Incorporating design information

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So far, we’ve imported and transformed our measures data into R. Now we’re going to address how to incorporate some design information on what went into each well (and plate).

If you haven’t already, load the necessary packages.

library(gcplyr)

# Including design elements

During analysis of growth curve data, we often want to incorporate information about the experimental design. For example, which bacteria are present in which wells, or which wells have received certain treatments. gcplyr enables incorporation of design elements in two ways:

1. Design elements can be imported from files
2. Design elements can be generated programmatically using make\_design

## Reading design elements from files

Users have two options for how to read design elements from files, depending on the shape of the design files that they have created:

* If design files are block-shaped, they can be read with import\_blockdesigns
* If design files are tidy-shaped, they can simply be read with read\_tidys

### Importing block-shaped design files

To import block-shaped design files, you can use the import\_blockdesigns function, which will return a tidy-shaped designs data frame (or list of data frames).

import\_blockdesigns only requires a list of filenames (or relative file paths) and will return a data.frame (or list of data frames) in a **tidy format** that you can save in R. That’s right, it reads in block-shaped designs but returns a tidy-shaped data frame!

#### A basic example

Let’s take a look at an example. First, we need to create an example file for the sake of this tutorial. **Don’t worry how the below code works**, just imagine that you’ve created this file in Excel.

write.csv(  
 file = "mydesign.csv",  
 x = matrix(rep(c("Tr1", "Tr2"), each = 48),  
 nrow = 8, ncol = 12, dimnames = list(LETTERS[1:8], 1:12)))

Now let’s take a look at what the file looks like:

print\_df(read.csv("mydesign.csv", header = FALSE, colClasses = "character"))  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2  
#> B Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2  
#> C Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2  
#> D Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2  
#> E Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2  
#> F Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2  
#> G Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2  
#> H Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr1 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2 Tr2

Here we can see that our design has Treatment 1 on the left-hand side of the plate (wells in columns 1 through 6), and Treatment 2 on the right-hand side of the plate (wells in columns 7 through 12). Let’s import this design using import\_blockdesigns. Since this block contains the treatment numbers, we’ve given the block\_names as “Treatment\_numbers”. If no block\_names is provided, import\_blockdesigns will automatically name it according to the file name.

my\_design <- import\_blockdesigns(files = "mydesign.csv",   
 block\_names = "Treatment\_numbers")  
head(my\_design, 20)  
#> Well Treatment\_numbers  
#> 1 A1 Tr1  
#> 2 A2 Tr1  
#> 3 A3 Tr1  
#> 4 A4 Tr1  
#> 5 A5 Tr1  
#> 6 A6 Tr1  
#> 7 A7 Tr2  
#> 8 A8 Tr2  
#> 9 A9 Tr2  
#> 10 A10 Tr2  
#> 11 A11 Tr2  
#> 12 A12 Tr2  
#> 13 B1 Tr1  
#> 14 B2 Tr1  
#> 15 B3 Tr1  
#> 16 B4 Tr1  
#> 17 B5 Tr1  
#> 18 B6 Tr1  
#> 19 B7 Tr2  
#> 20 B8 Tr2

#### Importing multiple block-shaped design elements

What do you do if you have multiple design components? For instance, what if you have several different bacterial strains each with several different treatments? In that case, simply save each design component as a separate file, and import them all in one go with import\_blockdesigns.

First, let’s create another example designs file. Again, **don’t worry how the below code works**, just imagine that you’ve created this file in Excel.

write.csv(  
 file = "mydesign2.csv",  
 x = matrix(rep(c("StrA", "StrB", "StrC", "StrD"), each = 24),  
 nrow = 8, ncol = 12, dimnames = list(LETTERS[1:8], 1:12),  
 byrow = TRUE))

Now let’s take a look at what the file looks like:

print\_df(read.csv("mydesign2.csv", header = FALSE, colClasses = "character"))  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA  
#> B StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA StrA  
#> C StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB  
#> D StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB StrB  
#> E StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC  
#> F StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC StrC  
#> G StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD  
#> H StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD StrD

Here we can see that our design has Strain A in the first two rows, Strain B in the next two rows, and so on.

