

Package ‘rapply’

May 9, 2026

Type Package

Title Revisiting Base Rapply

Version 1.2.8

Date 2025-11-24

Description The minimal 'rapply'-package contains a single function `rapply()`, providing an extended implementation of 'R'-base `rapply()` by allowing to recursively apply a function to elements of a nested list based on a general condition function and including the possibility to prune or aggregate nested list elements from the result. In addition, special arguments can be supplied to access the name, location, parents and siblings in the nested list of the element under evaluation. The `rapply()` function builds upon `rapply()`'s native 'C' implementation and requires no other package dependencies.

BugReports <https://github.com/JorisChau/rapply/issues>

URL <https://jorischau.github.io/rapply/>,
<https://github.com/JorisChau/rapply>

Depends R (>= 3.5)

Encoding UTF-8

License LGPL-3

LazyData true

RoxygenNote 7.3.2

NeedsCompilation yes

Author Joris Chau [aut, cre]

Maintainer Joris Chau <joris.chau@openanalytics.eu>

Repository CRAN

Date/Publication 2025-11-25 11:30:02 UTC

Contents

pokedex	2
renewable_energy_by_country	3
rapply	3

pokedex *Pokedex of Pokemon GO*

Description

A nested list containing property values of the original 151 Pokemon present in Pokemon GO. The data is available in JSON format from GitHub (credits to Gianluca Bonifazi).

Usage

pokedex

Format

A nested list containing 151 sublists with up to 17 list elements:

id integer, Identification number

num character, Pokemon number in official Pokedex

name character, Pokemon name

img character, URL to png image of the Pokemon

type character, Pokemon type

height character, Pokemon height

weight character, Pokemon weight

candy character, type of candy used to evolve Pokemon or given when transfered

candy_count integer, amount of candies required to evolve

egg character, travel distance to hatch the egg

spawn_change numeric, spawn change percentage

avg_spawns integer, number of spawns per 10.000 spawns

spawn_time character, local time at which spawns are most active

multipliers numeric, multiplier of Combat Power (CP) after evolution

weakness character, types of Pokemon this Pokemon is weak to

next_evolution list, numbers (num) and names (name) with successive evolutions

prev_evolution list, numbers (num) and names (name) with previous evolutions

Source

[PokemonGO-Pokedex](#)

`renewable_energy_by_country`*UNSD renewable energy share by country in 2016*

Description

A nested list containing renewable energy shares as a percentage in the total energy consumption per country in 2016. The dataset is publicly available at the United Nations Open SDG Data Hub.

Usage`renewable_energy_by_country`**Format**

The 249 countries and areas are structured as a nested list based on their geographical location according to the United Nations M49 Standard ([UNSD-M49](#)). The numeric values listed for each country or area are percentages, if no data is available the value is NA. Each list element contains an "M49-code" attribute with the UN Standard Country or Area Codes for Statistical Use (Series M, No. 49).

Source[UNSD_SDG07](#)

`rrapply`*Reimplementation of base-R's rapply*

Description

`rrapply` is a reimplemented and extended version of `rapply` to recursively apply a function `f` to a set of elements of a list and deciding *how* the result is structured.

Usage

```
rrapply(  
  object,  
  condition,  
  f,  
  classes = "ANY",  
  deflt = NULL,  
  how = c("replace", "list", "unlist", "prune", "flatten", "melt", "bind", "recurse",  
    "unmelt", "names"),  
  options,  
  ...  
)
```

Arguments

object	a list , expression vector, or call object, i.e., “list-like”.
condition	a condition function of one “principal” argument and optional special arguments <code>.xname</code> , <code>.xpos</code> , <code>.xparents</code> and/or <code>.xsiblings</code> (see ‘Details’), passing further arguments via <code>...</code> .
f	a function of one “principal” argument and optional special arguments <code>.xname</code> , <code>.xpos</code> , <code>.xparents</code> and/or <code>.xsiblings</code> (see ‘Details’), passing further arguments via <code>...</code> .
classes	character vector of class names, or “ANY” to match the class of any terminal node. Include “list” or “data.frame” to match the class of non-terminal nodes as well.
deflt	the default result (only used if <code>how = “list”</code> or <code>how = “unlist”</code>).
how	character string partially matching the ten possibilities given: see ‘Details’.
options	a named list with additional options <code>namesep</code> , <code>simplify</code> , <code>namecols</code> and/or <code>coldepth</code> that only apply to certain choices of <code>how</code> : see ‘Details’.
...	additional arguments passed to the call to <code>f</code> and <code>condition</code> .

