

How can I read a CSV file from a URL in R? What are some different methods for doing so?

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Reading a CSV file from a URL in R is a common task for data analysts and researchers. This process allows for easy access to data stored in a remote location without the need for downloading and saving the file locally. There are several methods for reading a CSV file from a URL in R, each with its own advantages and limitations. The most common approach is to use the "read.csv()" function, which allows for the direct import of a CSV file from a URL into R. Other methods such as using the "download.file()" function or utilizing packages specifically designed for reading data from URLs, such as the "RCurl" package, are also viable options. Ultimately, the chosen method will depend on the specific needs and preferences of the user.

Read a CSV from a URL in R (3 Methods)

There are three methods you can use to read a CSV file from a URL in R:

Method 1: Use Base R

```
data <- read.csv('https://website.com/data.csv')
```

Method 2: Use data.table Package

```
library(data.table)
```

```
data <- fread('https://website.com/data.csv')
```

Method 3: Use readr Package

```
library(readr)
```

```
data <- read_csv('https://website.com/data.csv')
```

Each method works the same, but the `data.table` and `readr` methods tend to be much quicker if you're reading a large dataset.

The following examples show how to use each method in practice.

Method 1: Use Base R

The following code shows how to import a CSV file from a URL using Base R:

```
#import data from URL
data <- read.csv('https://raw.githubusercontent.com/Statology/Miscellaneous/main/basketball_data.csv')

#view first five rows
head(data)

player assists points
1 A 6 12
2 B 7 19
3 C 14 7
4 D 4 6
5 E 5 10
```

```
#view class of data  
class(data)
```

```
"data.frame"
```

Method 2: Use data.table

The following code shows how to import a CSV file from a URL using the package:

```
library(data.table)
```

```
#import data from URL
```

```
data2 <-  
fread('https://raw.githubusercontent.com/Statology/Miscellaneous/main/basketball_data.csv')
```

```
#view first five rows
```

```
head(data2)
```

```
player assists points
```

```
1: A 6 12
```

```
2: B 7 19
```

```
3: C 14 7
```

```
4: D 4 6
```

```
5: E 5 10
```

#view class of data

class(data2)

"data.table" "data.frame"

Method 3: Use readr

The following code shows how to import a CSV file from a URL using the package:

library(readr)

#import data from URL

data3

<-

fread('https://raw.githubusercontent.com/Statology/Miscellaneous/main/basketball_data.csv')

#view first five rows

head(data3)

player assists points

1 A 6 12

2 B 7 19

3 C 14 7

4 D 4 6

5 E 5 10

#view class of data

class(data3)

"spec_tbl_df" "tbl_df" "tbl" "data.frame"

The following tutorials explain how to import other types of files into R:

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