## Introduction to R

Day 1 - Introduction to Data Analysis with R

Selina Baldauf Freie Universität Berlin - Theoretical Ecology

September 29, 2025

### Arithmetic operators

Addition	+
Subtraction	-
Multiplication	*
Division	/
Modulo	%%
Power	^

```
# Addition
2 + 2
# Subtraction
5.432 - 34234
# Multiplication
33 * 42
# Division
3 / 42
# Modulo (Remainder)
2 %% 2
# Power
2^2
# Combine operations
((2 + 2) * 5)^(10 %% 10)
```

### **Relational operators**

Equal to	==
Not equal to	!=
Less than	<
Greater than	>
Less or equal than	<=
Greater or equal than	>=

```
2 == 2
#> [1] TRUE
2 != 2
#> [1] FALSE
33 <= 32
#> [1] FALSE
20 < 20
#> [1] FALSE
```

### Logical operators

### Logical operators

```
Not !
And &
```

```
(3 < 1) & (3 == 3) # FALSE & TRUE = FALSE

#> [1] FALSE

(1 < 3) & (3 == 3) # TRUE & TRUE = TRUE

#> [1] TRUE

(3 < 1) & (3 != 3) # FALSE & FALSE = FALSE

#> [1] FALSE
```

### Logical operators

```
      Not
      !

      And
      &

      Or
      |

      (3 < 1) | (3 == 3) # FALSE | TRUE = TRUE</td>

      #> [1] TRUE

      (3 < 1) | (3 != 3) # FALSE | FALSE = FALSE</td>

      #> [1] FALSE
```

## Basic R Syntax

Whitespace does not matter

```
# this
data<-read_csv("data/my-data.csv")

# is the same as this

data <-
    read_csv( "data/my-data.csv" )</pre>
```

- There are good practice rules however -> More on that later
- RStudio will (often) tell you if something is incorrect
  - Find ② on the side of your script

### Comments in R

- Everything that follows a # is a comment
- Comments are not evaluated
- Notes that make code more readable or add information
- Comments can be used for
  - Explanation of code (if necessary)
  - Include links, names of authors, ...
  - Mark different sections of your code (Q try Ctrl/Cmd + Shift + R)

# Variables and data types in **R**



### Variables

- Store values under meaningful names to reuse them
- A variable has a **name** and **value** and is created using the **assignment operator**

### radius <- 5

- Variables are available in the global environment
- R is case sensitive: radius != Radius
- Variables can hold any R objects, e.g. numbers, tables with data, ...
- Choose meaningful variable names
  - Make your code easier to read

### **Variables**

```
# create a variable
radius <- 5
# use it in a calculation and save the result
# pi is a built-in variable that comes with R
circumference <- 2 * pi * radius
# change value of variable radius
radius <- radius + 1</pre>
```

### If you want to know which value stands behind a variable:

```
# just use the name to print the value to the console radius
```

or have a look at the "Environment" pane.

## Atomic data types

There are 6 so-called **atomic data types** in R. The 4 most important are:

Numeric: There are two numeric data types:

- Double: can be specified in decimal (1.243 or -0.2134), scientific notation (2.32e4) or hexadecimal (0xd3f1)
- Integer: numbers that are not represented by fraction. Must be followed by an L (1L, 2038459L, -5L)

**Logical**: only two possible values **TRUE** and **FALSE** (abbreviation: **T** or **F** - but better use non-abbreviated form)

**Character**: also called string. Sequence of characters surrounded by quotes ("hello", "sample\_1")

### Vectors

Vectors are data structures that are built on top of atomic data types.

Imagine a vector as a collection of values that are all of the same data type.



Image from Advanced R book

## **Creating vectors**

Use the function c() to combine values into a vector

```
lgl_var <- c(TRUE, TRUE, FALSE)
dbl_var <- c(2.5, 3.4, 4.3)
int_var <- c(1L, 45L, 234L)
chr_var <- c("These are", "just", "some strings")</pre>
```

There are many more options to create vectors

- seq() to create a sequence of numbers
- : creates a sequence of numbers with an increment of 1 (e.g. 1:10)
- rep() ro repeat values
- ...

Let's create some vectors to work with.

We can check the length of a vector using the length() function:

```
length(cities)
#> [1] 10
```

Divide population and area vector to calculate population density in each city: ::: {.cell}

```
population / area_km2
#> [1] 5861.801 4880.906 5725.191 3752.606 4264.871 5298.013 3575.685
#> [8] 2178.988 9649.123 20000.000
```

• • •

The operation is performed **separately for each element of the two vectors** and the result is a vector.

Same, if a **vector is divided by vector of length 1** (i.e. a single number). Result is always a vector.

```
mean_population <- mean(population) # calculate the mean of population vector
mean_population
#> [1] 5910000
population / mean_population # divide population vector by the mean
#> [1] 2.5549915 2.1150592 1.5228426 0.9137056 0.6429780 0.5414552 0.5076142
#> [8] 0.4737733 0.3722504 0.3553299
```

We can also work with relational and logical operators

```
population > mean_population
#> [1] TRUE TRUE TRUE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE
```

The result is a vector containing **TRUE** and **FALSE**, depending on whether the city's population is larger than the mean population or not.

Logical and relational operators can be combined

```
# population larger than mean population OR population larger than 3 million
population > mean_population | population > 3e6
#> [1] TRUE TRUE TRUE TRUE TRUE TRUE FALSE FALSE FALSE
```

Check whether elements occur in a vector:

```
cities == "Istanbul"
#> [1] TRUE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE
```

The **%in%** operator checks whether *multiple* elements occur in a vector.

```
# for each element of cities, checks whether that element is contained in to_check
to_check <- c("Istanbul", "Berlin", "Madrid")
cities %in% to_check # same as cities %in% c("Istanbul", "Berlin", "Madrid")
#> [1] TRUE FALSE FALSE FALSE TRUE TRUE FALSE FALSE FALSE
```

%in% always returns a vector of the same length as the vector on the left side

```
# for each element of to_check, check whether that element is contained in cities
to_check %in% cities
#> [1] TRUE TRUE TRUE
```

## **Indexing vectors**

You can use square brackets [] to access specific elements from a vector.

The basic structure is:

vector [vector of indexes to select]

```
cities[5]
#> [1] "Berlin"
```

```
# the three most populated cities
cities[1:3] # same as cities[c(1,2,3)]
#> [1] "Istanbul" "Moscow" "London"
```

```
# the last entry of the cities vector
cities[length(cities)] # same as cities[10]
#> [1] "Paris"
```

## **Indexing vectors**

Change the values of a vector at specified indexes using the assignment operator < - Imagine for example, that the population of

- Istanbul (index 1) increased to 20 Million
- Rome (index 8) changed but is unknown
- Paris (index 10) decreased by 200,000

```
# Update Istanbul (1) and Rome(8)
population[c(1, 8)] <- c(20e6, NA) # NA means missing value
# Update Paris (10)
population[10] <- population[10] - 200000

# Look at the result
population
#> [1] 20000000 12500000 9000000 5400000 3800000 3200000 3000000 NA
#> [9] 2200000 1900000
```

## **Indexing vectors**

You can also index a vector using logical tests. The basic structure is:

### vector [logical vector of same length]

```
mega_city <- population > mean_population
mega_city
#> [1] TRUE TRUE TRUE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE
```

#### Which are the mega cities?

```
cities[mega_city] # or short: cities[population > mean_population]
#> [1] "Istanbul" "Moscow" "London"
```

Return only the cities for which the comparison of their population against the mean population is TRUE

# Summary

Introduction to R

## **Summary I**

Variables have a name and a value and are created using the assignment operator
 <-, e.g. ::: {.cell}</li>

```
radius <- 5
```

- Vectors are a collection of values of the same data type:
  - character ("hello")
  - numeric: integer (23L) and double (2.23)
  - logical (TRUE and FALSE)

• • •

## **Summary II**

#### **Create vectors**

```
# combine objects into vector
c(1,2,3)

# create a sequence of values
seq(from = 3, to = 6, by = 0.5)
seq(from = 3, to = 6, length.out = 10)
2:10

# repeat values from a vector
rep(c(1,2), times = 2)
rep(c("a", "b"), each = 2)
```

## **Summary III**

#### Indexing and subsetting vectors

```
# By index
v[3]
v[1:4]
v[c(1,5,7)]

# Logical indexing with 1 vector
v[v > 5]
v[v != "bird" | v == "rabbit"]
v[v %in% c(1,2,3)] # same as v[v == 1 | v == 2 | v == 3]

# Logical indexing with two vectors of same length
v[y == "bird"] # return the value in v for which index y == "bird"
v[y == max(y)] # return the value in v for which y is the maximum of y
```

## **Summary IV**

#### Working with vectors

```
# length
length(v)
# rounding numbers
round(v, digits = 2)
# sum
sum(v)
# mean
mean(v)
# median
median(v)
# standard deviation
sd(v)
# find the min value
min(v)
# find the max value
```

# Now you

Task (30 min)

Working with vectors

Find the task description here