

# Package ‘syll’

February 2, 2026

**Type** Package

**Title** Hyphenation and Syllable Counting for Text Analysis

**Description** Provides the hyphenation algorithm used for 'TeX'/'LaTeX' and similar software, as proposed by Liang (1983, <<https://tug.org/docs/liang/>>). Mainly contains the function `hyphen()` to be used for hyphenation/syllable counting of text objects. It was originally developed for and part of the 'koRpus' package, but later released as a separate package so it's lighter to have this particular functionality available for other packages. Support for various languages needs be added on-the-fly or by plugin packages (<<https://undocumeantit.github.io/repos/>>); this package does not include any language specific data. Due to some restrictions on CRAN, the full package sources are only available from the project homepage. To ask for help, report bugs, request features, or discuss the development of the package, please subscribe to the `koRpus-dev` mailing list (<<http://korpusml.reaktanz.de>>).

**Depends** R (>= 3.0.0)

**Imports** methods

**Suggests** testthat, knitr, rmarkdown, syll.de, syll.en, syll.es

**VignetteBuilder** knitr

**URL** <https://reaktanz.de/?c=hacking&s=syll>

**BugReports** <https://github.com/unDocUMeantIt/syll/issues>

**Additional\_repositories** <https://undocumeantit.github.io/repos/l10n>

**License** GPL (>= 3)

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'02\_method\_hyphen.R' '02\_method\_kRp.hyphen.R'  
'02\_method\_show.kRp.hyphen.R' '02\_method\_summary.kRp.hyphen.R'

```
'available.syllly.lang.R' 'get.syllly.env.R'
'install.syllly.lang.R' 'manage.hyph.pat.R' 'read.hyph.pat.R'
'set.hyph.support.R' 'set.syllly.env.R' 'syllly-internal.R'
'syllly-internal_langpack_generator.R' 'syllly-package.R'
```

**NeedsCompilation** no

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## Contents

syllly-package	2
available.syllly.lang	3
correct.hyph	4
describe	5
get.syllly.env	7
hyphen	8
install.syllly.lang	10
kRp.hyph.pat,-class	11
kRp.hyphen,-class	12
manage.hyph.pat	13
read.hyph.pat	14
set.hyph.support	15
set.syllly.env	16
show,kRp.hyphen-method	18
summary,kRp.hyphen-method	18

## Index

20

## Description

Provides the hyphenation algorithm used for 'TeX'/'LaTeX' and similar software, as proposed by Liang (1983, <<https://tug.org/docs/liang/>>). Mainly contains the function `hyphen()` to be used for hyphenation/syllable counting of text objects. It was originally developed for and part of the 'koRpus' package, but later released as a separate package so it's lighter to have this particular functionality available for other packages. Support for various languages needs be added on-the-fly or by plugin packages (<<https://undocumeantit.github.io/repos/>>); this package does not include any language specific data. Due to some restrictions on CRAN, the full package sources are only available from the project homepage. To ask for help, report bugs, request features, or discuss the development of the package, please subscribe to the `koRpus-dev` mailing list (<<http://korpusml.reaktanz.de>>).

## Details

The DESCRIPTION file:

```
Package: syll
Type: Package
Version: 0.1-7
Date: 2026-02-01
Depends: R (>= 3.0.0)
Encoding: UTF-8
License: GPL (>= 3)
LazyLoad: yes
URL: https://reaktanz.de/?c=hacking&s=syll
```

## Author(s)

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Maintainer: Meik Michalke <meik.michalke@hhu.de>

## See Also

Useful links:

- <https://reaktanz.de/?c=hacking&s=syll>
- Report bugs at <https://github.com/unDocUMeantIt/syll/issues>

---

available.syll.lang *List available language packages*

---

## Description

Get a list of all currently available language packages for syll from the official l10n repository.

## Usage

```
available.syll.lang(repos = "https://undocumeantit.github.io/repos/l10n/")
```

## Arguments

repos	The URL to additional repositories to query. You should probably leave this to the default, but if you would like to use a third party repository, you're free to do so. The value is temporarily appended to the repos currently returned by <code>getOption("repos")</code> .
-------	---

## Details

syll's language support is modular by design, meaning you can load an extension package for each language you want to work with in a given session. These language support packages are named `syll.**`, where `**` is replaced by a valid language identifier (like `en` for English or `de` for German). See [set.hyp.support](#) for more details.

This function downloads the package list from (also) the official localization repository for syll and lists all currently available language packages that you could install and load. Apart from that it does not download or install anything.

