At the end of each session of R, when you close R, the program asks if you want to save your workspace. Usually we say no. However, the purpose of asking is to accommodate people who are in the middle of working through a large quantity of R code but they must shut down their computer and leave the session in order to run an errand or do some other task. If you say "yes" to saving your workspace, R will save the current objects in the R program you have been working on to your workspace on your computer. Then, when you re-start R, it will automatically load the stored objects into the new session so that you have them available, although invisibly.

I am going to show you a "quick and dirty" way to clear out your saved workspace so that is completely clean.

First, open R. Second run the command

rm(list = ls())

This will clear out the workspace **for the current R session.** To confirm that the space is indeed clear, type

ls()

and the result shown should be

character(0)

This means the current workspace is empty. Then quit R and when R asks you if you want to save the workspace, say "yes" (usually you say no). R will then overwrite what is stored in your semi-permanent workspace with the blank workspace in your current session. That will clean out the semi-permanent workspace by overwriting it with a blank workspace.

If you now re-open R and type in

ls()

the result should be

character(0)

This means when R loaded your semi-permanent workspace (which R always does by default), there was nothing there. Voila!