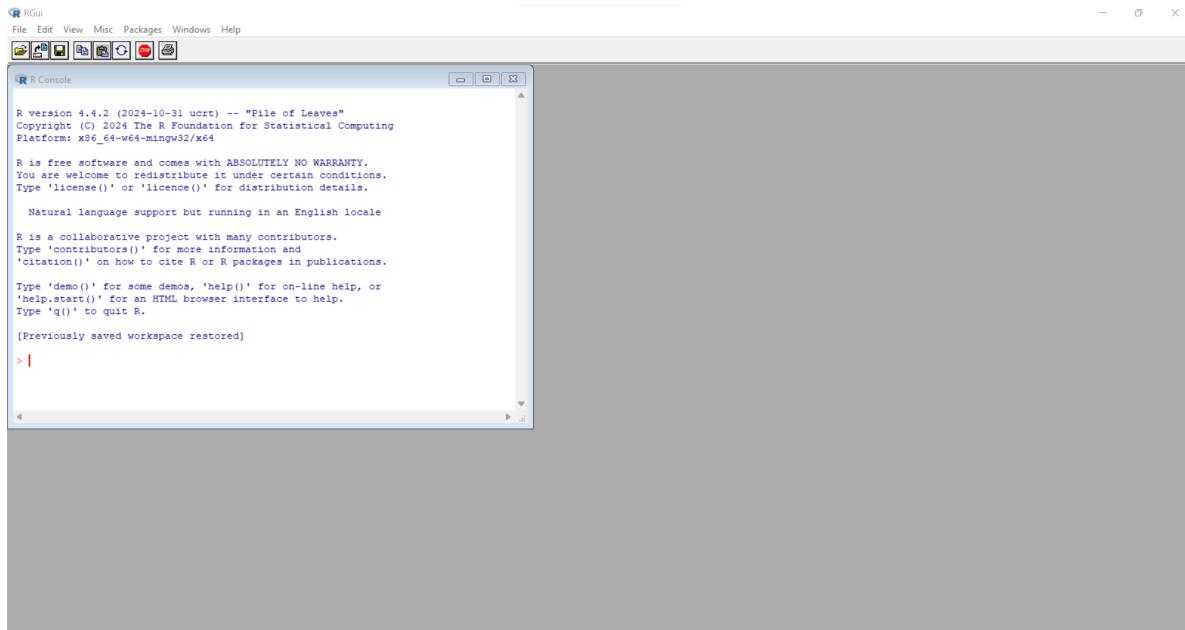
1. FIRST, Download and install R onto your computer from <https://cran.r-project.org/>.
  2. NEXT, After installing R, download and install RStudio Desktop onto your computer from <https://posit.co/download/rstudio-desktop/>.
-



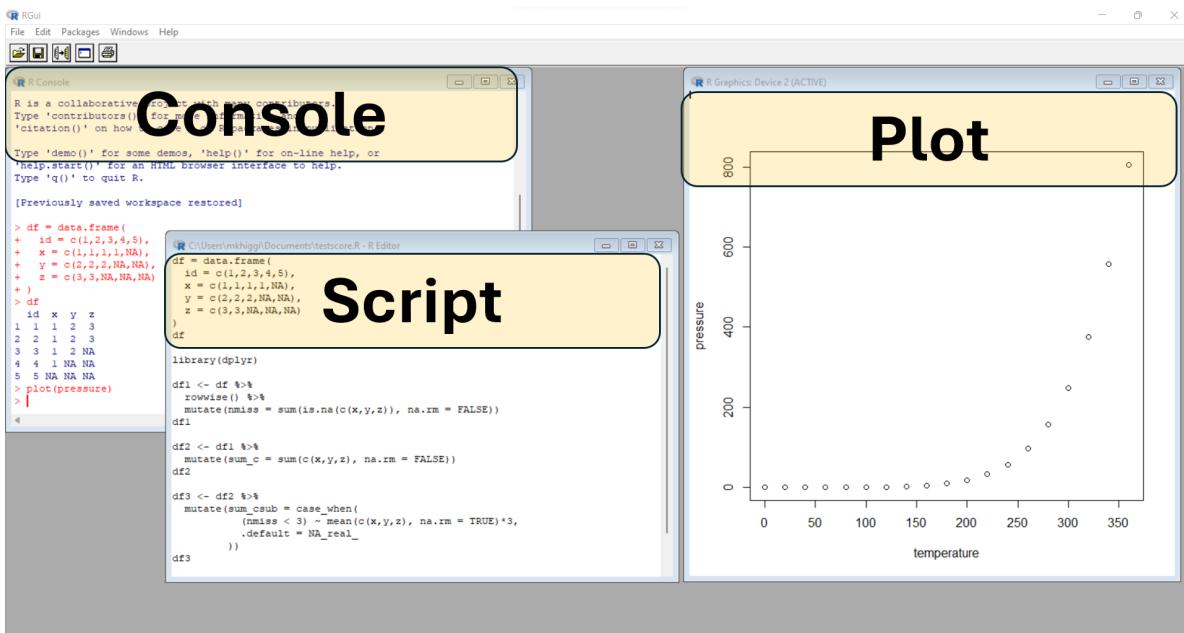
## 1. Get aquainted with R and R Studio

### Basic R

When you download **R** from **CRAN** and install it on your computer, there is a R application that you can run. However, it is very bare bones. Here is a screenshot of what it looks like on my computer (Windows 11 operating system).



You can type commands in the console window at the prompt “>” but this is slow and tedious. You can also write and execute scripts from inside this application and see the output back in the console window as well as creating plots. But managing large projects using this interface is not efficient.

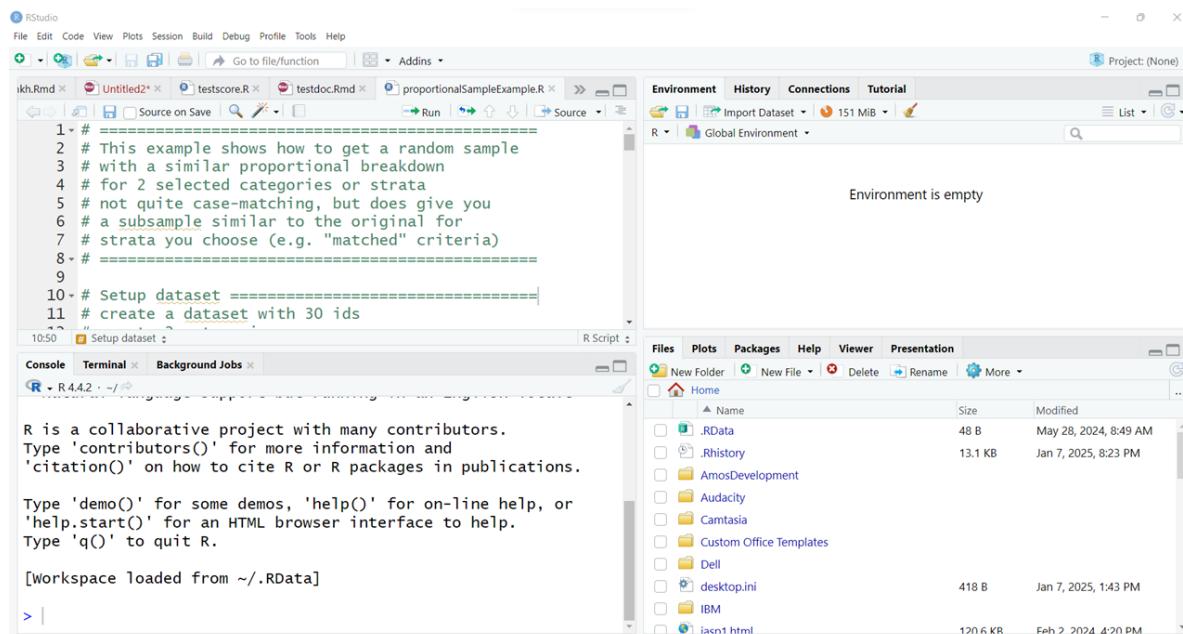




## RStudio IDE

The [RStudio Integrated Development Environment \(IDE\)](#) application provides much better tools for managing files within a given “project”. This biggest advantage of working in an IDE is everything is contained and managed within a given project, which is linked to a specific folder (container) on your compute (or cloud drive you may have access to).

However, you will still need to write and execute code using scripts and related files. An IDE is NOT a GUI (graphical user interface) which is the “point and click” workflow you may have experience with if you’ve used other analysis software applications such as SPSS, SAS Studio, Excel and similar.

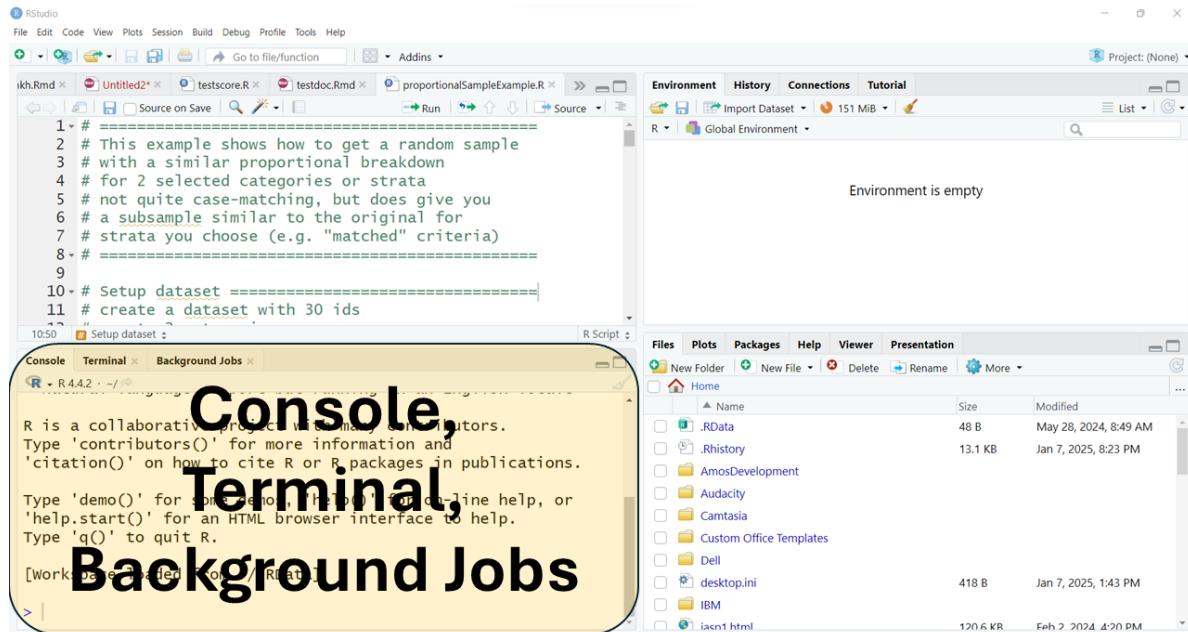


The interface is usually arranged with the following 4 “panes” or windows:

- Console
- Source
- Environment
- Files

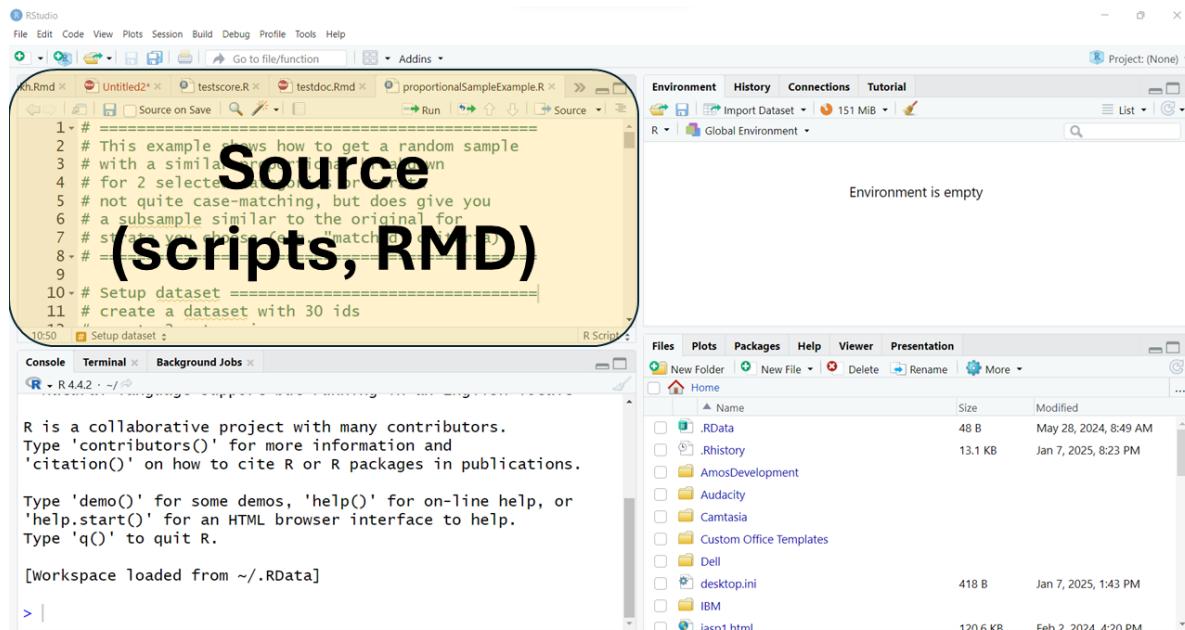


The typical arrangement, usually has the “Console” window pane at the bottom left. This window also usually has a TAB for the “terminal” and any “background jobs” that might be running.





