

# Package ‘this.path’

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**Title** Get Executing Script's Path, from 'RStudio', 'Rgui', 'Rscript' (Shells Including Windows Command-Line // Unix Terminal), and 'source'

**Description** Determine the full path of the executing script. Works when running a line or selection from a script in 'RStudio' and 'Rgui', when using 'source', 'sys.source', 'debugSource' in 'RStudio', and 'testthat::source\_file', and when running R from a shell.

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## R topics documented:

this.path-package	2
as.relative.path	3
check.path	4
here	5
R.from.shell	6
shFILE	8
this.path	9
this.path-defunct	11
this.path2	13

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this.path-package	<i>Get Executing Script's Path, from 'RStudio', 'Rgui', 'Rscript' (Shells Including Windows Command-Line // Unix Terminal), and 'source'</i>
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## Description

Determine the full path of the executing script. Works when running a line or selection from a script in 'RStudio' and 'Rgui', when using 'source', 'sys.source', 'debugSource' in 'RStudio', and 'testthat::source\_file', and when running R from a shell.

## Details

The three most important functions from this package are `this.path`, `this.dir`, and `here`.

`this.path()` returns the [normalized](#) path of the executing script.

`this.dir()` is a shorter way of writing `dirname(this.path())`, returning the [normalized](#) path of the directory in which the executing script is located.

`here()` constructs file paths relative to the executing script's directory.

## Note

This package started from a stack overflow posting, found at:

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/1815606/determine-path-of-the-executing-script>

If you like this package, please consider upvoting my answer so that more people will see it! If you have an issue with this package, please use `utils::bug.report(package = "this.path")` to report your issue.

## Author(s)

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## See Also

The main functions from **this.path**:

[this.path](#), [this.dir](#), [here](#)

`this.path` and `this.dir` variants:

[this.path2](#), [this.dir2](#), [this.dir3](#)

Check `this.path()` is functioning correctly:

[check.path](#), [check.dir](#)

Extract 'FILE' from command line arguments:

[shFILE](#)

[source](#), [sys.source](#), [debugSource](#), [testthat::source\\_file](#)

[R.from.shell](#)

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as.relative.path      *Make a Path Relative to Another Path*

---

## Description

When working with **this.path**, you will be dealing with a lot of absolute paths. These paths are not good for saving within files, so you'll need to use `as.relative.path()` to turn your absolute paths into relative paths.

## Usage

```
as.relative.path(path, relative.to = this.dir(verbose = FALSE))
as.rel.path      (path, relative.to = this.dir(verbose = FALSE))
```

## Arguments

`path`                    character vector of file // URL paths.  
`relative.to`            character string; the file // URL path to make path relative to.

## Details

Tilde-expansion (see [path.expand](#)) is first done on `path` and `relative.to`.

If `path` and `relative.to` are equivalent, "." will be returned. If `path` and `relative.to` have no base in common, the [normalized](#) path will be returned.

## Value

character vector of the same length as `path`.

## Examples

```
# Windows example

# as.relative.path(
#   c(
#     # paths which are equivalent will return "."
#     "C:/Users/effective_user/Documents/this.path/man",
#
#
#     # paths which have no base in common return as themselves
#     "https://raw.githubusercontent.com/ArcadeAntics/this.path/main/tests/this.path_w_URLs.R",
#     "D:/",
#     "//host-name/share-name/path/to/file",
#
#
#     "C:/Users/effective_user/Documents/testing",
#     "C:\\Users\\effective_user",
```

```

#       "C:/Users/effective_user/Documents/R/this.path.R"
#     ),
#     "C:/Users/effective_user/Documents/this.path/man"
# )

# Unix-alikes example

# as.relative.path(
#   c(
#     # paths which are equivalent will return "."
#     "/home/effective_user/Documents/this.path/man",
#
#
#     # paths which have no base in common return as themselves
#     "https://raw.githubusercontent.com/ArcadeAntics/this.path/main/tests/this.path_w_URLs.R",
#     "//host-name/share-name/path/to/file",
#
#
#     "/home/effective_user/Documents/testing",
#     "/home/effective_user",
#     "/home/effective_user/Documents/R/this.path.R"
#   ),
#   "/home/effective_user/Documents/this.path/man"
# )

```

---

check.path

*Check this.path() is Functioning Correctly*

---

## Description

Add `check.path("path/to/file")` to the beginning of your script to initialize `this.path()`, and check that `this.path()` is returning the path you expect.

