Package 'osmclass'

May 9, 2026

Type Package

Title Classify Open Street Map Features

Version 0.1.4

Description Classify Open Street Map (OSM) features into meaningful functional or analytical categories. Designed for OSM PBF files, e.g. from <https://download.geofabrik.de/> imported as spatial data frames. A classification consists of a list of categories that are related to certain OSM tags and values. Given a layer from an OSM PBF file and a classification, the main osm_classify() function returns a classification data table giving, for each feature, the primary and alternative categories (if there is overlap) assigned, and the tag(s) and value(s) matched on. The package also contains a classification of OSM features by economic function/significance, following Krantz (2023) <https://www.ssrn.com/abstract=4537867>.

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Encoding UTF-8

Depends R (>= 3.3.0)

Imports collapse (>= 1.9.6), data.table, stringi

RoxygenNote 7.3.3

LazyData true

URL https://sebkrantz.github.io/osmclass/

NeedsCompilation no

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Repository CRAN

Date/Publication 2026-05-02 19:50:07 UTC

Contents

`osmclass-package` *Classify Open Street Map Features*

Description

An R package to classify Open Street Map (OSM) features into meaningful functional or analytical categories. It expects OSM PBF data, e.g. from https://download.geofabrik.de/, imported as data frames (e.g. using *sf*), and is well optimized to deal with large quantities of OSM data.

Functions

Main Function to Classify OSM Features

`osm_classify()`

Auxiliary Functions to Extract Information (Tags) from OSM PBF Layers

`osm_other_tags_list()`
`osm_tags_df()`

Classifications

A Classification of OSM Features by Economic Function, developed for the Africa OSM following Krantz (2023)

`osm_point_polygon_class`
`osm_line_class`
`osm_line_info_tags`

References

Krantz, Sebastian, Mapping Africa's Infrastructure Potential with Geospatial Big Data, Causal ML, and XAI (August 10, 2023). Available at SSRN: https://www.ssrn.com/abstract=4537867

Examples

```
## Not run:
# Download OSM PBF file for Djibouti
download.file("https://download.geofabrik.de/africa/djibouti-latest.osm.pbf",
              destfile = "djibouti-latest.osm.pbf", mode = "wb")

# Import OSM data for Djibouti
```

```
library(sf)
st_layers("djibouti-latest.osm.pbf")
points <- st_read("djibouti-latest.osm.pbf", "points")
lines <- st_read("djibouti-latest.osm.pbf", "lines")
polygons <- st_read("djibouti-latest.osm.pbf", "multipolygons")

# Classify features
library(osmclass)
points_class <- osm_classify(points, osm_point_polygon_class)
polygons_class <- osm_classify(polygons, osm_point_polygon_class)
lines_class <- osm_classify(lines, osm_line_class)

# See what proportion of the data we have classified
sum(points_class$classified)/nrow(points)
sum(polygons_class$classified)/nrow(polygons)
sum(lines_class$classified)/nrow(lines)

# Get some additional info for lines
library(collapse)
lines_info <- lines |> ss(lines_class$classified) |>
  rsplit(lines_class$main_cat[lines_class$classified]) |>
  get_vars(names(osm_line_info_tags), regex = TRUE)

lines_info <- Map(osm_tags_df, lines_info, osm_line_info_tags[names(lines_info)])
str(lines_info)

# Get 'other_tags' of points layer as list
other_point_tags <- osm_other_tags_list(points$other_tags, values = TRUE)
str(other_point_tags)



# TIP: For larger OSM files, importing layers (esp. lines and polygons) at once
# may not be feasible memory-wise. In this case, translating to GPKG and using
# an SQL query for stepwise processing is helpful:

library(fastverse)
library(sf)

# Get all Africa OSM (6 Gb)
opt <- options(timeout = 6000)
download.file("https://download.geofabrik.de/africa-latest.osm.pbf",
              destfile = "africa-latest.osm.pbf", mode = "wb")

# GPKG is large (> 40 Gb)
gdal_utils("vectortranslate", "africa-latest.osm.pbf", "africa-latest.gpkg")

# Get map layers: shows how many features per layer
layers <- st_layers("africa-latest.gpkg")
print(layers)

# Example: stepwise classifying lines, 1M features at a time
N <- layers$features[layers$name == "lines"]
```

```
int <- seq(0L, N, 1e6L)
lines_class <- vector("list", length(int))

for (i in seq_len(length(int))) {
  cat("\nReading Lines Chunk:", i, "\n")
  temp = st_read("africa-latest.gpkg",
                 query = paste("SELECT * FROM lines LIMIT 1000000 OFFSET", int[i]))
  # Some pre-selection: removing residential roads
  temp %<>% fsubset(is.na(highway) | highway %chin% osm_line_class$road$highway)
  # Classifying
  temp_class <- osm_classify(temp, osm_line_class)
  lines_class[[i]] <- ss(temp_class, temp_class$classified, check = FALSE)
}

# Combining
lines_class <- rbindlist(lines_class)
options(opt)

## End(Not run)
```

`classifications` *Classification of OSM Features by Economic Function*

Description

A classification of OSM features by economic function. A newer detailed version is available for points and polygons.

Usage

```
osm_point_polygon_class

osm_point_polygon_class_det

osm_line_class

osm_line_info_tags
```

Format

An object of class `list` of length 34.

An object of class `list` of length 55.

An object of class `list` of length 11.

An object of class `list` of length 11.

