

# Package ‘mbkmeans’

September 22, 2025

**Type** Package

**Title** Mini-batch K-means Clustering for Single-Cell RNA-seq

**Version** 1.24.0

**Description** Implements the mini-batch k-means algorithm for large datasets, including support for on-disk data representation.

**Depends** R (>= 3.6)

**Imports** methods, DelayedArray, Rcpp, S4Vectors, SingleCellExperiment, SummarizedExperiment, ClusterR, benchmarkme, Matrix, BiocParallel

**Suggests** beachmat, HDF5Array, Rhdf5lib, BiocStyle, TENxPBMCDData, scater, DelayedMatrixStats, bluster, knitr, testthat, rmarkdown

**License** MIT + file LICENSE

**Encoding** UTF-8

**LazyData** true

**RoxygenNote** 7.1.1

**LinkingTo** Rcpp, RcppArmadillo (>= 0.7.2), Rhdf5lib, beachmat, ClusterR

**SystemRequirements** C++11

**VignetteBuilder** knitr

**biocViews** Clustering, GeneExpression, RNASeq, Software, Transcriptomics, Sequencing, SingleCell

**BugReports** <https://github.com/drisso/mbkmeans/issues>

**git\_url** <https://git.bioconductor.org/packages/mbkmeans>

**git\_branch** RELEASE\_3\_21

**git\_last\_commit** bffcc1e

**git\_last\_commit\_date** 2025-04-15

**Repository** Bioconductor 3.21

**Date/Publication** 2025-09-21

**Author** Yuwei Ni [aut, cph],  
Davide Risso [aut, cre, cph],  
Stephanie Hicks [aut, cph],  
Elizabeth Purdom [aut, cph]  
**Maintainer** Davide Risso <risso.davide@gmail.com>

**Contents**

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| blocksize . . . . .            | 2         |
| clusterRows . . . . .          | 3         |
| compute_wcss . . . . .         | 3         |
| mbkmeans . . . . .             | 4         |
| MbkmeansParam . . . . .        | 6         |
| mini_batch . . . . .           | 7         |
| predict_mini_batch . . . . .   | 9         |
| predict_mini_batch_r . . . . . | 10        |
| <b>Index</b>                   | <b>11</b> |

---

|           |                  |
|-----------|------------------|
| blocksize | <i>blocksize</i> |
|-----------|------------------|

---

**Description**

Return the maximum number of rows to use based on the amount of ram memory.

**Usage**

```
blocksize(data, ram = get_ram())
```

**Arguments**

- data            matrix-like object.
- ram            the max amount of ram (in bytes) to use.

**Value**

Numeric value of the maximum number of rows.

**Examples**

```
data <- matrix(NA, nrow = 100, ncol=1000)
blocksize(data, ram=1e6)
```

---

|             |                                 |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| clusterRows | <i>Cluster rows of a matrix</i> |
|-------------|---------------------------------|

---

### Description

Cluster rows of a matrix-like object with a variety of algorithms.

### Details

This function is deprecated. Please use the `clusterRows` function in the `bluster` Bioconductor package.

---

|              |                                              |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|
| compute_wcss | <i>Compute Within-Cluster Sum of Squares</i> |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------|

---

### Description

Given a vector of cluster labels, a matrix of centroids, and a dataset, it computes the WCSS.

### Usage

```
compute_wcss(clusters, cent, data)
```

### Arguments

|                       |                                                                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <code>clusters</code> | numeric vector with the cluster assignments.                                |
| <code>cent</code>     | numeric matrix with the centroids (clusters in rows, variables in columns). |
| <code>data</code>     | matrix-like object containing the data (numeric or integer).                |

### Value

A numeric vector with the value of WCSS per cluster.

### Examples

```
data = matrix(1:30,nrow = 10)
cl <- mini_batch(data, 2, 10, 10)
compute_wcss(cl$Clusters, cl$centroids, data)
```

mbkmeans

*Mini-Batch k-means for large single cell sequencing data***Description**

This is an implementation of the mini-batch k-means algorithm of Sculley (2010) for large single cell sequencing data with the dimensionality reduction results as input in the `reducedDim()` slot.

**Usage**

```
mbkmeans(x, ...)

## S4 method for signature 'SummarizedExperiment'
mbkmeans(x, whichAssay = 1, ...)

## S4 method for signature 'SingleCellExperiment'
mbkmeans(x, reduceMethod = "PCA", whichAssay = 1, ...)

## S4 method for signature 'LinearEmbeddingMatrix'
mbkmeans(x, ...)

## S4 method for signature 'ANY'
mbkmeans(
  x,
  clusters,
  batch_size = min(500, NCOL(x)),
  max_iters = 100,
  num_init = 1,
  init_fraction = batch_size/NCOL(x),
  initializer = "kmeans++",
  compute_labels = TRUE,
  calc_wcss = FALSE,
  early_stop_iter = 10,
  verbose = FALSE,
  CENTROIDS = NULL,
  tol = 1e-04,
  BPPARAM = BiocParallel::SerialParam(),
  ...
)
```

**Arguments**

|                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <code>x</code>   | The object on which to run mini-batch k-means. It can be a matrix-like object (e.g., <code>matrix</code> , <code>Matrix</code> , <code>DelayedMatrix</code> , <code>HDF5Matrix</code> ) with genes in the rows and samples in the columns. Specialized methods are defined for <code>SummarizedExperiment</code> and <code>SingleCellExperiment</code> . |
| <code>...</code> | passed to <code>'blockApply'</code> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| whichAssay      | The assay to use as input to mini-batch k-means. If x is a SingleCellExperiment, this is ignored unless reduceMethod = NA.                                                                          |
| reduceMethod    | Name of dimensionality reduction results to use as input to mini-batch k-means. Set to NA to use the full matrix.                                                                                   |
| clusters        | the number of clusters                                                                                                                                                                              |
| batch_size      | the size of the mini batches. By default, it equals the minimum between the number of observations and 500.                                                                                         |
| max_iters       | the maximum number of clustering iterations                                                                                                                                                         |
| num_init        | number of times the algorithm will be run with different centroid seeds                                                                                                                             |
| init_fraction   | proportion of data to use for the initialization centroids (applies if initializer is <i>kmeans++</i> ). Should be a float number between 0.0 and 1.0. By default, it uses the relative batch size. |
| initializer     | the method of initialization. One of <i>kmeans++</i> and <i>random</i> . See details for more information                                                                                           |
| compute_labels  | logical indicating whether to compute the final cluster labels.                                                                                                                                     |
| calc_wcss       | logical indicating whether the per-cluster WCSS is computed. Ignored if 'compute_labels = FALSE'.                                                                                                   |
| early_stop_iter | continue that many iterations after calculation of the best within-cluster-sum-of-squared-error                                                                                                     |
| verbose         | either TRUE or FALSE, indicating whether progress is printed during clustering                                                                                                                      |
| CENTROIDS       | a matrix of initial cluster centroids. The rows of the CENTROIDS matrix should be equal to the number of clusters and the columns should be equal to the columns of the data                        |
| tol             | a float number. If, in case of an iteration (iteration > 1 and iteration < max_iters) 'tol' is greater than the squared norm of the centroids, then kmeans has converged                            |
| BPPARAM         | See the 'BiocParallel' package. Only the label assignment is done in parallel.                                                                                                                      |

## Details

The implementation is largely based on the [MiniBatchKmeans](#) function of the ClusterR package. The contribution of this package is to provide support for on-disk data representations such as HDF5, through the use of DelayedMatrix and HDF5Matrix objects, as well as for sparse data representation through the classes of the Matrix package. We also provide high-level methods for objects of class SummarizedExperiment, SingleCellExperiment, and LinearEmbeddingMatrix.

This function performs k-means clustering using mini batches.

**kmeans++:** kmeans++ initialization. Reference : <http://theory.stanford.edu/~sergei/papers/kMeansPP-soda.pdf> AND <http://stackoverflow.com/questions/5466323/how-exactly-does-k-means-work>

**random:** random selection of data rows as initial centroids

## Value

A list with the following attributes: centroids, WCSS\_per\_cluster, best\_initialization, iters\_per\_initialization.

a list with the following attributes: centroids, WCSS\_per\_cluster, best\_initialization, iters\_per\_initialization

**Author(s)**

Lampros Mouselimis and Yuwei Ni

**References**

Sculley. Web-Scale K-Means Clustering. WWW 2010, April 26–30, 2010, Raleigh, North Carolina, USA. ACM 978-1-60558-799-8/10/04.

<https://github.com/mlampros/ClusterR>

**Examples**

```
library(SummarizedExperiment)
se <- SummarizedExperiment(matrix(rnorm(100), ncol=10))
mbkmeans(se, clusters = 2)
library(SingleCellExperiment)
sce <- SingleCellExperiment(matrix(rnorm(100), ncol=10))
mbkmeans(sce, clusters = 2, reduceMethod = NA)
x<-matrix(rnorm(100), ncol=10)
mbkmeans(x,clusters = 3)
```

---

MbkmeansParam

*Mini-batch k-means clustering*


---

**Description**

Run the mini-batch k-means [mbkmeans](#) function with the specified number of centers within clusterRows from the bluster Bioconductor package.