## Usage

```

check.path(...)
check.dir(...)

```

## Arguments

... further arguments passed to `file.path` which must return a character string; the path you expect `this.path()` or `this.dir()` to return. The specified path can be as deep as necessary (just the basename, the last directory name and the basename, the last two directory names and the basename, ...), but using an absolute path is not intended (recommended against). `this.path()` makes R scripts portable, but using an absolute path in `check.path` or `check.dir` makes an R script non-portable, defeating the whole purpose of this package.

**Value**

If the expected path // directory matches `this.path() // this.dir()`, then TRUE invisibly. Otherwise, an error is raised.

**Examples**

```
# I have a project called 'EOAdjusted'
#
# Within this project, I have a folder called 'code'
# where I place all of my scripts.
#
# One of these scripts is called 'provrun.R'
#
# So, at the top of my R script, I could write

# this.path::check.path("EOAdjusted", "code", "provrun.R")
#
# or
#
# this.path::check.path("EOAdjusted/code/provrun.R")
```

---

here

*Construct Path to File, Beginning with this.dir()*

---

**Description**

Construct the path to a file from components in a platform-independent way, starting with `this.dir()`.

**Usage**

```
here(..., .. = 0)
ici(..., .. = 0)
```

**Arguments**

... further arguments passed to `file.path()`.  
.. the number of directories to go back.

**Details**

The path to a file begins with a base. The base is .. number of directories back from the executing script's directory (`this.dir()`). The argument is named .. because ".." refers to the parent directory in Windows, Unix, and URL paths alike.

**Value**

A character vector of the arguments concatenated term-by-term, beginning with the executing script's directory.

**Examples**

```

this.path::

```

---

R.from.shell

*Using R From a Shell*


---

**Description**

How to use R from a shell (including the Windows command-line // Unix terminal).

**Details**

For the purpose of running R scripts, there are four ways to do it. Suppose our R script has filename 'script1.R', we could write any of:

R -f script1.R

R --file=script1.R

R CMD BATCH script1.R

Rscript script1.R

The first two are different ways of writing equivalent statements. The third statement is the first statement plus options '--restore' '--save' (plus option '--no-readline' under Unix-alikes), and it also saves the `stdout` and `stderr` in a file of your choosing. The fourth statement is the second statement plus options '--no-echo' '--no-restore'. You can try:

R --help

R CMD BATCH --help

Rscript --help

for a help message that describes what these options mean. In general, Rscript is the one you want to use. It should be noted that Rscript has some exclusive [environment variables](#) (not used by the other executables) that will make its behaviour different from R.

For the purpose of making packages, R CMD is what you'll need to use. Most commonly, you'll use:  
R CMD build  
R CMD INSTALL  
R CMD check

R CMD build will turn an R package (specified by a directory) into tarball. This allows for easy sharing of R packages with other people, including [submitting a package to CRAN](#). R CMD INSTALL will install an R package (specified by a directory or tarball), and is used by [utils::install.packages](#). R CMD check will check an R package (specified by a tarball) for possible errors in code, documentation, tests, and much more.

If, when you execute one of the previous commands, you see the following error message: “‘R’ is not recognized as an internal or external command, operable program or batch file.”, see section **Ease of Use on Windows**.

### Ease of Use on Windows

Under Unix-alikes, it is easy to invoke an R session from a shell by typing the name of the R executable you wish to run. On Windows, you should see that typing the name of the R executable you wish to run does not run that application, but instead signals an error. Instead, you will have to type the full path of the directory where your R executables are located (see section **Where are my R executable files located?**), followed by the name of the R executable you wish to run.

This is not very convenient to type everytime something needs to be run from a shell, plus it has another issue of being computer dependent. The solution is to add the path of the directory where your R executables are located to the Path environment variable. The Path environment variable is a list of directories where executable programs are located. When you type the name of an executable program you wish to run, Windows looks for that program through each directory in the Path environment variable. When you add the full path of the directory where your R executables are located to your Path environment variable, you should be able to run any of those executable programs by their basenames ('R', 'Rcmd', 'Rscript', and 'Rterm') instead of their full paths.

To add a new path to your Path environment variable:

1. Open the **Control Panel**
2. Open category **User Accounts**
3. Open category **User Accounts** (again)
4. Open **Change my environment variables**
5. Click the variable Path
6. Click the button **Edit...**
7. Click the button **New**
8. Type (or paste) the full path of the directory where your R executables are located, and press **OK**

This will modify your environment variable Path, not the systems. If another user wishes to run R from a shell, they will have to add the directory to their Path environment variable as well.