Let’s now import both designs using import\_blockdesigns. Since our two blocks contain the treatment numbers and then the strain letters, we’ve given the block\_names as c("Treatment\_numbers", "Strain\_letters"). If no block\_names is provided, import\_blockdesigns will automatically name it according to the file name.

my\_design <-   
 import\_blockdesigns(files = c("mydesign.csv", "mydesign2.csv"),   
 block\_names = c("Treatment\_numbers", "Strain\_letters"))  
head(my\_design, 20)  
#> Well Treatment\_numbers Strain\_letters  
#> 1 A1 Tr1 StrA  
#> 2 A2 Tr1 StrA  
#> 3 A3 Tr1 StrA  
#> 4 A4 Tr1 StrA  
#> 5 A5 Tr1 StrA  
#> 6 A6 Tr1 StrA  
#> 7 A7 Tr2 StrA  
#> 8 A8 Tr2 StrA  
#> 9 A9 Tr2 StrA  
#> 10 A10 Tr2 StrA  
#> 11 A11 Tr2 StrA  
#> 12 A12 Tr2 StrA  
#> 13 B1 Tr1 StrA  
#> 14 B2 Tr1 StrA  
#> 15 B3 Tr1 StrA  
#> 16 B4 Tr1 StrA  
#> 17 B5 Tr1 StrA  
#> 18 B6 Tr1 StrA  
#> 19 B7 Tr2 StrA  
#> 20 B8 Tr2 StrA

#### Notes for more advanced use

Note that import\_blockdesigns is essentially a wrapper function that calls read\_blocks, paste\_blocks, trans\_block\_to\_wide, trans\_wide\_to\_tidy, and then separate\_tidys. Any arguments for those functions can be passed to import\_blockdesigns.

For instance, if your design files do not start on the first row and first column, you can specify a startrow or startcol just like when you were using read\_blocks. Or if your designs are located in a sheet other than the first sheet, you can specify sheet.

Additionally, if you’ve already pasted together your design elements yourself, then you should specify what string is being used as a separator via the sep argument (that gets passed to separate\_tidys).

If you find yourself needing even more control over the process of importing block-shaped design files, each of the functions is available for users to call themselves. So you can run the steps manually, first reading with read\_blocks, pasting as needed with paste\_blocks, transforming to tidy with trans\_block\_to\_wide and trans\_wide\_to\_tidy, and finally separating design elements with separate\_tidys.

### Importing tidy-shaped design files

Just like measures data, to import tidy-shaped designs you could use the built-inRfunctions like read.table. However, if you need a few more options, you can use the gcplyr function read\_tidys. Unlike the built-in option, read\_tidys can import multiple tidy-shaped files at once, can add the filename as a column in the resulting data.frame, and can handle files where the tidy-shaped information doesn’t start on the first row and column.

read\_tidys only requires a filename (or vector of filenames, or relative file paths) and will return a data.frame (or list of data.frames) that you can save in R.

Once these design elements have been read into the R environment, you won’t need to transform them. So you can skip down to learning how to merge them with your data in the [**Merging spectrophotometric and design data**](#Xf550e4888c3170b77f36d3cd4cfaa950a01626c) section.

## Generating designs in R

If you’d rather make your design data.frames in R, gcplyr has a helper function that makes it easy to do so: make\_design. make\_design can create:

* block-shaped data.frames with your design information (e.g. for outputting to files)
* tidy-shaped data.frames with your design information (e.g. for merging with tidy-shaped plate reader data)

### An example with a single design

Let’s start with a simple example demonstrating the basic use of make\_design (we’ll move on to more complicated designs afterwards).

For example, let’s imagine a growth curve experiment where a 96 well plate (12 columns and 8 rows) has a different bacterial strain in each row, but the first and last columns and first and last rows were left empty.

| Row names | Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 | … | Column 11 | Column 12 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Row A | Blank | Blank | Blank | … | Blank | Blank |
| Row B | Blank | Strain #1 | Strain #1 | … | Strain #1 | Blank |
| Row B | Blank | Strain #2 | Strain #2 | … | Strain #2 | Blank |
| … | … | … | … | … | … | … |
| Row G | Blank | Strain #5 | Strain #5 | … | Strain #5 | Blank |
| Row G | Blank | Strain #6 | Strain #6 | … | Strain #6 | Blank |
| Row H | Blank | Blank | Blank | … | Blank | Blank |

Typing a design like this manually into a spreadsheet can be tedious. But generating a design data.frame using make\_design is easier.

make\_design first needs some general information, like the nrows and ncols in the plate, and the output\_format you’d like (typically blocks or tidy).

Then, for each different design component, make\_design needs five different pieces of information:

* a vector containing the possible values
* a vector specifying which rows these values should be applied to
* a vector specifying which columns these values should be applied to
* a string or vector of the pattern of these values
* a Boolean for whether this pattern should be filled byrow (defaults to TRUE)

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12,   
 Bacteria = list(c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3",   
 "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "123456",  
 FALSE)  
)

So for our example above, we can see:

* the possible values are c("Strain 1", "Strain 2", "Strain 3", "Strain 4", "Strain 5", "Strain 6")
* the rows these values should be applied to are rows 2:7
* the columns these values should be applied to are columns 2:11
* the pattern these values should be filled in by is "123456"
* and these values should *not* be filled by row, they should be filled by column

This entire list is passed with a name (here, “Bacteria”), that will be used as the resulting column header.

What does the result look like?

my\_design\_blk  
#> [[1]]  
#> [[1]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" NA  
#> C NA "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" NA  
#> D NA "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" NA  
#> E NA "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" NA  
#> F NA "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" NA  
#> G NA "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[1]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Bacteria"

We can see that make\_design has created a block-shaped data.frame containing the design elements as requested, and has attached a metadata containing the block\_name (this is useful for later transformation to tidy-shaped, or if you’re generating multiple design elements).

### A few notes on the pattern

One of the most important elements of every argument passed to make\_design is the string or vector specifying the pattern of values.

Oftentimes, it will be most convenient to simply use single-characters to correspond to the values. This is the default behavior of make\_design, which splits the pattern string into individual characters, and then uses those characters to correspond to the indices of the values you provided.

For instance, in the example above, I used the numbers 1 through 6 to correspond to the values "Strain 1", "Strain 2", "Strain 3", "Strain 4", "Strain 5", "Strain 6".

It’s important to **note that the “0” character is reserved for NA values.** There is an example of this later.

If you have more than 9 values, you can use letters (uppercase and/or lowercase). In that case, you just have to specify a lookup\_tbl\_start so that the function knows what letter you’re using as the 1 index. If no lookup\_tbl\_start is specified, the default is to count numbers first, then uppercase letters, then lowercase letters. For instance, in the previous example, I could have equivalently done:

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12, lookup\_tbl\_start = "A",  
 Bacteria = list(  
 c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3", "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "ABCDEF",  
 FALSE)  
)

Or I could have done:

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12, lookup\_tbl\_start = "a",  
 Bacteria = list(  
 c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3", "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "abcdef",  
 FALSE)  
)

Alternatively, you can use a separating character like a comma to delineate your indices. If you are doing so in order to use multicharacter indices (like numbers with more than one digit), all your indices will have to be numeric.

