

# How to Easily Read a CSV File From a URL in R

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## RECOMMENDED CITATION

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In R, there are three main methods for reading a CSV from a URL: using the `read.csv` function, using the `RCurl` package, and using the `curl` package. The `read.csv` function is the simplest approach, while the `RCurl` and `curl` packages offer more advanced options and are useful for more complex data sets. All three methods allow you to quickly and easily read a CSV from a URL directly into R.

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/arabpsychology/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/arabpsychology/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/arabpsychology/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: