

Intro R

Vittorio Zampinetti*

Mauro Gasparini†

2022-09-27

Introduction

R and RStudio

- **R**: programming language, tailored for statisticians
- **RStudio**: development environment, software for editing and running R (and Python) applications

It's going to change name soon, see Posit

Installation

First install R programming language (from [here](#)), then RStudio environment (from [here](#)).

R syntax

Here a brief overview of the main components of the R language.

Note: this is not a complete guide on the language nor on programming in general, but rather a quick-start introduction with the most used operations and structures, which assumes some very basic programming skills. For all the rest, Google is your friend (it really is).

Basic operations

R can be used as a fully featured calculator, typically directly from the console (see bottom panel in RStudio).

Some examples:

```
2 + 2 # calculator-style
```

```
## [1] 4
```

```
c(1, 2, 3) * 4 # vector operations
```

```
## [1] 4 8 12
```

```
t(matrix(c(c(1, 2, 3, 4)),  
         nrow = 2, ncol = 2)) # matrix operations (transpose)
```

```
##      [,1] [,2]  
## [1,]    1    2  
## [2,]    3    4
```

As any other programming language, it allows for variables declaration. Variables hold a value which can be assigned, modified, and used for other computations.

*Politecnico di Torino, vittorio.zampinetti@polito.it

†Politecnico di Torino, mauro.gasparini@polito.it

```
a <- 2 # assign values to variables
b = a + 2 # equal sign also valid, but...
b
```

```
## [1] 4
```

The arrow sign <- is the traditional sign for the assignment operation, but also = works. Check this examples to see why <- is recommended.

Conditional statements and loops have straightforward syntax (similar to C/C++ , but more compact).

```
if (b == 4 & a > 0) { # if-else statement
  out <- ""
  for (i in 1:b) { # for loop
    out <- paste(out, class(b)) # concatenate two or more strings
  }
  print(out) # print string to output
} else {
  stop("error") # stop program and exit
}
```

```
## [1] " numeric numeric numeric numeric"
```

While <- is only used for variable assignment, i.e. filling up the variable allocated space with some value, the = is both used for assignment and function argument passing (as introduced in Functions).

Functions

Functions are called with the () operator and present named arguments.

```
# get Normal samples with 0 (default) mean and 10 standard deviation
array <- rnorm(10, sd = 10) # sd is an argument,
                           # the mean is left to the default 0
array
```

```
## [1] -3.5449379 -2.9168349 -13.5519069 -3.9054161 -0.3240938 -8.9862922
## [7] -19.1325066 0.4365741 1.7257067 5.6900184
```

You can explicitly call the arguments to which you want to pass the parameters (e.g. sd of the Gaussian). In this case it is necessary, because the second position argument is the mean, but we want it to be the default.

Definition

To define a custom function

```
# implements power operation
#'
#' @param x a real number
#' @param n a natural number, defaults to 2
#' @return n-th power of x
pow <- function(x, n = 2) {
  ans <- 1
  if (n > 0) {
    for (i in 1:n) {
      ans <- ans * x
    }
  } else if (n == 0) {
    # do nothing, ans is already set to 1
  }
}
```

```

} else {
  stop("error: n must be non-negative")
}
return(ans)
}

```

```

print(paste("3^5 = ", pow(3, 5),
            ", 4^2 = ", pow(4, 2),
            ", 5^0 = ", pow(5, 0)))

```

```
## [1] "3^5 = 243 , 4^2 = 16 , 5^0 = 1"
```

The `return()` call can be omitted (but it's better not to).

```

pow <- function(a, b) {
  ans <- 1
  # ...
  # last expression is returned
  ans # this is equivalent to write return(ans)
}

```

Data types

Every variable in R is an object, which holds a value (or collection of values) and some other attributes, properties or methods.

Base types

There are 5 basic data types:

- **numeric** (real numbers)
- **integer**
- **logical** (aka boolean)
- **character**
- **complex** (complex numbers)

Numeric When you write numbers in R, they are going to default to numeric type values

```

a <- 3.4 # decimal
b <- -.30 # signed decimal
c <- 42 # also without dot, it's numeric

print(paste0("data types | a:", class(a),
            ", b:", class(b),
            ", c:", class(c)))

```

```
## [1] "data types | a:numeric, b:numeric, c:numeric"
```

Integer Integer numbers can be enforced typing an `L` next to the digits. Casting is implicit when the result of an operation involving integers is not an integer

```

int_num <- 50L # 50 stored as integer

non_casted_num <- int_num - 2L # result is exactly 48, still int
casted_num <- int_num / 7L # implicit cast to numeric type to store decimals
print(paste(class(int_num), class(non_casted_num), class(casted_num), sep = ", "))

```

```
## [1] "integer, integer, numeric"
```

Logical The logical type can only hold TRUE or FALSE (in capital letters)

```
bool_a <- FALSE
bool_b <- T # T and F are short for TRUE and FALSE
bool_a | !bool_b # logical or between F and not-T
```

```
## [1] FALSE
```

You can test the value of a boolean also using 0,1

```
bool_a == 0 # if 'A' is not equal to 'not B', raise an error
```

```
## [1] TRUE
```

and a sum between logical values, treats FALSE = 0 and TRUE = 1, which is useful when counting true values in logical arrays

```
bool_a + bool_b + bool_b # FALSE + TRUE + TRUE (it's not an OR operation)
```

```
## [1] 2
```

Character A character is any number of characters enclosed in quotes ' ' or double quotes " ".

```
char_a <- "," # single character
char_b <- "bird" # string
char_c <- 'word' # single quotes
full_char <- paste(char_b, char_a, char_c) # concatenate chars
class(full_char) # still a character
```

```
## [1] "character"
```

```
complex_num <- 5 + 4i
Mod(complex_num) # try all complex operations, e.g. modulus
```

