

# Import and Export Data with readr

## Introduction to R - Day 1

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2021-06-15 (updated: 2021-08-02)

# The tidyverse



# The tidyverse

The tidyverse is an opinionated **collection of R packages** designed for data science. All packages share an underlying design philosophy, grammar, and data structures.

([www.tidyverse.org](http://www.tidyverse.org))

These are the main packages from the tidyverse that we will use:



# Workflow data analysis



# The tidyverse

Install the tidyverse once with:

```
install.packages("tidyverse")
```

Then load and attach the packages at the beginning of your script:

```
library(tidyverse)
```

You can also install and load the tidyverse packages individually, but since we will use so many of them together, it's easier to load and attach them together.

# Import data with readr



# Readr

`readr` is a tidyverse package so to use it you can do one of the following things:

```
library(tidyverse) # or library(readr)
```

The most important functions are:

- `read_csv()/write_csv()` to read/write **comma delimited** files
- `read_csv2()/write_csv2()` to read/write **semicolon delimited** files
- `read_tsv()/write_tsv()` to read/write **tab delimited** files
- `read_delim()/write_delim()` to read/write files with **any delimiter**

# Read files with `read_*()`

All `read_*()` functions take a path to the data file as a first argument:

```
read_*(file = "path/to/your/file", ...)
```

Import files with a `readr` function fitting the delimiter of your file:

```
dat <- read_csv("./data/your_data.csv") # comma delimiter  
dat <- read_csv2("./data/your_data.txt") # semicolon delimiter  
dat <- read_tsv("./data/your_data.txt") # tab delimiter
```

Use `read_delim` for a generic type of delimiter:

```
dat <- read_delim("./data/your_data.txt", delim = "\t") # tab delimiter  
dat <- read_delim("./data/your_data.txt", delim = "..xyz..") # ..xyz.. delimiter
```

All `read_*()` functions return a `tibble`



# Read files with `read_*()`

Have a look at `?read_delim` for more options.

You can e.g.

- specify number of lines to skip reading with `skip`
- specify whether the data has a header column or not with `col_names = TRUE/FALSE`
- change the data types of columns while reading them with `col_types`
- ...

# Write files with `write_*()`

Every `read_*()` function has a corresponding `write_*()` function to export data from R.

Write data from R e.g.

- If tasks take a lot of time and you want to do them only once
  - Run the code, save the intermediate result, work with intermediate result
- To share transformed data
- ...

# Write files with `write_*()`

All `write_*` functions take the data to write as the first and the file to write to as the second argument:

```
write_*(x = dat, file = "path/to/save/file", ...)
```

```
write_csv(dat, file = "./data-clean/your_data.csv") # comma delimiter  
write_csv2(dat, file = "./data-clean/your_data.txt") # semicolon delimiter  
write_tsv(dat, file = "./data-clean/your_data.txt") # tab delimiter
```

Use `write_delim` for a generic type of delimiter:

```
write_delim(dat, file = "./data/your_data.txt", delim = "\t") # tab delimiter  
write_delim(dat, file = "./data/your_data.txt", delim = "..xyz..") # ..xyz.. delimiter
```

# Absolute vs. relative paths

## Absolute paths

```
C:/Users/Selina/some_folder/another_folder/data/file_to_read.csv
```

## Relative paths

```
./data/file_to_read.csv
```

- relative paths are interpreted relative to the **working directory**
  - the `./` in the path stands for the working directory
- check out where your working directory is with `getwd()`
- in RStudio projects, the working directory is always the project root

# Absolute vs. relative paths

Working with R and RStudio, the best way is to:

- **Organize your work in an RStudio project**
  - The project root is automatically the working directory
  - All your files are in one place
- **Use paths relative to the project root**

## Why?

- no need to change the working directory
- portable paths: will also work on other machines that copied the project
- makes the code more readable
- less error prone

Some guidelines for data sets for 

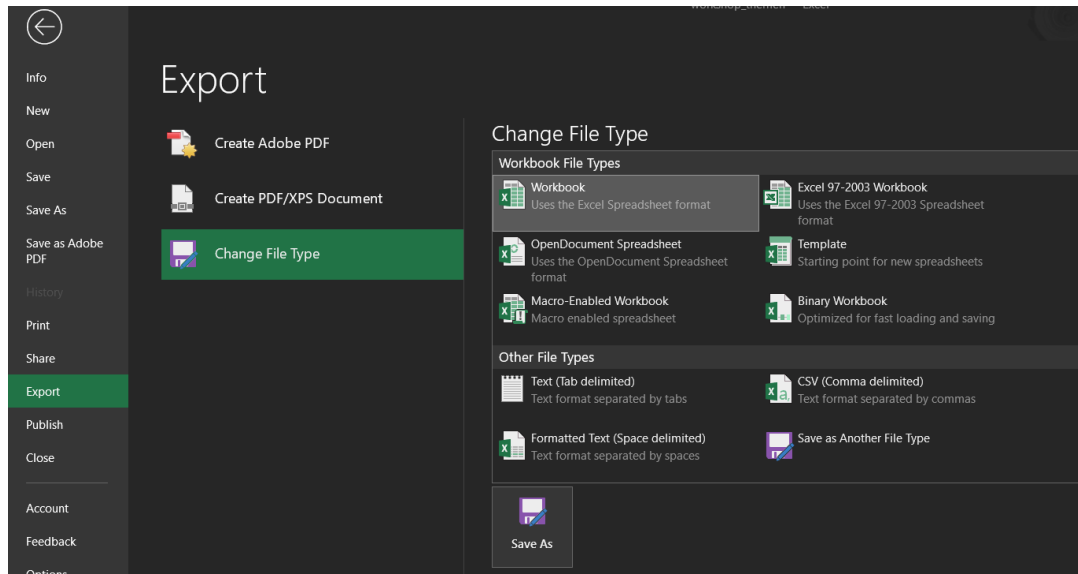
# Data format

Follow these guidelines to make data import to R easier and less frustrating

- Readable file format: `.csv`, `.txt` & Co instead of `.xlsx`

Save an Excel spreadsheet as csv or txt either by

1. `File -> Save As` and select comma separated from the drop down menu
2. `File -> Export`



# Data format

Follow these guidelines to make data import to R easier and less frustrating

- Readable file format: `.csv`, `.txt` & Co instead of `.xlsx`
- No white space in column headers
  - use a character as separator, e.g. `species_name` instead of `species name`
  - if this is unpractical, have a look at the function `janitor::clean_names()` from the `janitor` package
- Avoid special characters
  - no ä, ö, ü, ß, é, ê, ...
- Avoid empty cells
  - if you have missing values, put `NA` in the cell



# Paths

- Avoid white space in paths
  - `data-raw/my_data.csv` instead of `data raw/my_data.csv`
- Avoid special characters in paths
  - no ä, ö, ü, ß, é, ê, ...

# Now you

## Task 2-3: Read and write data files

Find the task description [here](#)