

Changes in R

by the R Core Team

New features in version 1.3.1

- `message-examples` is now a Perl script and about 50x faster.
- On Unix(-like) systems the default pager is now determined during configuration, and is 'less' if available, otherwise 'more' (and not 'more -s' as previously).
- `configure` now tests for `strptime` functions that fail on inputs before 1970 (found on Irix). It no longer checks for the `SCSL` and `SGIMATH` libraries on Irix.
- New formula interface to `cor.test()` in package `ctest`.
- "NA" is now a valid color name (as NA has been a valid integer color).
- `pairs()` function has a new 'gap' argument for adjusting the spacing between panels.
- R CMD check has a new test for unbalanced braces in Rd files.
- `readBin()` has a new argument 'signed' to simplify reading unsigned 8- and 16-bit integers.
- New `capabilities()` option "cledit".

- Modified restore code to give clearer error messages in some cases.

New development model

Previously, there were two development versions of R: one for fixing bugs in the current release ('stable') and one for adding new features ('unstable'). This two-tier model, which has been successful for some open source projects, did not optimally meet the needs of the R Core development team. Hence, as of the release of R 1.3.1, there are now three development versions of R, working towards the next patch ('r-patched'), minor ('r-devel'), and major ('r-ng') releases of R, respectively. Version r-patched is for bug fixes mostly. New features are typically introduced in r-devel. Version r-ng will eventually become the next generation of R. The three versions correspond to the R 'major.minor.patchlevel' numbering scheme.

Personalia

Martyn Plummer, already a key contributor to the R project and in particular maintainer of the Red-Hat i386 GNU/Linux binary distribution and add-on package `codas`, has taken over as maintainer of the R GNOME interface.

Editors:

Kurt Hornik & Friedrich Leisch
 Institut für Statistik und Wahrscheinlichkeitstheorie
 Technische Universität Wien
 Wiedner Hauptstraße 8-10/1071
 A-1040 Wien, Austria

Editor Programmer's Niche:

Bill Venables

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<http://www.R-project.org/>

Email of editors and editorial board:

firstname.lastname@R-project.org

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