Value

If `how = “unlist”`, a vector as in `rapply`. If `how = “list”`, `how = “replace”`, `how = “recurse”` or `how = “names”`, “list-like” of similar structure as `object` as in `rapply`. If `how = “prune”`, a pruned “list-like” object of similar structure as `object` with pruned list elements based on `classes` and `condition`. If `how = “flatten”`, a flattened pruned vector or list with pruned elements based on `classes` and `condition`. If `how = “melt”`, a melted data.frame containing the node paths and values of the pruned list elements based on `classes` and `condition`. If `how = “bind”`, a wide data.frame with repeated list elements expanded as single data.frame rows and aligned by identical list names using the same coercion rules as `how = “unlist”`. The repeated list elements are subject to pruning based on `classes` and `condition`. If `how = “unmelt”`, a nested list with list names and values defined in the data.frame object.

How to structure result

In addition to `rapply`’s modes to set `how` equal to “replace”, “list” or “unlist”, seven choices “prune”, “flatten”, “melt”, “bind”, “unmelt”, “recurse” and “names” are available:

- `how = “prune”` filters all list elements not subject to application of `f` from the list object. The original list structure is retained, similar to the non-pruned options `how = “replace”` or `how = “list”`.
- `how = “flatten”` is an efficient way to return a flattened unnested version of the pruned list. By default `how = “flatten”` uses similar coercion rules as `how = “unlist”`, this can be disabled with `simplify = FALSE` in the options argument.
- `how = “melt”` returns a melted data.frame of the pruned list, each row contains the path of a single terminal node in the pruned list at depth layers `L1`, `L2`, and so on. The column “value” contains the possibly coerced values at the terminal nodes and is equivalent to the result of `how = “flatten”`. If no list names are present, the node names in the data.frame default to the indices of the list elements “1”, “2”, etc.

- `how = "bind"` is used to unnest a nested list containing repeated sublists into a wide data.frame. Each repeated sublist is expanded as a single row in the data.frame and identical sublist component names are aligned as individual columns. By default, the list layer containing repeated sublists is identified based on the minimal depth detected across leaf nodes, this can be set manually with `coldepth` in the options argument.
- `how = "unmelt"` is a special case that reconstructs a nested list from a melted data.frame. For this reason, `how = "unmelt"` only applies to data.frames in the same format as returned by `how = "melt"`. Internally, `how = "unmelt"` first reconstructs a nested list from the melted data.frame and second uses the same functional framework as `how = "replace"`.
- `how = "recurse"` is a specialized option that is only useful in combination with e.g. `classes = "list"` to recurse further into updated "list-like" elements. This is explained in more detail below.
- `how = "names"` modifies the *names* of the nested list elements instead of the list content. `how = "names"` internally works similar to `how = "list"`, except that the value of `f` is used to replace the name of the list element under evaluation instead of its content.

Condition function

Both `rapply` and `rapply` allow to apply `f` to list elements of certain classes via the `classes` argument. `rapply` generalizes this concept via an additional `condition` argument, which accepts any function to use as a condition or predicate to select list elements to which `f` is applied. Conceptually, the `f` function is applied to all list elements for which the `condition` function exactly evaluates to `TRUE` similar to `isTRUE`. If the `condition` function is missing, `f` is applied to all list elements. Since the `condition` function generalizes the `classes` argument, it is allowed to use the `deflt` argument together with `how = "list"` or `how = "unlist"` to set a default value to all list elements for which the `condition` does not evaluate to `TRUE`.

Correct use of ...

The principal argument of the `f` and `condition` functions evaluates to the content of the list element. Any further arguments to `f` and `condition` (besides the special arguments `.xname`, `.xpos`, etc. discussed below) supplied via the `dots ...` argument need to be defined as function arguments in *both* the `f` and `condition` function (if existing), even if they are not used in the function itself. See also the 'Examples' section.

