

How to draw ideogram

Zuguang Gu <z.gu@dkfz.de>
German Cancer Research Center,
Heidelberg, Germany

July 5, 2013

The most widely use for the circos layout is to display genomic information. In most circumstances, figures contain an ideogram. Drawing ideogram by `circlize` package is rather simple.

An ideogram is, in fact, a series of rectangles with different colors. In the following example we are going to draw the ideogram for human.

The cytoband data for human can be download from <http://hgdownload.cse.ucsc.edu/goldenPath/hg19/database/cytoBand.txt.gz>. Uncompress the file and read it into R. Here the package already contains such file.

```
> library(circlize)
> d = read.table(file = paste(system.file(package = "circlize"),
+                             "/extdata/cytoBand.txt", sep=""),
+               colClasses = c("factor", "numeric", "numeric", "factor", "factor"))
> head(d)
```

	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5
1	chr1	0	2300000	p36.33	gneg
2	chr1	2300000	5400000	p36.32	gpos25
3	chr1	5400000	7200000	p36.31	gneg
4	chr1	7200000	9200000	p36.23	gpos25
5	chr1	9200000	12700000	p36.22	gneg
6	chr1	12700000	16200000	p36.21	gpos50

In the data frame, the second column and the third column are intervals for loci.

Here, setting the `colClasses` argument when reading the cytoband file is very important, because the positions on chromosomes are large integers (the second column and third column), `read.table` would store such data as `integer` mode. The summation of such large integers would throw error of data overflow. So you must set the data mode to floating point (`numeric`).

Since chromosomes are sorted by their names which are as mode of `character`, the order would look like “chr1, chr10, chr11, ..., chr2, chr20, ...”. We need to sort chromosomes by the numeric index first.

The process is simple. Extract the number part (1, 2, ..., 22) and the letter part (X, Y) of chromosome names. Sorted them separately and finally combine them.

```
> chromosome = levels(d[[1]])
> chromosome.ind = gsub("chr", "", chromosome)
> chromosome.num = grep("^\\d+$", chromosome.ind, value = TRUE)
> chromosome.letter = chromosome.ind[!grep("^\\d+$", chromosome.ind)]
> chromosome.num = sort(as.numeric(chromosome.num))
> chromosome.letter = sort(chromosome.letter)
> chromosome.num = paste("chr", chromosome.num, sep = "")
> chromosome.letter = paste("chr", chromosome.letter, sep = "")
> chromosome = c(chromosome.num, chromosome.letter)
> chromosome

[1] "chr1" "chr2" "chr3" "chr4" "chr5" "chr6" "chr7" "chr8" "chr9"
[10] "chr10" "chr11" "chr12" "chr13" "chr14" "chr15" "chr16" "chr17" "chr18"
[19] "chr19" "chr20" "chr21" "chr22" "chrX" "chrY"
```

The cytoband data also provides the range of each chromosome. This can be set as the `xlim` of each chromosome. In the following code, we calculate the start position and the end position of each chromosome and store them in a matrix in which order of rows of `xlim` correspond to the order of elements in `chromosome`.

By the way, if you don't want to draw ideogram, reading the cytoband file is also useful because it can help you to allocate chromosomes in the circle.

```
> xlim = matrix(nrow = 0, ncol = 2)
> for(chr in chromosome) {
+   d2 = d[d[[1]] == chr, ]
+   xlim = rbind(xlim, c(min(d2[[2]]), max(d2[[3]])))
+ }
```

Before we draw the circos layout, we need to set some graphic parameters. Here we do not need any cell paddings and we also do not need the line width to be too wide because genomic graph is a huge graph.

```
> par(mar = c(1, 1, 1, 1), lwd = 0.5)
> circos.par("cell.padding" = c(0, 0, 0, 0))
```

Initialize the circos layout with ranges of chromosomes. In the initialization step, width of each sector would correspond to the range of each chromosome. Also the order of sectors would be determined in this step. Here we must explicitly set the levels of the factors to ensure the order of chromosomes is "chr1, chr2, chr3, ..." or else the order would be the character order which is "chr1, chr11, ..." (this is the default behavior for the function of `factor`). After the initialization step, the position of each chromosome as well as the order are

stored in an internal variable. So in the later step, as long as the chromosome is specified, graphs would be draw in the sector which corresponds to the selected chromosome.

In the initialization step, order of the `xim` matrix should correspond to the order of `levels` of the `factors`, so do not be confused here.

```
> circos.initialize(factors = factor(chromosome, levels = chromosome),
+   xlim = xlim)
```

After the range of each chromosome has been allocated in the circle, we can draw the ideogram. Besides that, we also want to draw additional information such as the axis for chromosomes and names of chromosomes. Here we would draw ideogram, axis and the chromosome names in one track (It is just an option, also you can draw ideogram, axis and names of chromosomes in different tracks). in the following code, we create the first track in which there are 24 cells and each cell corresponds to a chromosome. The x-range of each cell is the range of the chromosome and the y-range of each cell is from 0 to 1.

```
> circos.trackPlotRegion(factors = chromosome, ylim = c(0, 1),
+   bg.border = NA, track.height = 0.1)
```

In the above codes, it is not necessary to set the `factors` argument. If `factors` is not set, `circos.trackPlotRegion` will automatically create plotting regions for all available sectors which have already been initialized. But explicitly specifying the `factors` argument would make your code more clear for reading. And the value for `factors` does not need to be a real factor. If it is not a factor, it would be converted to a factor internally. If the value for `factors` is already a factor, the level of the factor also does not need to be specified because the cells are positioned with the order of chromosomes which is already defined in the initialization step.

Now in each cell, we draw the ideogram for each chromosome. Code is simple. The steps are: for each chromosome, 1. assign different colors for different locus, 2. draw rectangle for different locus, 3. add axis, 4. add chromosome names. Here the color panel is from <http://circos.ca/tutorials/course/slides/session-2.pdf>, page 42.

```
> for(chr in chromosome) {
+   # data in `chr`
+   d2 = d[d[[1]] == chr, ]
+   n = nrow(d2)
+
+   # assign colors
+   col = rep("#FFFFFF", n)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "gpos100"] = rgb(0, 0, 0, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "gpos"] = rgb(0, 0, 0, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "gpos75"] = rgb(130, 130, 130, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "gpos66"] = rgb(160, 160, 160, maxColorValue = 255)
```

```

+   col[d2[[5]] == "gpos50"] = rgb(200, 200, 200, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "gpos33"] = rgb(210, 210, 210, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "gpos25"] = rgb(200, 200, 200, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "gvar"]   = rgb(220, 220, 220, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "gneg"]   = rgb(255, 255, 255, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "acen"]   = rgb(217, 47, 39, maxColorValue = 255)
+   col[d2[[5]] == "stalk"]  = rgb(100, 127, 164, maxColorValue = 255)
+
+   # rectangles for different locus
+   for(i in seq_len(n)) {
+     circos.rect(d2[i, 2], 0, d2[i, 3], 0.4, sector.index = chr,
+       col = col[i], border = NA)
+   }
+   # rectangle that cover the whole chromosome
+   circos.rect(d2[1, 2], 0, d2[n, 3], 0.4, sector.index = chr,
+     border = "black")
+
+   # axis
+   major.at = seq(0, 10^nchar(max(xlim[, 2])), by = 50000000)
+   circos.axis(h = 0.5, major.at = major.at,
+     labels = paste(major.at/1000000, "MB", sep = ""),
+     sector.index = chr, labels.cex = 0.3)
+   chr.xlim = get.cell.meta.data("xlim", sector.index = chr)
+
+   # chromosome names, only the number part or the letter part
+   circos.text(mean(chr.xlim), 1.2, labels = gsub("chr", "", chr),
+     sector.index = chr, cex = 0.8)
+ }

```

In the above code, you can find the ylim for the cells in the first track is `c(0, 1)` and the y-value in `circos.text` is 1.2 which exceeds the ylim. There may be some warnings saying some points are out of the plotting region. But in fact it is OK to draw something outside the plotting regions. You just need to ensure the final figure looks good.

If you do not want to draw ideogram in the most outside of the circos layout. You can draw it in other tracks as you wish.

If there is a translocation from position 111111111 in chromosome 2 to position 55555555 in chromosome 16. It can represent as a link in the circos layout.

```

> circos.link(sector.index1 = "chr2", point1 = 111111111,
+   sector.index2 = "chr16", point2 = 55555555)

```

If position 88888888 in chromosome 6 is important and we want to mark it, we can use following codes. First create a new track. Here there is no specifying of **factors**, thus the new track would create plotting regions for all available sectors (but with no borders. You would not see these cells but they really

