

# Package ‘disto’

July 22, 2025

**Type** Package

**Title** Unified Interface to Distance, Dissimilarity, Similarity  
Matrices

**Version** 0.2.0

**Description** Provides a high level API to interface over sources storing distance, dissimilarity, similarity matrices with matrix style extraction, replacement and other utilities. Currently, in-memory dist object backend is supported.

**URL** <https://github.com/talegari/disto>

**BugReports** <https://github.com/talegari/disto/issues>

**Imports** proxy (>= 0.4.19), dplyr (>= 0.7.4), assertthat (>= 0.2.0),  
fastmatch(>= 1.1.0), tidyr (>= 0.8.0), factoextra (>= 1.0.5),  
ggplot2 (>= 2.2.1), broom (>= 0.4.4), fastcluster (>= 1.1.25),  
pbapply (>= 1.3.4),

**Depends** R (>= 3.4.0)

**License** GPL-3

**Encoding** UTF-8

**RoxygenNote** 6.0.1

**Suggests** knitr (>= 1.15.1), rmarkdown (>= 1.4),

**VignetteBuilder** knitr

**NeedsCompilation** no

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**Repository** CRAN

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|                     |                                            |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| as.data.frame.disto | <i>Convert a disto object to dataframe</i> |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Convert the underlying data of a disto object to a dataframe in long format (3 columns: item1, item2, distance). This might be a costly operation and should be used with caution.

**Usage**

```
## S3 method for class 'disto'
as.data.frame(x, ...)
```

**Arguments**

- x                    object of class disto
- ...                  arguments for tidy

**Value**

a dataframe in long format

**Examples**

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio <- disto(objectname = "temp")
dio
head(as.data.frame(dio))
```

---

|        |                                                    |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------|
| dapply | <i>Matrix like apply function for disto object</i> |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Apply function for data underlying disto object

**Usage**

```
dapply(x, margin = 1, fun, subset, nproc = 1)
```

**Arguments**

|        |                                                      |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------|
| x      | disto object                                         |
| margin | (one among 1 or 2) dimension to apply function along |
| fun    | Function to apply over the margin                    |
| subset | (integer vector) Row/Column numbers along the margin |
| nproc  | Number of parallel processes (unix only)             |

**Value**

Simplified output of 'sapply' like function  
temp <- dist(iris[,1:4]) dio <- disto(objectname = "temp")  
# function to pick indexes of 5 nearest neighbors # an efficient alternative with Rcpp is required  
udf <- function(x) dim(x) <- NULL order(x)[1:6]  
hi <- dapply(dio, 1, udf)[-1, ] dim(hi)

---

|       |                                      |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| disto | <i>Constructor for class 'disto'</i> |
|-------|--------------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Create mapping to data sources storing distances(symmetric), dissimilarities(non-symmetric), similarities and so on

Provides a high level API to interface over backends storing distance, dissimilarity, similarity matrices with matrix style extraction, replacement and other utilities. Currently, in-memory dist object backend is supported.

**Usage**

```
disto(..., backend = "dist")
```

**Arguments**

... Arguments for a backend. See details  
 backend (string) Specify a backend. Currently supported: 'dist'

**Details**

This is a wrapper to create a 'disto' handle over different backends storing distances, dissimilarities, similarities etc with minimal data overhead like a database connection. The following named arguments are required to set-up the backend:

- **dist:**
  - objectname: Object of the class 'dist' or the name of the object as a 'string'.
  - env: Environment where the object exists. When this is missing, its assumed to be parent environment.

**Value**

Object of class 'disto' which is a thin wrapper on a list

**Author(s)**

Srikanth KS

**See Also**

Useful links:

- <https://github.com/talegari/disto>
- Report bugs at <https://github.com/talegari/disto/issues>

**Examples**

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio  <- disto(objectname = "temp")
dio
unclass(dio)
```

---

disto\_dist

*Constructor of disto with dist backend*

---

**Description**

Constructor of disto with dist backend

**Usage**

```
disto_dist(arguments)
```

Arguments

arguments            to construct disto object

Details

to be used by disto constructor function

Value

returns a list

---

|              |                                                 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| dist_extract | <i>Matrix style extraction from dist object</i> |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------|

---

Description

Matrix style extraction supports 'inner' and 'outer'(default) products

Usage

dist\_extract(object, i, j, k, product = "outer")

Arguments

|         |                                               |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------|
| object  | dist object                                   |
| i       | (integer vector) row positions                |
| j       | (integer vector) column positions             |
| k       | (integer vector) positions                    |
| product | (string) One among: 'inner', 'outer'(default) |

Details

In k-mode, both i and j should be missing and k should not be missing. In ij-mode, k should be missing and both i and j are optional. If i or j are missing, they are interpreted as all values of i or j (similar to matrix or dataframe subsetting). If i and j are of unequal length, the smaller one is recycled.

Value

A matrix or vector of distances when product is 'outer' and 'inner' respectively

**Examples**

```
# examples for dist_extract

# create a dist object
temp <- dist(iris[,1:4])
attr(temp, "Labels") <- outer(letters, letters, paste0)[1:150]
head(temp)
max(temp)
as.matrix(temp)[1:5, 1:5]

dist_extract(temp, 1, 1)
dist_extract(temp, 1, 2)
dist_extract(temp, 2, 1)
dist_extract(temp, "aa", "ba")

dist_extract(temp, 1:10, 11:20)
dim(dist_extract(temp, 1:10, ))
dim(dist_extract(temp, , 1:10))
dist_extract(temp, 1:10, 11:20, product = "inner")
length(dist_extract(temp, 1:10, , product = "inner"))
length(dist_extract(temp, , 1:10, product = "inner"))

dist_extract(temp, c("aa", "ba", "ca"), c("ca", "da", "fa"))
dist_extract(temp, c("aa", "ba", "ca"), c("ca", "da", "fa"), product = "inner")

dist_extract(temp, k = 1:3) # product is always inner when k is specified
```

---

dist\_ij\_k

---

*Vectorized version of dist\_ij\_k\_*


---

**Description**

Convert ij indexes to k indexes for a dist object

**Usage**

```
dist_ij_k(i, j, size)
```

**Arguments**

|      |                                            |
|------|--------------------------------------------|
| i    | row indexes                                |
| j    | column indexes                             |
| size | value of size attribute of the dist object |

**Value**

k indexes

---

|            |                                    |
|------------|------------------------------------|
| dist_ij_k_ | <i>Convert ij index to k index</i> |
|------------|------------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Convert ij index to k index for a dist object

**Usage**

dist\_ij\_k\_(i, j, size)

**Arguments**

- |      |                                            |
|------|--------------------------------------------|
| i    | row index                                  |
| j    | column index                               |
| size | value of size attribute of the dist object |

**Value**

k index

---

|           |                                         |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------|
| dist_k_ij | <i>Vectorized version of dist_k_ij_</i> |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Convert kth indexes to ij indexes of a dist object

**Usage**

dist\_k\_ij(k, size)

**Arguments**

- |      |                                            |
|------|--------------------------------------------|
| k    | kth indexes                                |
| size | value of size attribute of the dist object |

**Value**

ij indexes as 2\*n matrix where n is length of k vector

---

|            |                                      |
|------------|--------------------------------------|
| dist_k_ij_ | <i>Convert kth index to ij index</i> |
|------------|--------------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Convert kth index to ij index of a dist object

**Usage**

```
dist_k_ij_(k, size)
```

**Arguments**

|      |                                            |
|------|--------------------------------------------|
| k    | kth index                                  |
| size | value of size attribute of the dist object |

**Value**

ij index as a length two integer vector

---

|              |                                   |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|
| dist_replace | <i>Replacement values in dist</i> |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Replacement values of a dist object with either ij or position indexing

**Usage**

```
dist_replace(object, i, j, value, k)
```

**Arguments**

|        |                                            |
|--------|--------------------------------------------|
| object | dist object                                |
| i      | (integer vector) row positions             |
| j      | (integer vector) column positions          |
| value  | (integer/numeric vector) Values to replace |
| k      | (integer vector) positions                 |