Special arguments `.xname`, `.xpos`, `.xparents` and `.xsiblings`

The `f` and `condition` functions accept four special arguments `.xname`, `.xpos`, `.xparents` and `.xsiblings` in addition to the first principal argument. The `.xname` argument evaluates to the name of the list element. The `.xpos` argument evaluates to the position of the element in the nested list structured as an integer vector. That is, if `x = list(list("y", "z"))`, then an `.xpos` location of `c(1, 2)` corresponds to the list element `x[[c(1, 2)]]`. The `.xparents` argument evaluates to a vector of all parent node names in the path to the list element. The `.xsiblings` argument evaluates to the complete (sub)list that includes the list element as a direct child. The names `.xname`, `.xpos`, `.xparents` or `.xsiblings` need to be explicitly included as function arguments in `f` and `condition` (in addition to the principal argument). See also the 'Examples' section.

Avoid recursing into list nodes

By default, `rapply` recurses into any “list-like” element. If `classes = "list"`, this behavior is overridden and the `f` function is also applied to any list element of object that satisfies condition. For expression objects, use `classes = "language"`, `classes = "expression"` or `classes = "pairlist"` to avoid recursing into branches of the abstract syntax tree of object. If the condition or classes arguments are not satisfied for a “list-like” element, `rapply` will recurse further into the sublist, apply the `f` function to the nodes that satisfy condition and classes, and so on. Note that this behavior can only be triggered using the `classes` argument and not the `condition` argument.

Recursive list node updating

If `classes = "list"` and `how = "recurse"`, `rapply` applies the `f` function to any list element of object that satisfies condition similar to the previous section using `how = "replace"`, but recurses further into the *updated* list-like element after application of the `f` function. A primary use of `how = "recurse"` in combination with `classes = "list"` is to recursively update for instance the class or other attributes of all nodes in a nested list.

Avoid recursing into data.frames

If `classes = "ANY"` (default), `rapply` recurses into all “list-like” objects equivalent to `rapply`. Since `data.frames` are “list-like” objects, the `f` function will descend into the individual columns of a `data.frame`. To avoid this behavior, set `classes = "data.frame"`, in which case the `f` and condition functions are applied directly to the `data.frame` and not its columns. Note that this behavior can only be triggered using the `classes` argument and not the `condition` argument.

List attributes

In `rapply` intermediate list attributes (not located at terminal nodes) are kept when `how = "replace"`, but are dropped when `how = "list"`. To avoid unexpected behavior, `rapply` always preserves intermediate list attributes when using `how = "replace"`, `how = "list"`, `how = "prune"` or `how = "names"`. If `how = "unlist"`, `how = "flatten"`, `how = "melt"` or `how = "bind"` intermediate list attributes cannot be preserved as the result is no longer a nested list.

Expressions

Call objects and expression vectors are also accepted as object argument, which are treated as nested lists based on their internal abstract syntax trees. As such, all functionality that applies to nested lists extends directly to call objects and expression vectors. If object is a call object or expression vector, `how = "replace"` always maintains the type of object, whereas `how = "list"` returns the result structured as a nested list. `how = "prune"`, `how = "flatten"` and `how = "melt"` return the pruned abstract syntax tree as: a nested list, a flattened list and a melted `data.frame` respectively. This is identical to application of `rapply` to the abstract syntax tree formatted as a nested list.

Additional options

The `options` argument accepts a named list to configure several default options that only apply to certain choices of `how`. The `options` list can contain (any of) the named components `namesep`, `simplify`, `namecols` and/or `coldepth`:

- `namesep`, a character separator used to combine parent and child list names in `how = "flatten"` and `how = "bind"`. If `namesep = NA` (default), no parent names are included in `how = "flatten"` and the default separator `"."` is used in `how = "bind"`. Note that `namesep` cannot be used with `how = "unlist"` for which the name separator always defaults to `"."`.
- `simplify`, a logical value indicating whether the flattened unnested list in `how = "flatten"` and `how = "melt"` is simplified according to standard coercion rules similar to `how = "unlist"`. The default is `simplify = TRUE`. If `simplify = FALSE`, object is flattened to a single-layer list and returned as is.
- `namecols`, a logical value that only applies to `how = "bind"` indicating whether the parent node names associated to the each expanded sublist should be included as columns `L1`, `L2`, etc. in the wide `data.frame` returned by `how = "bind"`.
- `coldepth`, an integer value indicating the depth (starting from depth 1) at which list elements should be mapped to individual columns in the wide `data.frame` returned by `how = "bind"`. If `coldepth = 0` (default), this depth layer is identified automatically based on the minimal depth detected across all leaf nodes. This option only applies to `how = "bind"`.

Note

`rapply` allows the `f` function argument to be missing, in which case no function is applied to the list elements.

`how = "unmelt"` requires as input a `data.frame` as returned by `how = "melt"` with character columns to name the nested list components and a final list- or vector-column containing the values of the nested list elements.

See Also

[rapply](#)

Examples

```
# Example data

## Renewable energy shares per country (% of total consumption) in 2016
data("renewable_energy_by_country")

## Renewable energy shares in Oceania
renewable_oceania <- renewable_energy_by_country[["World"]][["Oceania"]]

## Pokemon properties in Pokemon GO
data("pokedex")

# List pruning and unnesting

## Drop logical NA's while preserving list structure
na_drop_oceania <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  f = function(x) x,
  classes = "numeric",
  how = "prune"
)
```

```

str(na_drop_oceania, list.len = 3, give.attr = FALSE)

## Drop logical NA's and return unnested list
na_drop_oceania2 <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  classes = "numeric",
  how = "flatten"
)
head(na_drop_oceania2, n = 10)

## Flatten to simple list with full names
na_drop_oceania3 <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  classes = "numeric",
  how = "flatten",
  options = list(namesep = ".", simplify = FALSE)
)
str(na_drop_oceania3, list.len = 10, give.attr = FALSE)

## Drop logical NA's and return melted data.frame
na_drop_oceania4 <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  classes = "numeric",
  how = "melt"
)
head(na_drop_oceania4)

## Reconstruct nested list from melted data.frame
na_drop_oceania5 <- rapply(
  na_drop_oceania4,
  how = "unmelt"
)
str(na_drop_oceania5, list.len = 3, give.attr = FALSE)

## Unnest list to wide data.frame
pokedex_wide <- rapply(pokedex, how = "bind")
head(pokedex_wide)

## Unnest to data.frame including parent columns
pokemon_evolution <- rapply(
  pokedex,
  how = "bind",
  options = list(namecols = TRUE, coldepth = 5)
)
head(pokemon_evolution, n = 10)

# Condition function

## Drop all NA elements using condition function
na_drop_oceania6 <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  condition = Negate(is.na),
  how = "prune"
)

```

```
)
str(na_drop_oceania6, list.len = 3, give.attr = FALSE)

## Replace NA elements by a new value via the ... argument
## NB: the 'newvalue' argument should be present as function
## argument in both 'f' and 'condition', even if unused.
na_zero_oceania <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  condition = function(x, newvalue) is.na(x),
  f = function(x, newvalue) newvalue,
  newvalue = 0,
  how = "replace"
)
str(na_zero_oceania, list.len = 3, give.attr = FALSE)

## Filter all countries with values above 85%
renewable_energy_above_85 <- rapply(
  renewable_energy_by_country,
  condition = function(x) x > 85,
  how = "prune"
)
str(renewable_energy_above_85, give.attr = FALSE)

# Special arguments .xname, .xpos, .xparents and .xsiblings

## Apply a function using the name of the node
renewable_oceania_text <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  condition = Negate(is.na),
  f = function(x, .xname) sprintf("Renewable energy in %s: %.2f%%", .xname, x),
  how = "flatten"
)
head(renewable_oceania_text, n = 10)

## Extract values based on country names
renewable_benelux <- rapply(
  renewable_energy_by_country,
  condition = function(x, .xname) .xname %in% c("Belgium", "Netherlands", "Luxembourg"),
  how = "prune"
)
str(renewable_benelux, give.attr = FALSE)

## Filter European countries with value above 50%
renewable_europe_above_50 <- rapply(
  renewable_energy_by_country,
  condition = function(x, .xpos) identical(.xpos[c(1, 2)], c(1L, 5L)) & x > 50,
  how = "prune"
)
str(renewable_europe_above_50, give.attr = FALSE)

## Filter European countries with value above 50%
renewable_europe_above_50 <- rapply(
  renewable_energy_by_country,
```

```

    condition = function(x, .xparents) "Europe" %in% .xparents & x > 50,
    how = "prune"
  )
  str(renewable_europe_above_50, give.attr = FALSE)

## Return position of Sweden in list
(xpos_sweden <- rapply(
  renewable_energy_by_country,
  condition = function(x, .xname) identical(.xname, "Sweden"),
  f = function(x, .xpos) .xpos,
  how = "flatten"
))
renewable_energy_by_country[[xpos_sweden$Sweden]]

## Return neighbors of Sweden in list
siblings_sweden <- rapply(
  renewable_energy_by_country,
  condition = function(x, .xsiblings) "Sweden" %in% names(.xsiblings),
  how = "flatten"
)
head(siblings_sweden, n = 10)

## Unnest selected columns in Pokedex list
pokedex_small <- rapply(
  pokedex,
  condition = function(x, .xpos, .xname) length(.xpos) < 4 & .xname %in% c("num", "name", "type"),
  how = "bind"
)
head(pokedex_small)

# Modifying list elements

## Calculate mean value of Europe
rapply(
  renewable_energy_by_country,
  condition = function(x, .xname) .xname == "Europe",
  f = function(x) mean(unlist(x), na.rm = TRUE),
  classes = "list",
  how = "flatten"
)

## Calculate mean value for each continent
## (Antarctica's value is missing)
renewable_continent_summary <- rapply(
  renewable_energy_by_country,
  condition = function(x, .xpos) length(.xpos) == 2,
  f = function(x) mean(unlist(x), na.rm = TRUE),
  classes = "list"
)
str(renewable_continent_summary, give.attr = FALSE)

## Filter country or region by M49-code
rapply(