The “Source” window pane is usually at the top left. This is where you will do most of your editing of your R program scripts (\*.R) or Rmarkdown files \*.Rmd). This is also where the data viewer window will open. You can also open and edit other kinds of files here as well (\*.tex, \*.css, \*.txt, and more).





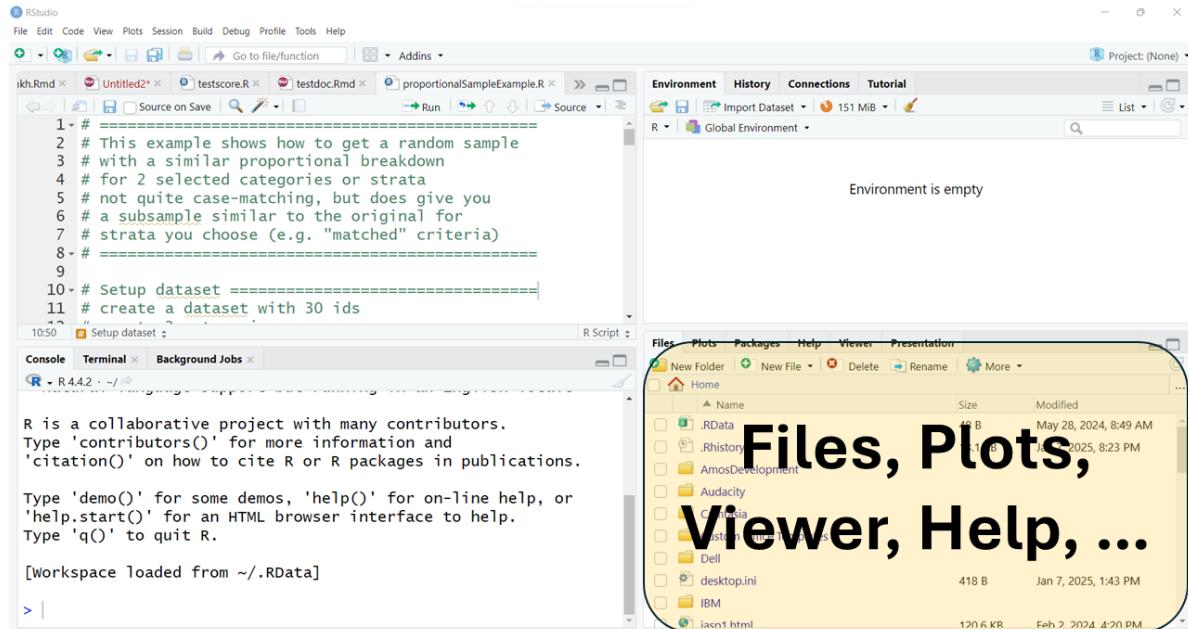
The top right window pane should always have your “Environment”, “History” and “Tutorial” TABS but may also have TABS for “Build” and “Git” depending on your project type and options selected.

The screenshot shows the RStudio interface. The left side features a code editor with an R script file containing sample code for creating a random sample. Below it is the R console output, which includes standard R startup messages and a workspace loading message. The right side of the interface is divided into several panes: the top-right pane displays the "Environment" and "History" tabs, with "Environment" currently active; the bottom-right pane is a file browser showing local files like RData, Rhistory, and AmosDevelopment. The top-left pane shows a list of open files, and the bottom-left pane shows background jobs.



The bottom right window pane has TABS for your:

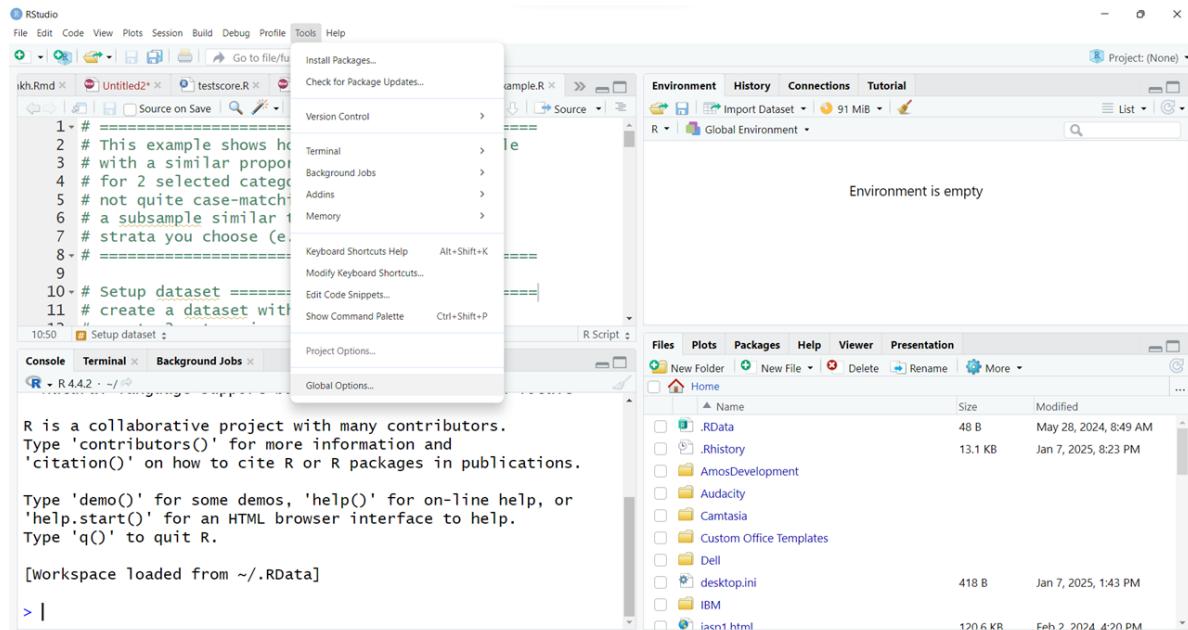
- Files directory
- Plots window for graphical output
- Packages - which lists all add-on R packages installed on your computer
- Help window
- as well as other TABS for Viewer and Presentation for viewing other kinds of output.





## Customising your RStudio interface

You also have the option to rearrange your window panes as well as change the look and feel of your programming interface and much more. To explore all of your options, click on the menu at the top for “Tools/Global Options”:

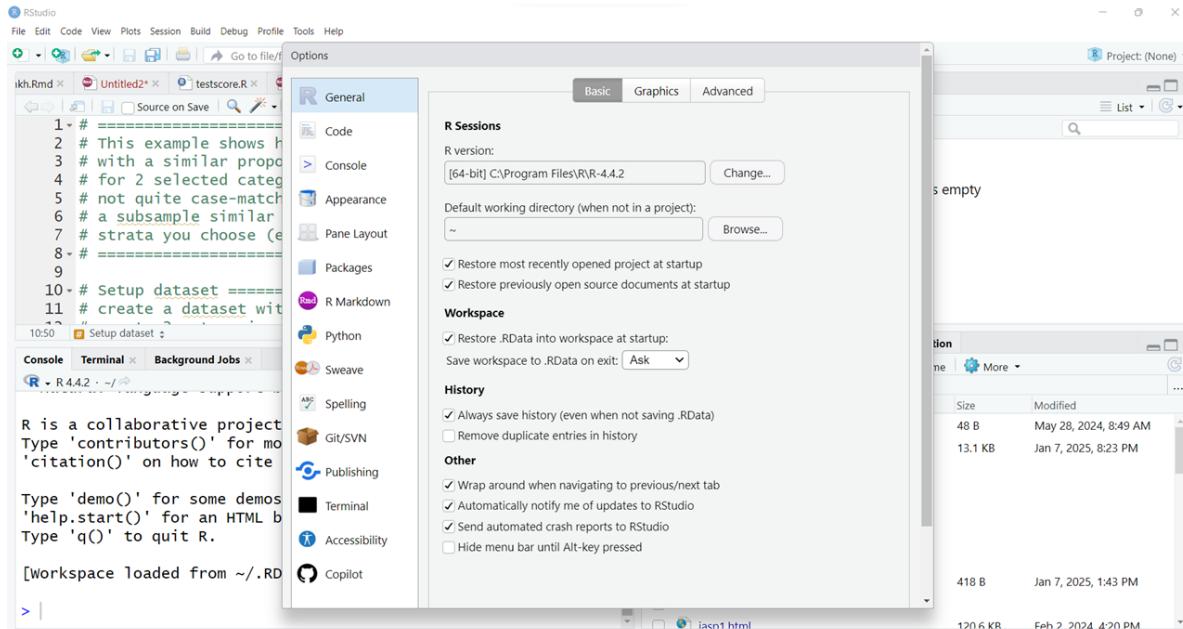


Take a look at the left side for the list of all of the options. Some of the most useful options to be aware of are:

- General
- Appearance, and
- Pane Layout

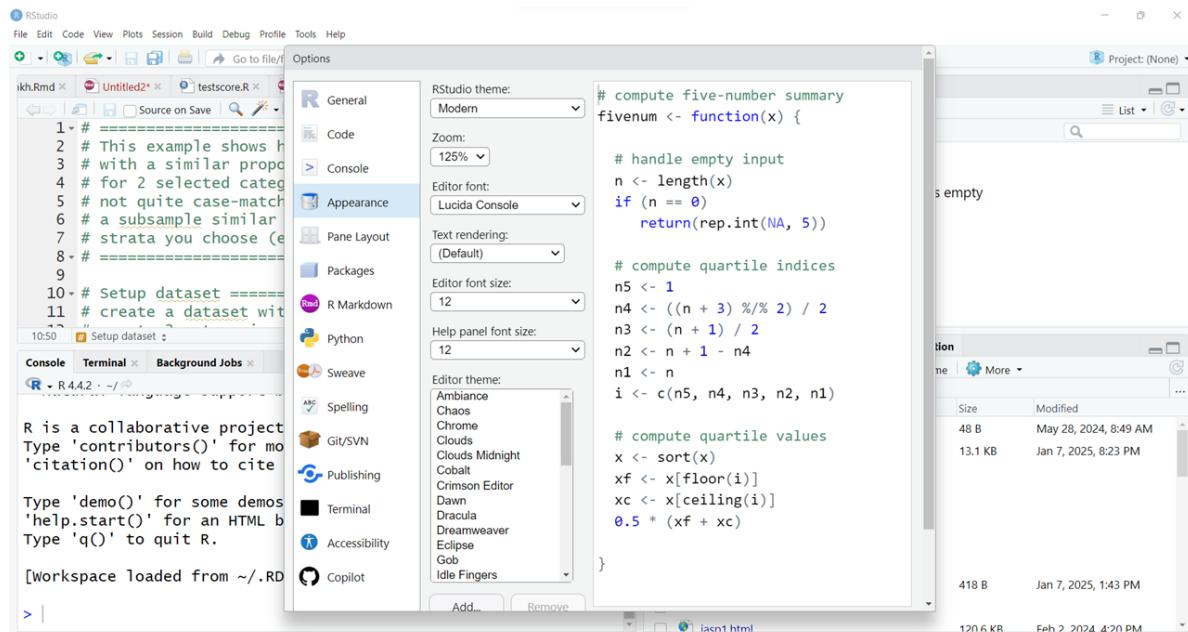


In the “General” tab, this is where you can see and confirm that R is installed and where the R programming language app is installed on your computer.



