

Writing R data to an Excel file

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Contents

Here are some words about exporting data from R to various other languages:

<http://www.statmethods.net/input/exportingdata.html>

Following the above, let's export some data from R to an Excel file. This does require an additional package `xlsx`. The following checks for the package (as well as for the `foreign` package, which isn't technically required for this example).

```
requiredPackages <- c("foreign", "xlsx")

bookKeeping <- lapply(requiredPackages, function(nextPackage) {
  print(paste("Next package: ", nextPackage))
  needToInstall <- !(nextPackage %in% rownames(installed.packages()))
  if (needToInstall) {
    print(paste("Need to install: ", nextPackage))
    install.packages(nextPackage)
  }

  require(nextPackage, quietly=TRUE)
})
```

```
## [1] "Next package:  foreign"
## [1] "Next package:  xlsx"
```

Now that we're reasonably sure the required packages are installed and loaded, we can generate some data and write it to a file. In this example we use the first three columns of the built-in `mtcars` data set. (The subsetting here is just to show that the data we end up with is not just an accidental regurgitation of the input.)

```
mtcarsMin <- mtcars[ , c("mpg", "cyl", "disp")]
head(mtcarsMin)
```

```
##           mpg cyl disp
## Mazda RX4    21.0  6  160
## Mazda RX4 Wag 21.0  6  160
## Datsun 710    22.8  4  108
## Hornet 4 Drive 21.4  6  258
## Hornet Sportabout 18.7  8  360
## Valiant      18.1  6  225
```

```
write.xlsx(mtcarsMin, "./carstuff.xlsx")
```

Assuming the above produced no errors, we can check the output file to try to verify that we've made an Excel file. The following is done in the `bash` shell on a linux box.

```
file "./carstuff.xlsx"
```

```
## ./carstuff.xlsx: Microsoft OOXML
```

There is so much meta information in the `xlsx` file that it's hard to do any further verification, but the `oocalc` spreadsheet utility from the LibreOffice suite *does* recognize and display the contents correctly.