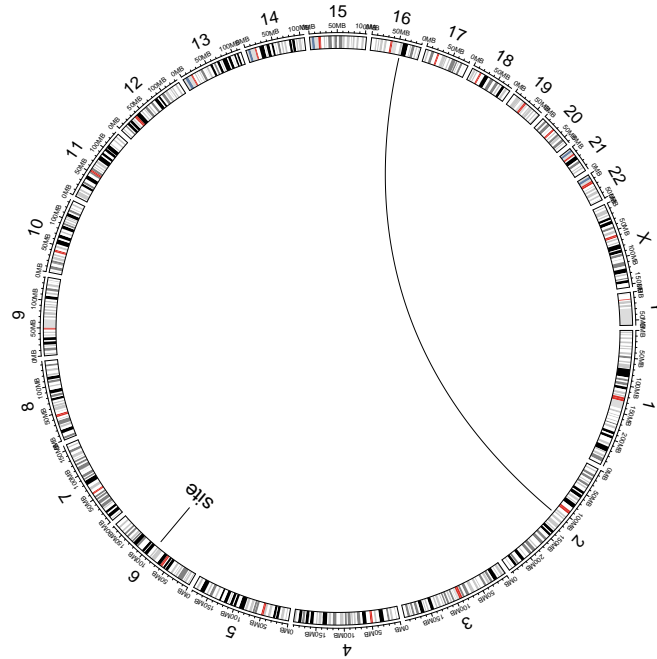


Figure 1: Ideogram in circos layout

exist.). Note you can not create plotting region for a single cell, however you can write so, but in fact plotting region for cells in all sectors would be created.

```
> # create a new track
> circos.trackPlotRegion(ylim = c(0, 1), bg.border = NA)
> circos.text(88888888, 0.2, labels = "site", sector.index = "chr6",
+   adj = c(0.5, 1))
> circos.lines(c(88888888, 88888888), c(0.3, 1), sector.index = "chr6",
+   straight = TRUE)
```

The final figure looks like figure 1.

In the `circos` package, there is already a `circos.initializeWithIdeogram` function to initialize the circos layout with an ideogram. However, how to embed the ideogram into the circos layout is really subjective, such as the position and colors of the ideogram, or maybe only subset of chromosomes are going to be plotted, or maybe there are some zoomings for certain chromosomes (see <http://circos.ca/intro/features/>. 'GLOBAL AND LOCAL ZOOMING' section). So the `circos.initializeWithIdeogram` is not a full functional function, it is only an example function to show how to allocate sectors for chromo-

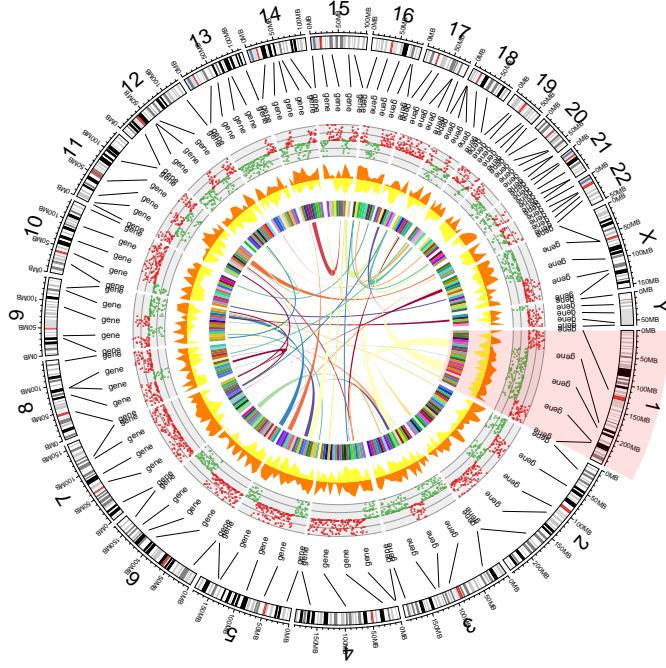


Figure 2: Detailed genomic graph

somes and how to draw ideogram. Thus users can draw their style of ideogram according the above example codes. All you need to remember is that **complicated graphs are assembled by simple graphs**.

Finally, more informative and specialized genomic graphs are figure 2 and figure 3. Figure 3 in fact combines two independent circos plots, users can refer to the main vignette to find out how to realize it.

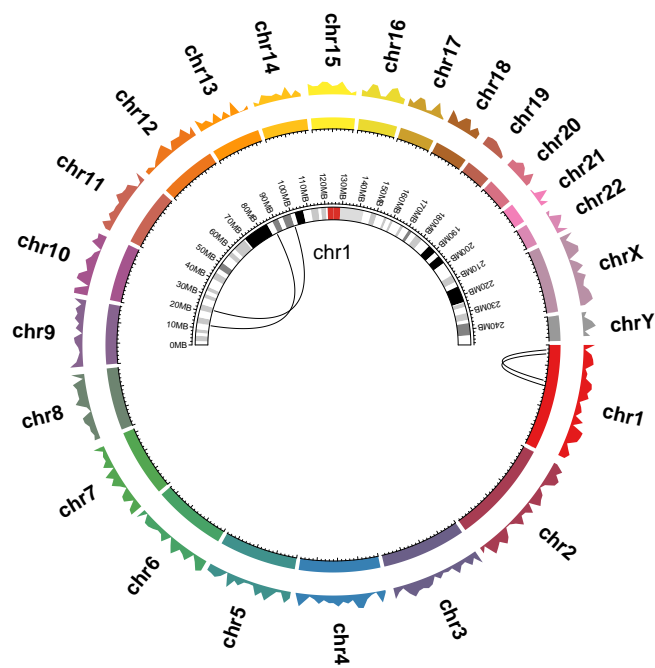


Figure 3: Two tracks of chromosomes in which the inner one zooms in chromosome 1 from the outer one.