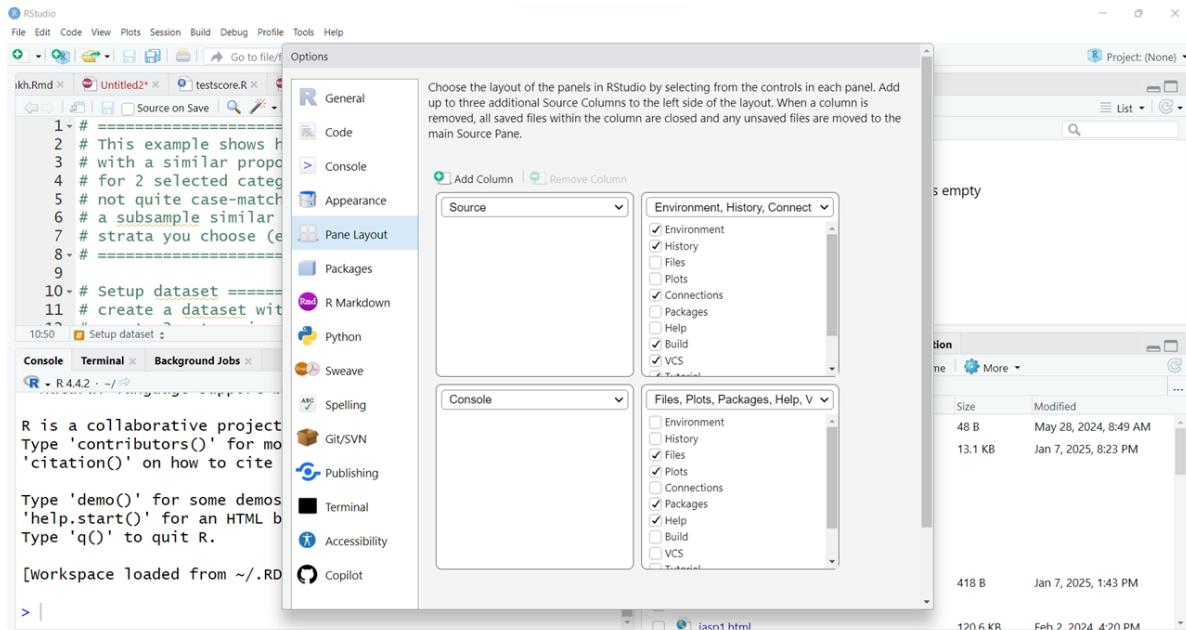


You will probably want to explore tuning these appearance parameters to customize the app appears to your preferences. For example, you can change the ZOOM level to improve readability. You may also want to change the FONT sizes for the Editor and Help windows as needed. I also encourage you to try out different Editor Themes which will change the colors of the R code as well as background colors (light or dark).





I would suggest NOT changing the layout of the window panes until you are very familiar with the default settings. But this is where you can see what the default settings are and what other options are available to you.





## 2. Write simple R code in Console

### Simple math

So, let's start with some simple R code using the Console window and typing commands at the > prompt.

You can write simple math expressions like 5 + 5.

```
5 + 5
```

```
[1] 10
```

Notice that the output shows the number 1 enclosed in square brackets followed by the answer (or output) of 10.

```
[1] 10
```

This is because R performed the addition operation using the + operator and then “saved” the output in temporary memory as a scalar object with 1 element, which is the number 10.

You can actually see this temporary object by typing .Last.value

```
.Last.value  
[1] 10
```

However, if we look at our current computing environment (see upper right window pane), it is still showing as empty.



```
R 4.4.2 · C:/MyGithub/emory_tidal_Rlectures/ · 132 MiB
R is free software and comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY.
You are welcome to redistribute it under certain conditions.
Type 'license()' or 'licence()' for distribution details.

Natural language support but running in an English locale

R is a collaborative project with many contributors.
Type 'contributors()' for more information and
'citation()' on how to cite R or R packages in publications.

Type 'demo()' for some demos, 'help()' for on-line help, or
'help.start()' for an HTML browser interface to help.
Type 'q()' to quit R.

[workspace loaded from C:/MyGithub/emory_tidal_Rlectures/.RData]

> 5+5
[1] 10
> 5 + 5
[1] 10
> .Last.value
[1] 10
>
```

This is because we have not yet “saved” the output into an object that we created. Let’s save this output into an object called `ten`.

To do this we need to do 2 things:

1. Create the object called `ten`
2. Use the “assign” operator `<-` to take the result of `5 + 5` and move it (save it or pipe it) into the object `ten`.

```
ten <- 5 + 5
```

To “see” the output of this object - you can either see it now in your Global Environment or type the object name in the Console to view it.

```
ten
```

```
[1] 10
```



The screenshot shows the RStudio interface. The console pane displays the R startup message, including the welcome message, license information, and a demonstration of the 'ten' constant. The environment pane shows a variable named 'ten' with the value '10'. A red circle highlights the 'ten' entry in the environment pane.

```
R version 4.4.2 (2022-08-16) -- "Ridge Rousseeuw"
Type 'copyright()' or 'license()' for distribution details.
Type 'help()' for usage on a particular function or feature.
Type 'demo()' for some demos, 'help()' for on-line help, or
'help.start()' for an HTML browser interface to help.
Type 'q()' to quit R.

[workspace loaded from C:/MyGithub/emory_tidal_Rlectures/.RData]

> 5+5
[1] 10
> 5 + 5
[1] 10
> .Last.value
[1] 10
> ten <- 5 + 5
> ten
[1] 10
> |
```

It is important to remember that R is an “object-oriented” programming language - everything in R is an object.

## Built in constants

There are several built in “constants” in R. Try typing these in at the Console to see the results.

```
pi
```

```
[1] 3.141593
```

```
letters
```

```
[1] "a" "b" "c" "d" "e" "f" "g" "h" "i" "j" "k" "l" "m" "n" "o" "p" "q" "r" "s"
[20] "t" "u" "v" "w" "x" "y" "z"
```

```
LETTERS
```

```
[1] "A" "B" "C" "D" "E" "F" "G" "H" "I" "J" "K" "L" "M" "N" "O" "P" "Q" "R" "S"
[20] "T" "U" "V" "W" "X" "Y" "Z"
```



```
month.name
```

```
[1] "January"   "February"  "March"      "April"       "May"        "June"  
[7] "July"       "August"     "September"  "October"    "November"   "December"
```

For the constants like `letters` you get a list of the 26 lower case letters. Notice that the number in [square brackets] updates for each new line printed out. This allows you to keep track of the number of elements in the output object. `letters` is an “character” array with 26 elements.

To confirm these details, we can use the `class()` function to determine that `letters` has all “character” elements. The `length()` function will let you know that there are 26 elements.

```
class(letters)
```

```
[1] "character"
```

```
length(letters)
```

```
[1] 26
```

## Getting help

If you would like to learn more about these built-in “constants”, you can get help in one of two ways. You can either type `help(pi)` in the Console (lower left) or type `pi` in the Help window (lower right).

```
help(pi)
```



The screenshot shows the RStudio interface with the following details:

- Console Tab:** Shows the command `> help(pi)`.
- Help Panel:** The search bar contains "pi". The results show the built-in constant `pi`.
- Description:** States "Constants built into R."
- Usage:** Lists constants: LETTERS, letters, month.abb, month.name, pi.
- Details:** Notes that R has a small number of built-in constants and lists available constants.

## Try out a function

The majority of the R programming language functionality is driven by functions. Technically the `+` operator is actually a function that performs a sum.

You can even get help on these operators, by typing `help("+")`. We have to add the quotes `" "` so that R knows we are looking for this operator and not trying to perform an addition operation inside the function call.

```
help("+")
```

But let's try a function to create a sequence of numbers - for example, a sequence from 1 to 10.

```
seq(10)
```

```
[1] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
```

And let's look at the help page for the `seq()` function.



The screenshot shows the R documentation for the `seq` function. The title bar says "R: Sequence Generation". The main content area starts with "seq {base}" and "R Documentation". Below this, the "Description" section states: "Generate regular sequences. `seq` is a standard generic with a default method. `seq.int` is a primitive which can be much faster but has a few restrictions. `seq_along` and `seq_len` are very fast primitives for two common cases." The "Usage" section lists several functions: `seq(...)`, `## Default S3 method:`, `seq(from = 1, to = 1, by = ((to - from) / (length.out - 1)), length.out = NULL, along.with = NULL, ...)`, `seq.int(from, to, by, length.out, along.with, ...)`, `seq_along(along.with)`, and `seq_len(length.out)`. The "Arguments" section notes: "... arguments passed to or from methods."

R allows for what is called “lazy” coding. This basically means you can provide very minimal input and R will try to figure out what you want using the default settings for a given function. In the case of `seq()` the function begins by default at 1 and creates and output in steps of 1 up to the value of 10.

While “lazy” coding practices are common with R, it would actually be better to explicitly define each argument to make sure you get the exact output you want. To do this, inside the parentheses () assign a value to each argument. For example:

```
seq(from = 1,  
     to = 10,  
     by = 1)
```

```
[1] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
```



You could easily change these to get a sequence from 0 to 1 in steps of 0.1 as follows:

```
seq(from = 0,  
    to = 1,  
    by = 0.1)
```

```
[1] 0.0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 0.5 0.6 0.7 0.8 0.9 1.0
```

---

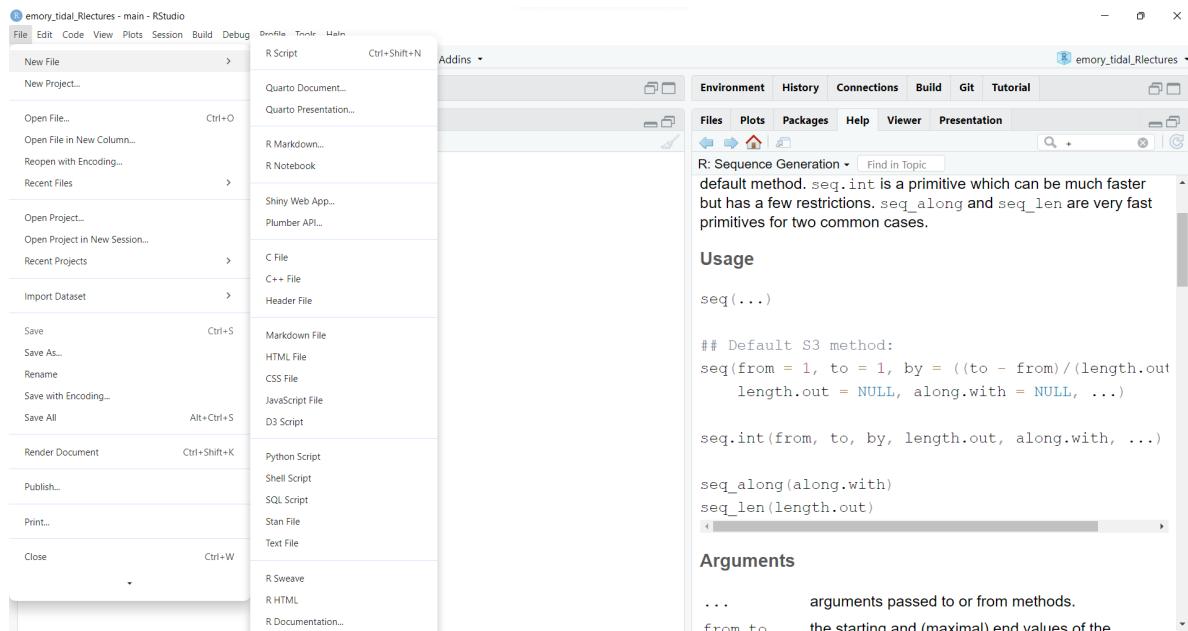


### 3. Create your first R script

#### Save your code in a new script

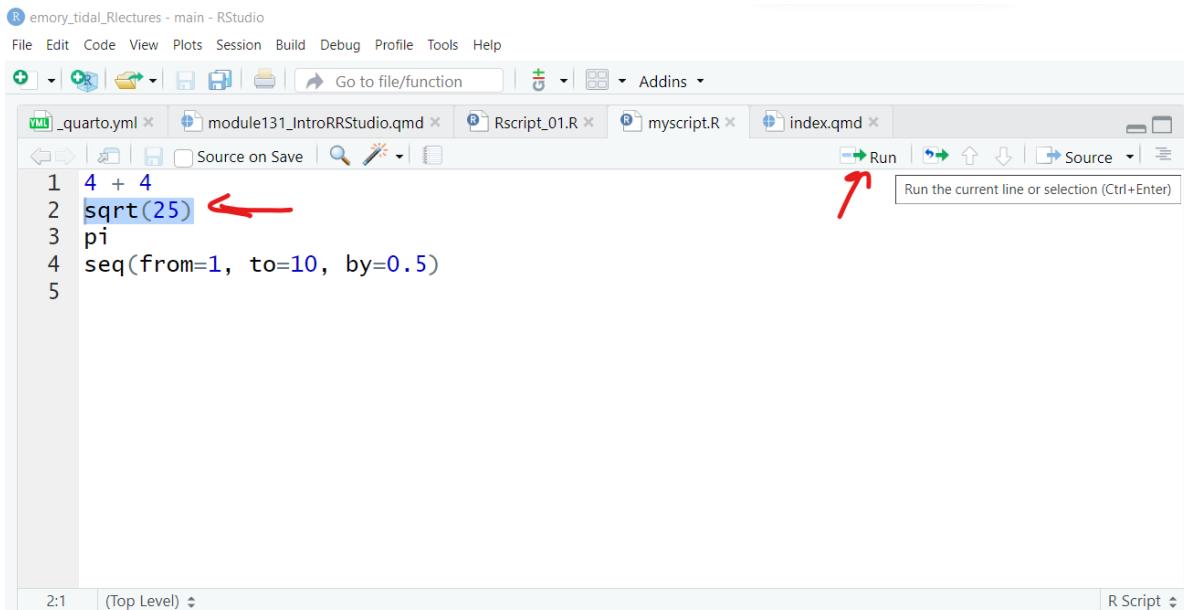
So, as you can tell, the R Console is useful but slow and tedious. Let's create an R script to save all of these commands in a file that we can easily access everything we've done so far and re-run these commands as needed.

