

# Getting Help for R

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**pluralsight**  
hardcore dev and IT training



# Outline



**Built-in help**



**Web search**



**Community**

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# Built-in Help

**Help()** to look at R  
documentation

**Demo()** to see  
demonstrations

**Vignette()** to get  
additional  
documentation

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# Help Command

## ■ Search local R documentation

- Description
- Usage
- Arguments
- Value
- References
- Examples

mean {base}

R Documentation

### Arithmetic Mean

#### Description

Generic function for the (trimmed) arithmetic mean.

#### Usage

```
mean(x, ...)
```

```
## Default S3 method:
```

```
mean(x, trim = 0, na.rm = FALSE, ...)
```

#### Arguments

**x** An R object. Currently there are methods for numeric/logical vectors and [date](#), [date-time](#) and [time interval](#) objects. Complex vectors are allowed for `trim = 0`, only.

**trim** the fraction (0 to 0.5) of observations to be trimmed from each end of `x` before the mean is computed. Values of `trim` outside that range are taken as the nearest endpoint.

**na.rm** a logical value indicating whether NA values should be stripped before the computation proceeds.

**...** further arguments passed to or from other methods.

#### Value

If `trim` is zero (the default), the arithmetic mean of the values in `x` is computed, as a numeric or complex vector of length one. If `x` is not logical (coerced to numeric), numeric (including integer) or complex, `NA_real_` is returned, with a warning.

If `trim` is non-zero, a symmetrically trimmed mean is computed with a fraction of `trim` observations deleted from each end before the mean is computed.

#### References

Becker, R. A., Chambers, J. M. and Wilks, A. R. (1988) *The New S Language*. Wadsworth & Brooks/Cole.

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# Help Command

help(**term**)

**Know** exact term

?**term**

help.search("**term**")

**Don't know** exact term

??**term**


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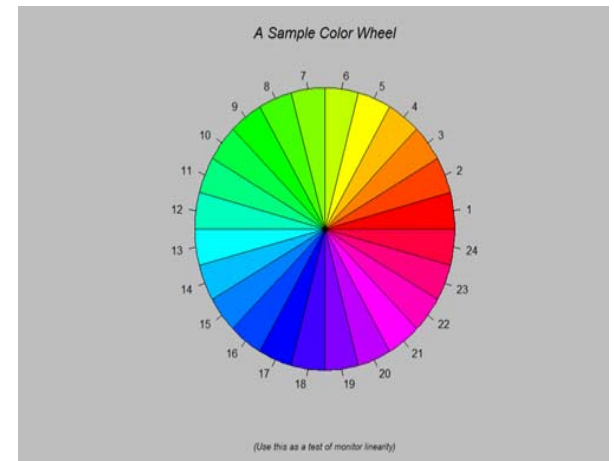
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# Demo Command

- See demonstrations of certain topic
  - Sample usage with dummy data
  - Code and related items

```
Console ~/   
> # Copyright (C) 1997-2009 The R Core Team  
>  
> require(datasets)  
  
> require(grDevices); require(graphics)  
  
> ## Here is some code which illustrates some of the differences between  
> ## R and S graphics capabilities. Note that colors are generally specified  
> ## by a character string name (taken from the X11 rgb.txt file) and that line  
> ## textures are given similarly. The parameter "bg" sets the background  
> ## parameter for the plot and there is also an "fg" parameter which sets  
> ## the foreground color.  
>  
>  
> x <- stats::rnorm(50)  
  
> opar <- par(bg = "white")  
  
> plot(x, ann = FALSE, type = "n")
```



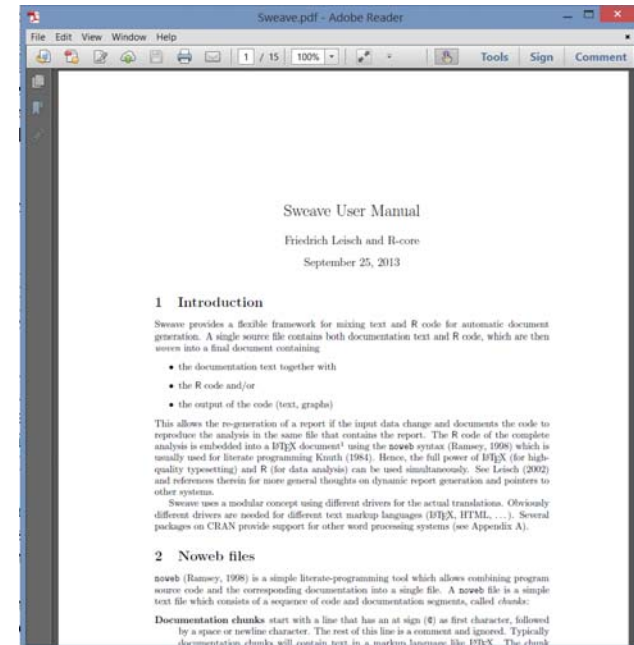
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# Vignette

- Short to mid-size documents
- Cover part of or all functionalities of a package
- Typically available in PDF format
  - Brief introduction
  - Background information
  - Usage
  - Results
  - References



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# Web Search

Using **R commands**

Using **search engines**

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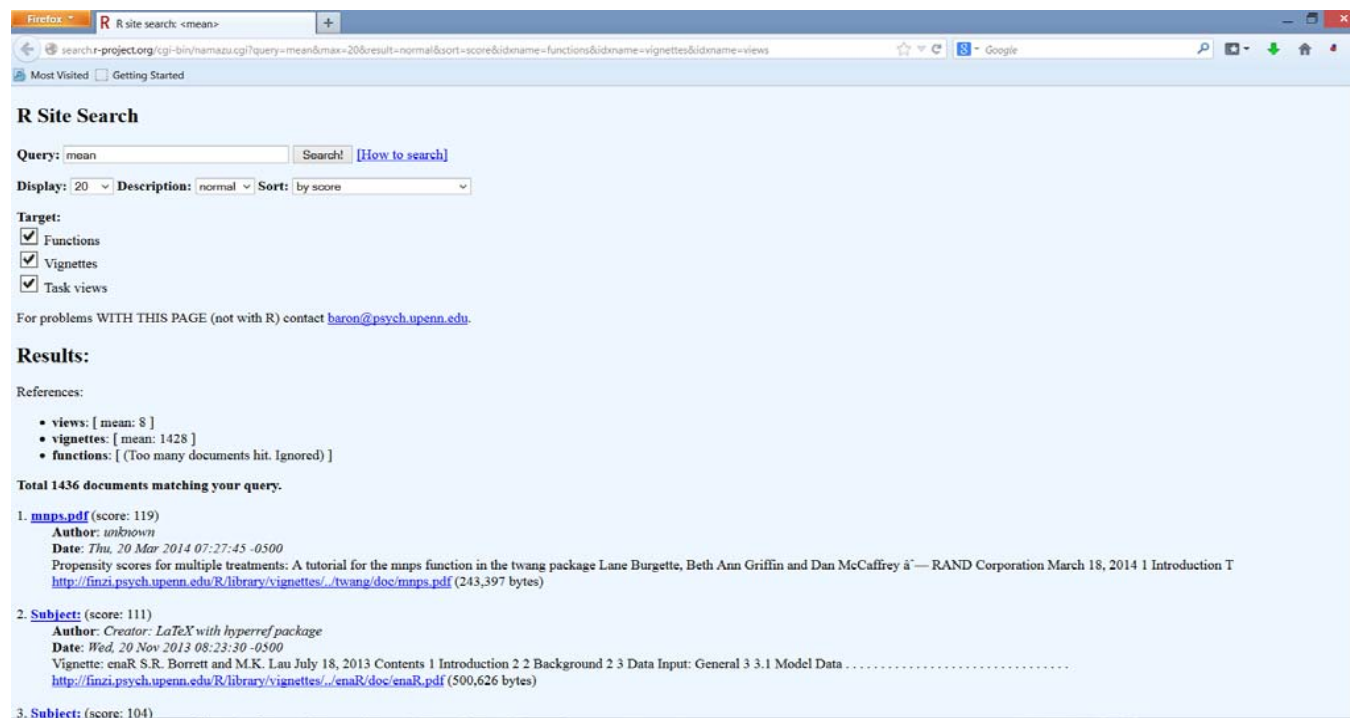
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# Web Search From Console

- RSiteSearch
- Use search engine at <http://search.r-project.org>



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# Search Engines



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# Search Engine Tips

- Use [R] instead of R
- Directly search for the error message

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# Community



**Mailing list**



**Forums**



**Blogs**

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# Mailing List



**R-help** for primary help

**R-devel** for code development  
in R

Special interest groups (SIG)  
such as **R-sig-finance**, **R-sig-hpc**

**More info :**

<http://bit.ly/mailingR>

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# Forums



**Stack Overflow**

<http://bit.ly/stackoverflowR>

**Cross Validated**

<http://bit.ly/crossvalidatedR>

**Nabble**

<http://bit.ly/nabbleR>

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# Blogs



## R-Bloggers

<http://bit.ly/Rbloggers>

## Revolution Analytics blog

<http://bit.ly/revolutionanalyticsR>

## R-Statistics blog

<http://bit.ly/rstatistics>

## R-Data mining blog

<http://bit.ly/rdatamining>

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# How to Ask a Question ?

- **Making a minimum reproducible example**
  - Create sample data
  - Fewer lines of code to reproduce error
- **Expected results**
- **Obtained results**
- **Providing necessary information**
  - Version of R or package
  - Operating system
- **Any additional required information**
- **Posting guidelines : <http://bit.ly/RPostingGuide>**

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# Do's and Don'ts



## Do's

- Good manners
- Do your homework before posting
- Post to correct forum / mailing list
- Provide minimum required information



## Don'ts

- Missing or non-specific subject
- Claim to have found bug
- Threatening not to use software

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# Summary



## Built-in help

Help  
Demo  
Vignettes



## Web search

RSiteSearch  
FindFn using SOS package  
Search engines



## Community

Mailing lists  
Forums  
Blogs  
Posting guide

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