Complex

```
## [1] 6.403124
```

Special values

- NA: “not available”, missing value
- Inf: infinity
- NaN: “not-a-number”, undefined value

```
missing_val <- NA
is.na(missing_val) # test if value is missing
```

```
## [1] TRUE
```

Every operation involving missing values, will output NA

```
missing_val == NA # cannot use ==
```

```
## [1] NA
```

```
print(paste(
  "1/0 = ", 1/0,
```

```
"", 0/0 = "", 0/0
))
```

```
## [1] "1/0 = Inf , 0/0 = NaN"
```

These special values are not necessarily unwanted, but they require extra care. E.g. `Inf` can appear also in case of numerical *overflow*.

```
exp(1000)
```

```
## [1] Inf
```

Conversion Variables types can be converted with `as.<typename>()`-like functions, as long as conversion makes sense. Some examples:

```
v <- T
w <- "0"
x <- 3.2
y <- 2L
z <- "F"
cat(paste(
  paste(x, as.integer(x), sep = " => "), # from numeric to integer
  paste(y, as.numeric(y), sep = " => "), # from integer to numeric
  paste(y, as.character(y), sep = " => "), # from integer to character
  paste(w, as.numeric(w), sep = " => "), # from number-char to numeric
  paste(v, as.numeric(v), sep = " => "), # from logical to numeric
  sep = "\n"
))
```

```
## 3.2 => 3
```

```
## 2 => 2
```

```
## 2 => 2
```

```
## 0 => 0
```

```
## TRUE => 1
```

```
as.numeric(z) # from character to numeric (coercion warning - NA)
```

```
## Warning: NAs introduced by coercion
```

```
## [1] NA
```

Vectors and matrices

Vectors Vectors are build with the `c()` function. A vector holds values of the same type.

```
vec1 <- c(4, 3, 9, 5, 8)
vec1
```

```
## [1] 4 3 9 5 8
```

Vector operations and aggregation of values is as intuitive as it can be.

```
vec2 <- vec1 - 1 # subtract 1 to all values (broadcast)
sum(vec1) # sum all values in vec1
```

```
## [1] 29
```

```
mean(vec2) # compute the mean
```

```
## [1] 4.8
```

```
sort(vec1, decreasing = TRUE) # sort elements in decreasing order
```

```
## [1] 9 8 5 4 3
```

Conversion is still possible and it's made element by element.

```
char_vec <- as.character(vec1) # convert every value in vec1 to char  
char_vec
```

```
## [1] "4" "3" "9" "5" "8"
```

Range vectors (unit-stepped intervals) are built with `start:end` syntax. Note: the type of range vectors is `integer`, not `numeric`.

```
x_range <- 1:10  
class(x_range)
```

```
## [1] "integer"
```

They are particularly useful in loops statements:

```
vec3 <- c() # declare an empty vector  
# iterate all the indices along vec1  
for (i in 1:length(vec1)) {  
  vec3[i] <- vec1[i] * i # access with [idx]  
}  
vec3
```

```
## [1] 4 6 27 20 40
```

Vector elements are selected with square brackets `[]`. Putting vectors inside brackets performs slicing

```
vec1[1:3] # first 3 elements
```

```
## [1] 4 3 9
```

```
vec1[c(1,3)] # only first and third element
```

```
## [1] 4 9
```

```
vec1[-c(1:3)] # all but elements 1 to 3
```

```
## [1] 5 8
```

```
vec1[seq(1, length(vec1), 2)] # odd position elements
```

```
## [1] 4 9 8
```

To find an element in a vector and get its index/indices, the `which()` function can be used

```
which(vec1 == 3)
```

```
## [1] 2
```

```
which(vec1 < 5)
```

```
## [1] 1 2
```

And finally, to filter only values that satisfy a certain condition, we can combine `which` with slicing.

```
vec1[which(vec1 >= 5)]
```

```
## [1] 9 5 8
```

```
# or, equivalently, using logical masking
vec1[vec1 >= 5]
```

```
## [1] 9 5 8
```

Matrices Matrices are built with `matrix()`

```
mat1 <- matrix(1:24,
               nrow = 6, ncol = 4)
mat1 # filled column-wise (default)
```

```
##      [,1] [,2] [,3] [,4]
## [1,]    1    7   13   19
## [2,]    2    8   14   20
## [3,]    3    9   15   21
## [4,]    4   10   16   22
## [5,]    5   11   17   23
## [6,]    6   12   18   24
```

```
mat2 <- matrix(1:24,
               nrow = 6, ncol = 4, byrow = TRUE)
mat2 # filled row-wise
```

```
##      [,1] [,2] [,3] [,4]
## [1,]    1    2    3    4
## [2,]    5    6    7    8
## [3,]    9   10   11   12
## [4,]   13   14   15   16
## [5,]   17   18   19   20
## [6,]   21   22   23   24
```

```
dim(mat2) # get dimensions
```

```
## [1] 6 4
```

```
c(nrow(mat2), ncol(mat2)) # get number of rows and cols separately
```

```
## [1] 6 4
```

```
# or, equivalently
dim(mat2)[1] # nrow
```

```
## [1] 6
```

All indexing operations available on vectors, are also available on matrices

```
mat2[1, 1] # element 1,1
```

```
## [1] 1
```

```
mat2[3, ] # third row (empty space for all elements)
```

```
## [1] 9 10 11 12
```

```
mat2[1:2, 1:2] # upper left 2x2 sub-matrix
```

```
##      [,1] [,2]
## [1,]    1    2
## [2,]    5    6
```

```
t(mat2) # transposed matrix
```

```
##      [,1] [,2] [,3] [,4] [,5] [,6]
## [1,]    1    5    9   13   17   21
## [2,]    2    6   10   14   18   22
## [3,]    3    7   11   15   19   23
## [4,]    4    8   12   16   20   24
```