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12, pattern\_split = ",",  
 Bacteria = list(  
 c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3", "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "1,2,3,4,5,6",  
 FALSE)  
)

If you find it easier to input the pattern as a vector rather than as a string that needs to be split, you can do that too. Just like when passing a string, if you’re not using numbers, then uppercase letters, then lowercase letters for your indices, make sure to specify a different lookup\_tbl\_start:

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12,  
 Bacteria = list(  
 c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3", "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 c(1,2,3,4,5,6),  
 FALSE)  
)

### Continuing with the example: multiple designs

Now let’s return to our example growth curve experiment. Imagine that now, *in addition* to having a different bacterial strain in each row, we also have a different media in each column in the plate.

| Row names | Column 1 | Column 2 | Column 3 | … | Column 11 | Column 12 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Row A | Blank | Blank | Blank | … | Blank | Blank |
| Row B | Blank | Media #1 | Media #2 | … | Media #10 | Blank |
| … | … | … | … | … | … | … |
| Row G | Blank | Media #1 | Media #2 | … | Media #10 | Blank |
| Row H | Blank | Blank | Blank | … | Blank | Blank |

We can generate both the bacterial strain design and the media design simply by adding an additional argument to our make\_design call.

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12, lookup\_tbl\_start = "a",  
 Bacteria = list(c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3",   
 "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "abcdef",  
 FALSE),  
 Media = list(c("Med1", "Med2", "Med3",  
 "Med4", "Med5", "Med6",  
 "Med7", "Med8", "Med9",  
 "Med10", "Med11", "Med12"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "abcdefghij")  
 )  
  
my\_design\_blk  
#> [[1]]  
#> [[1]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" NA  
#> C NA "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" NA  
#> D NA "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" NA  
#> E NA "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" "Str4" NA  
#> F NA "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" NA  
#> G NA "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[1]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Bacteria"   
#>   
#>   
#> [[2]]  
#> [[2]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" "Med6" "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> C NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" "Med6" "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> D NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" "Med6" "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> E NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" "Med6" "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> F NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" "Med6" "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> G NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" "Med6" "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[2]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Media"

Here we can see that two blocks have been created, one with our bacterial strains, and one with our media.

Now, imagine after the experiment we discover that Bacterial Strain 4 and Media #6 were contaminated, and we’d like to exclude them from our analyses by marking them as NA in the design. We can simply modify our pattern string, placing a 0 anywhere we would like an NA to be filled in.

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12, lookup\_tbl\_start = "a",  
 Bacteria = list(c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3",   
 "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "abc0ef",  
 FALSE),  
 Media = list(c("Med1", "Med2", "Med3",  
 "Med4", "Med5", "Med6",  
 "Med7", "Med8", "Med9",  
 "Med10", "Med11", "Med12"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "abcde0ghij")  
 )  
  
my\_design\_blk  
#> [[1]]  
#> [[1]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" NA  
#> C NA "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" NA  
#> D NA "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" NA  
#> E NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> F NA "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" NA  
#> G NA "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[1]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Bacteria"   
#>   
#>   
#> [[2]]  
#> [[2]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> C NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> D NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> E NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> F NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> G NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[2]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Media"

Now we can see that our design has been easily modified to place NA’s for those wells, which we can use after merging our designs with our data to exclude all of those wells from analyses.

However, the real strength of make\_design is that it is not limited to simple alternating patterns. The pattern specified can be any pattern, which make\_design will replicate sufficient times to cover the entire set of listed wells.

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12, lookup\_tbl\_start = "a",  
 Bacteria = list(c("Str1", "Str2"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "abaaabbbab",  
 FALSE),  
 Media = list(c("Med1", "Med2", "Med3"),  
 2:7,  
 2:11,  
 "aabbbc000abc"))  
  
