Introduction to ggplot2

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BIOF 339

1

Data visualization with ggplot2

What is ggplot2?

- A second (and final) iteration of the ggplot
- Implementation of Wilkerson's Grammar of Graphics in R
- Conceptually, a way to layer different elements onto a canvas to create a data visualization
- Started as Dr. Hadley Wickham's PhD thesis (with Dr. Dianne Cook)
- Won the John M. Chambers Statistical Software Award in 2006

- Mimicked in other software platforms
 - ggplot and seaborn in Python
 - $\circ~\mbox{Translated}$ in plotly

ggplot2 uses the grammar of graphics

A grammar ...

- compose and re-use small parts
- build complex structures from simpler units

of graphics ...

- Think of yourself as a painter
- Build a visualization using layers on a canvas
- Draw layers on top of each other

Introduction to ggplot2

The ggplot2 package is a very flexible and (to me) intuitive way of visualizing data. It is based on the concept of layering elements on a canvas.

This idea of layering graphics on a canvas is, to me, a nice way of building graphs

You need:

- A data.frame object
- Aesthetic mappings (aes) to say what data is used for what purpose in the viz
 - x- and y-direction
 - shapes, colors, lines
- A geometry object (geom) to say what to draw
 - You can "layer" geoms on each other to build plots



A dataset

library(tidyverse)
library(rio)
beaches <- import('.../data/sydneybeaches3.csv')</pre>

	date	year	month	day	season	rainfall	temperature	enterococci	day_num
1	2013-01-02	2013	1	2	1	0.0	23.4	6.7	2
2	2013-01-06	2013	1	6	1	0.0	30.3	2.0	6
3	2013-01-12	2013	1	12	1	0.0	31.4	69.1	12
4	2013-01-18	2013	1	18	1	0.0	46.4	9.0	18
5	2013-01-24	2013	1	24	1	0.0	27.5	33.9	24
6	2013-01-30	2013	1	30	1	0.6	26.6	26.5	30
	month_num	month_	_name s	seaso	on_name				
1	1	Jar	nuary		Summer				
2	1	Jar	nuary		Summer				
3	1	Jar	nuary		Summer				
4	1	Jar	nuary		Summer				
5	1	Jar	nuary		Summer				
6	1	Jai	nuary		Summer				

Credit: D. J. Navarro

Download the sydneybeaches3.csv file from the website and save it in your project's data folder

Building a graph

Start with a blank canvas

ggplot()

Add a data set

ggplot(

data = beaches # Tell ggplot the data you're using

Nothing has really happened yet, since we haven't said what we want to plot from the data set

The # symbol tells R that anything after it is a *comment* and should be ignored. We'll make a lot of use of comments in our code.

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Add a mapping from data to elements



What goes in

- the x and y axes
- the color of markers
- the shape of markers



Add a geometry to draw



What to draw:

- Points, lines
- histogram, bars, pies



Add options for the geom

ggplot(
data = beaches,
mapping = aes(
x = temperature,
y = rainfall
geom_point(size = 4)

Options pertaining to how we want things drawn are usually put in the function for the geometry, e.g. geom_point, geom_line, etc. If the option is based on any element from the dataset, we have to wrap it in a aes() function. We'll see this later



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Add a mapping to modify the geom



Anything data-driven has to be a mapping, driven by the aes function



A side note on aes

The aes function

The aes function and when it needs to be used creates quite a bit of confusion initially. Let's start with the documentation for this function

?aes

Description

Aesthetic mappings describe how variables in the data are mapped to visual properties (aesthetics) of geoms. Aesthetic mappings can be set in ggplot2() and in individual layers.

So, anytime we want to represent some aspect of the data on the plot in some form (color, shape, etc.), we have to use the aes function to *map* the data to the plot

The aes function

The aes function can occur in one of two places:

Within the ggplot function:





In the actual geom layer:





The aes function

The aes function can occur in one of two places:

Within the ggplot function:

• You do this if the same mapping will be common to **all** the subsequent geometry layers

In the actual geom layer:

- You do this if the mapping will apply **only** to that layer
- You do it if it makes more sense to put it in the geom.

Facets / Trellis / Small multiples

Split into facets



Create separate plots based on unique values of some variable (season_name) in your dataset

Typically this variable should a few distinct values



Remove the legend



Now we're getting more into the look of the plot and how much information should be on it

show.legend option is in geom_point here
since it would be based on the colors of the
points. If you had a different geometry like
geom_line, you would put the
show.legend option there if the legend was
based on that geom.



Change the background

```
ggplot(
  data = beaches,
  mapping = aes(
    x = temperature,
    y = rainfall
  )
) +
  geom_point(
    mapping = aes(color = season_name),
    size = 4,
    show.legend = FALSE
  ) +
  facet_wrap( ~ season_name) +
  theme_bw()
```

Again, a look-and-feel choice

In-built ggplot themes are described here. Other themes are availabe via packages ggthemes and others.



Update the labels

```
ggplot(
    data = beaches,
    mapping = aes(
        x = temperature,
        y = rainfall
    )
) +
    geom_point(
        mapping = aes(color = season_name),
        size = 4,
        show.legend = FALSE
    ) +
    facet_wrap( ~ season_name) +
    theme_bw() +
    labs(x = 'Temperature (C)', y = 'Rainfall (mm)')
```

This is **important**. Make sure the information in your plot is self-contained by putting appropriate labels and titles on it.

Add titles

```
ggplot(
  data = beaches,
  mapping = aes(
    x = temperature,
    y = rainfall
  )
) +
  geom_point(
    mapping = aes(color = season_name),
    size = 4,
    show.legend = FALSE
  ) +
  facet_wrap( ~ season_name) +
  theme_bw() +
  labs(x = 'Temperature (C)',
    y = 'Rainfall (mm)',
    title = 'Sydney weather by season',
    subtitle = "Data from 2013 to 2018")
```


Sydney weather by season Data from 2013 to 2018

Customize

```
ggplot(
 data = beaches.
 mapping = aes(
   x = temperature,
   y = rainfall
 geom_point(
   mapping = aes(color = season_name),
   size = 4,
   show.legend = FALSE
  facet_wrap( ~ season_name) +
  theme_bw() +
      subtitle = "Data from 2013 to 2018") +
  theme(axis.title = element_text(size = 14),
       axis.text = element_text(size = 12),
       strip.text = element_text(size = 12))
```


Sydney weather by season Data from 2013 to 2018

Understanding the structure of ggplot

Theme **Coordinates Statistics** Facets Geometries **Aesthetics** Data

The grammar

- Data
- Aesthetics (or aesthetic mappings)
- Geometries (as layers)
- Facets
- Themes
- (Coordinates)
- (Scales)

Data, Aesthetics and Geometries are **required** to actually create a plot

Peeking under the hood

If I write...

```
ggplot(
  data = beaches,
  aes(x = temperature,
      y = rainfall)
) +
  geom_point()
```

what's really run is ...

```
ggplot(
   data = beaches,
   mapping = aes(
        x = temperature, y = rainfall)) +
layer(
     geom = "point",
     stat = "identity",
     position = "identity") +
facet_null() +
theme_grey() +
coord_cartesian() +
scale_x_continuous() +
scale_y_continuous()
```

Each element can be adapted and tweaked to create graphs

Exploring aesthetics, mappings and their uses

Let's start

This is looking at the distribution of enterococci concentration (x-axis) in this dataset

Bacteria growth should depend on temperature....

Can't really parse the seasons out from the graph.

Add some color

This does better distinguish the seasons (and we get a legend as a by-product).

But.... things are too crammed on the left of the plot. This is because the bacterial concentrations are low, with some high values. A transformation may be nice.

A better choice of scale

This makes things a bit clearer, but still a bunch of squiggly lines

A better choice of where to put the color

Things are covered up!

For geometries with "insides", color puts color on the outlines, and fill puts color on the insides.

Let's play peek-a-boo



A bit better, but not great



Let's break things out



A lot clearer!!

There's stuff we don't need now, like the legend Also, can we please make the numbers human-readable



Cleaning up





Fixing the legend ordering





Exploring geometries

Univariate plots

Histograms

ggplot(
 data=dat_spine,
 aes(x = degree_spondylolisthesis))+
 geom_histogram()

`stat_bin()` using `bins = 30`. Pick better value wit

Histograms

ggplot(data=dat_spine, aes(x = degree_spondylolisthesis))+ geom_histogram(bins = 100)

This gives a very different view of the data



Density plots

data=dat_spine, aes(x = degree_spondylolisthesis))+ geom_density()



Density plots

data=dat_spine, aes(x = degree_spondylolisthesis))+ geom_density(adjust = 1/5) # Use 1/5 the bandwidth



Layering geometries





Bar plots (categorical variable)

<pre>dat_brca <- rio::import('/data/clinical_data_breast</pre>
<pre>ggplot(data=dat_brca, aes(x = Tumor))+ geom_bar()</pre>



Bar plots (categorical variable)

<pre>dat_brca <- import('/data/clinical_data_breast_canc</pre>
check.names = T)
ggplot(
data=dat_brca,
aes(x = Tumor,
fill = ER.Status))+
geom_bar()

Add additional information via mapping



Bar plots (categorical variable)

<pre>dat_brca <- import('/data/clinical_data_breast_canc</pre>
check.names = T)
ggplot(
data=dat_brca,
aes(x = Tumor,
fill = ER.Status))+
<pre>geom_bar(position = 'dodge')</pre>
<pre># Default is position = "stack"</pre>

Change the nature of the geometry



Graphing tabulated data

tabulated <- dat_brca %>% count(Tumor)
tabulated

	Tumor	n
1	T1	15
2	T2	65
3	Т3	19
4	T4	6

ggplot(
 data = tabulated,
 aes(x = Tumor, y = n)) +
 geom_bar()

Error: stat_count() can only have an x or y aesthetic

Graphing tabulated data



Here we need to change the default computation

The barplot usually computes the counts (stat_count)

We suppress that here since we have already done the computation



Peeking under the hood

plt <- ggplot(data = tabulated, aes(x = Tumor, y = n)) + geom_bar() plt\$layers [[1]] geom_bar: width = NULL, na.rm = FALSE, orientation = stat_count: width = NULL, na.rm = FALSE, orientation position_stack

plt <- ggplot(
 data = tabulated,
 aes(x = Tumor, y = n)) +
 geom_bar(stat = 'identity')
</pre>

geom_bar: width = NULL, na.rm = FALSE, orientation =
stat_identity: na.rm = FALSE
position_stack

Each layer has a geometry, statistic and position associated with it

Bivariate plots

ggplot(data = beaches, aes(x = date, y = temperature))+ geom_point()

This is great, but the dates are being treated as individual levels, since dates are encoded as characters .

beaches <- beaches %>%
mutate(date1 = as.Date(date))



ggplot(
 data = beaches,
 aes(x = date1, y = temperature))+
 geom_point()



ggplot(
 data = beaches,
 aes(x = date1, y = temperature))+
 geom_line()

If you keep date as a character, you dont see any lines plotted, and get the following warning:

geom_path: Each group consists of only one observation. Do you need to adjust the group aesthetic?

This is cryptic!! This arises since date is a character, gets converted to a factor for plotting, and then R doesn't know how to join lines between factors.



ggplot(
 data = beaches,
 aes(x = date1, y = temperature))+
 geom_point(color='black', size = 3) +
 geom_line(color='red',size=2)

Layer points and lines





Order of laying down geometries matters



Doing some computations



Averages over 75% of the data



Doing some computations



Averages over 10% of the data









Computation is done by groups





Ignore the outlier for now





Only color-code the smoothers

You can change the plot based on where you map the aesthetic





Remove the confidence bands

Maybe a cleaner look



Box Plots





Box Plots





Violin plots





Strip plots



Points are overlayed on each other



Strip plots



Jittering allows all points to be seen

Maybe too much



Strip plots



Jittering allows all points to be seen

Maybe too much


Layers, again





Layers, again





Scales

```
ggplot(
  data = beaches,
  aes(x = date1, y = enterococci)) +
  geom_point()
```

All the action is happening in the bottom bit





Log-transforming an axis can make things easier to see





Making the labels a bit easier to read



Order and orientation

Arrests in the USA in 1973

```
arrests <- import('../data/USArrests.csv')
ggplot(
   data = arrests,
   aes(x = State,
        y = Murder)) +
   geom_bar(stat = 'identity')</pre>
```

This plot is very hard to read

There is no ordering, and states can't be read





We see the pattern, but its still unreadable



Arrests in the USA in 1973



Flipping the axes makes the states readable



Arrests in the USA in 1973

```
arrests <- import('../data/USArrests.csv')
ggplot(
    data = arrests,
    aes(x = fct_reorder(State, Murder), # Order by murd
        y = Murder)) +
    geom_bar(stat = 'identity') +
    labs(x = 'State', y = 'Murder rate') +
    theme_bw() +
    theme(panel.grid.major.y = element_blank(),
        panel.grid.minor.y = element_blank()) +
    coord_flip()</pre>
```

Cleaning it up a little



Color schemes

ggplot comes with a default color scheme. There are several other schemes available

- scale_*_brewer uses the ColorBrewer palettes
- scale_*_gradient uses gradients
- scale_*_distill uses the ColorBrewer palettes, for continuous outcomes

Here * can be color or fill, depending on what you want to color

Note color refers to the outline, and fill refers to the inside







Specifying colors

```
ggplot(
   data = dat_spine,
   aes(x = sacral_slope, y = degree_spondylolisthesis,
      color = class_attribute)) +
   geom_point() +
   geom_smooth(se = F) +
   coord_cartesian(xlim = c(0, 100), ylim = c(0,200))
```



Specifying colors

```
ggplot(
  data = dat_spine,
  aes(x = sacral_slope, y = degree_spondylolisthesis,
      color = class_attribute)) +
  geom_point() +
  geom_smooth(se = F) +
  coord_cartesian(xlim = c(0, 100), ylim = c(0,200))
  scale_color_manual(values = c("Normal"="blue", 'Abn
```



A note on colors

When choosing colors, you should consider issues of accessibility, especially regarding color-blindness





You can create your own custom themes to keep a unified look to your graphs

ggplot comes with

- theme_classic
- theme_bw
- theme_void
- theme_dark
- theme_gray
- theme_light
- theme_minimal







```
my_theme <- function(){
    theme_bw() +
    theme(axis.text = element_text(size = 14),
        axis.title = element_text(size = 16),
        panel.grid.minor = element_blank(),
        strip.text = element_text(size=14),
        strip.background = element_blank())
}
ggplot(
    data = dat_brca,
    aes(x = Tumor))+
    geom_bar() +
    facet_grid(rows = vars(ER.Status),
            cols = vars(PR.Status)) +
    my_theme()</pre>
```