Operations with matrix and vectors can be both element-wise and matrix operations (e.g. scalar product). Note that a vector built with `c()` is a column vector by default. Some examples:

```
diagonal_mat <- diag(nrow = 4) # 4x4 identity matrix
# element by element
diagonal_mat * 1:2 # note: 1:2 is repeated to match the matrix dimensions
```

```
##      [,1] [,2] [,3] [,4]
## [1,]    1    0    0    0
## [2,]    0    2    0    0
## [3,]    0    0    1    0
## [4,]    0    0    0    2
```

```
diagonal_mat %*% seq(2, 8, 2) # matrix multiplication (4,4) x (4, 1) -> (4, 1)
```

```
##      [,1]
## [1,]    2
## [2,]    4
## [3,]    6
## [4,]    8
```

```
v1 <- 1:4
v2 <- 4:1
v1 %*% v2 # here v1 is implicitly converted to row vector
```

```
##      [,1]
## [1,]   20
```

Arrays Arrays are multi-dimensional vectors (generalization of a matrix with more than two dimensions). They work pretty much like matrices.

```
arr1 <- array(1:24, dim = c(2, 4, 3))
arr1
```

```
## , , 1
##      [,1] [,2] [,3] [,4]
## [1,]    1    3    5    7
## [2,]    2    4    6    8
##
## , , 2
##      [,1] [,2] [,3] [,4]
## [1,]    9   11   13   15
## [2,]   10   12   14   16
##
## , , 3
##      [,1] [,2] [,3] [,4]
## [1,]   17   19   21   23
## [2,]   18   20   22   24
```



```
## [1,] 17 19 21 23
## [2,] 18 20 22 24
```

```
arr1[2, 1, 3] # get one element
```

```
## [1] 18
```

```
sliced_arr <- arr1[, 2, ] # slice at column 2
sliced_arr
```

```
##      [,1] [,2] [,3]
## [1,]    3   11   19
## [2,]    4   12   20
```

```
dim(sliced_arr) # reduces ndims by one (dimension selected is dropped)
```

```
## [1] 2 3
```

Lists and dataframes

Lists are containers that can hold different data types. Each entry, which can even be another list, has a position in the list and can also be named.

```
list1 <- list(1:3, TRUE, x = c("a", "b", "c"))
list1
```

```
## [[1]]
## [1] 1 2 3
##
## [[2]]
## [1] TRUE
##
## $x
## [1] "a" "b" "c"
```

```
list1[[3]] # access with through index
```

```
## [1] "a" "b" "c"
```

Dataframes are collections of columns that have the same length. Contrarily to matrices, columns in dataframes can be of different types. They are the most common way of representing structured data and most of the dataset will be stored in dataframes.

```
df1 <- data.frame(x = 1, y = 1:10,
                  char = sample(c("a", "b"), 10, replace = TRUE))
```

```
df1 # x was set to just one value and gets repeated ('recycled')
```

```
##    x  y char
## 1  1  1   b
## 2  1  2   b
## 3  1  3   a
## 4  1  4   a
## 5  1  5   a
## 6  1  6   b
## 7  1  7   a
## 8  1  8   b
## 9  1  9   b
## 10 1 10   a
```

```
df1[[2]] # access through column index

## [1] 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
df1$x # access through column name

## [1] 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
df1[, 3] # access with matrix-style index

## [1] "b" "b" "a" "a" "a" "b" "a" "b" "b" "a"
df1[2:4, ] # can also select subset of rows

##   x y char
## 2 1 2    b
## 3 1 3    a
## 4 1 4    a
```

The `dplyr` library provides another dataframe object (called *tibble*) which has all the effective features of Base R `data.frame` and none of the deprecated functionalities. It's simply a newer version of dataframes (therefore recommended over the old one).

```
library("tibble")
tibble(x = 1:15, y = 1, z = x / y) # tibble dataframe

## # A tibble: 15 x 3
##       x     y     z
##   <int> <dbl> <dbl>
## 1     1     1     1
## 2     2     1     2
## 3     3     1     3
## 4     4     1     4
## 5     5     1     5
## 6     6     1     6
## 7     7     1     7
## 8     8     1     8
## 9     9     1     9
## 10    10     1    10
## 11    11     1    11
## 12    12     1    12
## 13    13     1    13
## 14    14     1    14
## 15    15     1    15
```

For more information on *tibble* and its advantages with respect to traditional dataframes, type `vignette("tibble")` in an R console. Notice that you can convert datasets to *tibble* with `as_tibble()`, while with `as.data.frame()` you will get a Base R dataframe.

Data manipulation

Now that we know what a dataframe is and how it is generated, we can focus on data manipulation.

The `dplyr` library provides an intuitive way of working with datasets. For instance, let's consider the `mtcars` dataset.

```
library(dplyr)

##
```

```
## Attaching package: 'dplyr'

## The following objects are masked from 'package:stats':
##
##   filter, lag

## The following objects are masked from 'package:base':
##
##   intersect, setdiff, setequal, union

mtcars$modelname <- rownames(mtcars) # name column with models
mtcars <- as_tibble(mtcars) # convert to tibble
mtcars # display the raw data

## # A tibble: 32 x 12
##   mpg   cyl  disp    hp  drat    wt  qsec    vs  am  gear  carb modelname
##   <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <dbl> <chr>
## 1  21     6  160   110  3.9   2.62  16.5    0    1    4     4 Mazda RX4
## 2  21     6  160   110  3.9   2.88  17.0    0    1    4     4 Mazda RX4 ~
## 3 22.8     4  108    93  3.85  2.32  18.6    1    1    4     1 Datsun 710
## 4 21.4     6  258   110  3.08  3.22  19.4    1    0    3     1 Hornet 4 D~
## 5 18.7     8  360   175  3.15  3.44  17.0    0    0    3     2 Hornet Spo~
## 6 18.1     6  225   105  2.76  3.46  20.2    1    0    3     1 Valiant
## 7 14.3     8  360   245  3.21  3.57  15.8    0    0    3     4 Duster 360
## 8 24.4     4  147.    62  3.69  3.19  20      1    0    4     2 Merc 240D
## 9 22.8     4  141.    95  3.92  3.15  22.9    1    0    4     2 Merc 230
##10 19.2     6  168.   123  3.92  3.44  18.3    1    0    4     4 Merc 280
## # ... with 22 more rows
```

Let's say we want to get the cars with more than 100 hp, and we are just interested in the car model name and we want the data to be sorted in alphabetic order.

```
mtcars %>% # send the data into the transformation pipe
  dplyr::filter(hp > 100) %>% # filter rows with hp > 100
  dplyr::select(modelname) %>% # filter columns (select only modelname col)
  dplyr::arrange(modelname) # display in alphabetic order
```

```
## # A tibble: 23 x 1
##   modelname
##   <chr>
## 1 AMC Javelin
## 2 Cadillac Fleetwood
## 3 Camaro Z28
## 4 Chrysler Imperial
## 5 Dodge Challenger
## 6 Duster 360
## 7 Ferrari Dino
## 8 Ford Pantera L
## 9 Hornet 4 Drive
##10 Hornet Sportabout
## # ... with 13 more rows
```

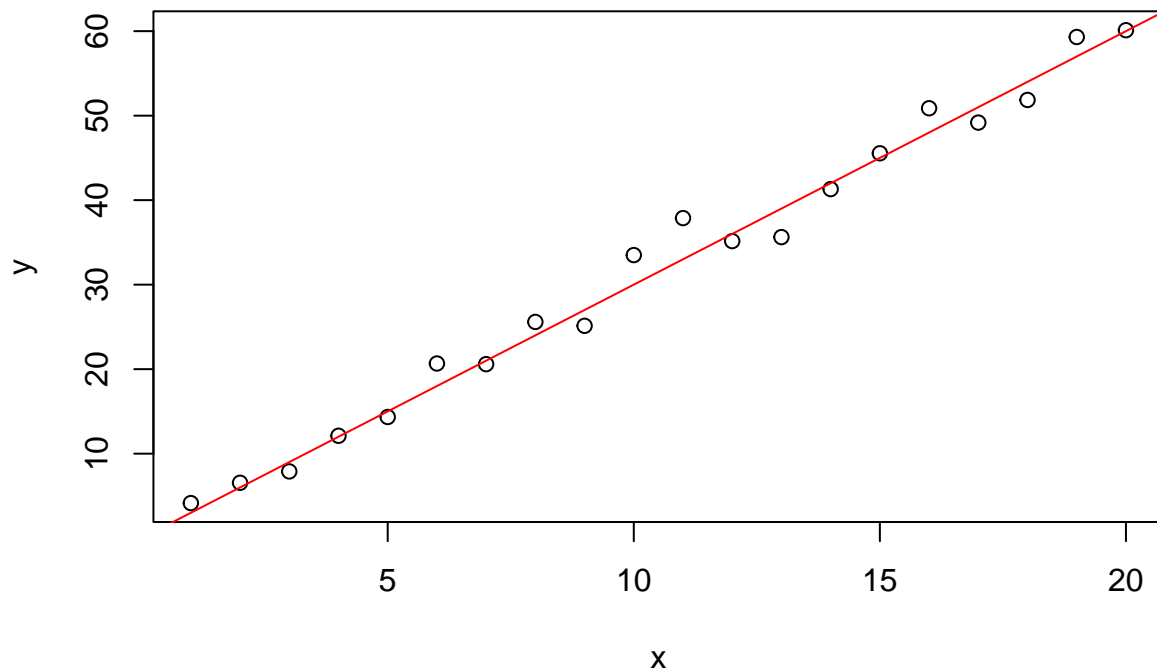
There are many other dplyr functions for data transformation. This useful cheatsheet summarizes most of them for quick access.

Plotting

In base R plots are built with several calls to functions, each of which edit the current canvas. For instance, to plot some points and a line:

```
# generate synthetic data
n_points <- 20
x = 1:n_points
y = 3 * x + 2 * rnorm(n_points)

plot(x, y)
abline(a = 0, b = 3, col = 'red')
```

