Basic Scripting, Syntax, and Data Types in Python

Mteor 227 – Fall 2017
Basic Shell Scripting/Programming with Python

• Shell: a user interface for access to an operating system’s services.
  – The outer layer between the user and the operating system.

• The first line in your program needs to be:

  `#!/usr/bin/python`

• This line tells the computer what python interpreter to use.
Comments

• Comments in Python are indicated with a pound sign, #.

• Any text following a # and the end of the line is ignored by the interpreter.

• For multiple-line comments, a # must be used at the beginning of each line.
Continuation Line

• The \ character at the end of a line of Python code signifies that the next line is a continuation of the current line.
Variable Names and Assignments

• Valid characters for variable, function, module, and object names are any letter or number. The underscore character can also be used.

• Numbers cannot be used as the first character.

• The underscore should not be used as either the first or last character, unless you know what you are doing.
  – There are special rules concerning leading and trailing underscore characters.
Variable Names and Assignments

- Python is case sensitive! Capitalization matters.
  - The variable `f` is not the same as the variable `F`.

- Python supports parallel assignment

```python
>>> a, b = 5, 'hi'
>>> a
5
>>> b
'hi'
```
Data Types

• Examples of *data types* are integers, floating-point numbers, complex numbers, strings, etc.

• Python uses *dynamic typing*, which means that the variable type is determined by its input.
  – The same variable name can be used as an integer at one point, and then if a string is assigned to it, it then becomes a string or character variable.
Numeric Data Types

- Python has the following numeric data types
  - Boolean
  - Integer
  - Floating Point
  - Complex
Boolean Data Type

• The Boolean data type has two values: True and False
  – Note: The capitalization matters

• True also has a numerical value of 1

• False also has a numerical value of zero

```python
>>> True == 1
True
>>> True == 2
False
>>> False == 1
False
>>> False == 0
True
```
Integer Data Type

• There are two integer data types in Python:

  – Integer
    • Ranges from approximately $-2147483648$ to $+2147483647$
    • Exact range is machine dependent

  – Long integer
    • Unlimited except by the machine’s available memory
Integer Data Type

• The two integer types are nearly transparent to the user
  – A long integer is denoted by having an L after the number.

```python
>>> a = 34
>>> a
34
>>> b = 34*200000000000000000000
>>> b
680000000000000000000L
```
Floating Point Data Type

• All floating point numbers are 64-bit (double precision)

• Scientific notation is the same as in other languages
  – Either lower or upper case (e or E) can be used.

```python
>>> a = 67000000000000000000.0
>>> a 6.7e+19
>>> b = 2E3
>>> b 2000.0
```
Complex Data Type

• Complex numbers such as $7.3 + i2.5$ are denoted $7.3 + 2.5j$
  – Either lower-case or upper-case j or J may be used to denote the imaginary part.

• The complex data type has some built-in attributes and methods to retrieve the real part, the imaginary part, and to compute the conjugate:
Complex Data Type Example

```python
>>> c = 3.4 + 5.6j
>>> c
(3.4+5.6j)
>>> c.real
3.4
>>> c.imag
5.6
>>> c.conjugate()
(3.4-5.6j)
```
Objects, Attributes, and Methods

- The complex number example provides an opportunity to discuss the object-oriented nature of Python.

- In Python, most entities are *objects*
  - In the example, the complex number \( c \) is an object that represents an *instance* of the complex *class*
Attributes

Objects may have *attributes* associated with them.

- The attributes can be thought of as some type of data that is bound to the object.

- Each attribute has a name.

- The value of the attribute is found by typing the name of the object, a period, and then the name of the attribute, in the form `object.attribute`
Complex Data Type Example

```python
>>> c = 3.4 + 5.6j
>>> c
(3.4+5.6j)
>>> c.real
3.4
>>> c.imag
5.6
>>> c.conjugate()
(3.4-5.6j)
```
Attributes of the Complex Class

• In the complex number example, the complex class has two attributes named ‘real’ and ‘imag’ that return the real and imaginary parts of the complex number.
  – The command c.real accessed the attribute named ‘real’ of the complex number c.
  – Likewise, the command c.imag accessed the attribute named ‘imag’.
Methods

• A method can be thought of as a function that belongs to the object.
  – The method operates on the objects attributes, or on other arguments supplied to the method.

• An object’s methods are invoked by typing the name of the object, a period, and then the name of the method, along with parenthesis for the argument list, in the form object.method([…argument list…])
  – Note: The parenthesis must always be present to invoke a method, even if there are not arguments needed.
Complex Data Type Example

```python
>>> c = 3.4 + 5.6j
>>> c
(3.4+5.6j)
>>> c.real
3.4
>>> c.imag
5.6
>>> c.conjugate()
(3.4-5.6j)
```
Methods of the Complex Class

• In the complex number example, the complex class has a method called conjugate() that returns the conjugate of the number represented by the object.
  – In the example there are no arguments that need to be passed to the method.
The None Data Type

• An object or variable with no value (also known as the *null value*) has data type of None (note capitalization).

• A value of None can be assigned to any variable or object in the same manner as any other value is assigned.

```python
>>> a = None
>>> a
```
Strings

- The string data type is assigned by enclosing the text in single, double, or even triple quotes. The following are all valid ways of denoting a string literal
  - ‘Hello there’
  - “Hello there”
  - ““Hello there””
  - “““Hello there”””
Mixing Quotes

- Mixing single, double, and triple quotes allows quotes to appear within strings.

```python
>>> s = 'Dad said, "Do it now!"
>>> s
'Dad said, "Do it now!"

>>> print(s)
Dad said, "Do it now!"
```
Triple Quotes

- Triple-quoted strings can include multiple lines, and retain all formatting contained within the triple quotes.

```python
>>> s = """This sentence runs
over a
few lines.""
>>> s
'This sentence runs\nover a\nfew lines.'
>>> print(s)
This sentence runs
over a
few lines.
```
Special Characters

- Special characters within string literals are preceded by the backslash, \\

- One common special character is the newline command, \n, which forces a new line.

```python
>>> print('Hello \n there.
Hello
there.
')
Hello there.
```
Lists and Tuples

- Lists and tuples are both collections of values of objects.
  - The data type of the objects within the list do not have to be the same.

- Lists are denoted with square brackets, while tuples are denoted with parentheses.

```python
>>> l = [4.5, -7.8, 'pickle', True, None, 5]
>>> t = (4.5, -7.8, 'pickle', True, None, 5)
```
Tuples versus Lists

• Lists can be modified after they are created.
  – Lists are mutable

• Tuples cannot be modified after they are created.
  – Tuples are immutable
Lists and Tuples may contain other Lists and Tuples

```python
>>> l = [4.5, ('cat', 'dog'), -5.3, [4, 8, -2], True]
```
Accessing Lists and Tuples

- The individual elements of a list of tuple are accessed by denoting their indices within square brackets.

```python
>>> t = [0, -5, 8, 'hi', False]
>>> t[0]
0
>>> t[1]
-5
>>> t[2]
8
>>> t[3]
'hi'
>>> t[4]
False
```
Use of Negative Indices

```python
>>> t = [0, -5, 8, 'hi', False]
>>> t[-1]
False
>>> t[-2]
'hi'
>>> t[-3]
8
>>> t[-4]
-5
>>> t[0]
0
```
Using Ranges

• Ranges of indices can also be used.
  – These are indicated by the form start:end

• IMPORTANT! The last value in the range is NOT returned.

```python
>>> t
[0, -5, 8, 'hi', False]
>>> t[1:3]
[-5, 8]
>>> t[0:-1]
[0, -5, 8, 'hi']
```
Using Ranges

• All the elements from the first up to a given index (minus one) are accessed by starting with a colon.

• All elements from a starting element to the end are accessed by ending with a colon.

```python
>>> t
[0, -5, 8, 'hi', False]
>>> t[:4]
[0, -5, 8, 'hi']
>>> t[2:]
[8, 'hi', False]
```
Striding

• Can specify a stride to skip elements.

• A negative stride can move backwards.

```python
>>> t = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12]
>>> t[0:-1:3]
[1, 4, 7, 10]
>>> t[10:2:-2]
[11, 9, 7, 5]
```
Accessing Nested Elements

• Nested elements are accessed by multiple indices.

```python
>>> n = [[2,3,7], [-2, -4, 8], ['pickle', 'Henry']]
>>> n[0]
[2, 3, 7]
>>> n[0][1]
3
>>> n[2][0]
'pickle'
>>> n[1][1:]
[-4, 8]
```
Assigning/Reassigning Elements

• Since lists are mutable, we can reassign values to their elements.

```python
>>> p = ['cat', 'dog', 'ferret', 'llama']
>>> p[2] = 'squirrel'
>>> p
['cat', 'dog', 'squirrel', 'llama']
>>> p[0:2] = ['zebra', 'monkey']
>>> p
['zebra', 'monkey', 'squirrel', 'llama']
```
Lists versus Arrays

- Although lists kind of look like arrays, they are not the same.
  - The elements of a list may be a mixture of variables and objects of different types.

- Python does have arrays, but we won’t be using them.
  - Instead we will be using arrays from the Numerical Python (NumPy) library.
Functions and Methods for Lists

- `len(ls)` returns the number of items in the list `ls`.

- `del ls[i:j]` deletes items at indices `i` through `j-1`.

- `ls.append(elem)` adds element `elem` to the end of the list.

- `ls.extend(elems)` adds the multiple elements, `elems`, to the end of the list. Note the `elems` must be in the form of a list or tuple.
Functions and Methods for Lists

- `ls.count(target)` returns the number of instances of target contained in the list.

- `ls.index(target)` returns the first index of the list that contains target. A range can also be provided.

- `ls.insert(I,elem)` inserts `elem` at index `i`.

- `ls.pop(i)` returns element at index `I` and also removes the element from the list.
Functions and Methods for Lists

- `ls.remove(target)` removes the first occurrence of target from the list.

- `ls.reverse()` reverses the list in place.

- `ls.sort()` sorts the list in place. If keyword `reverse = True`, it also reverses the results of the sort.

- Note that the `reverse()` and `sort()` methods both change the actual list. They don’t just return a copy.
The range() function

- The built-in range() function provides a useful means of generating sequences of integers

```python
>>> r = range(-5, 8)
>>> r
[-5, -4, -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7]
```
Caution!

- Note that the sequence is always one short of the final number in the argument.

- This is true almost everywhere in Python.
  - Ranges and sequences of values do not include the last item in the specified range.
The range() Function (cont.)

- Can use steps, or even go in reverse:

```python
>>> r = range(-5, 8, 3)
>>> r
[-5, -2, 1, 4, 7]
>>> r = range(8, -5, -3)
>>> r
[8, 5, 2, -1, -4]
```
Dictionaries

• A dictionary is a collection of objects that are referenced by a key rather than by an index number.

• In other programming languages, dictionaries are referred to as hashes or associated arrays.
Dictionaries

• Dictionaries are defined using curly braces, with the key:value pairs separated by a colon.

• Elements are accessed by using the key as though it were an index

```python
d = {'first': 'John', 'last': 'Doe', 'age': 34}

>>> d['first']
'John'

>>> d['age']
34
```
Alternate Means of Creating Dictionaries

```python
>>> d = dict(first = 'John', last = 'Doe', age = 34)
>>> d = dict([['first', 'John'], ['last', 'Doe'], ['age', 34]])
```
Dictionaries are Mutable

```python
>>> d
{'age': 34, 'last': 'Doe', 'first': 'John'}
>>> d['age'] = 39
>>> d
{'age': 39, 'last': 'Doe', 'first': 'John'}
```
Functions and Methods for Dictionaries

- `len(d)` returns the number of items in `d`.

- `del d[k]` removes the item in `d` whose key is `k`.

- `k in d` is used to see if `d` contains an item with key given by `k`.
  - Returns either True or False

- `d.clear()` deletes all items in the dictionary.
Functions and Methods for Dictionaries

- d.copy makes a copy of the dictionary.

- d.keys() returns a list of all keys in the dictionary.

- d.items() returns a list containing tuples of all key-value pairs.

- d.values() returns a list of all values in the dictionary.
Finding an Object’s Type

• The data type of an object can be found using the `type(obj)` function

```python
>>> a = 4
>>> type(a)
<type 'int'>
>>> b = 4.5
>>> type(b)
<type 'float'>
>>> c = 'Hello'
>>> type(c)
<type 'str'>
>>> d = 4+7j
>>> type(d)
<type 'complex'>
>>> e = (4, 7, 2.3, 'radish')
>>> type(e)
<type 'tuple'>
```