In RStudio go to the top menu File/New File/R Script:



Once the R Script file is created, type in some of the commands we did above in the Console and put one command on each line.

Just select each line and click “Run”.



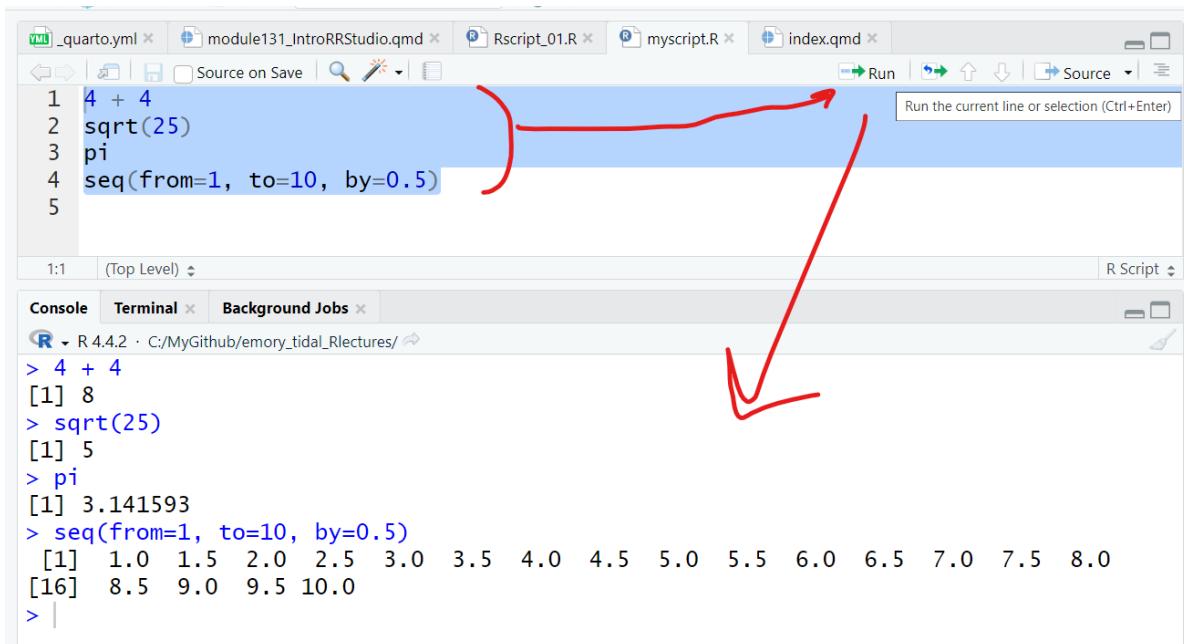
A screenshot of the RStudio interface. The top menu bar includes File, Edit, Code, View, Plots, Session, Build, Debug, Profile, Tools, and Help. The toolbar contains various icons for file operations like Open, Save, and Print. The main workspace shows a script named "myscript.R" with the following content:

```
1 4 + 4
2 sqrt(25)
3 pi
4 seq(from=1, to=10, by=0.5)
5
```

The second line, "sqrt(25)", is highlighted with a red arrow pointing to it. A red arrow also points from the "Run" button in the toolbar to a tooltip that says "Run the current line or selection (Ctrl+Enter)".

Then you can save the file on your computer as “myscript.R” for example.

You can also select all of the rows and click run to see the output in the Console Window.



A screenshot of the RStudio interface. The top menu bar, toolbar, and script editor are identical to the previous screenshot. A large red bracket highlights the entire code block in the script editor. A red arrow points from this bracket to the "Run" button in the toolbar. Another red arrow points from the "Run" button to the "Console" tab at the bottom of the interface.

The "Console" tab is active, showing the following R session output:

```
> 4 + 4
[1] 8
> sqrt(25)
[1] 5
> pi
[1] 3.141593
> seq(from=1, to=10, by=0.5)
[1] 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0 4.5 5.0 5.5 6.0 6.5 7.0 7.5 8.0
[16] 8.5 9.0 9.5 10.0
> |
```

Here is the code and output:



```
4 + 4
```

```
[1] 8
```

```
sqrt(25)
```

```
[1] 5
```

```
pi
```

```
[1] 3.141593
```

```
seq(from=1, to=10, by=0.5)
```

```
[1] 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0 4.5 5.0 5.5 6.0 6.5 7.0 7.5 8.0  
[16] 8.5 9.0 9.5 10.0
```

### Create R objects and Use Them

Let's try out some more built-in R functions, save the output in objects in the environment and then use them in other functions.

Create a sequence of numbers and save them as an object called `x`. I also added a comment in the R code block below. Everything after the `#` hashtag is a comment which R will ignore. It is a good idea to add comments in your code to make sure that you and others understand what each part of your code does.

```
# save sequence of numbers  
# from 1 to 10 in steps of 0.5  
# in an object named x  
x <- seq(from=1, to=10, by=0.5)  
  
# Type x to view the contents  
x
```

```
[1] 1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5 4.0 4.5 5.0 5.5 6.0 6.5 7.0 7.5 8.0  
[16] 8.5 9.0 9.5 10.0
```



Also take a look at the Global Environment to see the new object `x`.

The screenshot shows the RStudio interface. In the top-left, the console window displays R code and its output:

```
> # save sequence of numbers
> # from 1 to 10 in steps of 0.5
> # in an object named x
> x <- seq(from=1, to=10, by=0.5)
>
> # Type x to view the contents
> x
[1]  1.0  1.5  2.0  2.5  3.0  3.5  4.0  4.5  5.0  5.5  6.0  6.5  7.0  7.5  8.0
[16] 8.5  9.0  9.5 10.0
>
```

In the top-right, the Global Environment pane shows two objects:

ten	10
x	num [1:19] 1 1.5 2 2.5 3...

A red arrow points to the 'x' entry in the table. A red curly brace on the right side of the pane groups the 'Values' section and the help text below it.

Below the Global Environment pane, the help documentation for the `seq` function is visible:

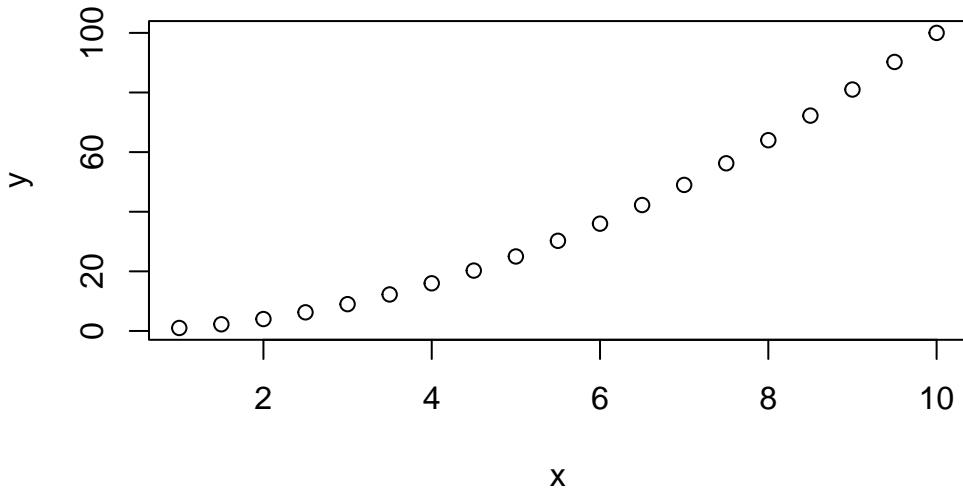
R: Sequence Generation Find in Topic  
generic with a default method. `seq.int` is a primitive which can be much faster but has a few restrictions. `seq_along` and `seq_len` are very fast primitives for two common cases.

Usage  
`seq(...)`  
## Default S3 method:

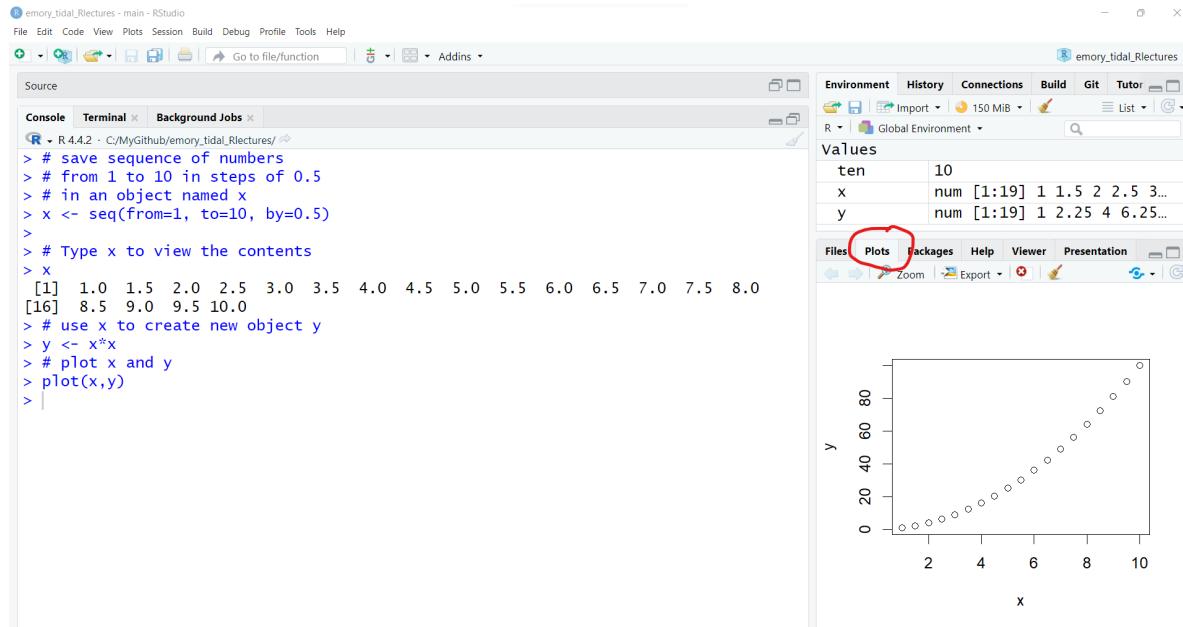
```
# use x to create new object y
y <- x*x
```

Once the object `y` is created, we can make a simple 2-dimensional scatterplot.

```
# plot x and y
plot(x,y)
```



The plot is shown below, but if you are running this in the RStudio desktop, check the Plots window pane (lower right).



**On your own**

Download [Rscript\\_01.R](#) open it in your RStudio and run through the code. Try out new variations on your own.