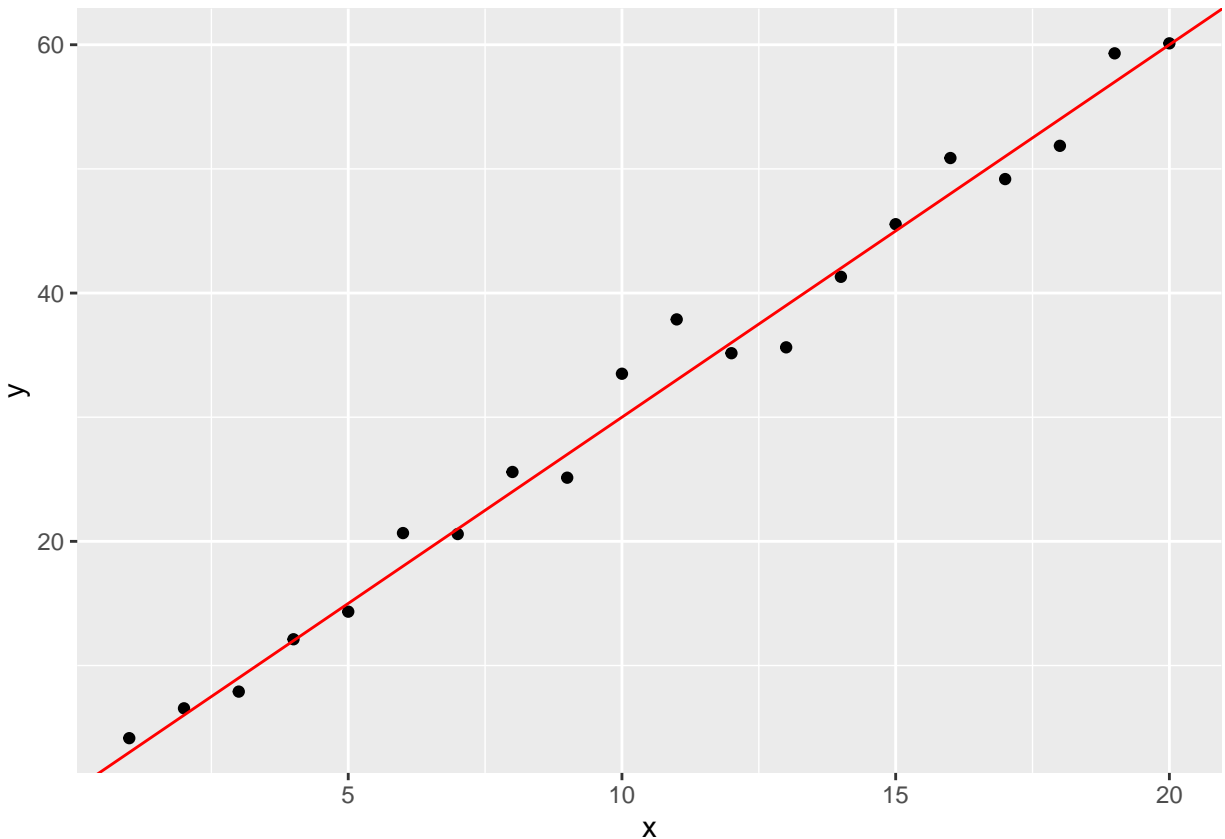


However, the `ggplot` library is now the new standard plotting library. In `ggplot`, a plot is decomposed in three main components: data, coordinate system and visual marks, called *geoms*. The plot is built by stacking up layers of visualization objects. Data is in form of dataframes and the columns are selected in the aesthetics arguments.

The same plot shown before can be drawn with `ggplot` in the following way.

```
library(ggplot2)
gg_df <- tibble(x = x, y = y)

ggplot(gg_df) +
  geom_point(mapping = aes(x, y)) +
  geom_abline(mapping = aes(intercept = 0, slope = 3), color = "red")
```



This is just a brief example. More will be seen in the next lessons. Check out this [cheatsheet](#) for quick look-up on ggplot functions.

Examples: plot and data manipulation

Combining altogether, here a data visualization workflow on the Gapminder dataset.

```
library(gapminder)
# have a quick look at the Gapminder dataset
str(gapminder)

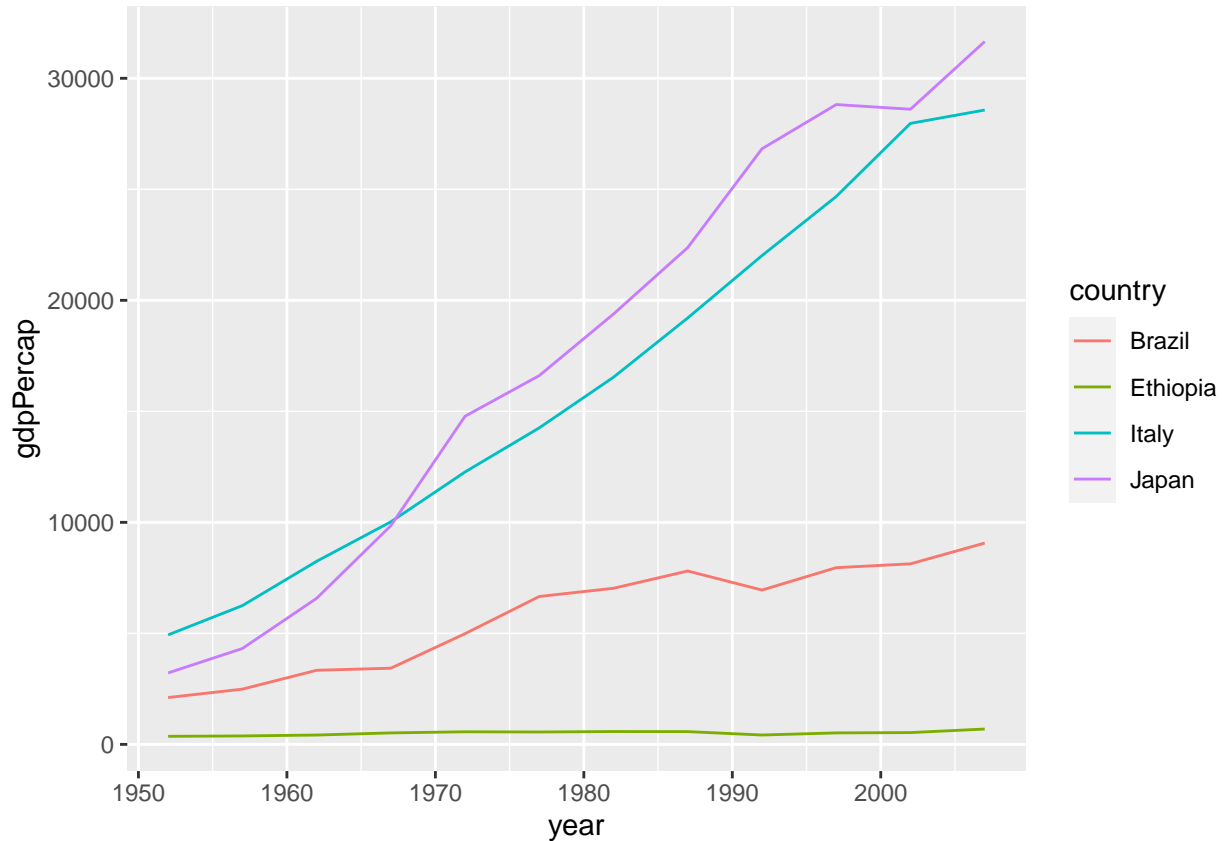
## tibble [1,704 x 6] (S3: tbl_df/tbl/data.frame)
##  $ country   : Factor w/ 142 levels "Afghanistan",...: 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 ...
##  $ continent : Factor w/ 5 levels "Africa","Americas",...: 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 ...
##  $ year      : int [1:1704] 1952 1957 1962 1967 1972 1977 1982 1987 1992 1997 ...
##  $ lifeExp   : num [1:1704] 28.8 30.3 32 34 36.1 ...
##  $ pop       : int [1:1704] 8425333 9240934 10267083 11537966 13079460 14880372 12881816 13867957 163
##  $ gdpPercap: num [1:1704] 779 821 853 836 740 ...
```

