

How to Select Random Rows in R Using dplyr

Authored by
stats writer

November 29, 2025

RECOMMENDED CITATION

stats writer (2025). *How to Select Random Rows in R Using dplyr*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=101814>

When using the dplyr package in R, you can select random rows by using the `sample_frac()` function. This function requires two arguments: the data frame from which to select the rows and the fraction of rows to sample. By setting the fraction to a value between 0 and 1, you can select a random sample from the data frame. For example, `sample_frac(df, 0.5)` will randomly select half of the rows from the data frame `df`.

You can use the following methods to select random rows from a data frame in R using functions from the package:

Method 1: Select Random Number of Rows

`df %>% sample_n(5)`

This function randomly selects **5** rows from the data frame.

Method 2: Select Random Fraction of Rows

`df %>% sample_frac(.25)`

This function randomly selects **25%** of all rows from the data frame.

The following examples show how to use each method in practice with the following data frame in R:

`#create data frame`

```
df <- data.frame(team=c('A', 'B', 'C', 'D', 'E', 'F', 'G', 'H'),
  points=c(10, 10, 8, 6, 15, 15, 12, 12),
  rebounds=c(8, 8, 4, 3, 10, 11, 7, 7))
```

`#view data frame`

`df`

team points rebounds

1 A 10 8

2 B 10 8

3 C 8 4

4 D 6 3

5 E 15 10

6 F 15 11

7 G 12 7

8 H 12 7

Example 1: Select Random Number of Rows

We can use the following code to randomly select **5** rows from the data frame:

```
library(dplyr)
```

```
#randomly select 5 rows from data frame
```

```
df %>% sample_n(5)
```

```
team points rebounds
```

```
1 F 15 11
```

```
2 A 10 8
```

```
3 D 6 3
```

```
4 G 12 7
```

```
5 B 10 8
```

Notice that five rows are randomly selected from the data frame.

Example 2: Select Random Fraction of Rows

We can use the following code to randomly select **25%** of all rows from the data frame:

```
library(dplyr)
```

```
#randomly select 25% of all rows from data frame
```

```
df %>% sample_frac(.25)
```

```
team points rebounds
```

```
1 E 15 10
```

```
2 G 12 7
```

Since the original data frame had 8 total values, 25% of 8 is equal to 2.

Note: You can find the complete documentation for the **sample_n** and **sample_frac** functions in dplyr .

The following tutorials explain how to perform other common operations in dplyr: