

Python

ACTL3143 & ACTL5111 Deep Learning for Actuaries
Patrick Laub



Recording of this lecture

A recording covering (most of) this Python content:

Introduction to Python

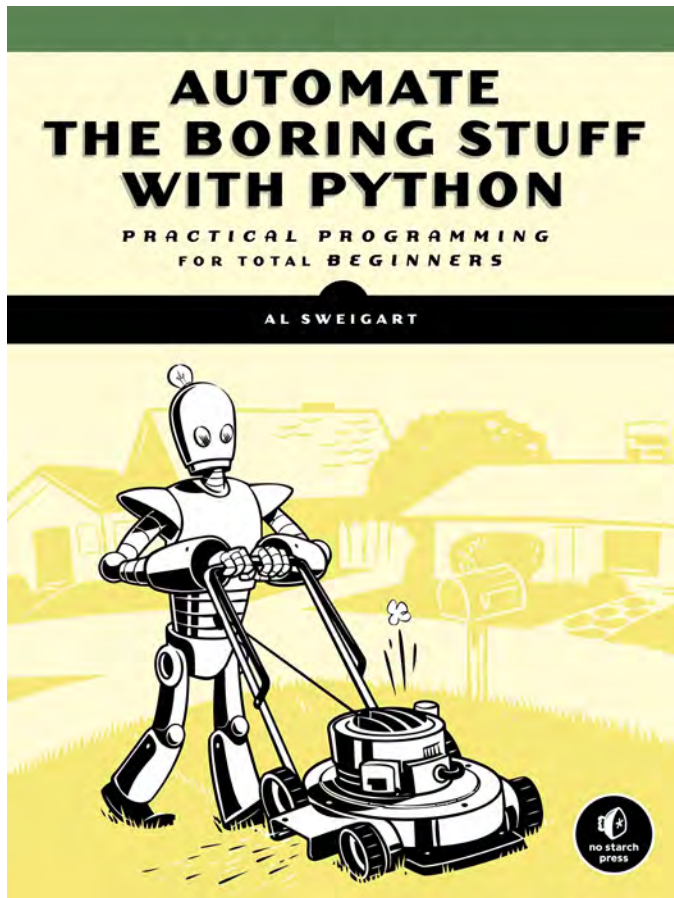


Lecture Outline

- **Data Science & Python**
- Python Data Types
- Collections
- Control Flow
- Python Functions
- Import syntax
- Lambda functions



About Python



Free book [Automate the Boring Stuff with Python](#)

It is *general purpose* language

Python powers:

- Instagram
- Spotify
- Netflix
- Uber
- Reddit...

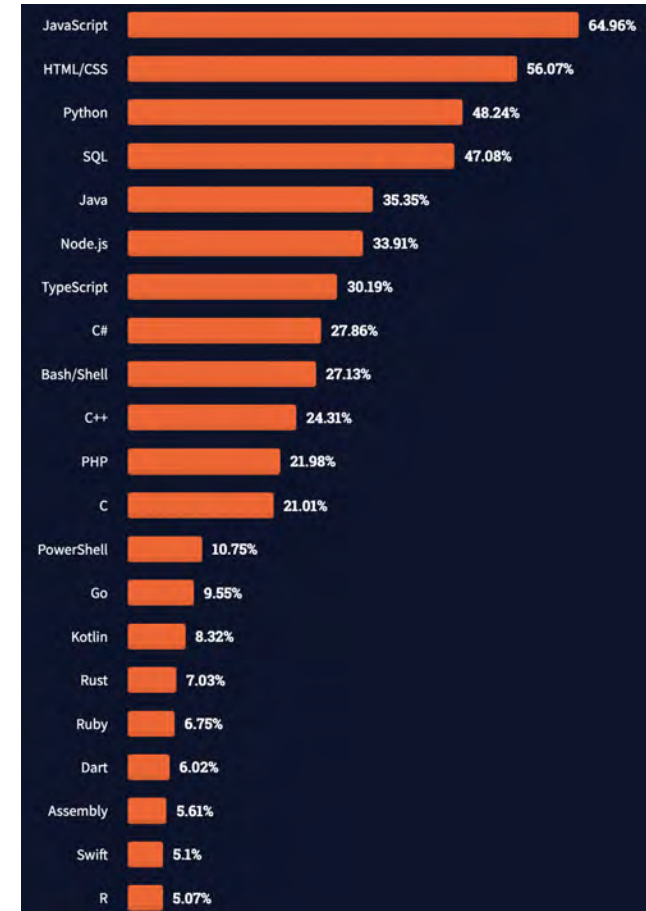
Python is on Mars.



Sources: [Blog post](#) and [Github](#).