A factor, which we haven't seen yet, is just a data-type characterizing a discrete categorical variable; the levels of a factor describe how many distinct categories it can take value from (e.g. the variable `continent` takes values from the set `{Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe, Oceania}`).

Let's say we want to compare the GDP per capita of some different countries (Italy, Japan, Brasil and Ethiopia), plotted against time (year by year).

```
# transform the dataset according to what is necessary
wanted_countries <- c("Italy", "Japan", "Brazil", "Ethiopia")
gapminder %>%
```

```
dplyr::filter(country %in% wanted_countries) %>%
# now feed the filtered data to ggplot (using the pipe op)
ggplot() +
  geom_line(aes(year, gdpPerCap, color = country))
```

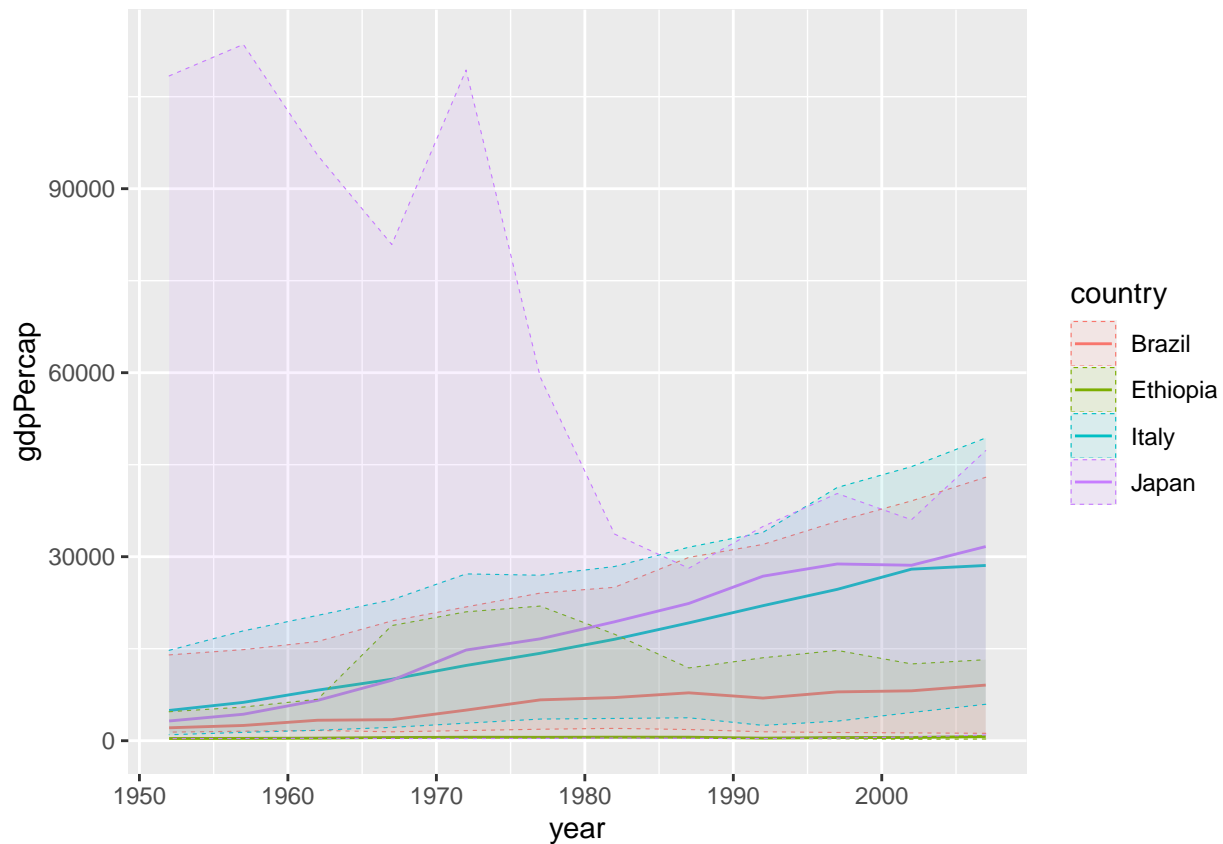


If we want to add some information about the same measure over the whole continent, showing for instance the boundaries of GDP among all countries in the same continent of the four selected countries, this is more or less what we can do

```
# give all the data to ggplot, we'll filter later
gapminder %>%
  ggplot() +
    geom_line(data = . %>%
      dplyr::filter(country %in% wanted_countries),
      aes(year, gdpPerCap, color = country)) +
    # now group by continent and get the upper/lower bounds
    geom_ribbon(data = . %>%
      dplyr::filter(!is.na(gdpPerCap)) %>% # min(NA) = NA, make sure NAs are excluded
      dplyr::group_by(continent, year) %>% # gather all entries for each continent separately
      dplyr::summarize(minGdp = min(gdpPerCap), maxGdp = max(gdpPerCap), across()) %>% # compute agg
      dplyr::filter(country %in% wanted_countries),