You can install the packages by either calling the convenient wrapper function [install.syll.lang](#), or [install.packages](#) (see examples).

## Value

Returns an invisible character vector with all available language packages.

## See Also

[install.syll.lang](#)

## Examples

```
## Not run:
# see all available language packages
available.syll.lang()

# install support for German
install.syll.lang("de")
# alternatively, you could call install.packages directly
install.packages("syll.de", repos="https://undocumeantit.github.io/repos/l10n/")

## End(Not run)
```

## Description

The method `correct.hyp` can be used to alter objects of class [kRp.hyphen](#).

## Usage

```
correct.hyp(obj, word = NULL, hyphen = NULL, cache = TRUE)

## S4 method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
correct.hyp(obj, word = NULL, hyphen = NULL, cache = TRUE)
```

## Arguments

obj	An object of class <code>kRp.hyphen</code> .
word	A character string, the (possibly incorrectly hyphenated) word entry to be replaced with hyphen.
hyphen	A character string, the new manually hyphenated version of word. Mustn't contain anything other than characters of word plus the hyphenation mark "-".
cache	Logical, if TRUE, the given hyphenation will be added to the sessions' hyphenation cache. Existing entries for the same word will be replaced.

## Details

Although hyphenation should turn out to be rather accurate, the algorithm does ususally produce some errors. If you want to correct for these flaws, this method can be of help, because it might prevent you from introducing new errors. That is, it will do some sanitiy checks before the object is actually manipulated and returned.

That is, `correct.hyph` checks whether word and hyphen are actually hyphenations of the same token before proceeding. If so, it will also recalculate the number of syllables and update the `syll` field.

If both word and hyphen are NULL, `correct.hyph` will try to simply recalculate the syllable count for each word, by counting the hyphenation marks (and adding 1 to the number). This can be usefull if you changed hyphenation some other way, e.g. in a spreadsheet GUI, but don't want to have to correct the syllable count yourself as well.

## Value

An object of the same class as `obj`.

## Examples

```
## Not run:
hyphenated.txt <- correct.hyph(hyphenated.txt, "Hilfe", "Hil-fe")

## End(Not run)
```

## Description

These methods should be used to get or set values of hyphenated text objects generated by functions like `hyphen()`.

**Usage**

```

describe(obj, ...)

## S4 method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
describe(obj)

describe(obj, ...) <- value

## S4 replacement method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
describe(obj, ...) <- value

language(obj)

## S4 method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
language(obj)

language(obj) <- value

## S4 replacement method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
language(obj) <- value

hyphenText(obj)

## S4 method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
hyphenText(obj)

hyphenText(obj) <- value

## S4 replacement method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
hyphenText(obj) <- value

## S4 method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
x[i, j]

## S4 replacement method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
x[i, j] <- value

## S4 method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
x[[i]]

## S4 replacement method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'
x[[i]] <- value

```

**Arguments**

obj	An object of class <a href="#">kRp.hyphen</a> .
...	Additional arguments as defined by respective methods.
value	A value to set.

x	An object of class <a href="#">kRp.hyphen</a> .
i	Row index.
j	Column index.

## Details

`describe()` returns the desc slot.  
`language()` returns the lang slot.  
`hyphenText()` returns the hyphen slot from objects of class `kRp.hyphen`.  
`[/[]` Can be used as a shortcut to index the results of `hyphenText()`.

## Examples

```
## Not run:
hyphenText(hyphenated.txt)

## End(Not run)
```

---

get.syll.y.env	<i>Get syll.y session settings</i>
----------------	------------------------------------

---

## Description

The function `get.syll.y.env` returns information on your session environment regarding the `syll.y` package, e.g. whether a cache file should be used, if it was set before using [set.syll.y.env](#).

## Usage

```
get.syll.y.env(..., errorIfUnset = TRUE)
```

## Arguments

...	Named parameters to get from the syll.y environment. Valid arguments are:
<b>lang</b>	Logical, whether the set language should be returned.
<b>hyph.cache.file</b>	Logical, whether the set hyphenation cache file for <code>hyphen</code> should be returned.
<b>hyph.max.token.length</b>	Logical, whether the set maximum token length should be returned.
<b>errorIfUnset</b>	Logical, if TRUE and the desired property is not set at all, the function will fail with an error message.

## Details

For the most part, `get.syll.y.env` is a convenient wrapper for [getOption](#).