If you wish to modify the system environment variable Path (you will need admin permissions):

1. Open the **Control Panel**
2. Open category **System and Security**

3. Open category **System**
4. Open **Advanced system settings**
5. Click the button **Environment Variables...**
6. Modify Path same as before, just select Path in **System variables** instead of **User variables**

To check that this worked correctly, open a shell and execute the following commands:

```
R --help
R --version
```

You should see that the first prints the usage message for the R executable while the second prints information about the version of R currently being run. If you have multiple versions of R installed, make sure this is the version of R you wish to run.

### Where are my R executable files located?

In an R session, you can find the location of your R executable files with the following command:  
`cat(sQuote(normalizePath(R.home("bin"))), "\n")`

On Windows, for me, this is:

```
'C:\Program Files\R\R-4.1.2\bin\x64'
```

On Linux, for me, this is:

```
'/usr/lib/R/bin'
```

---

shFILE

*Get Argument 'FILE' Provided to R by a Shell*

---

### Description

Look through the command line arguments, extracting argument 'FILE' from either of the following: '--file=FILE' or '-f' 'FILE'

### Usage

```
shFILE()
normalized.shFILE()
```

### Details

For shFILE, if there are no such arguments, NA is returned.

For normalized.shFILE, if there are no such arguments, an error is raised.

For both functions, if there are multiple such arguments, an error is raised.

### Value

character string. For normalized.shFILE, an absolute path.



**Note**

Both functions will save their return values; this makes them faster when called subsequent times.  
For normalized .shFILE, the path on Windows will use / as the file separator.

**See Also**

[this.path, here](#)

---

 this.path

*Determine Executing Script's Filename*


---

**Description**

this.path() returns the [normalized](#) path of the executing script.

this.dir() is a shorter way of writing `dirname(this.path())`, returning the [normalized](#) path of the directory in which the executing script is located.

**Usage**

```
this.path(verbose = getOption("verbose"))
this.dir(...)
```

**Arguments**

verbose	TRUE or FALSE; should the method in which the path of the executing script was determined be printed?
...	arguments passed to this.path.

**Details**

There are three ways in which R code is typically run; in 'RStudio' or 'Rgui' by running the current line or selection with the **Run** button (or appropriate keyboard shortcut), through a source call (a call to function `source`, `sys.source`, `debugSource` in 'RStudio', or `testthat::source_file`), and from a shell (including the Windows command-line // Unix terminal).

To retrieve the executing script's filename, first an attempt is made to find a source call. The calls are searched in reverse order so as to grab the most recent source call in the case of nested source calls. If a source call was found, the argument *file* (*fileName* in the case of `debugSource`, *path* in the case of `testthat::source_file`) is returned from the function's evaluation environment. If you have your own source-like function that you'd like to be recognized by `this.path`, please contact the package maintainer so that it can be implemented.

If no source call is found up the calling stack, then an attempt is made to figure out how R is currently being used.

If R is being run from a shell, the shell arguments are searched for '-f' 'FILE' or '--file=FILE' (the two methods of taking input from 'FILE'). If exactly one of either type of argument is supplied,

the text ‘FILE’ is returned. It is an error to use `this.path` when none or multiple arguments of either type are supplied.

If `R` is being run from a shell under Unix-alikes with ‘-g’ ‘Tk’ or ‘--gui=Tk’, `this.path()` will signal an error. This is because ‘Tk’ does not make use of its ‘-f’ ‘FILE’, ‘--file=FILE’ argument.

If `R` is being run from ‘RStudio’, the active document’s filename (the document in which the cursor is active) is returned (at the time of evaluation). If the active document is the `R` console, the source document’s filename (the document open in the current tab) is returned (at the time of evaluation). Please note that the source document will *NEVER* be a document open in another window (with the **Show in new window** button). It is important to not leave the current tab (either by closing or switching tabs) while any calls to `this.path` have yet to be evaluated in the run selection. It is an error for no documents to be open or for a document to not exist (not saved anywhere).

If `R` is being run from ‘Rgui’, the source document’s filename (the document most recently interacted with besides the `R` Console) is returned (at the time of evaluation). Please note that minimized documents will be *INCLUDED* when looking for the most recently used document. It is important to not leave the current document (either by closing the document or interacting with another document) while any calls to `this.path` have yet to be evaluated in the run selection. It is an error for no documents to be open or for a document to not exist (not saved anywhere).

