

# Package ‘rmatio’

May 9, 2026

**Title** Read and Write 'Matlab' Files

**Version** 0.19.0

**Description** Read and write 'Matlab' MAT files from R. The 'rmatio' package supports reading MAT version 4, MAT version 5 and MAT compressed version 5. The 'rmatio' package can write version 5 MAT files and version 5 files with variable compression.

**Copyright** The package includes the source code of matio written by Christopher Hulbert (<http://sourceforge.net/projects/matio/>) (License: Simplified BSD). The matio io routines have been adopted to use R printing and error routines.

**License** GPL-3

**URL** <https://github.com/stewid/rmatio>

**SystemRequirements** zlib headers and library.

**Type** Package

**Biarch** true

**Imports** Matrix, methods, utils

**Depends** R(>= 3.2)

**Collate** 'read\_mat.R' 'rmatio.R' 'write\_mat.R'

**Encoding** UTF-8

**RoxygenNote** 7.2.3

**NeedsCompilation** yes

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read.mat	<i>Read Matlab file</i>
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### Description

Reads the values in a mat-file to a list.

### Usage

`read.mat(filename)`

### Arguments

`filename`      Character string, with the MAT file or URL to read.

### Details

Reads the values in a mat-file and stores them in a list.

### Value

A list with the variables read.

### Note

- A sparse complex matrix is read as a dense complex matrix.
- A sparse logical matrix is read as a 'lgCMatrix'
- A sparse matrix is read as a 'dgCMatrix'
- A matrix of dimension 1 x n or n x 1 is read as a vector
- A structure is read as a named list with fields.
- A cell array is read as an unnamed list with cell data
- A function class type is read as NULL and gives a warning.

### See Also

See [write.mat](#) for more details and examples.

## Examples

```
## Read a version 4 MAT file with little-endian byte ordering
filename <- system.file("extdata/matio_test_cases_v4_le.mat",
                        package = "rmatio")
m <- read.mat(filename)

## View content
str(m)

## Read a version 4 MAT file with big-endian byte ordering.
filename <- system.file("extdata/matio_test_cases_v4_be.mat",
                        package = "rmatio")
m <- read.mat(filename)

## View content
str(m)

## Read a compressed version 5 MAT file
filename <- system.file("extdata/matio_test_cases_compressed_le.mat",
                        package = "rmatio")
m <- read.mat(filename)

## View content
str(m)
```

---

rmatio

**rmatio:** *reading and writing Matlab MAT files from R*

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## Description

Reading and writing Matlab MAT files from R

## Details

rmatio supports reading MAT version 4, MAT version 5 and MAT compressed version 5.

rmatio can write version 5 MAT files and version 5 files with variable compression.

## References

- Christopher C. Hulbert, MATIO User Manual for version 1.5.2.  
[https://sourceforge.net/projects/matio/files/matio/1.5.2/matio\\_user\\_guide.pdf/download](https://sourceforge.net/projects/matio/files/matio/1.5.2/matio_user_guide.pdf/download)
- The MathWorks Inc., MATLAB - MAT-File Format, version R2013b, September 2013.  
[https://www.mathworks.com/help/pdf\\_doc/matlab/matfile\\_format.pdf](https://www.mathworks.com/help/pdf_doc/matlab/matfile_format.pdf)

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`write.mat`*Write Matlab file*

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### Description

Writes the values in a list to a mat-file.

### Usage

```
write.mat(object, filename = NULL, compression = TRUE, version = c("MAT5"))  
  
## S4 method for signature 'list'  
write.mat(object, filename = NULL, compression = TRUE, version = c("MAT5"))
```

### Arguments

<code>object</code>	The object to write.
<code>filename</code>	The MAT file to write.
<code>compression</code>	Use compression when writing variables. Defaults to TRUE.
<code>version</code>	MAT file version to create. Currently only support for Matlab level-5 file (MAT5) from <code>rmatio</code> package.

### Details

Writes the values in the list to a mat-file. All values in the list must have unique names.

### Value

invisible NULL

### Note

- A vector is saved as a 1 x length array
- Support for writing a sparse matrix of type `'dgCMatrix'` or `'lgCMatrix'` to file

### Author(s)

Stefan Widgren

### Examples

```
## Not run:  
library(Matrix)  
filename <- tempfile(fileext = ".mat")  
  
## Example how to read and write an integer vector with rmatio  
write.mat(list(a = 1:5), filename = filename)
```

```

a <- as.integer(read.mat(filename)[["a"]])

stopifnot(identical(a, 1:5))

unlink(filename)

## Read a compressed version 5 MAT file
m <- read.mat(system.file("extdata/matio_test_cases_compressed_le.mat",
                          package = "rmatio"))

## Write an uncompressed version 5 MAT file
write.mat(m, filename = "test-uncompressed.mat", compression = FALSE,
          version = "MAT5")

## Write a compressed version 5 MAT file
write.mat(m, filename = "test-compressed.mat", compression = TRUE,
          version = "MAT5")

## Check that the content of the files are identical
identical(read.mat("test-uncompressed.mat"),
          read.mat("test-compressed.mat"))

unlink("test-uncompressed.mat")
unlink("test-compressed.mat")

## Example how to read and write a S4 class with rmatio
## Create 'DemoS4Mat' class
setClass("DemoS4Mat",
         representation(a = "dgCMatrix",
                       b = "integer",
                       c = "matrix",
                       d = "numeric"))

## Create a function to coerce a 'DemoS4Mat' object to a list.
setAs(from = "DemoS4Mat",
      to = "list",
      def = function(from) {
        return(list(a = from@a,
                   b = from@b,
                   c = from@c,
                   d = from@d))
      })

## Create a function to coerce a list to a 'DemoS4Mat' object.
setAs(from = "list",
      to = "DemoS4Mat",
      def = function(from) {
        new("DemoS4Mat",
           a = from[["a"]],
           b = as.integer(from[["b"]]),
           c = from[["c"]],
           d = from[["d"]])
      })

```

```
    }  
  )  
  
  ## Define a method to write a 'DemoS4Mat' object to a MAT file.  
  setMethod("write.mat",  
            signature(object = "DemoS4Mat"),  
            function(object,  
                      filename,  
                      compression,  
                      version) {  
            ## Coerce the 'DemoS4Mat' object to a list and  
            ## call 'rmatio' 'write.mat' with the list.  
            write.mat(as(object, "list"),  
                      filename,  
                      compression,  
                      version)  
            }  
  )  
  
  ## Create a new 'DemoS4Mat' object  
  demoS4mat <- new("DemoS4Mat",  
                  a = Matrix(c(0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0,  
                               0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 0,  
                               0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1),  
                             nrow = 3,  
                             ncol = 9,  
                             byrow = TRUE,  
                             sparse = TRUE),  
                  b = 1:5,  
                  c = matrix(as.numeric(1:9), nrow = 3),  
                  d = c(6.0, 7.0, 8.0))  
  
  ## Write to MAT file  
  write.mat(demoS4mat, filename)  
  
  ## Read the MAT file  
  demoS4mat_2 <- as(read.mat(filename), "DemoS4Mat")  
  
  ## Check result  
  stopifnot(identical(demoS4mat, demoS4mat_2))  
  
  unlink(filename)  
  
  ## End(Not run)
```

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