my\_design\_blk  
#> [[1]]  
#> [[1]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Str1" "Str2" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str2" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" NA  
#> C NA "Str2" "Str2" "Str1" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str1" "Str2" "Str2" NA  
#> D NA "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str2" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str2" NA  
#> E NA "Str1" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str1" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" NA  
#> F NA "Str1" "Str1" "Str2" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str2" "Str1" "Str1" NA  
#> G NA "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str1" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str1" "Str2" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[1]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Bacteria"   
#>   
#>   
#> [[2]]  
#> [[2]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Med1" "Med1" "Med2" "Med2" "Med2" "Med3" NA NA NA "Med1" NA  
#> C NA "Med2" "Med3" "Med1" "Med1" "Med2" "Med2" "Med2" "Med3" NA NA NA  
#> D NA NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med1" "Med1" "Med2" "Med2" "Med2" "Med3" NA  
#> E NA NA NA NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med1" "Med1" "Med2" "Med2" NA  
#> F NA "Med2" "Med3" NA NA NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med1" "Med1" NA  
#> G NA "Med2" "Med2" "Med2" "Med3" NA NA NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[2]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Media"

gcplyr also includes an optional helper function for make\_design called make\_designpattern. make\_designpattern just helps by reminding the user what arguments are necessary for each design and ensuring they’re in the correct order. For example, the following produces the same data.frame as the above code:

my\_design\_blk <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "blocks",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12, lookup\_tbl\_start = "a",  
 Bacteria = make\_designpattern(  
 values = c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3",   
 "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 rows = 2:7, cols = 2:11, pattern = "abc0ef",  
 byrow = FALSE),  
 Media = make\_designpattern(  
 values = c("Med1", "Med2", "Med3",  
 "Med4", "Med5", "Med6",  
 "Med7", "Med8", "Med9",  
 "Med10", "Med11", "Med12"),  
 rows = 2:7, cols = 2:11, pattern = "abcde0ghij"))  
  
my\_design\_blk  
#> [[1]]  
#> [[1]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" "Str1" NA  
#> C NA "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" "Str2" NA  
#> D NA "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" "Str3" NA  
#> E NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> F NA "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" "Str5" NA  
#> G NA "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" "Str6" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[1]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Bacteria"   
#>   
#>   
#> [[2]]  
#> [[2]]$data  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#> B NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> C NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> D NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> E NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> F NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> G NA "Med1" "Med2" "Med3" "Med4" "Med5" NA "Med7" "Med8" "Med9" "Med10" NA  
#> H NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA NA  
#>   
#> [[2]]$metadata  
#> block\_name   
#> "Media"

So far, we’ve been using the blocks option for output\_format, because it’s easy to see that our design matches what we’d intended with that format. However, **for merging our designs with plate reader data, we need it tidy-shaped**. Luckily, there’s no need to transform it yourself, simply change the output\_format argument option to tidy.

my\_design\_tdy <- make\_design(  
 output\_format = "tidy",  
 nrows = 8, ncols = 12, lookup\_tbl\_start = "a",  
 Bacteria = make\_designpattern(  
 values = c("Str1", "Str2", "Str3",   
 "Str4", "Str5", "Str6"),  
 rows = 2:7, cols = 2:11, pattern = "abc0ef",  
 byrow = FALSE),  
 Media = make\_designpattern(  
 values = c("Med1", "Med2", "Med3",  
 "Med4", "Med5", "Med6",  
 "Med7", "Med8", "Med9",  
 "Med10", "Med11", "Med12"),  
 rows = 2:7, cols = 2:11, pattern = "abcde0ghij"))  
  
head(my\_design\_tdy, 20)  
#> Well Bacteria Media  
#> 1 A1 NA NA  
#> 2 A2 NA NA  
#> 3 A3 NA NA  
#> 4 A4 NA NA  
#> 5 A5 NA NA  
#> 6 A6 NA NA  
#> 7 A7 NA NA  
#> 8 A8 NA NA  
#> 9 A9 NA NA  
#> 10 A10 NA NA  
#> 11 A11 NA NA  
#> 12 A12 NA NA  
#> 13 B1 NA NA  
#> 14 B2 Str1 Med1  
#> 15 B3 Str1 Med2  
#> 16 B4 Str1 Med3  
#> 17 B5 Str1 Med4  
#> 18 B6 Str1 Med5  
#> 19 B7 Str1 NA  
#> 20 B8 Str1 Med7

### Saving designs to files

Often after generating designs in R with make\_design, you’ll want to save those designs to files. This might be so that human-readable files documenting your designs are available without opening R. Or perhaps it’s because you need to post the design files, for instance to Dryad as part of a manuscript submission.