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#### 4. Install and load R packages (**understand R session**)

```
sessionInfo()
```

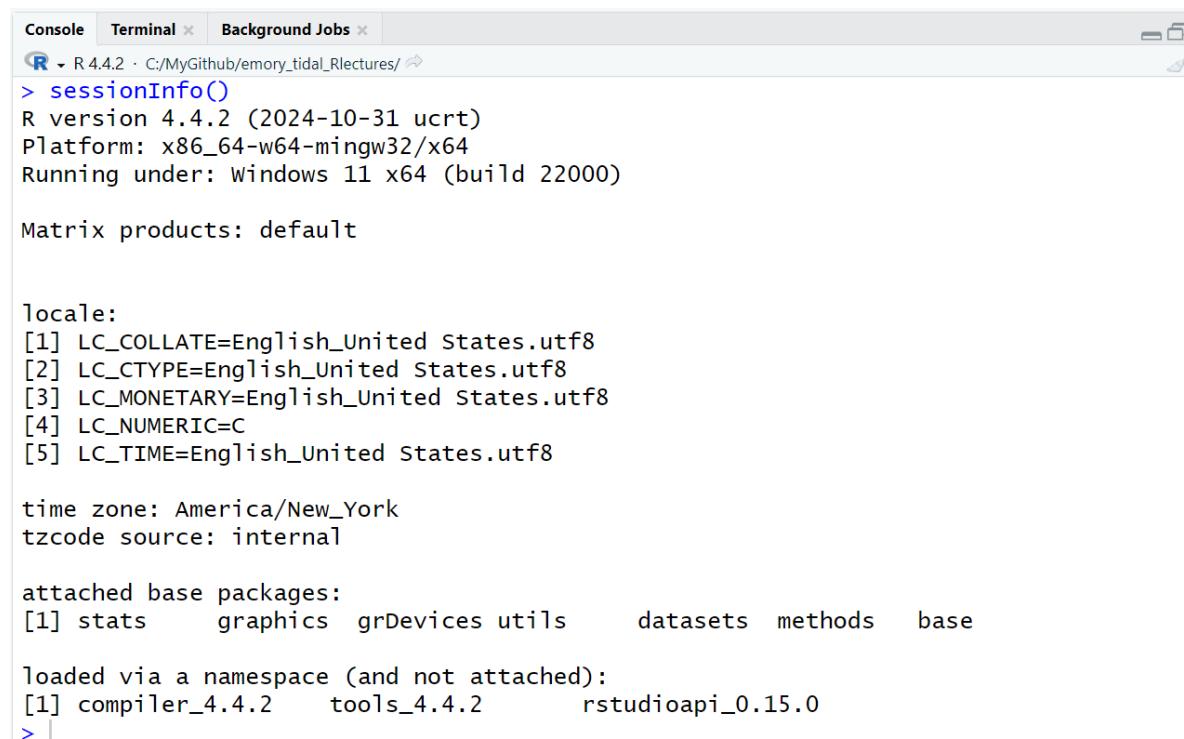
While the base installation of R is pretty powerful on its own, the beauty of R and the R programming community is that there are literally hundreds of thousands if not millions of people programming in R and creating new functions everyday.

In order to use these new functions, the developers put them together in packages that we can install to extend the functionality of R.

But first, let's take a look at the packages that are part of the basic installation of R. One way to see which packages are currently installed and loaded into your current R computing session, is by typing `sessionInfo()`.

You will also notice that the `sessionInfo()` command also lists the version of R I'm currently running (4.4.2), my operating system (Windows 11) and my locale (USA, East Coast). These details can sometimes be helpful for collaborating with others who may be working with different system settings and for debugging errors.

```
sessionInfo()
```



The screenshot shows the RStudio interface with the 'Console' tab selected. The console window displays the output of the `sessionInfo()` command. The output provides detailed information about the R environment, including the R version (4.4.2), platform (x86\_64-w64-mingw32/x64), and locale (USA, East Coast). It also shows the default matrix product behavior, locale settings, time zone, and attached base packages. The 'loaded via a namespace (and not attached)' section lists the compiler, tools, and rstudioapi packages.

```
R version 4.4.2 (2024-10-31 ucrt)
Platform: x86_64-w64-mingw32/x64
Running under: Windows 11 x64 (build 22000)

Matrix products: default

locale:
[1] LC_COLLATE=English_United States.utf8
[2] LC_CTYPE=English_United States.utf8
[3] LC_MONETARY=English_United States.utf8
[4] LC_NUMERIC=C
[5] LC_TIME=English_United States.utf8

time zone: America/New_York
tzcode source: internal

attached base packages:
[1] stats      graphics   grDevices utils      datasets   methods    base

loaded via a namespace (and not attached):
[1] compiler_4.4.2    tools_4.4.2       rstudioapi_0.15.0
> |
```



## 7 Base R Packages

The basic installation of R includes 7 packages:

- stats
- graphics
- grDevices
- utils
- datasets
- methods
- base

To learn more click on the Packages tab in the lower right window pane to see the list of packages installed on your computer. I have a lot of Packages, but here is a screenshot of the base packages.

See the packages listed under “System Library” which are the ones that were installed with base R. You’ll notice that only some of these have checkmarks next to them. The checkmark means those are also loaded into your R session. Only some of them are loaded into memory by default to minimize the use of your computer’s memory.

emory\_tidal\_Rlectures - main - RStudio

File Edit Code View Plots Session Build Debug Profile Tools Help

Console Terminal Background Jobs

R > sessionInfo()

R version 4.4.2 (2024-10-31 ucrt)  
Platform: x86\_64-w64-mingw32/x64  
Running under: Windows 11 x64 (build 22000)

Matrix products: default

locale:

[1] LC\_COLLATE=English\_United States.utf8  
[2] LC\_CTYPE=English\_United States.utf8  
[3] LC\_MONETARY=English\_United States.utf8  
[4] LC\_NUMERIC=C  
[5] LC\_TIME=English\_United States.utf8

time zone: America/New\_York  
tzcode source: internal

attached base packages:  
[1] stats graphics grDevices utils datasets methods base

loaded via a namespace (and not attached):  
[1] compiler\_4.4.2 tools\_4.4.2 rstudioapi\_0.15.0

Emory TIDAL R Lectures

Environment History Connections Build Git Tutorial

Files Plots Packages Help Viewer Presentation

Install Update

Name	Description	Version
zealot	Multiple, Unpacking, and Destucturing Assignment	0.1.0
zip	Cross-Platform ‘zip’ Compression	2.3.1
zlibbioc	An R packaged zlib-1.2.5	1.48.0
zoo	S3 Infrastructure for Regular and Irregular Time Series (‘Z’s Ordered Observations)	1.8-12

System Library

Package	Description	Version
base	The R Base Package	4.4.2
boot	Bootstrap Functions (Originally by Angelo Canty for S)	1.3-31
class	Functions for Classification	7.3-22
cluster	“Finding Groups in Data”: Cluster Analysis Extended Rousseeuw et al.	2.1.6
codetools	Code Analysis Tools for R	0.2-20
compiler	The R Compiler Package	4.4.2
datasets	The R Datasets Package	4.4.2
foreign	Read Data Stored by ‘Minitab’, ‘S’, ‘SAS’, ‘SPSS’, ‘Stata’, ‘Systat’, ‘Weka’, ‘dBase’, ...	0.8-87
graphics	The R Graphics Package	4.4.2
grDevices	The R Graphic Devices and Support for Colours and Fonts	4.4.2
grid	The Grid Graphics Package	4.4.2
KernSmooth	Functions for Kernel Smoothing Supporting Wand & Jones (1995)	2.23-24

### Install a Package and Load it into R session memory

Let’s install an R package, like `ggplot2`.



Go to the RStudio menu Tools/Install Packages

The screenshot shows the RStudio interface with the 'Tools' menu open, specifically the 'Install Packages...' option. The main workspace shows R session output:

```
R version 4.4.2 (2024-10-31 ucrt) -- "Ridge Ruler"
Platform: x86_64-w64-mingw32/x64_64-bit
Running under: Windows 11 x64

Matrix products: default

locale:
[1] LC_COLLATE=English_United States.1252
[2] LC_CTYPE=English_United States.1252
[3] LC_MONETARY=English_United States.1252
[4] LC_NUMERIC=C
[5] LC_TIME=English_United States.1252

time zone: America/New_York
tzcode source: internal

attached base packages:
[1] stats      graphics   grDevices utils      datasets   methods    base

loaded via a namespace (and not attached):
[1] compiler_4.4.2    tools_4.4.2      rstudioapi_0.15.0
> |
```

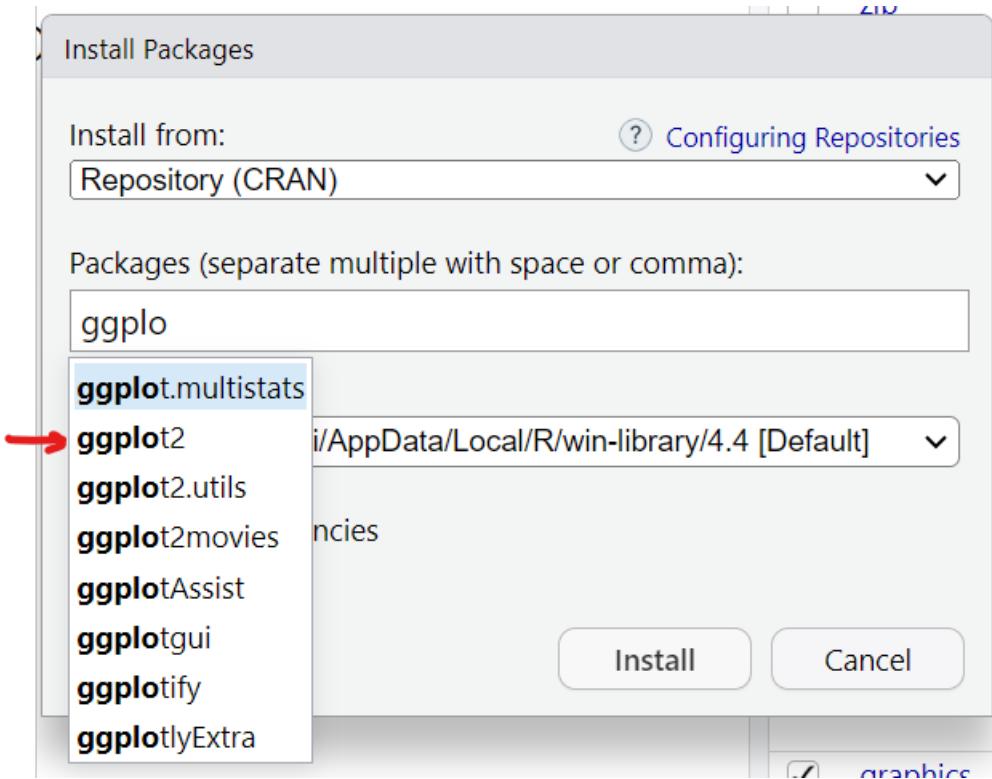
The 'Packages' tab in the sidebar is active, displaying a list of installed packages:

Name	Description	Version
Assignment	Cross-Platform 'zip' Compression	2.3.1
zlibbioc	An R packaged zlib-1.2.5	1.48.0
zoo	S3 Infrastructure for Regular and Irregular Time Series (Z's Ordered Observations)	1.8-12

Below this, the 'System Library' section lists all available R packages:

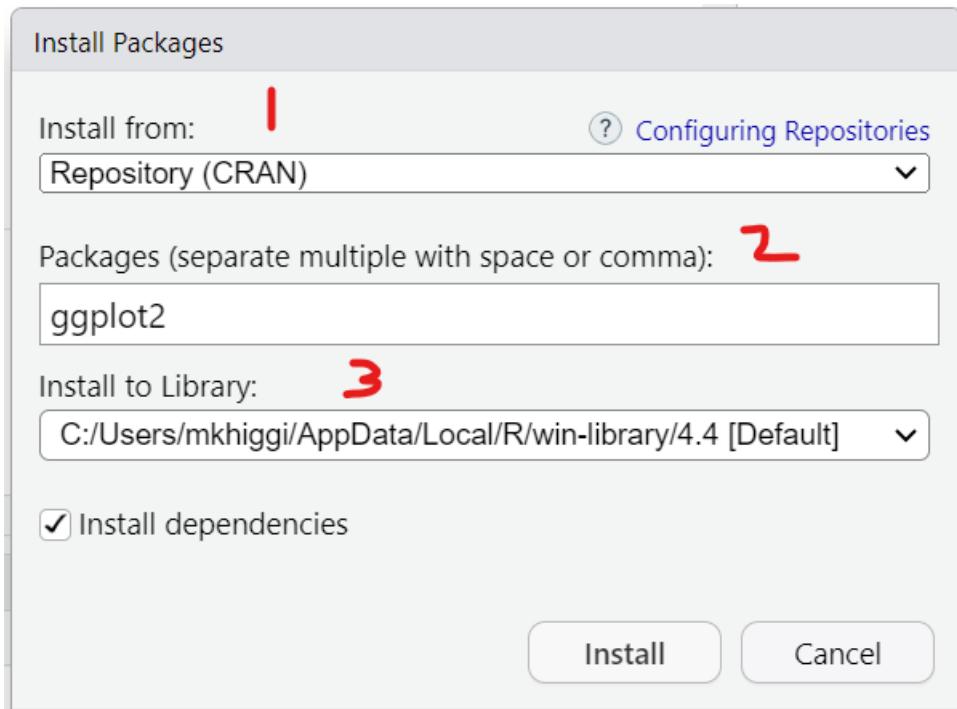
Name	Description	Version
base	The R Base Package	4.4.2
boot	Bootstrap Functions (Originally by Angelo Canty for S)	1.3-31
class	Functions for Classification	7.3-22
cluster	"Finding Groups in Data": Cluster Analysis Extended Rousseeuw et al.	2.1.6
codetools	Code Analysis Tools for R	0.2-20
compiler	The R Compiler Package	4.4.2
datasets	The R Datasets Package	4.4.2
foreign	Read Data Stored by 'Minitab', 'S', 'SAS', 'SPSS', 'Stata', 'Systat', 'Weka', 'dBase', ...	0.8-87
graphics	The R Graphics Package	4.4.2
grDevices	The R Graphics Devices and Support for Colours and Fonts	4.4.2
grid	The Grid Graphics Package	4.4.2
KernSmooth	Functions for Kernel Smoothing Supporting Wand & Jones (1995)	2.23-24
lattice	Trellis Graphics for R	0.22-6
MASS	Support Functions and Datasets for Venables	7.3-61

This will then open up a window where you can type in the name of the package you want. As soon as we start typing `ggplot2` the menu begins listing all packages with that partial spelling...



You'll notice that there are 3 parts to the installation:

1. Where you want to get the package - from which repository (more below).
2. The name of the package. You can actually type more than one package name at a time separated by commas.
3. The file location on your computer where the new package is installed - your file location will be different than mine. But this is useful to know in case something goes wrong. I would suggest keeping the default settings.



### Where to get packages - CRAN

Using the Tools/Install Packages menu from within RStudio automatically links to [CRAN](#), which is the “The Comprehensive R Archive Network”. You’ve already been here once to download and install the R programming language application.



The screenshot shows the main page of the Comprehensive R Archive Network (CRAN). On the left sidebar, there are several navigation links: CRAN Mirrors, What's new?, Search, CRAN Team, About R, R Homepage, The R Journal, Software, R Sources, R Binaries, Packages (with a red arrow pointing to it), Task Views (with a red arrow pointing to it), and Other. The main content area is titled "The Comprehensive R Archive Network". It has two main sections: "Download and Install R" and "Source Code for all Platforms". The "Download and Install R" section provides links for downloading R for Linux, macOS, and Windows. The "Source Code for all Platforms" section explains that users should download precompiled binaries unless they want to compile the source code themselves. It also provides links for the latest release, the CRAN directory for daily snapshots, and information about new features and bug fixes.

However, you can also click on “Packages” at the left to see the full list of packages currently available. As of right now (01/10/2025 at 5:12pm EST) there are 21,872 packages. This number increases every day as people create, validate and publish their packages on CRAN. You can get a list of all of the packages or if you have no idea what package you need, you can also look at the “Task Views” to see groupings of packages.

Here is what the list of Packages looks like sorted by name:

The screenshot shows the "Available CRAN Packages By Name" page. At the top, there is a menu bar with various links. Below the menu, there is a large heading "Available CRAN Packages By Name" followed by a link to "ABCDEF...XYZ". The main content area lists packages starting with 'A', each with a brief description. The packages listed include: A3, AalenJohansen, AATools, ABACUS, abasequence, abbreviate, abc, abc.data, ABC.RAP, ABCAnalysis, abclass, ABCoptim, ABCp2, aberf, abcrlda, abctools, abd, abdiv, abe, aberrance, abess, and abr. Each package name is followed by its description, such as "Accurate, Adaptable, and Accessible Error Metrics for Predictive Models" for 'A3'.



However, you can also browse Packages by “Task View”:

CRAN task views aim to provide guidance which packages on CRAN are relevant for tasks related to a certain topic. They give a brief overview of the included packages which can also be automatically installed using the [ctv](#) package. The views are intended to have a sharp focus so that it is sufficiently clear which packages should be included (or excluded) - and they are *not* meant to endorse the “best” packages for a given task.

To automatically install the views, the [ctv](#) package needs to be installed, e.g., via

```
install.packages("ctv")
```

and then the views can be installed via `install.views` or `update.views` (where the latter only installs those packages are not installed and up-to-date), e.g.,

```
ctv::install.views("Econometrics")
ctv::update.views("Econometrics")
```

To query information about a particular task view on CRAN from within R or to obtain the list of all task views available, respectively, the following commands are provided:

```
ctv::ctv("Econometrics")
ctv::available.views()
```

The resources available from the [CRAN Task View Initiative](#) provide further information on how to contribute to existing task views and how to propose new task views.

**Topics**

<a href="#">ActuarialScience</a>	Actuarial Science
<a href="#">Agriculture</a>	Agricultural Science
<a href="#">Bayesian</a>	Bayesian Inference
<a href="#">CausalInference</a>	Causal Inference
<a href="#">ChemPhys</a>	Chemometrics and Computational Physics
<a href="#">ClinicalTrials</a>	Clinical Trial Design, Monitoring, and Analysis
<a href="#">Cluster</a>	Cluster Analysis & Finite Mixture Models
<a href="#">Databases</a>	Databases with R
<a href="#">DifferentialEquations</a>	Differential Equations

For example, suppose you are interested in survival analysis, here is a screenshot of the [Survival Task View](#).

As you can see each Task View has a person(s) listed who help to maintain these collections. As you scroll through the webpage, you'll see links to packages they recommend along with a description of what the packages do. For example, see the links below to the `survival` and `rms` packages.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with multiple tabs open. The active tab is titled "CRAN Task View: Survival Analysis". The page content includes details about the maintainer (Arthur Allignol, Aurelien Latouche), contact information (arthur.allignol@gmail.com), version (2023-09-10), URL (<https://CRAN.R-project.org/view=Survival>), and source (<https://github.com/cran-task-views/Survival/>). It also provides instructions for contributions, citations, and installations. Below this, there's a section on "Standard Survival Analysis" with a diagram showing two downward arrows pointing from the left and right sides towards a central text block. The text describes various packages for estimating survival distributions, including Kaplan-Meier, survival, rms, prodlm, km.ci, plot.surv, eha, NADA, svykm, kaplan-meier, spatstat, and km.

## Where to get packages - Bioconductor

While the list of R packages on CRAN is impressive, if you plan to do analyses of biological data, there is a good chance you will need a package from [Bioconductor.org](#).

As of right now (01/10/2025 at 6:45pm EST) there are 2289 packages. Similar to CRAN, Bioconductor requires each package to meet certain validation criteria and code testing requirements even more stringent than CRAN. You notice that you can search for packages under the biocViews (left side column) or you can sort them alphabetically or search for individual packages in the section on the right side.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with multiple tabs open. The active tab is 'Bioconductor - BiocViews'. The page header includes the Bioconductor logo and navigation links for About, Learn, Packages, Developers, and Get Started. Below the header, a breadcrumb trail shows 'Home > BiocViews'. A sidebar on the left is titled 'Bioconductor version 3.20 (Release)' and contains a link to 'Go to 3.21 (Devel)'. It also lists categories: Software (2289), AssayDomain (900), BiologicalQuestion (970), Infrastructure (577), ResearchField (1102), and ShinyApps (33). The main content area is titled 'Packages found under Software:' and includes a note: 'Rank based on number of downloads: lower numbers are more frequently downloaded.' A search bar is present. A table lists four packages:

Package	Maintainer	Title	Rank
<a href="#">BiocVersion</a>	Bioconductor Package Maintainer	Set the appropriate version of Bioconductor packages	1
<a href="#">BiocGenerics</a>	Hervé Pagès	S4 generic functions used in Bioconductor	2
<a href="#">GenomeInfoDb</a>	Hervé Pagès	Utilities for manipulating chromosome names, including modifying them to follow a particular naming style	3
<a href="#">S4Vectors</a>	Hervé Pagès	Foundation of vector-like and list-like containers in Bioconductor	4

The one disadvantage of R packages from Bioconductor is that you cannot install them directly using the RStudio menu for Tools/Install Packages - you cannot “see” the Bioconductor repository from inside RStudio. Instead you have to install these using R code. For example, here is what you need to do to install the [phyloseq](#) package which “... provides a set of classes and tools to facilitate the import, storage, analysis, and graphical display of microbiome census data”.

See the black box of code below, to install [phyloseq](#) you need to:

1. Install [BiocManager](#) from CRAN - this you can install from the RStudio menu for Tools/Install Packages.
2. Then go to the Console or open an R script and run:

```
install.packages("BiocManager")
```



The screenshot shows a web browser window with multiple tabs open. The active tab is titled "Bioconductor - phyloseq". The page content is for the "phyloseq" package, which is described as an R package for reproducible interactive analysis and graphics of microbiome census data. It includes sections for Installation (with R code examples), Documentation (with a command example), and a citation section. The Bioconductor navigation bar at the top includes links for About, Learn, Packages (which is selected), Developers, and Get Started.

## Where to get packages - Github, friends, teammates, ...

In addition to CRAN and Bioconductor, you can get packages from Github, friends, teammates or write your own. To get an idea of how many packages may be currently on [Github](#), we can “search” for “R package” <https://github.com/search?q=R+package&type=repositories> and as you can see this is well over 118,000+ packages.



The screenshot shows a GitHub search interface with the query "R package". The results page displays 118k results. The first result is "hadley/r-pkgs", described as "Building R packages". The second result is "qinwf/awesome-R", described as "A curated list of awesome R packages, frameworks and software.". The third result is "r-lib/httpr", described as "httpr: a friendly http package for R". On the right side of the results, there is a sidebar with information about R, links to r-project.org and Wikipedia, and a section titled "Sponsor open source projects you depend on".

While you can find packages on Github that have not (yet) been published on CRAN or Bioconductor, the developers of packages currently on CRAN and Bioconductor also often publish their development version (think of these as in “beta” and still under going testing) on Github. For example, the current published version of the data wrangling `dplyr` package was last updated on 11/17/2023.

The screenshot shows the CRAN package details page for `dplyr`. The page title is "dplyr: A Grammar of Data Manipulation". It describes `dplyr` as a fast, consistent tool for working with data frame like objects, both in memory and out of memory. The page lists various package metadata, including Version (1.1.4), Depends (R (≥ 3.5.0)), Imports (cli (≥ 3.4.0), generics, glue (≥ 1.3.2), lifecycle (≥ 1.0.3), magrittr (≥ 1.5)), Suggests (bench, broom, callr, covr, DBI, dbplyr (≥ 2.2.1), ggplot2, knitr, Lahman, lobstr, microbenchmark, nycflights13, purrr, rmarkdown, RMySQL, RPostgreSQL, RSQLite, stringi (≥ 1.7.6), testthat (≥ 3.1.5), tidyverse (≥ 1.3.0), withr), Published (2023-11-17), DOI (10.32614/CRAN.package.dplyr), Author (Hadley Wickham [aut], Romain François [aut], Lionel Henry [aut], Kirill Müller [aut], Davis Vaughan [aut], Posit Software, PBC [cph, fnd]), Maintainer (Hadley Wickham <hadley at posit.co>), BugReports (<https://github.com/tidyverse/dplyr/issues>), License (MIT + file LICENSE), URL (<https://dplyr.tidyverse.org>, <https://github.com/tidyverse/dplyr>), NeedsCompilation (yes), Materials ([README](#) [NEWS](#)), In views ([Databases](#), [ModelDeployment](#)), CRAN checks ([dplyr\\_results](#)), Documentation, Reference manual ([dplyr.pdf](#)), and Vignettes ([dplyr <-> base R](#), [Column-wise operations](#)).

But the development version of `dplyr` on Github was last updated 5 months ago in August



2024.

The screenshot shows the GitHub repository page for the `dplyr` package. The repository has 243 stars, 2.1k forks, and 4.8k issues. It contains 38 branches and 58 tags. The 'Code' tab is selected. The 'About' section describes `dplyr` as a grammar of data manipulation and provides links to the `dplyr.tidyverse.org` website and the `dplyr` package documentation. The repository page also includes sections for Readme, Code of conduct, Activity, Custom properties, and Report repository.

So, while the developers haven't published this on CRAN, if you want to test out new functions and updates under development for this package, you can go to the R Console or write a R script to install the development version using these commands (see below) which is explained on the [dplyr on Github](#) website.

```
# install.packages("pak")
pak::pak("tidyverse/dplyr")
```

### Finding and vetting R packages

So, as you have seen there are numerous ways to find R packages and there are hundreds of thousands of them out there. Your company or team may have their own custom R package tailored for your specific research areas and data analysis workflows.

Finding R packages is similar to finding new questionnaires, surveys or instruments for your research. For example, if you want to measure someone's depression levels, you would probably use a validated instrument like the [Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression \(CESD\)](#) or the [Beck Depression Index \(BDI\)](#). These measures have been well published and are well established for depression research.

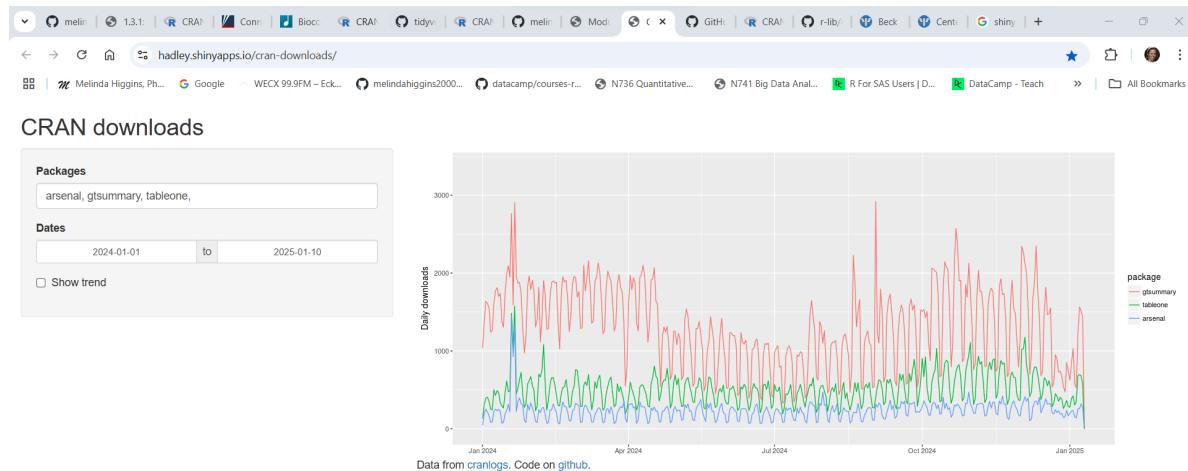
Finding R packages is similar - do your research! Make sure that the R package has been published and is well established to do the analysis you want. In terms of reliability, getting packages from CRAN or Bioconductor are the best followed by Github or other individuals.



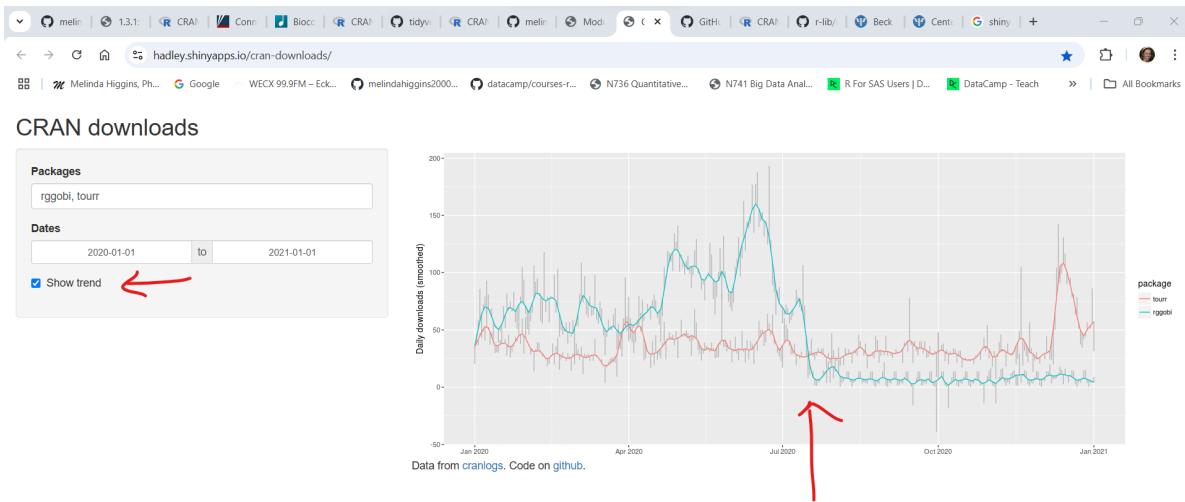
The best suggestion is look to see which R packages are being used by other people in your field.

To get an idea of how long a package has been in use and if it is still being actively supported and how it relates to other similar packages, check out this interactive Shiny app website for [CRAN downloads](#). Type in the packages you want to compare and changes the dates - here is an example comparing `arsenal`, `gtsummary`, and `tableone` packages all of which are useful for making tables of summary statistics (aka, “Table 1”) - showing the number of downloads since the beginning of Jan 1, 2024.

As you can see the most downloaded is `gtsummary` followed by `arsenal` with `tableone` having the fewest downloads. This does NOT necessarily imply quality, but it does give you some insight into the popularity of these packages.



Here is an example of 2 specific packages I like. The `rggobi` package which was great for visualizing multiple dimensions of data simultaneously but which is no longer supported and the newer `tourrr` package which was written by the same developer to replace the `rggobi` package. You can see that in the middle of 2020, the number of downloads for `rggobi` dropped almost to 0 and the `tourrr` package downloads started to rise - this is about when they switched over from maintaining one package to supporting the newer one. [rggobi on CRAN](#) moved to archived status in July 2020, but [tourrr on CRAN](#) was last updated in April 2024.



So, do your homework and check to see when the package was last updated, who maintains it and how good their documentation is for the package and what it does.

### Load the new R package into your R session

After you've decided what package you want and have installed it onto your computer, you must load it into memory for **EVERY** new R session for which you want those functions available.

For example, suppose I want to make a plot using the `ggplot2` package. Before I can use the `ggplot()` function, I have to load that package into my computing session. Here is an example:

```
# show current sessionInfo
sessionInfo()

R version 4.4.2 (2024-10-31 ucrt)
Platform: x86_64-w64-mingw32/x64
Running under: Windows 11 x64 (build 22000)

Matrix products: default

locale:
```



```
[1] LC_COLLATE=English_United States.utf8
[2] LC_CTYPE=English_United States.utf8
[3] LC_MONETARY=English_United States.utf8
[4] LC_NUMERIC=C
[5] LC_TIME=English_United States.utf8

time zone: America/New_York
tzcode source: internal

attached base packages:
[1] stats      graphics   grDevices utils      datasets   methods    base

loaded via a namespace (and not attached):
[1] compiler_4.4.2    fastmap_1.1.1     cli_3.6.3       tools_4.4.2
[5] htmltools_0.5.8.1 rstudioapi_0.15.0  yaml_2.3.8     rmarkdown_2.26
[9] knitr_1.49        jsonlite_1.8.8    xfun_0.49      digest_0.6.35
[13] rlang_1.1.4       evaluate_0.23

# notice that ggplot2 is not listed
# but let's try the ggplot() function with the
# built-in pressure dataset
ggplot(pressure, aes(temperature, pressure)) +
  geom_point()
```

```
Error in ggplot(pressure, aes(temperature, pressure)): could not find function "ggplot"
```

This will generate an error since these functions are not yet available in our session. So, use the `library()` function to LOAD the `ggplot2` functions into current working memory.

```
# load ggplot2 package
library(ggplot2)

# look at sessionInfo again
sessionInfo()
```

```
R version 4.4.2 (2024-10-31 ucrt)
Platform: x86_64-w64-mingw32/x64
Running under: Windows 11 x64 (build 22000)

Matrix products: default
```

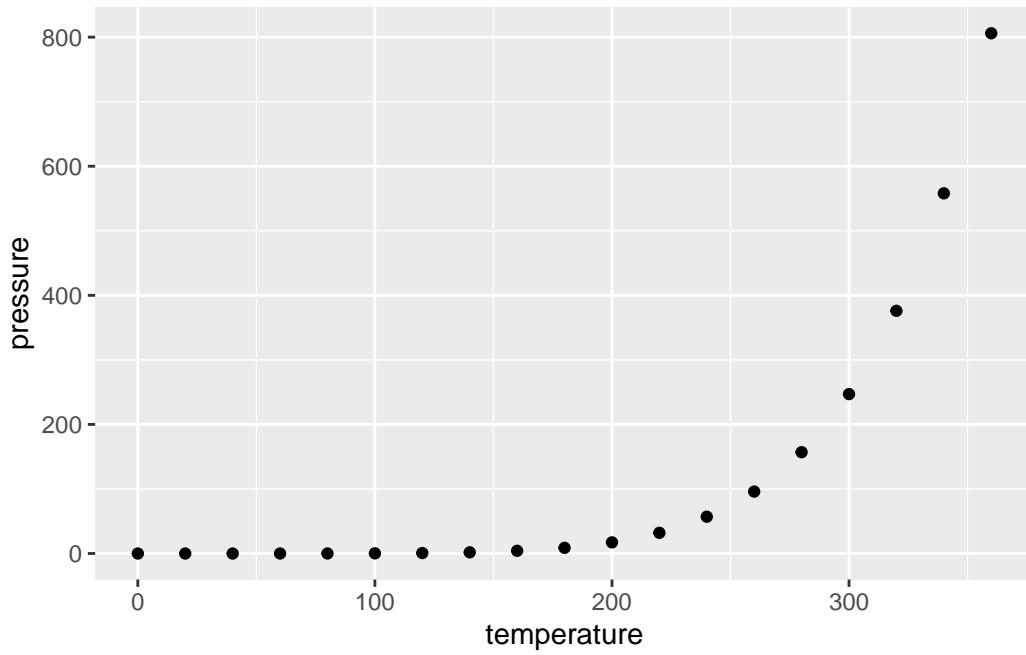


```
locale:  
[1] LC_COLLATE=English_United States.utf8  
[2] LC_CTYPE=English_United States.utf8  
[3] LC_MONETARY=English_United States.utf8  
[4] LC_NUMERIC=C  
[5] LC_TIME=English_United States.utf8  
  
time zone: America/New_York  
tzcode source: internal  
  
attached base packages:  
[1] stats      graphics   grDevices utils      datasets  methods    base  
  
other attached packages:  
[1] ggplot2_3.5.1  
  
loaded via a namespace (and not attached):  
[1] vctrs_0.6.5      cli_3.6.3       knitr_1.49      rlang_1.1.4  
[5] xfun_0.49        generics_0.1.3  jsonlite_1.8.8  glue_1.8.0  
[9] colorspace_2.1-0 htmltools_0.5.8.1 scales_1.3.0    fansi_1.0.6  
[13] rmarkdown_2.26   grid_4.4.2     evaluate_0.23  munsell_0.5.0  
[17] tibble_3.2.1    fastmap_1.1.1  yaml_2.3.8     lifecycle_1.0.4  
[21] compiler_4.4.2  dplyr_1.1.4    pkgconfig_2.0.3 rstudioapi_0.15.0  
[25] digest_0.6.35   R6_2.5.1       tidyselect_1.2.1 utf8_1.2.4  
[29] pillar_1.9.0    magrittr_2.0.3  withr_3.0.2     tools_4.4.2  
[33] gtable_0.3.6
```

Notice that under `other attached packages` we can now see `ggplot2_3.5.1` indicating that yes `ggplot2` is installed and in memory and that version 3.5.1 is the version you are currently using.

Let's try the plot again.

```
# try the plot again  
ggplot(pressure, aes(temperature, pressure)) +  
  geom_point()
```





## 5. Create your first R Markdown report and produce output files in different formats (HTML, PDF, or DOCX)

### Create a new Rmarkdown File

We will do more in the later lesson 1.3.6: Putting reproducible research principles into practice, but let's take a look at an Rmarkdown file and how we can use it to create a report that combines and links together data + code + documentation to produce a seamless report.

