

# What is the cause of the error “unused arguments” when using the “Fix” function in R?

Authored by  
**stats writer**

May 4, 2024

## RECOMMENDED CITATION

stats writer (2024). *What is the cause of the error “unused arguments” when using the “Fix” function in R?*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=142686>

The error "unused arguments" occurs when using the "Fix" function in R when there are extra arguments provided that are not used in the function. This can happen when the user inputs more arguments than the function requires, or when the arguments provided do not match the required format. This error helps to identify and correct any unnecessary or incorrect arguments, ensuring the proper functioning of the "Fix" function in R.

## Fix in R: error in select unused arguments

One error you may encounter in R is:

**Error in select(., cyl, mpg) : unused arguments (cyl, mpg)**

This error occurs when you attempt to use the `select()` function from the `dplyr` package in R but also have the `MASS` package loaded.

When this occurs, R attempts to use the `select()` function from the `MASS` package instead and an error is produced.

This tutorial shares exactly how to fix this error.

How to Reproduce the Error

Suppose we attempt to run the following code to summarize a variable in the `mtcars` dataset in R:

```
library(dplyr)
```

```
library(MASS)
```

```
#find average mpg grouped by 'cyl'
```

```
mtcars %>%
```

```
select(cyl, mpg) %>%
```

```
group_by(cyl) %>%
```

```
summarize(avg_mpg = mean(mpg))
```

```
Error in select(., cyl, mpg) : unused arguments (cyl, mpg)
```

An error occurs because the `select()` function from the MASS package clashes with the `select()` function from the dplyr package.

How to Fix the Error

The easiest way to fix this error is to explicitly tell R to use the `select()` function from the dplyr package by using the following code:

```
library(dplyr)
```

```
library(MASS)
```

```
#find average mpg grouped by 'cyl'
```

```
mtcars %>%  
dplyr::select(cyl, mpg) %>%  
group_by(cyl) %>%  
summarize(avg_mpg = mean(mpg))
```

```
# A tibble: 3 x 2
```

```
cyl avg_mpg
```

```
1 4 26.7
```

```
2 6 19.7
```

```
3 8 15.1
```

The code successfully runs because `dplyr::select` explicitly tells R to use the `select()` function from the `dplyr` package instead of the `MASS` package.

The following tutorials explain how to troubleshoot other common errors in R:

**[How to Fix in R: longer object length is not a multiple of shorter object length](#)**