If you’d like to save your designs to files, you can save them either tidy-shaped or block-shaped. Both formats can easily be read back into R by gcplyr.

#### Saving tidy-shaped designs

These design files will be less human-readable, but easier to import and merge. Additionally, tidy-shaped files are often better for data repositories, like Dryad. To save tidy-shaped designs, simply use the built-in write.csv function.

#See the previous section where we created my\_design\_tdy  
write.csv(x = my\_design\_tdy, file = "tidy\_design.csv",  
 row.names = FALSE)

#### Saving block-shaped designs

These design files will be more human-readable but require slightly more computational steps to import and merge. For these, use the gcplyr function write\_blocks. Typically, you’ll use write\_blocks to save files in one of two formats:

* multiple - each block will be saved to its own .csv file
* single - all the blocks will be saved to a single .csv file, with an empty row in between them

##### Saving block-shaped designs to multiple files

The default setting for write\_blocks is output\_format = 'multiple'. This creates one csv file for each block, naming the files according to the block\_names in the metadata for each block.

#See the previous section where we created my\_design\_blk  
write\_blocks(my\_design\_blk)  
  
#Let's see what the files look like  
print\_df(read.csv("Bacteria.csv", header = FALSE, colClasses = "character"))  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A   
#> B Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1   
#> C Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2   
#> D Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3   
#> E   
#> F Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5   
#> G Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6   
#> H  
  
print\_df(read.csv("Media.csv", header = FALSE, colClasses = "character"))  
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A   
#> B Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> C Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> D Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> E Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> F Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> G Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> H

##### Saving block-shaped designs to a single file

The other setting for write\_blocks is output\_format = 'single'. This creates a single csv file that contains all the blocks, putting metadata like block\_names in rows that precede each block.

Let’s take a look what the single output format looks like:

#See the previous section where we created my\_design\_blk  
write\_blocks(my\_design\_blk, file = "Design.csv", output\_format = "single")  
  
#Let's see what the file looks like  
print\_df(read.csv("Design.csv", header = FALSE, colClasses = "character"))  
#> block\_name Bacteria   
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A   
#> B Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1 Str1   
#> C Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2 Str2   
#> D Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3 Str3   
#> E   
#> F Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5 Str5   
#> G Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6 Str6   
#> H   
#>   
#> block\_name Media   
#> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12  
#> A   
#> B Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> C Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> D Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> E Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> F Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> G Med1 Med2 Med3 Med4 Med5 Med7 Med8 Med9 Med10   
#> H

Here we can see all our design information has been saved to a single file, and the metadata has been added in rows before each block.

#### Best practices for saving designs to files

It’s best to leave the make\_design and write\_blocks commands in your analysis script, so that every time your analysis is run your design files are kept up to date. Just note that if your make\_design command has output\_format = blocks, you’ll need to make a version where output\_format = tidy that you can merge\_dfs with your plate reader data.

# Merging spectrophotometric and design data

Once we have both our design and data in theRenvironment and tidy-shaped, we can merge them using merge\_dfs.

For this, we’ll use the data in the example\_widedata dataset that is included with gcplyr, and which was the source for our previous examples with import\_blockmeasures and read\_wides.

In the example\_widedata dataset, we have 48 different bacterial strains. The left side of the plate has all 48 strains in a single well each, and the right side of the plate also has all 48 strains in a single well each:

| Row names | Column 1 | … | Column 6 | Column 7 | … | Column 12 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Row A | Strain #1 | … | Strain #6 | Strain #1 | … | Strain #6 |
| Row B | Strain #7 | … | Strain #12 | Strain #7 | … | Strain #12 |
| … | … | … | … | … | … | … |
| Row G | Strain #37 | … | Strain #42 | Strain #37 | … | Strain #42 |
| Row H | Strain #43 | … | Strain #48 | Strain #43 | … | Strain #48 |

