

# Setting up a minimal neovim environment for data science code development

A neovim IDE for R, Python, and Julia

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## Table of contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Install the latest stable version of neovim.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Configure neovim</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>plugin discussions</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Set up R</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Appendix Ubuntu tweaks</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Appendix Isolate configuration files</b>	<b>8</b>

## 1 Introduction

Neovim (a fork of Vim) is a text editor that has several advantages for data science code development. One of its main attractions (besides being open source) is that it has a number



Photo by Nathan Waters on Unsplash

of useful plugins to facilitate working on R, python, and julia code. Also, its modal, keyboard-centric system allows text and code manipulation at potentially far greater speed than conventional, mouse-centric, systems.

In this post we describe a minimal, yet functional setup to allow a quick start with neovim. We also describe a more extensive setup utilizing several of the neovim-only plugins that together allow neovim to provide IDE style code editing and REPL interaction for the three primary data science coding tools: R, Python, and Julia.

Our presentation here is for a MacOS environment. Appendix one contains required adjustments for a ubuntu linux environment.

## 2 Install the latest stable version of neovim.

With minimal effort we can install both the terminal and GUI versions of neovim. The simplest approach is to use homebrew:

```
> brew install neovim neovim-qt
```

Suggest set up convenience aliases in `zsh`.

```
> alias ng = "nvim-qt"
> alias nt = "nvim"
```

(mnemonic: the `t` in `nt` is for terminal, the `g` in `ng` is for GUI)

## 3 Configure neovim

The standard location for `neovim` configuration files on “unix-like” systems is `~/.config/nvim`. The main config file is either `init.vim` (VimL) or `init.lua` (Lua). In this post we’ll focus on lua based configuration.

Here is the file hierarchy we'll construct. In fact all the code in the lua subdirectory could be bundled into the `init.lua` file, but this approach is clearer and cleaner.

```
.
|-- ginit.vim
|-- init.lua
|-- lazy-lock.json
|-- lua
|   |-- basics.lua
|   |-- leap-config.lua
|   |-- nvim-R-config.lua
|   |-- nvim-cmp-config.lua
|   |-- nvim-telescope-config.lua
|   |-- nvim-tree-config.lua
|   `-- treesitter-config.lua
|-- my_snippets
|   |-- all.snippets
|   |-- tex
|   |-- R
|   |-- python
|   |-- julia
|   |-- giles.tex.snippets
|   |-- mail.snippets
|   |-- r.snippets
|   |-- rmd.snippets
|   |-- snippets.snippets
|   |-- tex.snippets
|   |-- text.snippets
|   `-- txt.snippets
|-- spell
|   |-- en.utf-8.add
|   `-- en.utf-8.add.spl
```

Neovim on its own is limited. We can add the functionality we need using plugins. To install one or more plugins we'll need a plugin manager. There are several to choose from. We'll use the **Lazy** plugin manager for this post. To install the **Lazy** plugin manager issue the following command at the shell prompt:

```
> git clone https://github.com/folke/lazy.nvim.git \
  ~/.local/share/nvim/lazy/lazy.nvim
```

Add the following code to `init.lua` list the plugins needed to be installed from `github` and “feed” them to `Lazy` for installation.

`Nvim-R`, `Leap`, `UltiSnips`, and `vimtex` need additional configuration. The required code is contained in bespoke files under the `lua` directory.

```
vim.g.mapleader = ","
vim.g.maplocalleader = " "
vim.opt.rtp:prepend("~/.local/share/nvim/lazy/lazy.nvim")
require('plugins')
require('basics')
require('nvim-tree-config')
require('nvim-R-config')
require('nvim-telescope-config')
require('leap').add_default_mappings()
require('leap-config')
require('lualine').setup()
```

List of plugins

```
require('lazy').setup({
  --
  --minimal data science setup
  --
  'jalvesaq/Nvim-R',
  'lervag/vimtex',
  'SirVer/ultisnips',
  'jalvesaq/vimcmdline',
  --
})
```

```

--optional utilities
--
"nvim-lualine/lualine.nvim",
"bluz71/vim-moonfly-colors",
'junegunn/vim-peekaboo',
'tpope/vim-commentary',
'francoiscabrol/ranger.vim',
'machakann/vim-highlightedyank',
'tpope/vim-surround',
'ggandor/leap.nvim',
--
--neovim specific
'nvim-lua/plenary.nvim',
'nvim-tree/nvim-web-devicons',
'nvim-tree/nvim-tree.lua',
'nvim-telescope/telescope.nvim',
'nvim-treesitter/nvim-treesitter',
'neovim/nvim-lspconfig',
})

```

## 4 plugin discussions

```

# basics
```sh

```

```

local map = vim.keymap.set
local opts = {noremap = true}
vim.cmd([[
"    paste registers into terminal
tnoremap <expr> <C-R> '<C-\><C-N>''.nr2char(getchar()).'pi'
set background=dark
colorscheme moonfly

```

```

let $FZF_DEFAULT_COMMAND = 'rg --files --hidden'
set completeopt=menu,menuone,noinsert,noselect
set number relativenumber
set textwidth=80
set cursorline
set clipboard=unnamed
set iskeyword=-_
set hlsearch
set splitright
set hidden
set incsearch
set noswapfile
set showmatch
set ignorecase
set smartcase
set gdefault
filetype plugin on
set encoding=utf-8
set nobackup
set nowritebackup
set updatetime=300
set signcolumn=yes
set colorcolumn=80
set timeoutlen=1000 ttimeoutlen=10
let g:UltiSnipsSnippetDirectories = ['~/.config/nvim/my_snippets']
let g:UltiSnipsExpandTrigger="<tab>"
let g:UltiSnipsJumpForwardTrigger="<c-j>"
let g:UltiSnipsJumpBackwardTrigger="<c-k>"
nnoremap <leader>U <Cmd>call UltiSnips#RefreshSnippets()<CR>

autocmd BufWinEnter,WinEnter term:/* startinsert
"autocmd TermOpen * exec "normal! i"
]])
map('n', ':', ';', opts)
map('n', ';', ':', opts)
map('n', '<leader>u', ':UltiSnipsEdit<cr>', opts)
map('n', '<leader>U', '<Cmd>call UltiSnips#RefreshSnippets()<cr>', opts)
map('n', '<localleader><localleader>', '<C-d>', opts)
map('n', '-', '$', opts)
map('n', '<leader>w', 'vipgq', opts)
map('n', '<leader>v', ':edit ~/.config/nvim/init.lua<cr>', opts)

```

```

map('n', '<leader>n', ':edit ~/.config/nvim/lua/basics.lua<cr>', opts)
map('n', '<leader>a', 'ggVG', opts)
map('n', '<leader>t', ':tab split<cr>', opts)
map('n', '<leader>y', ':vert sb3<cr>', opts)
map('n', '<leader>0', ':ls!<CR>:b<Space>', opts)
map('n', '<leader><leader>', '<C-w>w', opts)
map('n', '<leader>1', '<C-w>:b1<cr>', opts)
map('n', '<leader>2', '<C-w>:b2<cr>', opts)
map('n', '<leader>3', '<C-w>:b3<cr>', opts)
map('t', 'ZZ', "q('yes')<CR>", opts)
map('t', 'ZQ', "q('no')<CR>", opts)
map('v', '-', '$', opts)
map('t', '<leader>0', '<C-\\><C-n><C-w>:ls!<cr>:b<Space>', opts)
map('t', '<Escape>', '<C-\\><C-n>', opts)
map('t', ',,', '<C-\\><C-n><C-w>w', opts)
map('i', '<Esc>', '<Esc>`^', opts)

```

## 5 Set up R

```

vim.cmd([[
iabb <buffer> x %>%
iabb <buffer> z %in%
let R_auto_start = 2
let R_enable_comment = 1
let R_hl_term = 0
let R_clear_line = 1
let R_pdfviewer = "zathura"
let R_assign = 2
let R_latexcmd = ['xelatex']
augroup rmarkdown
autocmd!
autocmd FileType rmd,r noremap <buffer> <CR> :call SendLineToR("down")<CR>
autocmd FileType rmd,r noremap <buffer> <space> :call RMakeRmd("default")<cr>

```

```
autocmd FileType rmd,r noremap <space>i :call RAction("dim")<cr>
autocmd FileType rmd,r noremap <space>h :call RAction("head")<cr>
autocmd FileType rmd,r noremap <space>p :call RAction("print")<cr>
autocmd FileType rmd,r noremap <space>q :call RAction("length")<cr>
autocmd FileType rmd,r noremap <space>n :call RAction("nvim.names")<cr>
autocmd FileType rmd,r vmap <buffer> <CR> <localleader>sd
autocmd FileType rmd,r nmap <buffer> <space>j <localleader>gn
autocmd FileType rmd,r nmap <buffer> <space>k <localleader>gN
autocmd FileType rmd,r nmap <buffer> <space>l <localleader>cd
augroup END
]])
```

## 6 Appendix Ubuntu tweaks

## 7 Appendix Isolate configuration files

```
git clone https://github.com/LazyVim/starter ~/.config/LazyVim
NVIM_APPNAME=LazyVim nvim
```