

Why am I getting the error “non-character argument” in `strsplit(unitspec, ” “)`?

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The error "non-character argument" in the function `strsplit(unitspec, " ")` occurs when the argument passed to the function is not a character type. This function is designed to split a string into separate elements based on a specified delimiter, and it requires the input to be a character type. If the argument is not a character type, the function will not be able to perform the splitting operation and will return an error. To resolve this error, the input argument must be converted to a character type before being passed to the `strsplit` function.

Fix: error in strsplit(unitspec, " ") : non-character argument

One error you may encounter in R is:

Error in strsplit(df\$my_column, split = "1") : non-character argument

This error usually occurs when you attempt to use the `strsplit()` function in R to split up a string, yet the object you're working with is not a string.

This tutorial shares exactly how to fix this error.

How to Reproduce the Error

Suppose we have the following data frame in R:

#create data frame

```
df <- data.frame(team=c('A', 'B', 'C'),  
points=c(91910, 14015, 120215))
```

```
#view data frame  
df
```

```
team points  
1 A 91910  
2 B 14015  
3 C 120215
```

Now suppose we attempt to use the `strsplit()` function to split the values in the "points" column based on where the number 1 occurs:

```
#attempt to split values in points column  
strsplit(df$points, split="1")
```

```
Error in strsplit(df$points, split = "1") : non-character  
argument
```

We receive an error because the variable "points" is not a character.

We can confirm this by checking the class of this variable:

```
#display class of "points" variable
```

```
class(df$points) "numeric"
```

We can see that this variable has a class of numeric.

How to Fix the Error

The way to fix this error is to use `as.character()` to convert the "points" variable to a character before attempting to use the `strsplit()` function:

```
#split values in points column based on where 1  
appears  
strsplit(as.character(df$points), split="1")
```

```
]  
"9" "9" "0"
```

```
]  
"" "40" "5"
```

```
]  
"" "202" "5"
```

This time we're able to successfully split each value in the "points" column because we first used the `as.character()` function to convert "points" to a

character.

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

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