Stack Overflow 2021 Dev. Survey

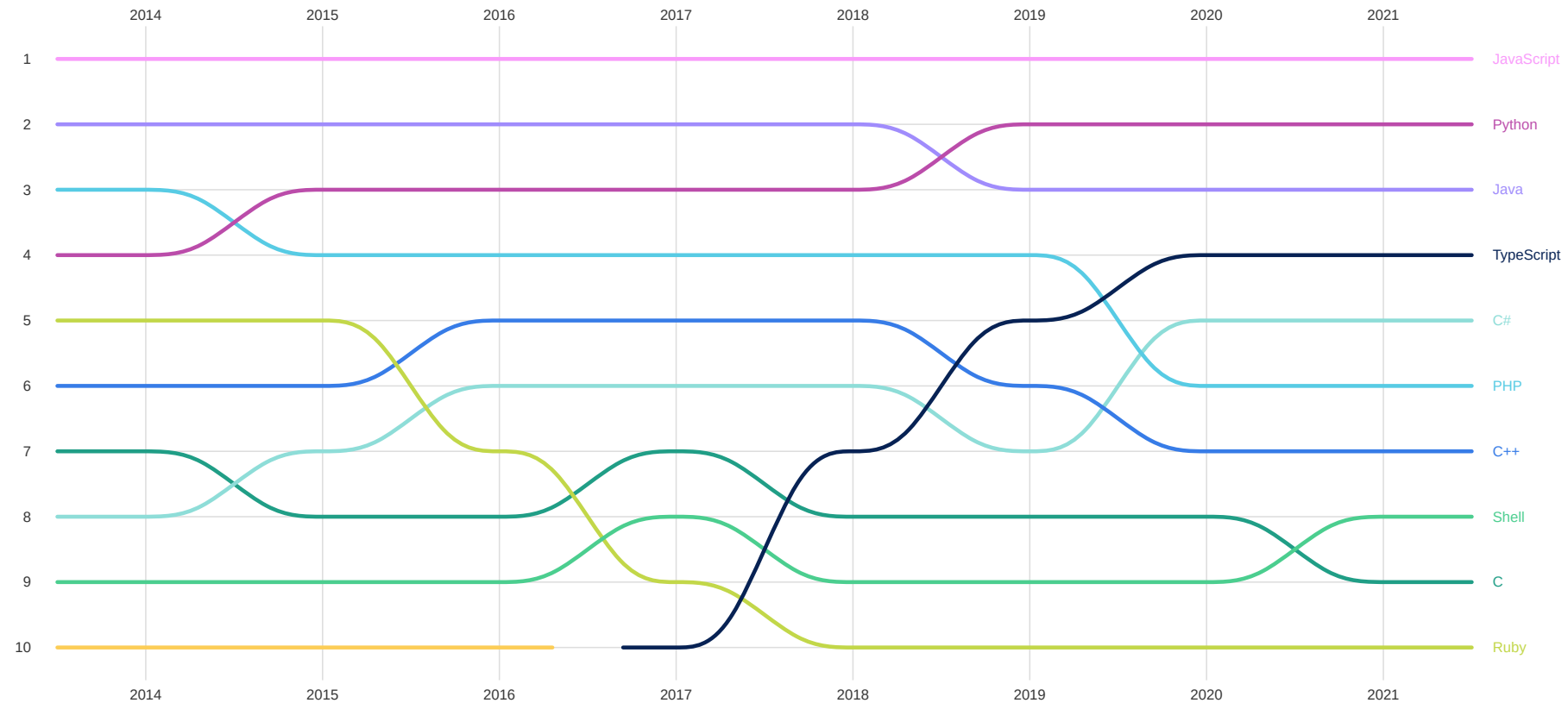
- Python is 3rd most popular language
- Python is the most wanted language
- In ‘Other frameworks and libraries’, they note that “several data science libraries for Python make strong showings”.



Popular languages.



Github's 2021 State of the Octoverse



Top languages over the years

Source: Kaggle (2021), [State of Machine Learning and Data Science](#).



Python and machine learning

...[T]he entire machine learning and data science industry has been dominated by these two approaches: **deep learning** and **gradient boosted trees**... Users of gradient boosted trees tend to use Scikit-learn, XGBoost, or LightGBM. Meanwhile, most practitioners of deep learning use Keras, often in combination with its parent framework TensorFlow. The common point of these tools is **they're all Python libraries**: Python is by far the most widely used language for machine learning and data science.



Source: François Chollet (2021), *Deep Learning with Python, Second Edition*, Section 1.2.7.

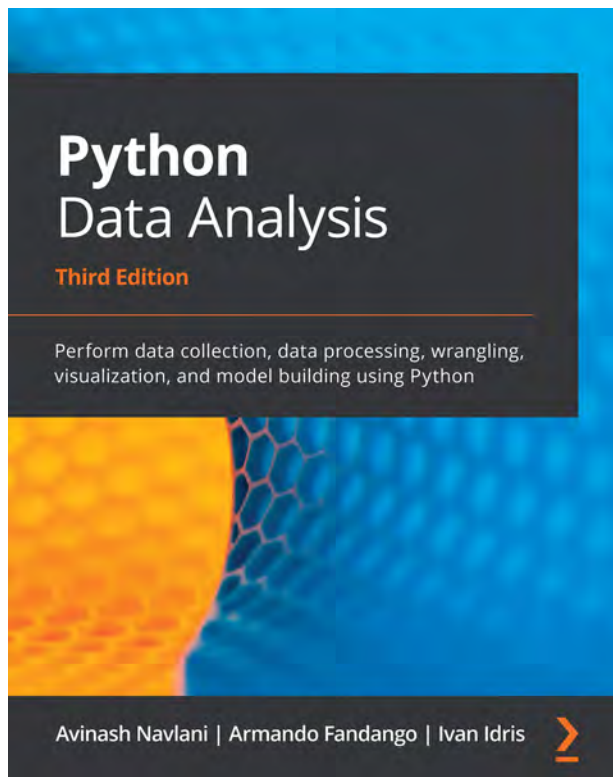
Python for data science

In R you can run:

```
1 pchisq(3, 10)
```

In Python it is

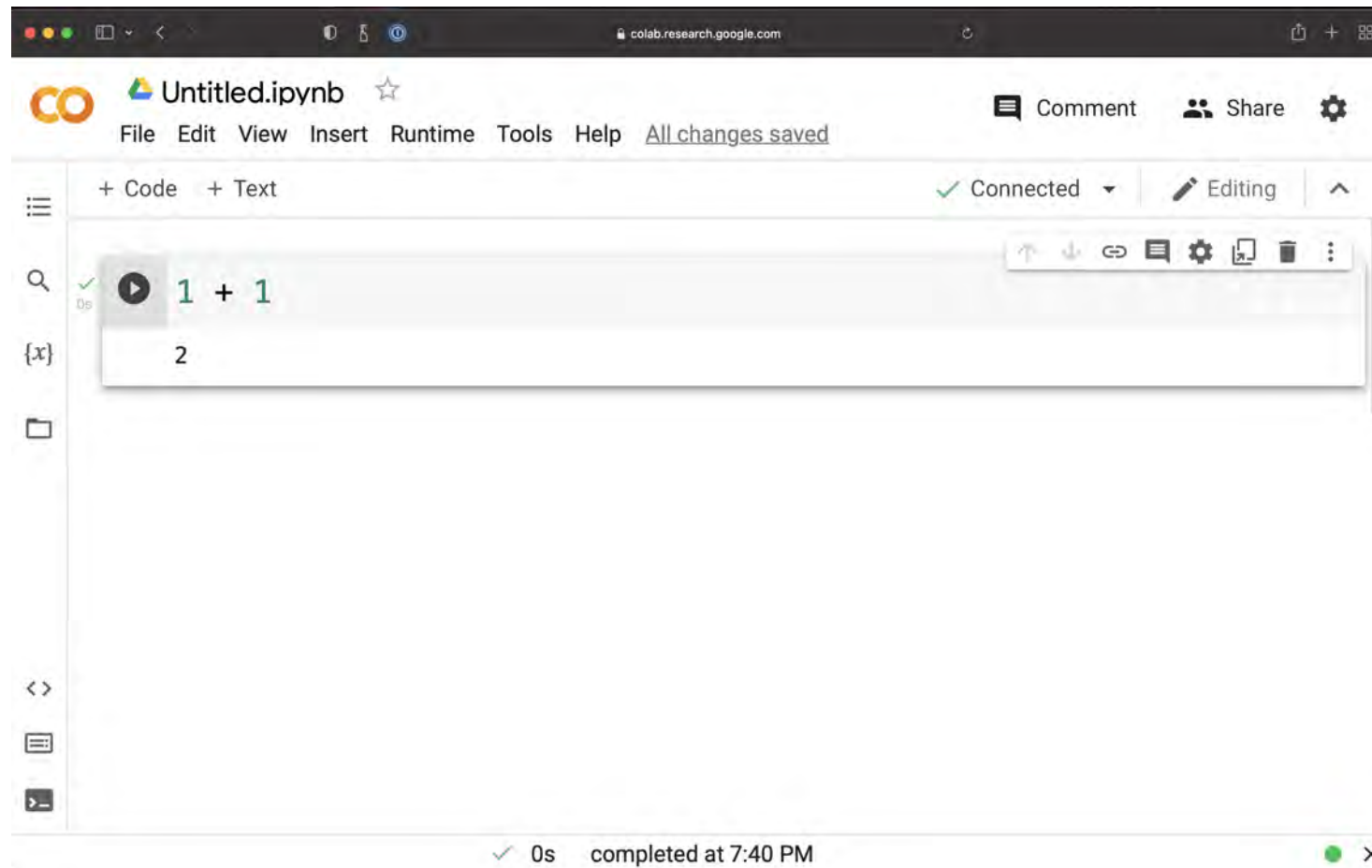
```
1 from scipy import stats  
2 stats.chi2(10).cdf(3)
```



In Leganto



Google Colaboratory



An example notebook in Google Colaboratory.