```

```

    renewable_energy_by_country,
    condition = function(x) attr(x, "M49-code") == "155",
    f = function(x, .xname) .xname,
    classes = c("list", "ANY"),
    how = "unlist"
  )

# Recursive list updating

## Recursively remove list attributes
renewable_no_attrs <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  f = function(x) c(x),
  classes = c("list", "ANY"),
  how = "recurse"
)
str(renewable_no_attrs, list.len = 3, give.attr = TRUE)

## recursively replace all names by M49-codes
renewable_m49_names <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  f = function(x) attr(x, "M49-code"),
  how = "names"
)
str(renewable_m49_names, list.len = 3, give.attr = FALSE)

# List attributes

## how = "list" preserves all list attributes
na_drop_oceania_attr <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  f = function(x) replace(x, is.na(x), 0),
  how = "list"
)
str(na_drop_oceania_attr, max.level = 2)

## how = "prune" also preserves list attributes
na_drop_oceania_attr2 <- rapply(
  renewable_oceania,
  condition = Negate(is.na),
  how = "prune"
)
str(na_drop_oceania_attr2, max.level = 2)

# Expressions

## Replace logicals by integers
call_old <- quote(y <- x <- 1 + TRUE)
call_new <- rapply(call_old,
  f = as.numeric,
  how = "replace",
  classes = "logical"
)

```

```
str(call_new)

## Update and decompose call object
call_ast <- rrapply(call_old,
  f = function(x) ifelse(is.logical(x), as.numeric(x), x),
  how = "list"
)
str(call_ast)

## Prune and decompose expression
expr <- expression(y <- x <- 1, f(g(2 * pi)))
is_new_name <- function(x) !exists(as.character(x), envir = baseenv())
expr_prune <- rrapply(expr,
  classes = "name",
  condition = is_new_name,
  how = "prune"
)
str(expr_prune)

## Prune and flatten expression
expr_flatten <- rrapply(expr,
  classes = "name",
  condition = is_new_name,
  how = "flatten"
)
str(expr_flatten)

## Prune and melt expression
rrapply(expr,
  classes = "name",
  condition = is_new_name,
  f = as.character,
  how = "melt"
)

## Avoid recursing into call objects
rrapply(
  expr,
  classes = "language",
  condition = function(x) !any(sapply(x, is.call)),
  how = "flatten"
)
```

Index

* datasets

pokedex, 2

renewable_energy_by_country, 3

call, 4

class, 4

expression, 4

function, 4

isTRUE, 5

list, 4

pokedex, 2

rapply, 3–7

renewable_energy_by_country, 3

rrapply, 3