How do I use the readLines() function in R, and what are some examples of its usage?

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June 29, 2024

The readLines() function in R is a convenient way to read and store lines of data from a file into a character vector. It is commonly used for importing text files or datasets into R for further analysis and manipulation. To use the function, simply specify the file path or URL of the file you want to read as the argument. The function will then automatically read and store each line of the file as an element in the character vector. Some examples of its usage include reading a CSV file containing a list of names and storing them in a vector, or reading a text file containing a series of numbers and converting them into a numeric vector. Overall, the readLines() function is a useful tool for efficiently importing and organizing data in R.

Use readLines() Function in R (With Examples)

The readLines() function in R can be used to read some or all text lines from a connection object.

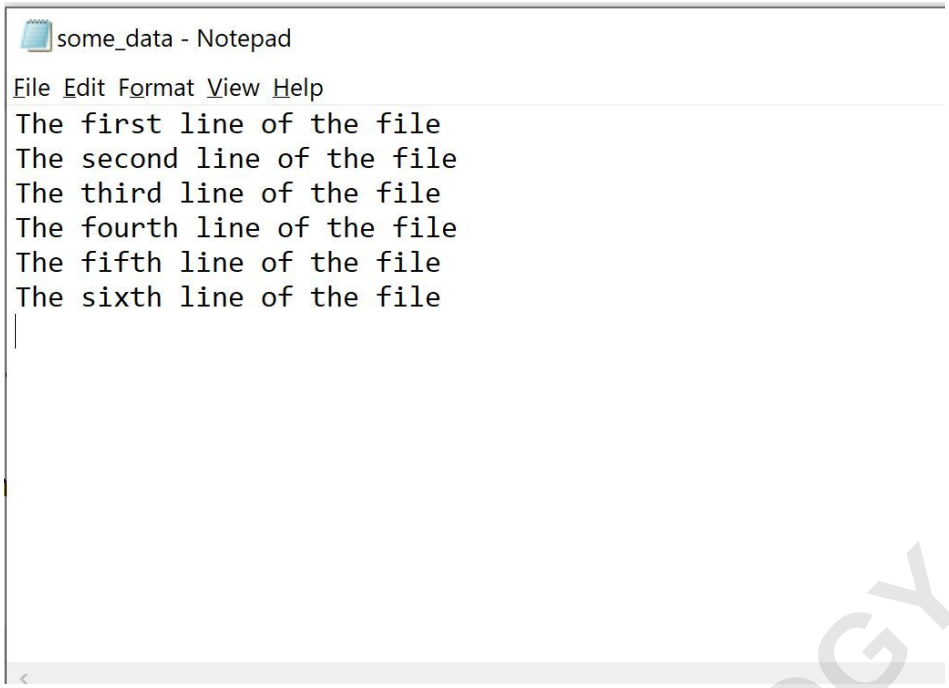
This function uses the following syntax:

readLines(con, n=-1L)

where:

con: A connection object or character stringn: The maximum number of lines to read. Default is to read all lines.

The following examples show how to use this function in practice with the following text file called some_data.txt:



Example 1: Use readLines() to Read All Lines from Text File

Suppose the text file is saved in my Documents folder on my computer.

I can use the following readLines() function to read each line from this text file:

```
#read every line from some_data.txt
readLines("C:/Users/Bob/Documents/some_data.txt")
```

```
"The first line of the file" "The second line of the file"
"The third line of the file" "The fourth line of the file"
"The fifth line of the file" "The sixth line of the file"
```

The text file contains 6 lines, so the readLines() function produces a character vector of length 6.

If I'd like, I can save the lines from the text file in a data frame instead:

```
#read every line from some_data.txt
my_data <- readLines("C:/Users/Bob/Documents/some_data.txt")

#create data frame
df = data.frame(values=my_data)

#view data frame
df

values
1 The first line of the file
2 The second line of the file
3 The third line of the file
4 The fourth line of the file
5 The fifth line of the file
6 The sixth line of the file
```

The result is a data frame with one column and six

rows.

Example 2: Use readLines() to Read First N Lines from Text File

Once again suppose the text file is saved in my Documents folder on my computer.

```
#read first 4 lines from some_data.txt
readLines("C:/Users/Bob/Documents/some_data.txt", n=4)

"The first line of the file" "The second line of the file"
"The third line of the file" "The fourth line of the file"
```

The readLines() function produces a character vector of length 4.

I can also use brackets to access a specific line from this text file.

For example, I can use the following code to access just the second line from the character vector:

```
#read first 4 lines from some_data.txt
my_data <-
readLines("C:/Users/Bob/Documents/some_data.txt",
```

n=4)

#display second line only
my_data

"The second line of the file"

Additional Resources

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