If `R` is being run from ‘AQUA’, the executing script’s path cannot be determined. Unlike ‘RStudio’ and ‘Rgui’, there is currently no way to request the path of an open document. Until such a time that there is a method for requesting the path of an open document, consider using ‘RStudio’.

If `R` is being run in another manner, it is an error to use `this.path`.

If your GUI of choice is not implemented with `this.path`, please contact the package maintainer so that it can be implemented.

## Value

character string; the executing script’s filename.

## Note

The first time `this.path` is called within a script, it will [normalize](#) the script’s path, check that the script exists (throwing an error if it does not), and save it in the appropriate environment. When `this.path` is called subsequent times within the same script, it returns the saved path. This will be faster than the first time, will not check for file existence, and will be independent of the working directory.

As a side effect, this means that a script can delete itself using [file.remove](#) or [unlink](#) but still know its own path for the remainder of the script.

Within a script that contains calls to both `this.path` and [setwd](#), `this.path` *MUST* be used *AT LEAST* once before the first call to `setwd`. This isn’t always necessary; for instance if you ran a script using its absolute path as opposed to its relative path, changing the working directory has no effect. However, it is still advised against.

The following is *NOT* an example of bad practice:

```
setwd(this.path::this.dir())
```

`setwd` is most certainly written before `this.path()`, but `this.path()` will be evaluated first. It is not the written order that is bad practice, but the order of evaluation. Do not change the working directory before calling `this.path` at least once.

**See Also**[here](#)[shFILE](#)[this.path-package](#)[source](#), [sys.source](#), [debugSource](#), [testthat::source\\_file](#)[R.from.shell](#)**Examples**

```

this.path::write.code(file = FILE <- tempfile(), {
  withAutoprint({
    cat(sQuote(this.path::this.path(verbose = TRUE)), "\n\n")
  }, verbose = FALSE)
})

source(FILE, verbose = FALSE)
sys.source(FILE, envir = environment())
if (.Platform$GUI == "RStudio")
  get("debugSource", "tools:rstudio", inherits = FALSE)(FILE)
if (requireNamespace("testthat"))
  testthat::source_file(FILE, chdir = FALSE, wrap = FALSE)

this.path:::Rscript(c("--default-packages=NULL", "--vanilla", FILE))

# this.path also works when source-ing a URL
# (included tryCatch in case an internet connection is not available)
tryCatch({
  source("https://raw.githubusercontent.com/ArcadeAntics/this.path/main/tests/this.path_w_URLs.R")
}, condition = base::message)

```

---

[this.path-defunct](#)*Defunct Functions in Package* **this.path**

---

**Description**

The functions or variables listed here are no longer part of `this.path` as they are no longer needed or have been moved to a new package.

**Usage**

```
ArgumentParser(...)  
  
## S4 method for signature 'this.path_ArgumentParser'  
add.argument(...)  
  
## S4 method for signature 'this.path_ArgumentParser'  
add.help(...)  
  
## S4 method for signature 'this.path_ArgumentParser'  
add.skip(...)  
  
## S4 method for signature 'this.path_ArgumentParser'  
add.version(...)  
  
## S4 method for signature 'this.path_ArgumentParser'  
add.subparsers(...)  
  
Args(...)  
  
Commands(...)  
  
dedent(...)  
  
delayedAssign2(...)  
  
file.open(...)  
  
list.files2(...)  
dir2(...)  
  
Missing(...)  
  
normalizeAgainst(...)  
  
commandPrompt(...)  
  
commandQuote(...)  
shEncode(...)  
  
path.contract(...)  
  
pseudoglobalenv(...)  
  
python(...)  
  
R(...)  
Rcmd(...)
```

```
Rscript(...)
Rterm(...)

writeArgs(...)
readArgs(...)

has.ext(...)
scan2(...)
format4scan(...)
setReadWriteArgsMethod(...)

withArgs(...)
```

### Arguments

...

### See Also

[Defunct](#)

---

<code>this.path2</code>	<i>Determine Executing Script's Filename</i>
-------------------------	--

---

### Description

Versions of [this.path](#) and [this.dir](#) which return NULL or the [working directory](#) instead of throwing an error when there is no executing script.

### Usage

```
this.path2(...)
this.dir2(...)

this.dir3(...)
```

### Arguments

... arguments passed to `this.path`.

