

# idiogram package

Karl Dykema

November 17, 2025

Bioinformatics Special Program, Van Andel Research Institute

## 1 Standard idiogram plots

**idiogram** displays cytogenetic banding information in the plot margin and calls a secondary plotting function to display associated data at the same relative scale. Cytogenetic data for human, mouse, and rat genomes are currently included. We have written this due to a large volume of traditional cytogenetic data currently available.

The data is arranged by associating feature identifiers to genomic location using a **chromLoc** annotation object build using the **buildChromLocation** from the annotation package. As such is a vector of data is to be plotted, the 'names' attribute of the vector MUST to contain the gene identifiers. Likewise if a matrix of data is to be plotted, the 'rownames' attribute of the matrix MUST to the gene identifiers.

To date, 'plot' can be called for vector data, while 'maplot' and 'image' can be called for matrix data. Most additional plotting arguments can be passed down via .... However, the idiogram function plots the axis independently. Therefore arguments like 'cex.axis' are not passed via the 'plot' function. The 'cex.axis', 'col.axis', and 'font.axis' are intercepted from ... and redirected to the 'axis' call. Other parameters that effect the axis should be set via 'par'.

Below some example data is set up to plot an idiogram.

```
> if(require(hu6800.db) && require(golubEsets)){
+   library(golubEsets)
+   data(golubTrain)
+   library(hu6800.db)
+   library(idiogram)
+   library(annotate)
+
+   hu.chr <- buildChromLocation("hu6800")
+   ex <- golubTrain@exprs[,1]
+   colors <- rep("black",times=length(ex))
+   colors[ex > 10000] <- "red"
```

```

+     pts <- rep(1,times=length(ex))
+     pts[ex > 10000] <- 2
+ }

> if(require(hu6800.db) && require(golubEsets)){
+     idiogram(ex,hu.chr,chr="1",col=colors,
+     pch=pts,font.axis=2,cex.axis=1)
+ }

```

1



Figure 1: An idiogram

## 2 Interactive idiogram plots

Many investigators have their favorite region of interest, and would find it useful to dynamically interact with their idiogram plots. This has been added through the `idiograb` function. This has made an easier way for researchers to identify specific genes within cytogenetic regions of interest.

`idiograb` has been written to take an `idiogram` call as one of its arguments. Two points are first clicked on to determine the coordinates of a rectangular region. All names of genes within that region are then returned in a vector.

### 3 Using idiogram with other packages

Many useful packages can be used in conjunction with **idiogram**. In this section, we will show how to use the *limma* package to determine differentially expressed genes and then plot them with **idiogram**. Please see the *limma* tutorial for more information.

The **topTable** function returns a data frame with information about differentially expressed genes. Here we show how you would use the results of **topTable** ("t") and a **chromLocation** object that contains chip-specific annotation information. In this case, we need to create a vector of values with the names attribute set to the corresponding gene name. A colors vector is created with "gray" as the base color, and then altered to accentuate the values with an absolute value of greater than 1. Please note, the actual data was not included with this package to save space. This is only example code.

```
data <- t$M
names(data) <- rownames(t)
colors <- rep("gray",length(data))
colors[which(data>1)] <- "red"
colors[which(data<(-1))]] <- "blue"
names(colors) <- names(data)
midiogram(data,chromLocation,xlim=c(-5,5),col=colors,pch=20)
```