      aes(ymin = minGdp, ymax = maxGdp,
          x = year, color = country, fill = country),
      alpha = 0.1, linetype = "dashed", size = 0.2) -> plt
plt
```

`summarise()` has grouped output by 'continent', 'year'. You can override using the

```
## `.groups` argument.
```



But, since it looks a bit confusing, we might want four separate plots.

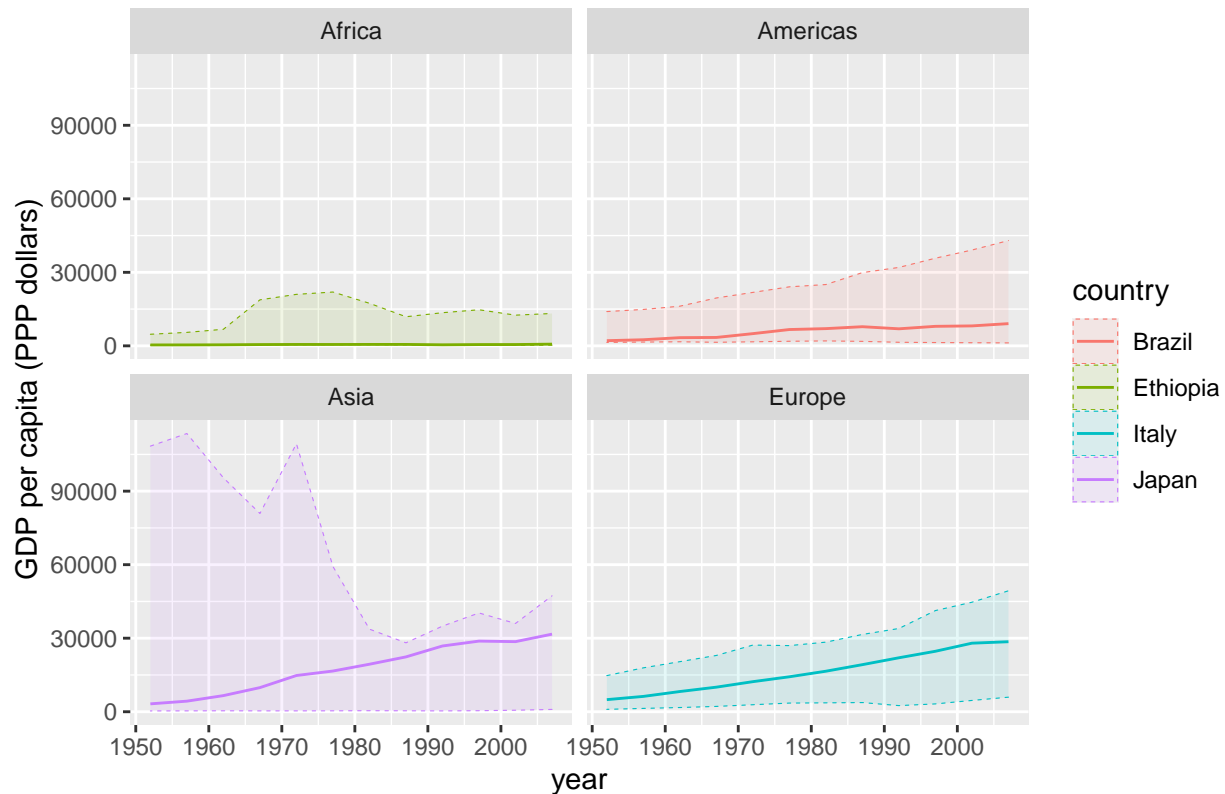
```
gapminder %>%
  dplyr::filter(country %in% wanted_countries) %>%
  dplyr::pull(continent) %>% # extract one column from a dataframe (different from select)
  unique() -> wanted_continents

gapminder %>%
  dplyr::filter(continent %in% wanted_continents) %>%
  ggplot() +
    geom_line(data = . %>%
      dplyr::filter(country %in% wanted_countries),
      aes(year, gdpPercap, color = country)) +
    # now group by continent and get the upper/lower bounds
    geom_ribbon(data = . %>%
      dplyr::filter(!is.na(gdpPercap)) %>% # min(NA) = NA, make sure NAs are excluded
      dplyr::group_by(continent, year) %>% # gather all entries for each continent separately
      dplyr::summarize(minGdp = min(gdpPercap), maxGdp = max(gdpPercap), across()) %>% # compute aggreg
      dplyr::filter(country %in% wanted_countries),
      aes(ymin = minGdp, ymax = maxGdp,
          x = year, color = country, fill = country),
      alpha = 0.1, linetype = "dashed", size = 0.2) +
    facet_wrap(vars(continent)) +
    labs(title = paste("Country GDP per capita compared with",
      "continent lower and upper bounds"),
```

```
x = "year", y = "GDP per capita (PPP dollars)")
```

```
## `summarise()` has grouped output by 'continent', 'year'. You can override using the
## `.groups` argument.
```