### Details

There are a few reasons why there would be no executing script:

- R is being run from a shell without supplying argument `'-f' 'FILE'` or `'--file=FILE'`
- R is being run from a shell under Unix-alikes with option `'-g' 'Tk'` or `'--gui=Tk'` (GUI `'Tk'` does not make use of its `'-f' 'FILE'` or `'--file=FILE'` arguments)
- R is being run from `'RStudio'` with no documents open

- R is being run from ‘Rgui’ with no documents open

The following cases will still throw an error:

- unable to `normalize` the executing script’s filename
- using `sys.source` or `testthat::source_file` on a file named “clipboard”, “clipboard-128”, or “stdin”
- active // source document in ‘RStudio’ // ‘Rgui’ does not exist (not saved anywhere)
- in ‘AQUA’, running the current line or selection from an open R script (currently unimplemented)

### Value

for `this.path2` or `this.dir2`, the executing script’s filename or directory, or NULL if unavailable.

for `this.dir3`, the executing script’s directory, or the working directory if unavailable.

### Examples

```
this.path:::Rscript(c("--default-packages=NULL", "--vanilla", "-e", "this.path::this.path()"))
this.path:::Rscript(c("--default-packages=NULL", "--vanilla", "-e", "this.path::this.path2()"))
```

```
this.path:::Rscript(c("--default-packages=NULL", "--vanilla", "-e", "this.path::this.dir()"))
this.path:::Rscript(c("--default-packages=NULL", "--vanilla", "-e", "this.path::this.dir2()"))
this.path:::Rscript(c("--default-packages=NULL", "--vanilla", "-e", "this.path::this.dir3()"))
```

# Index

- \* **package**
  - this.path-package, 2
- add.argument (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.argument, ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.argument, this.path\_ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.help (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.help, ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.help, this.path\_ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.skip (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.skip, ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.skip, this.path\_ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.subparsers (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.subparsers, ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.subparsers, this.path\_ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.version (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.version, ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- add.version, this.path\_ArgumentParser-method
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- Args (this.path-defunct), 11
- ArgumentParser (this.path-defunct), 11
- ArgumentParser-class
  - (this.path-defunct), 11
- as.rel.path (as.relative.path), 3
- as.relative.path, 3
- check.dir, 2
- check.dir (check.path), 4
- check.path, 2, 4
- commandPrompt (this.path-defunct), 11
- commandQuote (this.path-defunct), 11
- Commands (this.path-defunct), 11
- dedent (this.path-defunct), 11
- Defunct, 13
- delayedAssign2 (this.path-defunct), 11
- dir2 (this.path-defunct), 11
- dirname, 2, 9
- environment variables, 6
- file.open (this.path-defunct), 11
- file.path, 4, 5
- file.remove, 10
- format4scan (this.path-defunct), 11
- has.ext (this.path-defunct), 11
- here, 2, 5, 9, 11
- ici (here), 5
- list.files2 (this.path-defunct), 11
- Missing (this.path-defunct), 11
- normalize, 10, 14
- normalizeAgainst (this.path-defunct), 11
- normalized, 2, 3, 9
- normalized.shFILE (shFILE), 8
- path.contract (this.path-defunct), 11
- path.expand, 3
- pseudoglobalenv (this.path-defunct), 11
- python (this.path-defunct), 11
- R (this.path-defunct), 11
- R.from.shell, 2, 6, 11
- Rcmd (this.path-defunct), 11
- readArgs (this.path-defunct), 11
- Rscript (this.path-defunct), 11
- Rterm (this.path-defunct), 11
- scan2 (this.path-defunct), 11

setReadWriteArgsMethod  
    (this.path-defunct), 11

setwd, 10

shEncode (this.path-defunct), 11

shFILE, 2, 8, 11

source, 2, 9, 11

stderr, 6

stdout, 6

sys.source, 2, 9, 11, 14

  

testthat::source\_file, 2, 9, 11, 14

this.dir, 2, 5, 13

this.dir (this.path), 9

this.dir2, 2

this.dir2 (this.path2), 13

this.dir3, 2

this.dir3 (this.path2), 13

this.path, 2, 9, 9, 13

this.path-defunct, 11

this.path-package, 2

this.path2, 2, 13

this.path\_ArgumentParser-class  
    (this.path-defunct), 11

  

unlink, 10

utils::bug.report, 2

utils::install.packages, 7

  

withArgs (this.path-defunct), 11

working directory, 13

writeArgs (this.path-defunct), 11