Go to the RStudio menu and click File/New File/R Markdown:



R emory\_tidal\_Rlectures - main - RStudio

File Edit Code View Plots Session Build Debug Profile Tools Help

New File >

- New Project...

Open File... Ctrl+O

- Open File in New Column...
- Reopen with Encoding...

Recent Files >

- Open Project...
- Open Project in New Session...

Recent Projects >

- Import Dataset >

Save Ctrl+S

- Save As...
- Rename
- Save with Encoding...
- Save All Alt+Ctrl+S

Render Document Ctrl+Shift+K

- Publish...

Print...

Close Ctrl+W

R Script Ctrl+Shift+N

- Quarto Document...
- Quarto Presentation...
- R Markdown... **A**
- R Notebook

Shiny Web App...

Plumber API...

C File

- C++ File
- Header File

Markdown File

- HTML File
- CSS File
- JavaScript File
- D3 Script

Python Script

- Shell Script
- SQL Script
- Stan File
- Text File

R Sweave

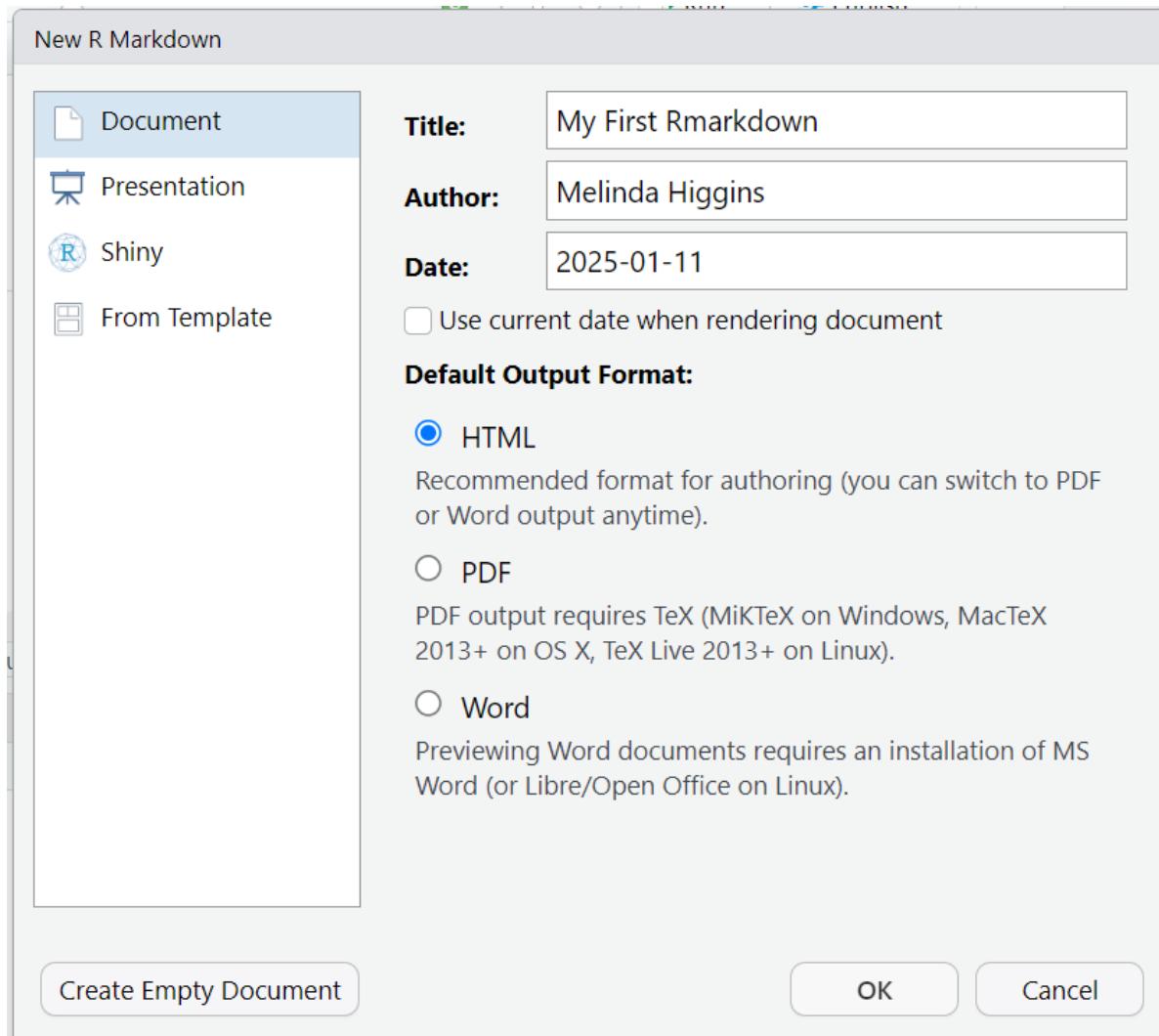
- R HTML
- R Documentation...



Type in a title, your name, the date and choose the format you'd like to create. For your first documents I encourage you to try HTML first. But you can create WORD documents and even PDFs. In addition to documents, you can create slide deck presentations, Shiny apps and other custom products like R packages, websites, books and many more.

**To get started, use the built-in template:**

- Type in a title
- Type in your name as author
- Choose and output document format
  - HTML is always a good place to start - **only need a browser to read the output \*.html file.**
  - DOC usually works OK - **but you need MS Word or Open Office installed on your computer.**
  - PDF **NOTE: You need a TEX compiler on your computer** - Installing the `tinytex` <https://yihui.org/tinytex/> R package will work.



### Rmarkdown sections

Here is the **Example RMarkdown Template** provided by RStudio to help you get started.



The screenshot shows the RStudio interface with an R Markdown file open. The code editor displays the following content:

```
1 ---  
2 title: "My Rmarkdown Report"  
3 author: "Melinda Higgins"  
4 date: "2024-03-02"  
5 output: html_document  
6 ---  
7  
8 ```{r setup, include=FALSE}  
9 knitr::opts_chunk$set(echo = TRUE)  
10 ...  
11  
12 ## R Markdown  
13  
14 This is an R Markdown document. Markdown is a simple formatting syntax  
for authoring HTML, PDF, and MS Word documents. For more details on  
using R Markdown see <http://rmarkdown.rstudio.com>.  
15  
16 When you click the **Knit** button a document will be generated that  
includes both content as well as the output of any embedded R code  
chunks within the document. You can embed an R code chunk like this:  
17  
18 ```{r cars}  
19 summary(cars)  
20 ...
```

This document consists of the following 3 key sections:

1. YAML (yet another markup language) - this is essentially the metadata for your document and defines elements like the title, author, date and type of output document to be created (HTML in this example).



YAML



The screenshot shows the RStudio interface with three tabs open: 'ucsb\_meds\_0-prerequisites.qmd', 'Untitled1', and 'rladiesatl\_03072024\_presentation.qmd'. The 'Source' tab is selected for the presentation document. The code in the source editor is:

```
1 ---  
2 title: "My Rmarkdown Report"  
3 author: "Melinda Higgins"  
4 date: "2024-03-02"  
5 output: html_document  
6 ---  
7  
8 ```{r setup, include=FALSE}  
9 knitr::opts_chunk$set(echo = TRUE)  
10  
11  
12 ## R Markdown  
13  
14 This is an R Markdown document. Markdown is a simple formatting syntax  
for authoring HTML, PDF, and MS Word documents. For more details on  
using R Markdown see <http://rmarkdown.rstudio.com>.  
15  
16 When you click the **Knit** button a document will be generated that  
includes both content as well as the output of any embedded R code  
chunks within the document. You can embed an R code chunk like this:  
17  
18 ```{r cars}  
19 summary(cars)  
20  
21 My Rmarkdown Report
```

2. R code blocks - the goal is to “interweave” code and documentation so these 2 elements live together. That way the analysis outputs and any associated tables for figures are updated automatically without have to cut-and-paste from other applications into your document - which is time consuming and prone to human errors.

Notice that the code block starts and ends with 3 backticks ` ` ` and includes the {r} Rlanguage designation inside the curly braces.

Note

Rmarkdown can be used for many different programming languages including python, sas, and more, see [rmarkdown - language-engines](#).



## R Code Chunks

```
1 ---  
2 title: "My Rmarkdown Report"  
3 author: "Melinda Higgins"  
4 date: "2024-03-02"  
5 output: html_document  
6 ---  
7  
8 ```{r setup, include=FALSE}  
9 knitr::opts_chunk$set(echo = TRUE)  
10 ...  
11  
12 ## R Markdown  
13  
14 This is an R Markdown document. Markdown is a simple formatting syntax  
for authoring HTML, PDF, and MS Word documents. For more details on  
using R Markdown see <http://rmarkdown.rstudio.com>.  
15  
16 When you click the **Knit** button a document will be generated that  
includes both content as well as the output of any embedded R code  
chunks within the document. You can embed an R code chunk like this:  
17  
18 ```{r cars}  
19 summary(cars)  
20 ...
```

And along with the R code blocks, we can also create our document with “marked up (or marked down)” text. Rmarkdown is a version of “markdown” which is a simplified set of tags that tell the computer how you want a piece of text formatted. For example putting 2 asterisks \*\* before and after a word will make it **bold**, putting one \_ underscore before and after a word will make the word *italics*; one or more hashtags # indicate a header at certain levels, e.g. 2 hashtags ## indicate a header level 2.

### 💡 Rmarkdown Tutorial

I encourage you to go through the step by step tutorial at <https://rmarkdown.rstudio.com/lesson-1.html>.



Marked up text

```
1 ---  
2 title: "My Rmarkdown Report"  
3 author: "Melinda Higgins"  
4 date: "2024-03-02"  
5 output: html_document  
6 ---  
7  
8 ```{r setup, include=FALSE}  
9 knitr::opts_chunk$set(echo = TRUE)  
10 ``.  
11  
12 ## R Markdown  
13  
14 This is an R Markdown document. Markdown is a simple formatting syntax  
for authoring HTML, PDF, and MS Word documents. For more details on  
using R Markdown see <http://rmarkdown.rstudio.com>.  
15  
16 When you click the **Knit** button a document will be generated that  
includes both content as well as the output of any embedded R code  
chunks within the document. You can embed an R code chunk like this:  
17  
18 ```{r cars}  
19 summary(cars)  
20 ``.
```

Here are all 3 sections outlined.

YAML

R Code Chunks

Marked up text

```
1 ---  
2 title: "My Rmarkdown Report"  
3 author: "Melinda Higgins"  
4 date: "2024-03-02"  
5 output: html_document  
6 ---  
7  
8 ```{r setup, include=FALSE}  
9 knitr::opts_chunk$set(echo = TRUE)  
10 ``.  
11  
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19 summary(cars)  
20 ``.
```

At the top of the page you'll notice a little blue button that says "knit" - this will "knit" (or combine) the output from the R code chunks and format the text as "marked up" and produce the HTML file:



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "My First Rmarkdown". The page content includes:

- A header section with the title "My First Rmarkdown", author "Melinda Higgins", and date "2025-01-11".
- A section titled "R Markdown" with a note explaining what it is and how to use it.
- An R code chunk titled "summary(cars)" which displays the following output:

```
##      speed      dist
## Min.   :4.0   Min.   : 2.00
## 1st Qu.:12.0  1st Qu.:26.00
## Median :15.0  Median :36.00
## Mean   :15.4  Mean   :42.98
## 3rd Qu.:19.0  3rd Qu.:56.00
## Max.   :25.0  Max.   :120.00
```

Below this, there is a section titled "Including Plots" with a note about embedding plots. A scatter plot is shown with the y-axis labeled "pressure" ranging from 0 to 800 and the x-axis showing 15 data points. The plot shows a positive correlation between speed and distance.



## References

- R Core Team. 2024. *R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing*. Vienna, Austria: R Foundation for Statistical Computing. <https://www.R-project.org/>.
- Wickham, Hadley. 2016. *Ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis*. Springer-Verlag New York. <https://ggplot2.tidyverse.org>.
- Wickham, Hadley, Winston Chang, Lionel Henry, Thomas Lin Pedersen, Kohske Takahashi, Claus Wilke, Kara Woo, Hiroaki Yutani, Dewey Dunnington, and Teun van den Brand. 2024. *Ggplot2: Create Elegant Data Visualisations Using the Grammar of Graphics*. <https://ggplot2.tidyverse.org>.

## Other Helpful Resources

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