**Value**

A character string or list, possibly including:

lang                    The specified language  
 hyph.cache.file  
                           The specified hyphenation cache file for *hyphen*

**See Also**

[set.syllable.env](#)

**Examples**

```
set.syllable.env(hyph.cache.file=file.path(tempdir(), "cache_file.RData"))
get.syllable.env(hyph.cache.file=TRUE)
```

hyphen                    *Automatic hyphenation*

**Description**

These methods implement word hyphenation, based on Liang's algorithm.

**Usage**

```
hyphen(words, ...)

## S4 method for signature 'character'
hyphen(
  words,
  hyph.pattern = NULL,
  min.length = 4,
  rm.hyph = TRUE,
  quiet = FALSE,
  cache = TRUE,
  as = "kRp.hyphen"
)

hyphen_df(words, ...)

## S4 method for signature 'character'
hyphen_df(
  words,
  hyph.pattern = NULL,
  min.length = 4,
  rm.hyph = TRUE,
  quiet = FALSE,
```

```

  cache = TRUE
)

hyphen_c(words, ...)

## S4 method for signature 'character'
hyphen_c(
  words,
  hyph.pattern = NULL,
  min.length = 4,
  rm.hyph = TRUE,
  quiet = FALSE,
  cache = TRUE
)

```

## Arguments

words	Either a character vector with words/tokens to be hyphenated, or any tagged text object generated with the <code>koRpus</code> package.
...	Only used for the method generic.
hyph.pattern	Either an object of class <code>kRp.hyph.pat</code> , or a valid character string naming the language of the patterns to be used (must already be loaded, see details).
min.length	Integer, number of letters a word must have for considering a hyphenation. <code>hyphen</code> will not split words after the first or before the last letter, so values smaller than 4 are not useful.
rm.hyph	Logical, whether appearing hyphens in words should be removed before pattern matching.
quiet	Logical. If FALSE, short status messages will be shown.
cache	Logical. <code>hyphen()</code> can cache results to speed up the process. If this option is set to TRUE, the current cache will be queried and new tokens also be added. Caches are language-specific and reside in an environment, i.e., they are cleaned at the end of a session. If you want to save these for later use, see the option <code>hyph.cache.file</code> in <code>set.syllable.env</code> .
as	A character string defining the class of the object to be returned. Defaults to " <code>kRp.hyphen</code> ", but can also be set to " <code>data.frame</code> " or " <code>numeric</code> ", returning only the central <code>data.frame</code> or the numeric vector of counted syllables, respectively. For the latter two options, you can alternatively use the shortcut methods <code>hyphen_df</code> or <code>hyphen_c</code> .

## Details

For this to work the function must be told which pattern set it should use to find the right hyphenation spots. The most straight forward way to add support for a particular language during a session is to load an appropriate language package (e.g., the package `syllable.en` for English or `syllable.de` for German). See `available.syllable.lang` and `install.syllable.lang` for more information on how to get language support packages.

After such a package was loaded, you can simply use the language abbreviation as the value for the `hyph.pattern` argument (like "en" for the English pattern set). If `words` is an object that was tokenized and tagged with the `koRpus` package, its language definition can be used instead, i.e. you don't need to specify `hyph.pattern`, `hyphen` will pick the language automatically.

In case you'd rather use your own pattern set, `hyph.pattern` can be an object of class `kRp.hph.pat`, alternatively.

### Value

An object of class `kRp.hph`, `data.frame` or a numeric vector, depending on the value of the `as` argument.

### References

Liang, F.M. (1983). *Word Hy-phen-a-tion by Com-put-er*. Dissertation, Stanford University, Dept. of Computer Science.

### See Also

`read.hph.pat`, `manage.hph.pat`, `available.syll.lang`, and `install.syll.lang`

### Examples

```
## Not run:
library(syll.en)
sampleText <- c("This", "is", "a", "rather", "stupid", "demonstration")
hyphen(sampleText, hyph.pattern="en")
hyphen_df(sampleText, hyph.pattern="en")
hyphen_c(sampleText, hyph.pattern="en")

# using a koRpus object
hyphen(tagged.text)

## End(Not run)
```

---

`install.syll.lang`      *Install language support packages*

---

### Description

This is a wrapper for `install.packages`, making it more convenient to install additional language support packages for `syll`.

### Usage

```
install.syll.lang(
  lang,
  repos = "https://undocumeantit.github.io/repos/l10n/",
  ...
)
```

## Arguments

lang	Character vector, one or more valid language identifiers (like en for English or de for German).
repos	The URL to additional repositories to query. You should probably leave this to the default, but if you would like to use a third party repository, you're free to do so. The value is temporarily appended to the repos currently returned by <code>getOption("repos")</code> .
...	Additional options for <code>install.packages</code> .

## Details

For a list of currently available language packages see [available.syll.lang](#). See [set.hyph.support](#) for more details on syll's language support in general.

## Value

Does not return any useful objects, just calls [install.packages](#).

## See Also

[install.packages](#), [available.syll.lang](#)

## Examples

```
## Not run:
# install support for German
install.syll.lang("de")
# load the package
library("syll.de")

## End(Not run)
```

---

kRp.hyph.pat,-class     S4 Class *kRp.hyph.pat*

---

## Description

This class is used for objects that are returned by [read.hyph.pat](#).

## Details

Since this package has been a part of the koRpus package before, you might run into old pattern files. You will know that this is the case if using them automatically tries to load the koRpus package. In these cases, you might want to strip the defunct reference to koRpus by calling the private function `syll:::koRpus2syll` which take the path to the old file as its first argument. Be aware that calling this function will overwrite the old file in-place, so you should make a backup first!

**Slots**

**lang** A character string, naming the language that is assumed for the patterns in this object

**pattern** A matrix with three columns:

**orig:** The unchanged patgen patterns.

**char:** Only the characters used for matching.

**nums:** The hyphenation number code for the pattern.

**Constructor function**

Should you need to manually generate objects of this class (which should rarely be the case), the constructor function `kRp_hyph_pat(...)` can be used instead of `new("kRp.hyph.pat", ...)`. Whenever possible, stick to [read.hyph.pat](#).

**Description**

This class is used for objects that are returned by [hyphen](#).

**Slots**

**lang** A character string, naming the language that is assumed for the analyzed text in this object

**desc** Descriptive statistics of the analyzed text.

**hyphen** A data.frame with two columns:

**syll:** Number of recognized syllables

**word:** The hyphenated word

**Constructor function**

Should you need to manually generate objects of this class (which should rarely be the case), the constructor function `kRp_hyphen(...)` can be used instead of `new("kRp.hyphen", ...)`. Whenever possible, stick to [hyphen](#).

---

 manage.hyph.pat *Handling hyphenation pattern objects*


---

## Description

This function can be used to examine and change hyphenation pattern objects be used with [hyphen](#).

## Usage

```
manage.hyph.pat(
  hyph.pattern,
  get = NULL,
  set = NULL,
  rm = NULL,
  word = NULL,
  min.length = 3L,
  rm.hyph = TRUE
)
```

## Arguments

hyph.pattern	Either an object of class <code>kRp.hyph.pat</code> , or a valid language abbreviation for patterns included in this package.
get	A character string, part of a word to look up in the pattern set, i.e., without the numbers indicating split probability.
set	A character string, a full pattern to be added to the pattern set, i.e., including the numbers indicating split probability.
rm	A character string, part of a word to remove from the pattern set, i.e., without the numbers indicating split probability.
word	A character string, a full word to hyphenate using the given pattern set.
min.length	Integer, number of letters a word must have for considering a hyphenation.
rm.hyph	Logical, whether appearing hyphens in words should be removed before pattern matching.

## Details

You can only run one of the possible actions at a time. If any of these arguments is not `NULL`, the corresponding action is done in the following order, and every additional discarded:

`get` Searches the pattern set for a given word part

`set` Adds or replaces a pattern in the set (duplicates are removed)

`rm` Removes a word part and its pattern from the set

`word` Hyphenates a word and returns all parts examined as well as all matching patterns

If all action arguments are `NULL`, `manage.hyph.pat` returns the full pattern object.

## Value

If all action arguments are `NULL`, returns an object of class `kRp.hyph.pat`. The same is true if `set` or `rm` are set and `hyph.pattern` is itself an object of that class; if you refer to a language instead, pattern changes will be done internally for the running session and take effect immediately. The `get` argument will return a character vector, and `word` a data frame.

## References

[1] <https://ctan.org/tex-archive/language/hyph-utf8/tex/patterns/txt/>

## See Also

`kRp.hyph.pat`, `hyphen`

## Examples

```
## Not run:
manage.hyph.pat("en", set="r3ticl")
manage.hyph.pat("en", get="rticl")
manage.hyph.pat("en", word="article")
manage.hyph.pat("en", rm="rticl")

## End(Not run)
```

`read.hyph.pat`

*Reading patgen-compatible hyphenation pattern files*

## Description

This function reads hyphenation pattern files, to be used with `hyphen`.

## Usage

```
read.hyph.pat(file, lang, fileEncoding = "UTF-8")
```

## Arguments

<code>file</code>	A connection or character string with a valid path to a file with hyphenation patterns (one pattern per line).
<code>lang</code>	A character string, usually two letters short, naming the language the patterns are meant to be used with (e.g. "es" for Spanish).
<code>fileEncoding</code>	A character string defining the character encoding of the file to be read. Unless you have a really good reason to do otherwise, your pattern files should all be UTF-8 encoded.

## Details

Hyphenation patterns that can be used are available from CTAN[1]. But actually any file with only the patterns themselves, one per line, should work.

The language designation is of no direct consequence here, but if the resulting pattern object is to be used by other functions in this package or koRpus, it should resemble the designation that's used for the same language there.

## Value

An object of class [kRp.hyph.pat](#).

## References

[1] <https://ctan.org/tex-archive/language/hyph-utf8/tex/patterns/txt/>

## See Also

[hyphen](#), [manage.hyph.pat](#)

## Examples

```
## Not run:  
read.hyph.pat("~/patterns/hyph-en-us.pat.txt", lang="en_us")  
## End(Not run)
```

---

set.hyph.support      *Add support for new languages*

---

## Description

You can use this function to add new languages to be used with [sylly](#).

## Usage

```
set.hyph.support(value)
```

## Arguments

value	A named list that upholds exactly the structure defined above.
-------	--

## Details

Language support in this package is designed to be extended easily. You could call it modular, although it's actually more "environmental", but nevermind.

To add new language support, say for Xyzedish, you basically have to call this function once and provide respective hyphenation patterns. If you would like to re-use this language support, you should consider making it a package.

If it succeeds, it will fill an internal environment with the information you have defined. hyphen will then know which language patterns are available as data files (which you must provide also).

You provide the meta data as a named list. It usually has one single entry to tell the new language abbreviation, e.g., `set.hyph.support(list("xyz"="xyz"))`. However, this will only work if a) the language support script is a part of the syll.y package itself, and b) the hyphen pattern is located in its data subdirectory.

For your custom hyphenation patterns to be found automatically, provide it as the value in the named list, e.g., `set.hyph.support(list("xyz"=hyph.xyz))`. This will directly add the patterns to syll.y's environment, so it will be found when hyphenation is requested for language "xyz".

If you would like to provide hyphenation as part of a third party language package, you must name the object `hyph.<lang>`, save it to your package's data subdirectory named `hyph.<lang>.rda`, and append `package="<yourpackage>"` to the named list; e.g., `set.hyph.support(list("xyz"=c("xyz", package="koRpus.lang.xyz")))`. Only then syll.y will look for the pattern object in your package, not its own data directory.

## Hyphenation patterns

To be able to also do syllable count with the newly added language, you should add a hyphenation pattern file as well. Refer to the documentation of `read.hyph.pat()` to learn how to produce a pattern object from a downloaded hyphenation pattern file. Make sure you use the correct name scheme (e.g. "hyph.xyz.rda") and good compression.

## Examples

```
## Not run:
set.hyph.support(
  list("xyz"="xyz")
)

## End(Not run)
```

---

set.syll.y.env

*A function to set information on your syll.y environment*

---

## Description

The function `set.syll.y.env` can be called before any of the hyphenation functions. It writes information on your current session's settings to your global [.Options](#).

## Usage

```
set.syll.y.env(..., validate = TRUE)
```

## Arguments

...	Named parameters to set in the syll.y environment. Valid arguments are:
<b>lang</b>	A character string specifying a valid language.
<b>hyph.cache.file</b>	A character string specifying a path to a file to use for storing already hyphenated data, used by <b>hyphen</b> .
<b>hyph.max.token.length</b>	A single number to set the internal cache size for tokens. The value should be set to the longest token to be hyphenated.
<b>validate</b>	To explicitly unset a value again, set it to an empty character string (e.g., <code>lang=""</code> ).
<b>validate</b>	Logical, if TRUE given paths will be checked for actual availability, and the function will fail if files can't be found. This option is currently without any effect, as it does not apply to <code>hyph.cache.file</code> because that file will be created automatically if needed.

## Details

To get the current settings, the function `get.syll.y.env` should be used. For the most part, `set.syll.y.env` is a convenient wrapper for `options`. To permanently set some defaults, you could also add respective options calls to an `.Rprofile` file.

## Value

Returns an invisible NULL.