Details

The simple classification, developed for Krantz (2023), aims to classify OSM features into meaningful and specific economic categories such as 'education', 'health', 'tourism', 'financial', 'shopping', 'transport', 'communications', 'industrial', 'residential', 'road', 'railway', 'pipeline', 'power', 'waterway' etc. Separate classifications are developed for points and polygons (buildings) (33 categories), and lines (11 categories), which should be applied to the respective layers of OSM PBF files, see osmclass-package for and example. The classification is optimized (in terms of tag choice and order of categories) to assign the most sensible primary category to most features in the Africa OSM.

In spring 2025, I added a more detailed classification with 55 categories (`osm_point_polygon_class_det`) for point and polygon-based features, approximately reflecting an extended database used in the November 2024 update of the article where OSM features are combined with other geospatial data sources.

References

Krantz, Sebastian, Mapping Africa's Infrastructure Potential with Geospatial Big Data, Causal ML, and XAI (August 10, 2023). Available at SSRN: https://www.ssrn.com/abstract=4537867

See Also

osmclass-package

Examples

```
collapse::unlist2d(osm_point_polygon_class, idcols = c("category", "tag"))
collapse::unlist2d(osm_line_class, idcols = c("category", "tag"))
# This list contains additional tags with information about lines (e.g. roads and railways)
collapse::unlist2d(osm_line_info_tags, idcols = c("category", "tag"))
```

---

djibouti_points *OSM Points Layer for Djibouti, August 2023*

Description

A data table of all 8608 OSM points in Djibouti as of August 2023.

Usage

```
djibouti_points
```

Format

A data table with 8608 rows and 10 columns. The first column contains the OSM id of each point. Other columns give the values of frequent OSM tags for point features. The last column is called 'other_tags' and contains all remaining (less frequent) tags. Please consult the OSM Feature Documentation for the exact meaning and frequently used values of these tags.

Source

Geofabrik download server (https://download.geofabrik.de/). See osmclass-package for how to download it.

See Also

osmclass-package

Examples

```
data(djibouti_points)
```

`osm_classify` *Classify OSM Features*

Description

Classifies OSM features into meaningful functional or analytical categories, according to a supplied classification.

Usage

```
osm_classify(data, classification)
```

Arguments

`data`	imported layer from an OSM PBF file. Usually an 'sf' data frame, but the geometry column is unnecessary. Importantly, the data frame should have an 'other_tags' column with OSM PBF formatting.
`classification`	a 2-level nested list providing a classification. The layers of the list are:
categories	a list of tags and matched values that constitute a feature category.
tags	a character vector of tag values to match, or `""` to match all possible values. It is also possible to match all exc

See `osm_point_polygon_class` and `osm_line_class` for example classifications.

Value

a *data.table* with rows matching the input frame and columns

`classified`	logical. Whether the feature was classified i.e. matched by any tag-value in the `classification`.
`main_cat`	character. The first category the feature was assigned to, depending on the order of categories in the `classification`.
`main_tag`	character. The tag matched for the main category.
`main_tag_value`	character. The value matched on.
`alt_cats`	character. Alternative (secondary) categories assigned, comma-separated if multiple.
`alt_tags_values`	character. The tags and double-quoted values matched for secondary categories, comma-separated if multiple.

Note

It is not necessary to expand the 'other_tags' column, e.g. using `osm_tags_df()`. `osm_classify()` efficiently searches the content of that column without expanding it.

See Also

osmclass-package

Examples

```
# See Examples at ?osmclass for a full examples

# Classify OSM Points in Djibouti
djibouti_points_class <- osm_classify(djibouti_points, osm_point_polygon_class)
head(djibouti_points_class)
collapse::descr(djibouti_points_class)
```

---

osm_other_tags_list *Generate a List from the 'other_tags' Column in OSM PBF Data*

Description

Generate a List from the 'other_tags' Column in OSM PBF Data

Usage

```
osm_other_tags_list(x, values = FALSE, split = "\",\"|\"=>\"", ...)
```

Arguments

x	character. The 'other_tags' column of an imported osm.pbf file.
values	logical. TRUE also includes the values of tags.
split	character. Pattern passed to strsplit to split up x.
...	further arguments to strsplit.

Value

a list of tags as character vectors, or a nested list of tags and values if values = TRUE.

See Also

osmclass-package

Examples

```
# See Examples at ?osmclass for full examples

# Extract 'other_tags' as list
other_tags <- osm_other_tags_list(djibouti_points$other_tags)
other_tags[1:10]

# Count frequency (showing top 10)
sort(table(unlist(other_tags)), decreasing = TRUE)[1:10]

# Also include values
other_tags_values <- osm_other_tags_list(djibouti_points$other_tags, values = TRUE)
other_tags_values[1:10]
```

---

osm_tags_df *Extract Tags as Columns from an OSM PBF Layer*

Description

Extract Tags as Columns from an OSM PBF Layer

Usage

```
osm_tags_df(data, tags, na.prop = 0)
```

Arguments

data	an imported layer from an OSM PBF file. Usually has a few important tags already expanded as columns, and an 'other_tags' column which compounds less frequent tags as character strings.
tags	character. A vector of tags to extract as columns.
na.prop	double. Proportion of features having a tag in order to keep the column.

Value

a *data.table* with the supplied `tags` as columns, and the same number of rows as the input frame.

See Also

osmclass-package

Examples

```
# See Examples at ?osmclass for full examples

# Extracting tags of interest (some of which are inside 'other_tags')
tags <- c("osm_id", "highway", "man_made", "name", "alt_name",
          "description", "wikidata", "amenity", "tourism")
head(osm_tags_df(djibouti_points, tags))

# Only keeping tags with at least 5\% non-missing
head(osm_tags_df(djibouti_points, tags, na.prop = 0.05))
```

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