Then, on the right hand side of the plate a phage was also inoculated (while the left hand side remained bacteria-only):

| Row names | Column 1 | … | Column 6 | Column 7 | … | Column 12 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Row A | No Phage | … | No Phage | Phage Added | … | Phage Added |
| Row B | No Phage | … | No Phage | Phage Added | … | Phage Added |
| … | … | … | … | … | … | … |
| Row G | No Phage | … | No Phage | Phage Added | … | Phage Added |
| Row H | No Phage | … | No Phage | Phage Added | … | Phage Added |

Let’s generate our design:

example\_design <- make\_design(  
 pattern\_split = ",", nrows = 8, ncols = 12,  
 "Bacteria\_strain" = make\_designpattern(  
 values = paste("Strain", 1:48),  
 rows = 1:8, cols = 1:6,  
 pattern = 1:48,  
 byrow = TRUE),  
 "Bacteria\_strain" = make\_designpattern(  
 values = paste("Strain", 1:48),  
 rows = 1:8, cols = 7:12,  
 pattern = 1:48,  
 byrow = TRUE),  
 "Phage" = make\_designpattern(  
 values = c("No Phage"),  
 rows = 1:8, cols = 1:6,  
 pattern = "1"),  
 "Phage" = make\_designpattern(  
 values = c("Phage Added"),  
 rows = 1:8, cols = 7:12,  
 pattern = "1"))

Here’s what the resulting data.frame looks like:

head(example\_design, 20)  
#> Well Bacteria\_strain Phage  
#> 1 A1 Strain 1 No Phage  
#> 2 A2 Strain 2 No Phage  
#> 3 A3 Strain 3 No Phage  
#> 4 A4 Strain 4 No Phage  
#> 5 A5 Strain 5 No Phage  
#> 6 A6 Strain 6 No Phage  
#> 7 A7 Strain 1 Phage Added  
#> 8 A8 Strain 2 Phage Added  
#> 9 A9 Strain 3 Phage Added  
#> 10 A10 Strain 4 Phage Added  
#> 11 A11 Strain 5 Phage Added  
#> 12 A12 Strain 6 Phage Added  
#> 13 B1 Strain 7 No Phage  
#> 14 B2 Strain 8 No Phage  
#> 15 B3 Strain 9 No Phage  
#> 16 B4 Strain 10 No Phage  
#> 17 B5 Strain 11 No Phage  
#> 18 B6 Strain 12 No Phage  
#> 19 B7 Strain 7 Phage Added  
#> 20 B8 Strain 8 Phage Added

Now let’s transform the example\_widedata to tidy-shaped.

example\_tidydata <- trans\_wide\_to\_tidy(example\_widedata,  
 id\_cols = "Time")

And finally, we merge the two using merge\_dfs, saving the result to ex\_dat\_mrg, short for example\_data\_merged:

ex\_dat\_mrg <- merge\_dfs(example\_tidydata, example\_design)  
#> Joining, by = "Well"  
  
head(ex\_dat\_mrg)  
#> Time Well Measurements Bacteria\_strain Phage  
#> 1 0 A1 0.003 Strain 1 No Phage  
#> 2 0 B1 0.001 Strain 7 No Phage  
#> 3 0 C1 0.002 Strain 13 No Phage  
#> 4 0 D1 0.002 Strain 19 No Phage  
#> 5 0 E1 0.002 Strain 25 No Phage  
#> 6 0 F1 0.001 Strain 31 No Phage

# What’s next?

Now that you’ve merged your data and designs, you can pre-process and plot your data

1. Introduction: vignette("gcplyr")
2. Importing and transforming data: vignette("import\_transform")
3. Incorporating design information: vignette("incorporate\_designs") **4. Pre-processing and plotting your data: vignette("preprocess\_plot")**
4. Processing your data: vignette("process")
5. Analyzing your data: vignette("analyze")
6. Statistics, merging other data, and other resources: vignette("conclusion")