## See Also

[get.syll.y.env](#)

## Examples

```
set.syll.y.env(hyph.cache.file=file.path(tempdir(), "cache_file.RData"))
get.syll.y.env(hyph.cache.file=TRUE)

## Not run:
# example for setting permanent default values in an .Rprofile file
options(
  syll.y=list(
    hyph.cache.file=file.path(tempdir(), "cache_file.RData"),
    lang="de"
  )
)
# be aware that setting a permanent default language without loading
# the respective language support package might trigger errors

## End(Not run)
```

---

show,kRp.hyphen-method  
*Show method for syll objects*

---

### Description

Show method for S4 objects of class [kRp.hyphen](#).

### Usage

```
## S4 method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'  
show(object)
```

### Arguments

object        An object of class kRp.hyphen.

### See Also

[kRp.hyphen](#)

### Examples

```
## Not run:  
hyphen(tagged.text)  
  
## End(Not run)
```

---

summary,kRp.hyphen-method  
*Summary method for syll objects*

---

### Description

Summary method for S4 objects of class [kRp.hyphen](#).

### Usage

```
## S4 method for signature 'kRp.hyphen'  
summary(object)
```

### Arguments

object        An object of class kRp.hyphen.

**See Also**

[kRp.hyphen](#)

**Examples**

```
## Not run:  
summary(hyphen(tagged.text))  
  
## End(Not run)
```

# Index

- \* **classes**
  - kRp.hyph.pat,-class, 11
  - kRp.hyphen,-class, 12
- \* **hyphenation**
  - hyphen, 8
  - manage.hyph.pat, 13
  - read.hyph.pat, 14
- \* **methods**
  - correct.hyph, 4
  - show, kRp.hyphen-method, 18
  - summary, kRp.hyphen-method, 18
- \* **misc**
  - get.syll.y.env, 7
  - set.syll.y.env, 16
  - .Options, 16
  - .Rprofile, 17
  - [,-methods (describe), 5
  - [,kRp.hyphen,ANY,ANY-method (describe), 5
  - [,kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
  - [<-, -methods (describe), 5
  - [<-,kRp.hyphen,ANY,ANY,ANY-method (describe), 5
  - [<-,kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
  - [[], -methods (describe), 5
  - [[],kRp.hyphen,ANY-method (describe), 5
  - [[],kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
  - [[[<-, -methods (describe), 5
  - [[[<-,kRp.hyphen,ANY,ANY-method (describe), 5
  - [[[<-,kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
  - available.syll.y.lang, 3, 9–11
  - correct.hyph, 4
  - correct.hyph, kRp.hyphen-method (correct.hyph), 4
  - describe, 5
  - describe, kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
- describe<- (describe), 5
- describe<-,kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
- get.syll.y.env, 7, 17
- getOption, 7
- hyphen, 8, 12–15, 17
- hyphen, character-method (hyphen), 8
- hyphen\_c (hyphen), 8
- hyphen\_c,-methods (hyphen), 8
- hyphen\_c, character-method (hyphen), 8
- hyphen\_df (hyphen), 8
- hyphen\_df,-methods (hyphen), 8
- hyphen\_df, character-method (hyphen), 8
- hyphenText (describe), 5
- hyphenText,-methods (describe), 5
- hyphenText, kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
- hyphenText<- (describe), 5
- hyphenText<-, -methods (describe), 5
- hyphenText<-,kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
- install.packages, 4, 10, 11
- install.syll.y.lang, 4, 9, 10, 10
- kRp.hyph.pat, 9, 14, 15
- kRp.hyph.pat,-class, 11
- kRp.hyph.pat-class (kRp.hyph.pat,-class), 11
- kRp.hyphen, 4–7, 10, 18, 19
- kRp.hyphen,-class, 12
- kRp.hyphen-class (kRp.hyphen,-class), 12
- kRp.hyph\_pat (kRp.hyph.pat,-class), 11
- kRp.hyphen (kRp.hyphen,-class), 12
- language (describe), 5
- language, kRp.hyphen-method (describe), 5
- language<- (describe), 5

language<- ,kRp.hyphen-method  
(describe), 5

manage.hyph.pat, 10, 13, 15

options, 17

read.hyph.pat, 10–12, 14

set.hyph.support, 4, 11, 15

set.syll.env, 7–9, 16

show(show,kRp.hyphen-method), 18

show,kRp.hyphen-method, 18

summary (summary,kRp.hyphen-method), 18

summary,kRp.hyphen-method, 18

syll (syll-package), 2

syll-package, 2