

When pivot-wider goes wrong

Packages

The inevitable:

```
library(tidyverse)
```

Some long data that should be wide

```
d <- tribble(
  ~obs, ~time, ~y,
  1, "pre", 19,
  2, "post", 18,
  3, "pre", 17,
  4, "post", 16,
  5, "pre", 15,
  6, "post", 14
)
```

```
# A tibble: 6 x 3
  obs time      y
  <dbl> <chr> <dbl>
1     1 pre    19
2     2 post    18
3     3 pre    17
```

What happens here?

```
d
```

```
# A tibble: 6 x 3
  obs time      y
  <dbl> <chr> <dbl>
1     1 pre    19
2     2 post   18
3     3 pre    17
4     4 post   16
5     5 pre    15
6     6 post   14
```

```
d %>% pivot_wider(names_from = time, values_from = y)
```

```
# A tibble: 6 x 3
  obs pre post
  <dbl> <dbl> <dbl>
1     1    19  NA
2     2   18  NA
3     3   17  NA
4     4   16  NA
5     5   15  NA
6     6   14  NA
```

The problem

```
d %>% pivot_wider(names_from = time, values_from = y)
```

```
# A tibble: 6 x 3
  obs    pre post
<dbl> <dbl> <dbl>
1     1    19  NA
2     2    NA  18
3     3    17  NA
4     4    NA  16
5     5    15  NA
6     6    NA  14
```

- There are 6 different obs values, so 6 different rows.
- No data for obs 2 and pre, so that cell missing (NA).
- Not enough data (6 obs) to fill 12 ($= 2 \times 6$) cells.
- obs needs to say which subject provided which 2 observations.

Fixing it up

```
d2 <- tribble(
  ~subject, ~time, ~y,
  1, "pre", 19,
  1, "post", 18,
  2, "pre", 17,
  2, "post", 16,
  3, "pre", 15,
  3, "post", 14
)
d2
```

```
# A tibble: 6 x 3
  subject time      y
  <dbl> <chr> <dbl>
1       1 pre     19
2       1 post     18
3       2 pre     17
```

Coming out right

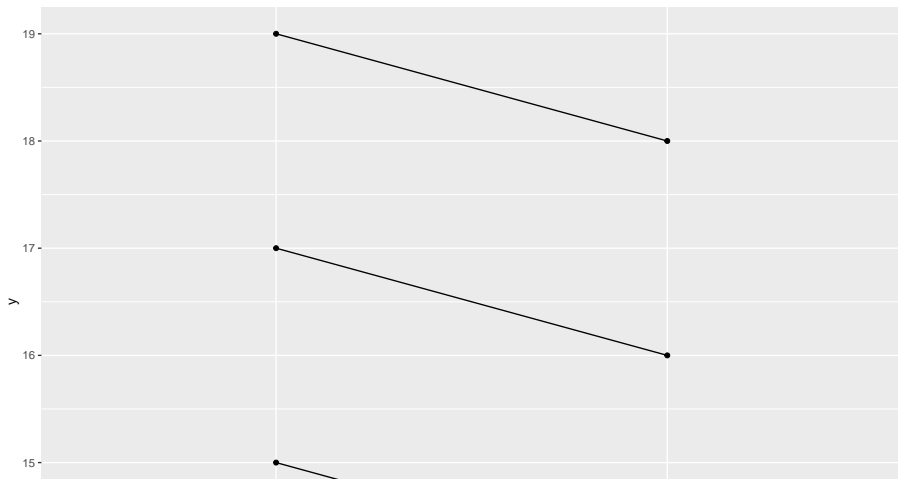
```
d2 %>% pivot_wider(names_from = time, values_from = y)
```

```
# A tibble: 3 x 3
  subject    pre    post
  <dbl> <dbl> <dbl>
1       1     19     18
2       2     17     16
3       3     15     14
```

- row each observation goes to determined by other column subject, and now a pre and post for each subject.
- right layout for matched pairs t or to make differences for sign test or normal quantile plot.
- “spaghetti plot” needs data longer, as d2.

Spaghetti plot

```
d2 %>% mutate(time = fct_inorder(time)) %>%  
  ggplot(aes(x = time, y = y, group = subject)) +  
    geom_point() + geom_line()
```



Another example

- Two independent samples this time

```
# A tibble: 8 x 2
  group      y
  <chr>    <dbl>
1 control     8
2 control    11
3 control    13
4 control    14
5 treatment   12
6 treatment   15
7 treatment   16
8 treatment   17
```

- These should be arranged like this
- but what if we make them wider?

Wider

```
d3 %>% pivot_wider(names_from = group, values_from = y)
```

```
# A tibble: 1 x 2  
  control treatment  
  <list>    <list>  
1 <dbl [4]> <dbl [4]>
```

- row determined by what not used for `pivot_wider`: nothing!
- everything smooshed into *one* row!
- this time, too *much* data for the layout.
- Four data values squeezed into each of the two cells: “list-columns”.

Get the data out

- To expand list-columns out into the data values they contain, can use `unnest`:

```
d3 %>% pivot_wider(names_from = group, values_from = y) %>%  
  unnest(c(control, treatment))
```

```
# A tibble: 4 x 2  
  control treatment  
    <dbl>    <dbl>  
1      8      12  
2     11      15  
3     13      16  
4     14      17
```

- in this case, wrong layout, because data values not paired.

A proper use of list-columns

```
d3 %>% nest_by(group) %>%  
  summarize(n = nrow(data),  
            mean_y = mean(data$y),  
            sd_y = sd(data$y))
```

```
# A tibble: 2 x 4  
# Groups:   group [2]  
  group      n mean_y sd_y  
  <chr>  <int>  <dbl> <dbl>  
1 control     4   11.5  2.65  
2 treatment   4    15  2.16
```

- another way to do `group_by` and `summarize` to find stats by group.
- run this one piece at a time to see what it does.