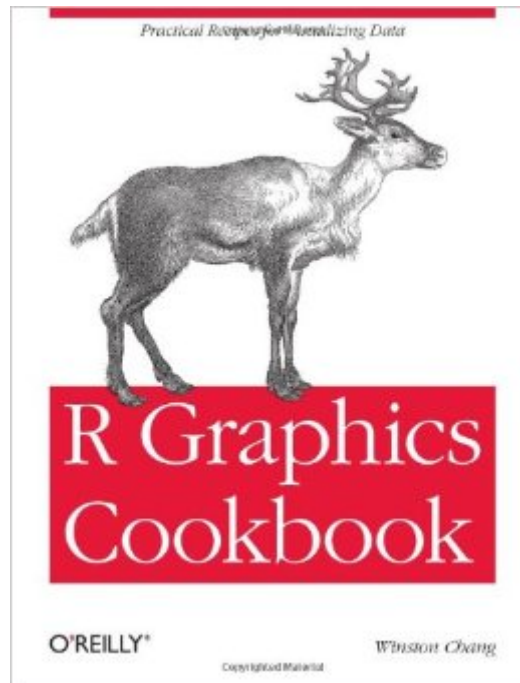


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# R Graphics Cookbook



## Synopsis

This practical guide provides more than 150 recipes to help you generate high-quality graphs quickly, without having to comb through all the details of R's graphing systems. Each recipe tackles a specific problem with a solution you can apply to your own project, and includes a discussion of how and why the recipe works. Most of the recipes use the ggplot2 package, a powerful and flexible way to make graphs in R. If you have a basic understanding of the R language, you're ready to get started. Use R's default graphics for quick exploration of data. Create a variety of bar graphs, line graphs, and scatter plots. Summarize data distributions with histograms, density curves, box plots, and other examples. Provide annotations to help viewers interpret data. Control the overall appearance of graphics. Render data groups alongside each other for easy comparison. Use colors in plots. Create network graphs, heat maps, and 3D scatter plots. Structure data for graphing.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Even if you know R, learning to do graphs well in R is like learning (yet another) new language - that of ggplot2. You could learn a new language by first studying its grammar and building some vocabulary. In that case, you might want to start with ggplot2 creator's book *ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis (Use R!)*. That's an excellent book and that's where I started. Still, there are many loose ends in my understanding of ggplot2 and sometimes I struggle to find the exact technique to achieve the effect I want. e.g. do I set fill or colour? What does grouping exactly do?

How do I rearrange factors? How do I remove the legends and clean up the grid lines? I am sure answers to all such questions could be found by googling and reading Hadley's original text carefully. However, the beauty of Winston Chang's book is that it has compiled tons of such examples in recipe format and is a huge time saver. Now this is my first stop reference, even before hitting google or stackoverflow. Another advantage of the book is that all recipes are self contained and you could quickly pick up a technique or two in any 5 minute of break time. After immersing myself in enough examples during last week, I feel I am getting better hang of grammar of graphics (philosophy behind ggplot2). By the way, if you have not read Hadley's book or tutorial, please read Appendix A before you dive in.

Even though I am really familiar with ggplot2, plyr and reshape, Winston Chang have some great tricks manipulating data and creating awesome graphics that I had never seen before. The recipe format of this book is great for beginners and advanced users because one can get straight answers without having to read too much.

This book is essentially a collection of examples of doing very specific graphical methods using ggplot2. Perhaps that is all it seeks to be; the clue being in the "cookbook" of the title -- implying a collection of recipes. What this book lacks is a discussion of the rationale underlying the use of ggplot2, leaving the reader to infer as much as possible through the experience of multiple examples (much as a good cookbook will have an introductory discussion of how various ingredients work together). This is fine if all you intend is to stick to some very specific graph styles, but makes it challenging to tailor a graph to a specific problem. Considering the extent of the examples, a chapter summarizing the theory behind the use of ggplot2 would be really helpful. I'm hesitant to buy the official ggplot2 book (ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis), as it seems well-understood that ggplot2 has evolved dramatically since that book was published, and it seems a lot to pay for a book which doesn't match the package in current form. Based upon the reviews, I had assumed that this book would fill the gap.

I have Hadley Wickham's book on ggplot2— ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis (Use R!), which is a great introduction to advanced R graphics. However, since that book was published in 2009, a few updates in R and ggplot2 have made some of the tricks I used for plots obsolete and I've had to refer to the online ggplot2 documentation to update my code. The R Graphics Cookbook makes this task of finding best practices for ggplot2 much easier, and provides some really concrete

examples. This R Graphics Cookbook and the ggplot2 book make for a powerful combination.

... "ggplot2" being a particular, fairly mature and popular R graphics package developed by Hadley Wickham, and described in his 2009 book "ggplot2: Elegant graphics for data analysis". Three years later, Winston Chang's accessible and inexpensive how-to book can push "ggplot2" into the mainstream. It is actually a different book, "R for Everyone" by Jared Lander, that brought me over the fence separating "old school" R graphics and "ggplot2" - it's a pity that, talking about a "syntax" of graphics, neither "ggplot2"-focused book manages to be textbook-systematic about it, and the reader has to pick up the general points as they go through examples - but once I am here, "R Graphics Cookbook" is a necessity. <sup>UPD</sup>. With the benefit of a little more life experience, I would say: don't spend your time on *any* R book. Python is the way to go.

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