## Details

There are two modes to specify the positions:

- ij-mode where i and j are specified and k is missing. If i or j are missing, they are interpreted as all values of i or j (similar to matrix or dataframe subsetting). Lengths of i, j are required to be same. If 'value' is singleton, then it is extended to the length of i or j. Else, 'value' should have same length as i or j.
- k-mode where k is present and both i and k are missing. k is the positions in the dist object. If 'value' is singleton, then it is extended to the length of k. Else, 'value' should have same length as k.

## Value

dist object

## Examples

```
# create a dist object
d <- dist(iris[,1:4])
attr(d, "Labels") <- outer(letters, letters, paste0)[1:150]
head(d)
max(d)
as.matrix(d)[1:5, 1:5]

# replacement in ij-mode
d <- dist_replace(d, 1, 2, 100)
dist_extract(d, 1, 2, product = "inner")
d <- dist_replace(d, "ca", "ba", 102)
dist_extract(d, "ca", "ba", product = "inner")

d <- dist_replace(d, 1:5, 6:10, 11:15)
dist_extract(d, 1:5, 6:10, product = "inner")
d <- dist_replace(d, c("ca", "da"), c("aa", "ba"), 102)
dist_extract(d, c("ca", "da"), c("aa", "ba"), product = "inner")

# replacement in k-mode
d <- dist_replace(d, k = 2, value = 101)
dist_extract(d, k = 2)
dist_extract(d, 3, 1, product = "inner") # extracting k=2 in ij-mode
```

---

dist\_subset

*dist\_subset*

---

## Description

Compute subset faster than regular '[' on a dist object. This is from **proxy** package (not exported by proxy).

**Usage**

```
dist_subset(x, subset, ...)
```

**Arguments**

|        |                                             |
|--------|---------------------------------------------|
| x      | dist object                                 |
| subset | index of the subset. This has to be unique. |
| ...    | additional arguments                        |

**Value**

returns a dist subset

---

|             |                         |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| names.disto | <i>Get names/labels</i> |
|-------------|-------------------------|

---

**Description**

Get names/labels of the underlying distance storing backend

**Usage**

```
## S3 method for class 'disto'
names(x)
```

**Arguments**

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| x | disto object |
|---|--------------|

**Value**

A character vector

**Examples**

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio <- disto(objectname = "temp")
dio
names(dio) <- paste0("a", 1:150)
```

---

|            |                            |
|------------|----------------------------|
| plot.disto | <i>Plot a disto object</i> |
|------------|----------------------------|

---

## Description

Various plotting options for subsets of disto objects

## Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'disto'  
plot(x, ...)
```

## Arguments

|     |                                    |
|-----|------------------------------------|
| x   | object of class disto              |
| ... | Additional arguments. See details. |

## Details

Among the additional arguments,

- 'type': is mandatory. Currently, these options are supported: heatmap, dendrogram.
- sampleSize: A random sample of indexes is drawn from the distance object underlying the disto mapping. Default value of sampleSize is set to 100.
- seed seed for random sample. Default is 100.

## Value

ggplot object

## Examples

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])  
dio  <- disto(objectname = "temp")  
plot(dio, type = "heatmap")  
plot(dio, type = "dendrogram")
```

---

|             |                                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| print.disto | <i>Print method for dist class</i> |
|-------------|------------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Print method for dist class

**Usage**

```
## S3 method for class 'disto'
print(x, ...)
```

**Arguments**

- x                    object of class disto
- ...                  currently not in use

**Value**

invisible NULL. Function writes backend type and size to terminal as a message.

**Examples**

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio  <- disto(objectname = "temp")
print(dio)
```

---

|      |                                        |
|------|----------------------------------------|
| size | <i>Obtain size of the disto object</i> |
|------|----------------------------------------|

---

**Description**

Obtain size of the disto object

**Usage**

```
size(disto, ...)
```

**Arguments**

- disto                object of class disto
- ...                  currently not in use

**Value**

Integer vector of length 1

Examples

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio  <- disto(objectname = "temp")
size(dio)
```

---

|               |                               |
|---------------|-------------------------------|
| summary.disto | Summary method for dist class |
|---------------|-------------------------------|

---

Description

Summary method for dist class

Usage

```
## S3 method for class 'disto'
summary(object, ...)
```

Arguments

|        |                       |
|--------|-----------------------|
| object | object of class disto |
| ...    | currently not in use  |

Value

invisibly returns the tidy output of summary as a dataframe.

Examples

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio  <- disto(objectname = "temp")
dio
summary(dio)
```

---

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 'names<-.disto' | Set names/labels |
|-----------------|------------------|

---

Description

Set names/labels of the underlying distance storing backend

Usage

```
## S3 replacement method for class 'disto'
names(x) <- value
```

**Arguments**

|       |                    |
|-------|--------------------|
| x     | disto object       |
| value | A character vector |

**Value**

invisible disto object

**Examples**

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio <- disto(objectname = "temp")
dio
names(dio) <- paste0("a", 1:150)
```

---

`[,disto`

---

*Extract from a disto object in matrix style extraction*


---

**Description**

Extract a disto object in matrix style extraction and via direct indexing. 'product' specification allows both outer (matrix output, default option) and inner (vector) product type extraction. For dist backend see: [dist\\_extract](#).

**Usage**

```
## S3 method for class 'disto'
x[i, j, k, product = "outer"]
```

**Arguments**

|         |                                      |
|---------|--------------------------------------|
| x       | object of class 'disto'              |
| i       | (integer vector) row indexes         |
| j       | (integer vector) column indexes      |
| k       | (integer vector) direct indexes      |
| product | (string) One among: "inner", "outer" |

**Value**

When product is 'outer', returns a matrix. Else, a vector.

## Examples

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio <- disto(objectname = "temp")
dio
names(dio) <- paste0("a", 1:150)

dio[1, 2]
dio[2, 1]
dio[c("a1", "a10"), c("a5", "a72")]
dio[c("a1", "a10"), c("a5", "a72"), product = "inner"]
dio[k = c(1,3,5)]
```

---

|             |                                       |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| '[<-.disto' | <i>In-place replacement of values</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|

---

## Description

For dist backend see: [dist\\_replace](#).

## Usage

```
## S3 replacement method for class 'disto'
x[i, j, k] <- value
```

## Arguments

|       |                                            |
|-------|--------------------------------------------|
| x     | object of class 'disto'                    |
| i     | (integer vector) row index                 |
| j     | (integer vector) column index              |
| k     | (integer vector) direct index              |
| value | (integer/numeric vector) Values to replace |

## Value

Invisible disto object. Note that this function is called for its side effect.

## Examples

```
temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio <- disto(objectname = "temp")
names(dio) <- paste0("a", 1:150)
dio

dio[1, 2] <- 10
dio[1,2]

dio[1:10, 2:11] <- 100
```

```

dio[1:10, 2:11, product = "inner"]

dio[paste0("a", 1:5), paste0("a", 6:10)] <- 101
dio[paste0("a", 1:5), paste0("a", 6:10), product = "inner"]

```

---

|            |                                                 |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| `[[.disto` | <i>Extract a single value from disto object</i> |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------|

---

## Description

Extract a single value from disto object in matrix style extraction and via direct indexing. This does not support using names. This is faster than `link{extract}`. For dist backend see: [dist\\_extract](#).

## Usage

```

## S3 method for class 'disto'
x[[i, j, k]]

```

## Arguments

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| x | object of class 'disto'       |
| i | (integer vector) row index    |
| j | (integer vector) column index |
| k | (integer vector) direct index |

## Value

(A real number) Distance value

## Examples

```

temp <- stats::dist(iris[,1:4])
dio <- disto(objectname = "temp")
dio

dio[[1, 2]]
dio[[2, 1]]
dio[[k = 3]]

```

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