**Usage**

```
MbkmeansParam(centers, ...)
```

**Arguments**

|         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| centers | An integer scalar specifying the number of centers. Alternatively, a function that takes the number of observations and returns the number of centers. Note, the <a href="#">mbkmeans</a> function uses the argument clusters argument to represent this argument. However, we use centers to match |
| ...     | Further arguments to pass to <a href="#">mbkmeans</a> .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

**Details**

This function is deprecated. Please use the MbkmeansParam function in the bluster Bioconductor package.

mini\_batch

*Mini\_batch***Description**

Mini-batch-k-means for matrix-like objects

**Usage**

```
mini_batch(
  data,
  clusters,
  batch_size,
  max_iters,
  num_init = 1L,
  init_fraction = 1,
  initializer = "kmeans++",
  compute_labels = TRUE,
  calc_wcss = FALSE,
  early_stop_iter = 10L,
  verbose = FALSE,
  CENTROIDS = NULL,
  tol = 1e-04
)
```

**Arguments**

|                              |                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <code>data</code>            | numeric or integer matrix-like object.                                                                                                                 |
| <code>clusters</code>        | the number of clusters.                                                                                                                                |
| <code>batch_size</code>      | the size of the mini batches.                                                                                                                          |
| <code>max_iters</code>       | the maximum number of clustering iterations.                                                                                                           |
| <code>num_init</code>        | number of times the algorithm will be run with different centroid seeds.                                                                               |
| <code>init_fraction</code>   | percentage of data to use for the initialization centroids (applies if initializer is <i>kmeans++</i> ). Should be a float number between 0.0 and 1.0. |
| <code>initializer</code>     | the method of initialization. One of <i>kmeans++</i> and <i>random</i> . See details for more information.                                             |
| <code>compute_labels</code>  | logical indicating whether to compute the final cluster labels.                                                                                        |
| <code>calc_wcss</code>       | logical indicating whether the within-cluster sum of squares should be computed and returned (ignored if 'compute_labels = FALSE').                    |
| <code>early_stop_iter</code> | continue that many iterations after calculation of the best within-cluster-sum-of-squared-error.                                                       |
| <code>verbose</code>         | logical indicating whether progress is printed on screen.                                                                                              |

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CENTROIDS | an optional matrix of initial cluster centroids. The rows of the CENTROIDS matrix should be equal to the number of clusters and the columns should be equal to the columns of the data. |
| tol       | convergence tolerance.                                                                                                                                                                  |

## Details

This function performs k-means clustering using mini batches. It was inspired by the implementation in <https://github.com/mlampros/ClusterR>.

The input matrix can be in any format supported by the ‘DelayedArray’ / ‘beachmat’ framework, including the matrix classes defined in the ‘Matrix’ package and the ‘HDFMatrix’ class.

There are two possible initializations.

**kmeans++:** kmeans++ initialization.

**random:** random selection of data rows as initial centroids.

## Value

a list with the following attributes:

centroids: the final centroids;

WCSS\_per\_cluster (optional): the final per-cluster WCSS.

best\_initialization: which initialization value led to the best WCSS solution;

iters\_per\_initialization: number of iterations per each initialization;

Clusters (optional): the final cluster labels.

## References

Sculley, D., 2010, April. Web-scale k-means clustering. In Proceedings of the 19th international conference on World wide web (pp. 1177-1178). ACM.

Arthur, D. and Vassilvitskii, S., 2007, January. k-means++: The advantages of careful seeding. In Proceedings of the eighteenth annual ACM-SIAM symposium on Discrete algorithms (pp. 1027-1035). Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics.

## Examples

```
data = matrix(1:30,nrow = 10)
mini_batch(data, 2, 10, 10)
```



---

predict\_mini\_batch\_r    *Compute labels for mini-batch k-means*

---

### Description

Given a data matrix and a centroid matrix, it assigns each data point to the closest centroid, using block processing.

### Usage

```
predict_mini_batch_r(  
  data,  
  centroids,  
  BPPARAM = BiocParallel::SerialParam(),  
  ...  
)
```

### Arguments

|           |                                                                   |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| data      | a matrix-like object with features in row and samples in columns. |
| centroids | a matrix with the coordinates of the centroids.                   |
| BPPARAM   | for parallel computations. See the ‘BiocParallel’ package.        |
| ...       | passed to ‘blockApply’.                                           |

### Value

a vector of cluster labels for each observation.

### Examples

```
data(iris)  
km <- mini_batch(as.matrix(iris[,1:4]), clusters = 3,  
                 batch_size = 10, max_iters = 100)  
predict_mini_batch_r(t(as.matrix(iris[,1:4])), km$centroids)
```

# Index

blocksize, [2](#)

clusterRows, [3](#)

compute\_wcss, [3](#)

mbkmeans, [4](#), [6](#)

mbkmeans, ANY-method (mbkmeans), [4](#)

mbkmeans, LinearEmbeddingMatrix-method  
(mbkmeans), [4](#)

mbkmeans, SingleCellExperiment-method  
(mbkmeans), [4](#)

mbkmeans, SummarizedExperiment-method  
(mbkmeans), [4](#)

MbkmeansParam, [6](#)

mini\_batch, [7](#)

MiniBatchKmeans, [5](#), [9](#)

predict\_mini\_batch, [9](#)

predict\_mini\_batch\_r, [10](#)

show, MbkmmeansParam-method  
(MbkmeansParam), [6](#)