Country GDP per capita compared with continent lower and upper bound



Probability

Base R provide functions to handle almost any probability distribution. These functions are usually divided into four categories:

- density function
- distribution function
- quantile function
- random function (sampling)

```
n <- 10
```

```
normal_samples <- rnorm(n = n, mean = 0, sd = 1) # sample 10 Gaussian samples
normal_samples
```

```
## [1] 1.0256860 -1.4489057 -0.6171149 0.2592484 0.7784836 -1.6101335
```

```
## [7] -0.2284794 0.9325255 1.4804557 -3.1345000
```

```
dnorm(normal_samples, mean = 2, sd = 1) # compute the density function (over another Normal)
```

```
## [1] 2.481846e-01 1.042208e-03 1.298989e-02 8.768131e-02 1.891926e-01
```

```
## [6] 5.899515e-04 3.330663e-02 2.256682e-01 3.485751e-01 7.520344e-07
```



```
pnorm(normal_samples, mean = 0, sd = 1) # cumulative distribution function
```

```
## [1] 0.8474801827 0.0736819646 0.2685794617 0.6022782153 0.7818580236  
## [6] 0.0536843629 0.4096367743 0.8244675014 0.9306241606 0.0008607362
```

```
qnorm(c(0.05, 0.95), mean = 0, sd = 1) # get the quantiles of a normal
```

```
## [1] -1.644854 1.644854
```

Extras

File system and helper

R language provides several tools for management of files and function help. Here some useful console commands. Note that most of them are also available on RStudio through the graphic interface (buttons).

R saves all the variables and you can display them with `ls()`.

```
rm(list = ls()) # clear up the space removing all variables stored so far  
# let's add some variables
```

```
x <- 1:10  
y <- x[x %% 2 == 0]
```

```
ls() # check variables in the environment
```

```
## [1] "x" "y"
```

The working directory is the folder located on your computer from which R navigates the filesystem.

```
getwd() # check your wd
```

```
## [1] "/Users/zemp/phd/teach_ms/lessons"
```

```
setwd("./tmp") # set the working directory to an arbitrary (existing) folder  
# save the current environment
```

```
save.image("./01_test.RData")  
# check that it's on the working directory  
dir()
```

RStudio typically save the environment automatically, but sometimes (if not every time you close R) you should clear the environment variables, because loading many variables when opening RStudio might fill up too much memory.

You can also read function helpers simply by typing `?function_name`. This will open a formatted page with information about a specific R function or object.

```
?quit # help for the quit function
```

```
?Arithmetic # help for more general syntax information  
help(Trig) # or use help(name)
```

Packages

Packages can be installed via command line using `install.packages("package_name")`, or through RStudio graphical interface.

```
# the following function call is commented because package installation should  
# not be included in a script (but you can find it commented, showing that the  
# script requires a package as dependency)
```

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

And then you can load the package with `library`.

```
library(tidyverse)
```

```
## -- Attaching packages ----- tidyverse 1.3.2 --
## v tidyr 1.2.1      v stringr 1.4.1
## v readr 2.1.2      v forcats 0.5.2
## v purrr 0.3.4
## -- Conflicts ----- tidyverse_conflicts() --
## x dplyr::filter() masks stats::filter()
## x dplyr::lag()     masks stats::lag()
```

Arrow sign

The difference between `<-` and `=` is not just programming *style* preference. Here an example where using `=` rather than `<-` makes a difference:

```
# gives error: argument 'b' is not part of 'within'
within(data.frame(a= rnorm(2)), b = a^2)
```

```
## Error in eval(substitute(expr), e): argument is missing, with no default
```

```
# 'b<-a^2' is the value passed to the expr argument of within()
within(data.frame(a = rnorm(2)), b <- a^2)
```

```
##           a           b
## 1  0.06868314 0.004717374
## 2 -0.54025213 0.291872361
```

Although this event might never occur in one's programming experience, it's safer (and more elegant) to use `<-` when assigning variable.

Besides, `->` is also valid and it is used (more intuitive) when assigning pipes result to variables.

```
library(dplyr)

starwars %>%
  dplyr::mutate(bmi = mass / ((height / 100) ^ 2)) %>%
  dplyr::filter(!is.na(bmi)) %>%
  dplyr::group_by(species) %>%
  dplyr::summarise(bmi = mean(bmi)) %>%
  dplyr::arrange(desc(bmi)) -> x

x
```

```
## # A tibble: 32 x 2
##   species      bmi
##   <chr>      <dbl>
## 1 Hutt      443.
## 2 Vulptereen  50.9
## 3 Yoda's species 39.0
## 4 Kaleesh   34.1
## 5 Droid     32.7
## 6 Dug       31.9
## 7 Trandoshan 31.3
## 8 Sullustan  26.6
```

```
## 9 Zabrak          26.1
## 10 Besalisk        26.0
## # ... with 22 more rows
```

Exercises

1. LogSumExp trick

Try to implement the log-sum-exp trick in a function that takes as argument three **numeric** variables and computed the log of the sum of the exponentials in a numerically stable way. See this Wiki paragraph if you don't know the trick yet.

```
log_sum_exp3 <- function(a, b, c) {
  # delete this function and re-write it using the trick
  # in order to make it work
  return(log(exp(a) + exp(b) + exp(c)))
}

# test - this result is obviously wrong: edit the function above
log_sum_exp3(a = -1000, b = -1001, c = -999) # should give -998.5924

## [1] -Inf
```