How can I use the replicate() function in R?

Authored by

stats writer

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The replicate() function in R is a versatile tool that allows users to repeat a specific R expression a certain number of times. This function is useful for tasks such as creating multiple copies of data, running simulations, and testing code performance. By specifying the number of times to replicate and the expression to be repeated, the replicate() function makes it easy to perform repetitive tasks efficiently and accurately. Overall, the replicate() function is an essential tool for data analysis and programming in R.

Use the replicate() Function in R (With Examples)

You can use the replicate() function to repeatedly evaluate some expression in R a certain number of times.

This function uses the following basic syntax:

replicate(n, expr)

where:

n: The number of times to repeatedly evaluate some expression.expr: The expression to evaluate.

The following examples show how to use this function in practice.

Example 1: Replicate a Value Multiple Times

The following code shows how to use the replicate() function to repeatedly evaluate a single value multiple

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times:

#replicate the value 3 exactly 10 times
replicate(n=10, 3)

3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3

#replicate the letter 'A' exactly 7 times
replicate(n=7, 'A')

"A" "A" "A" "A" "A" "A" "A"

#replicate FALSE exactly 5 times
replicate(n=5, FALSE)

FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE FALSE

Example 2: Replicate a Function Multiple Times

Now suppose we'd like to repeatedly evaluate some function.

For example, suppose we use the rnorm() function to produce three values for a that follows a normal distribution with a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1:

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```
#make this example reproducible
set.seed(1)

#generate 3 values that follow normal distribution
rnorm(3, mean=0, sd=1)
```

-0.6264538 0.1836433 -0.8356286

Using the replicate() function, we can repeatedly evaluate this rnorm() function a certain number of times.

For example, we can evaluate this function 5 times:

```
#make this example reproducible
set.seed(1)

#generate 3 values that follow normal distribution (replicate this 4 times)
replicate(n=4, rnorm(3, mean=0, sd=1))
```

1.5952808 0.4874291 -0.3053884 -0.6212406
0.3295078 0.7383247 1.5117812 -2.2146999
-0.8204684 0.5757814 0.3898432 1.1249309

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The result is a matrix with 3 rows and 4 columns.

#make this example reproducible
set.seed(1)

#generate 3 values that follow normal distribution (replicate this 6 times)
replicate(n=6, rnorm(3, mean=0, sd=1))

1.5952808 0.4874291 -0.3053884 -0.6212406 -0.04493361 0.8212212
0.3295078 0.7383247 1.5117812 -2.2146999 -0.01619026 0.5939013
-0.8204684 0.5757814 0.3898432 1.1249309 0.94383621 0.9189774

The result is a matrix with 6 rows and 3 columns.

Using replicate() to Simulate Data

The replicate() function is particularly useful for running simulations.

For example, suppose we'd like to generate 5 samples of size n = 10 that each follow a normal distribution.

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We can use the replicate() function to produce 5 different samples and we can then use the colMeans() function to find the mean value of each sample:

```
#make this example reproducible
set.seed(1)

#create 5 samples each of size n=10
data <- replicate(n=5, rnorm(10, mean=0, sd=1))

#view samples
data

          [,1]        [,2]       [,3]        [,4]       [,5]
 -0.6264538  1.51178117 0.91897737  1.35867955 -0.1645236
  0.1836433  0.38984324 0.78213630 -0.10278773 -0.2533617
 -0.8356286 -0.62124058 0.07456498  0.38767161  0.6969634
  1.5952808 -2.21469989 -1.98935170 -0.05380504  0.5566632
  0.3295078  1.12493092 0.61982575 -1.37705956 -0.6887557
 -0.8204684 -0.04493361 -0.05612874 -0.41499456 -0.7074952
```

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0.4874291 -0.01619026 -0.15579551 -0.39428995 0.3645820
0.7383247 0.94383621 -1.47075238 -0.05931340 0.7685329
0.5757814 0.82122120 -0.47815006 1.10002537 -0.1123462
-0.3053884 0.59390132 0.41794156 0.76317575 0.8811077

#calculate mean of each sample
colMeans(data)

0.1322028 0.2488450 -0.1336732 0.1207302 0.1341367

From the output we can see:

The mean of the first sample is 0.1322.The mean of the second sample is 0.2488.The mean of the third sample is -0.1337.

And so on.

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