

Package ‘daff’

May 8, 2026

Version 1.1.1

Title Diff, Patch and Merge for Data.frames

Description Diff, patch and merge for data frames. Document changes in data sets and use them to apply patches. Changes to data can be made visible by using `render_diff()`. The 'V8' package is used to wrap the 'daff.js' JavaScript library which is included in the package.

License MIT + file LICENSE

Imports V8 (>= 0.6), jsonlite, utils

URL <https://github.com/edwindj/daff>

Suggests testthat

RoxygenNote 7.2.3

Encoding UTF-8

NeedsCompilation no

Author Paul Fitzpatrick [aut] (JavaScript original,
<http://paulfitz.github.io/daff/>),
Edwin de Jonge [aut, cre] (R wrapper, ORCID:
<<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6580-4718>>),
Gregory R. Warnes [aut]

Maintainer Edwin de Jonge <edwindjonge@gmail.com>

Repository CRAN

Date/Publication 2024-02-15 09:40:02 UTC

Contents

daff	2
differs_from	2
diff_data	3
merge_data	5
patch_data	6
render_diff	7
which_conflicts	8
write_diff	9

Index **10**

<code>daff</code>	<i>Data diff, patch and merge for R</i>
-------------------	---

Description

Daff calculates differences between two `data.frames`. This difference can be stored and later used to patch the original data. Differences can also be made visual by using `render_diff` showing what changed.

Details

Storing the difference between data sets allows for tracking or incorporating manual changes to data sets. Ideally changes to data should be scripted to be reproducible, but there are situations or scenarios where this is not possible or happens out of your control. `daff` can help track these changes.

actions

<code>diff_data</code>	Find differences in values between <code>data.frames</code>
<code>patch_data</code>	Apply a patch generated with <code>diff_data</code> to a <code>data.frame</code>
<code>merge_data</code>	Merge two diverged <code>data.frames</code> originating from a same parent

daff.js

Daff wraps the `daff.js` library which offers more functionality.

<code>differs_from</code>	<i>differs from,</i>
---------------------------	----------------------

Description

This is the same function as `diff_data` but with arguments reversed. This is more useful when using `dplyr` and `magrittr`

Usage

```
differs_from(data, data_ref, ...)
```

Arguments

<code>data</code>	<code>data.frame</code> to check for changes
<code>data_ref</code>	<code>data.frame</code> reference data frame
<code>...</code>	not further specified

Value

difference object

See Also

diff_data

diff_data

Do a data diff

Description

Find differences with a reference data set. The diff can be used to [patch_data](#), to store the difference for documentation purposes using [write_diff](#) or to visualize the difference using [render_diff](#)

Usage

```
diff_data(
  data_ref,
  data,
  always_show_header = TRUE,
  always_show_order = FALSE,
  columns_to_ignore = c(),
  count_like_a_spreadsheet = TRUE,
  ids = c(),
  ignore_whitespace = FALSE,
  never_show_order = FALSE,
  ordered = TRUE,
  padding_strategy = c("auto", "smart", "dense", "sparse"),
  show_meta = TRUE,
  show_unchanged = FALSE,
  show_unchanged_columns = FALSE,
  show_unchanged_meta = FALSE,
  unchanged_column_context = 1L,
  unchanged_context = 1L
)
```

Arguments

data_ref	data.frame reference data frame
data	data.frame to check for changes
always_show_header	logical Should we always give a table header in diffs? This defaults to TRUE, and - frankly - you should leave it at TRUE for now.

always_show_order	logical	Diffs for tables where row/column order has been permuted may include an extra row/column specifying the changes in row/column numbers. If you'd like that extra row/column to always be included, turn on this flag, and turn off never_show_order.
columns_to_ignore	character	List of columns to ignore in all calculations. Changes related to these columns are ignored.
count_like_a_spreadsheet	logical	Should column numbers, if present, be rendered spreadsheet-style as A,B,C,...,AA,BB,CC? Defaults to TRUE.
ids	character	List of columns that make up a primary key, if known. Otherwise heuristics are used to find a decent key (or a set of decent keys).
ignore_whitespace	logical	Should whitespace be omitted from comparisons. Defaults to FALSE.
never_show_order	logical	Diffs for tables where row/column order has been permuted may include an extra row/column specifying the changes in row/column numbers. If you'd like to be sure that that row/column is *never included, turn on this flag, and turn off always_show_order.
ordered	logical	Is the order of rows and columns meaningful? Defaults to 'TRUE'.
padding_strategy	logical	Strategy to use when padding columns. Valid values are "auto", "smart", "dense", and "sparse". Leave null for a sensible default.
show_meta	logical	Show changes in column properties, not just data, if available. Defaults to TRUE.
show_unchanged	logical	Should we show all rows in diffs? We default to showing just rows that have changes (and some context rows around them, if row order is meaningful), but you can override this here.
show_unchanged_columns	logical	Should we show all columns in diffs? We default to showing just columns that have changes (and some context columns around them, if column order is meaningful), but you can override this here. Irrespective of this flag, you can rely on index/key columns needed to identify rows to be included in the diff.
show_unchanged_meta	logical	Show all column properties, if available, even if unchanged. Defaults to FALSE.
unchanged_column_context	integer	When showing context columns around a changed column, what is the minimum number of such columns we should show?
unchanged_context	integer	When showing context rows around a changed row, what is the minimum number of such rows we should show?

Value

difference object

See Also

[differs_from](#)

Examples

```
library(daff)
x <- iris
x[1,1] <- 10
diff_data(x, iris)

dd <- diff_data(x, iris)
#write_diff(dd, "diff.csv")
summary(dd)
```

merge_data	<i>Merge two tables based on a parent version</i>
------------	---

Description

`merge_data` provides a three-way merge: suppose two versions are based on a common version, this function will merge tables a and b.

Usage

```
merge_data(parent, a, b)
```

Arguments

parent	data.frame
a	data.frame changed version of parent
b	data.frame other changed version of parent

Details

If both a and b change the same table cell with a different value, this results in a conflict. In that case a warning will be generated with the number of conflicts. In the returned data.frame of a conflicting merge columns with conflicting values are of type character and contain all three values coded as

```
(parent) a /// b
```

Value

merged data.frame. When a merge has conflicts the columns of conflicting changes are of type character and contain all three values.

See Also

[which_conflicts](#)

Examples

```
parent <- a <- b <- iris[1:3,]
a[1,1] <- 10
b[2,1] <- 11
# succesful merge
merge_data(parent, a, b)

parent <- a <- b <- iris[1:3,]
a[1,1] <- 10
b[1,1] <- 11
# conflicting merge (both a and b change same cell)
merged <- merge_data(parent, a, b)
merged #note the conflict

#find out which rows contain a conflict
which_conflicts(merged)
```

patch_data

patch_data

Description

Patch data with a diff generated by [diff_data](#)

Usage

```
patch_data(data, patch)
```

Arguments

data	data.frame that should be patched
patch	generated with <code>diff_data</code>

Value

data.frame that has been patched.

Examples

```
library(daff)
x <- iris
#change a value
x[1,1] <- 1000

patch <- diff_data(iris, x)
print(patch)
# apply patch
iris_patched <- patch_data(iris, patch)

iris_patched[1,1] == 1000
```

render_diff	<i>Render a data_diff to html</i>
-------------	-----------------------------------

Description

Converts a `diff_data` object to HTML code, and opens the resulting HTML code in a browser window if `view==TRUE` and R is running interactively.

Usage

```
render_diff(  
  diff,  
  file = tempfile(fileext = ".html"),  
  view = interactive(),  
  fragment = FALSE,  
  pretty = TRUE,  
  title,  
  summary = !fragment,  
  use.DataTables = !fragment  
)
```

Arguments

<code>diff</code>	diff_data object generated with <code>diff_data</code>
<code>file</code>	character target file (optional)
<code>view</code>	logical Open the generated HTML in a browser if R is being used interactively
<code>fragment</code>	logical If TRUE generate (just) an HTML table, otherwise generate a valid HTML document.
<code>pretty</code>	logical Use HTML arrow characters instead of '->'.
<code>title</code>	character title text. Defaults to the quoted names of the data objects compared, separated by 'vs.'
<code>summary</code>	logical Should a summary of changes be shown above the HTML table?
<code>use.DataTables</code>	logical Include jQuery DataTables plugin and enable: - pagination (10,25,50,100,All) - searching - filtering - column visibility (individually enable/disable) - copy/csv/excel/pdf export buttons - column reorder (drag and drop) - row reorder (drag and drop) - row/multirow select

Value

generated html

See Also

`data_diff`

Examples

```
y <- iris[1:3,]
x <- y

x <- head(x,2) # remove a row
x[1,1] <- 10 # change a value
x$hello <- "world" # add a column
x$Species <- NULL # remove a column

patch <- diff_data(y, x)
render_diff(patch, title="compare x and y", pretty = TRUE)

#apply patch
y_patched <- patch_data(y, patch)
```

which_conflicts	<i>return which rows of a merged data.frame contain conflicts</i>
-----------------	---

Description

return which rows of a merged data.frame contain conflicts.

Usage

```
which_conflicts(merged)
```

Arguments

merged data.frame merged data.frame with possible conflicts.

Value

integer vector with row positions containing conflicts.

See Also

[merge_data](#)

Examples

```
parent <- a <- b <- iris[1:3,]
a[1,1] <- 10
b[2,1] <- 11
# succesful merge
merge_data(parent, a, b)

parent <- a <- b <- iris[1:3,]
a[1,1] <- 10
b[1,1] <- 11
```

```
# conflicting merge (both a and b change same cell)
merged <- merge_data(parent, a, b)
merged #note the conflict

#find out which rows contain a conflict
which_conflicts(merged)
```

write_diff

Write or read a diff to or from a file

Description

The diff information is stored in the Coopy highlighter diff format: <https://paulfitz.github.io/daff-doc/spec.html>

Usage

```
write_diff(diff, file = "diff.csv")

read_diff(file)
```

Arguments

diff	generated with diff_data
file	filename or connection

Details

Note that type information of the target data.frame is lost when writing a patch to disk. Using a stored diff to patch a data.frame will use the column types of the source data.frame to determine the target column types. New introduced columns may become characters.

Names of the reference and comparison dataset are also lost when writing a data_diff object to disk.

Value

diff object that can be used in [patch_data](#)

Index

daff, [2](#)
diff_data, [2](#), [3](#), [6](#), [7](#)
differs_from, [2](#)

merge_data, [2](#), [5](#), [8](#)

patch_data, [2](#), [3](#), [6](#), [9](#)

read_diff (write_diff), [9](#)
render_diff, [3](#), [7](#)

which_conflicts, [5](#), [8](#)
write_diff, [3](#), [9](#)