<http://colab.research.google.com>



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Variables and basic types

```
1 1 + 2
```

3

```
1 x = 1
2 x + 2.0
```

3.0

```
1 type(2.0)
```

float

```
1 type(1), type(x)
```

(int, int)

```
1 does_math_work = 1 + 1 == 2
2 print(does_math_work)
3 type(does_math_work)
```

True

bool

```
1 contradiction = 1 != 1
2 contradiction
```

False



Shorthand assignments

If we want to add 2 to a variable `x`:

```
1 x = 1
2 x = x + 2
3 x
```

3

```
1 x = 1
2 x += 2
3 x
```

3

Same for:

- `x -= 2` : take 2 from the current value of `x`,
- `x *= 2` : double the current value of `x`,
- `x /= 2` : halve the current value of `x`.



Strings

```
1 name = "Patrick"  
2 surname = "Laub"
```

```
1 coffee = "This is Patrick's coffee"  
2 quote = 'And then he said "I need a coffee!"'
```

```
1 name + surname
```

'PatrickLaub'

```
1 greeting = f"Hello {name} {surname}"  
2 greeting
```

'Hello Patrick Laub'

```
1 "Patrick" in greeting
```

True



and & or

```
1 name = "Patrick"
2 surname = "Laub"
3 name.istitle() and surname.istitle()
```

True

```
1 full_name = "Dr Patrick Laub"
2 full_name.startswith("Dr ") or full_name.endswith(" PhD")
```

True

! Important

The dot is used denote methods, it can't be used inside a variable name.

```
1 i.am.an.unfortunate.R.users = True
```

NameError: name 'i' is not defined



help to get more details

```
1 help(name.istitle)
```

Help on built-in function istitle:

istitle() method of builtins.str instance

Return True if the string is a title-cased string, False otherwise.

In a title-cased string, upper- and title-case characters may only follow uncased characters and lowercase characters only cased ones.



f-strings

```
1 print(f"Five squared is {5*5} and five cubed is {5**3}")
2 print("Five squared is {5*5} and five cubed is {5**3}")
```

Five squared is 25 and five cubed is 125
Five squared is {5*5} and five cubed is {5**3}

Use f-strings and avoid the older alternatives:

```
1 print(f"Hello {name} {surname}")
2 print("Hello " + name + " " + surname)
3 print("Hello {} {}".format(name, surname))
4 print("Hello %s %s" % (name, surname))
```

Hello Patrick Laub
Hello Patrick Laub
Hello Patrick Laub
Hello Patrick Laub



Converting types

```
1 digit = 3
2 digit
```

3

```
1 type(digit)
```

int

```
1 num = float(digit)
2 num
```

3.0

```
1 type(num)
```

float

```
1 num_str = str(num)
2 num_str
```

'3.0'



Quiz

What is the output of:

```
1 x = 1
2 y = 1.0
3 print(f"{x == y} and {type(x) == type(y)}")
```

True and False

What would you add before line 3 to get “True and True”?

```
1 x = 1
2 y = 1.0
3 x = float(x) # or y = int(y)
4 print(f"{x == y} and {type(x) == type(y)}")
```

True and True



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Lists

```
1 desires = ["Coffee", "Cake", "Sleep"]  
2 desires
```

['Coffee', 'Cake', 'Sleep']

```
1 len(desires)
```

3

```
1 desires[0]
```

'Coffee'

```
1 desires[-1]
```

'Sleep'

```
1 desires[2] = "Nap"  
2 desires
```

['Coffee', 'Cake', 'Nap']



Slicing lists

```
1 print([0, 1, 2])  
2 desires
```

[0, 1, 2]

['Coffee', 'Cake', 'Nap']

```
1 desires[0:2]
```

['Coffee', 'Cake']

```
1 desires[0:1]
```

['Coffee']

```
1 desires[:2]
```

['Coffee', 'Cake']



A common indexing error

```
1 desires[1.0]
```

TypeError: list indices must be integers or slices, not float

```
1 desires[: len(desires) / 2]
```

TypeError: slice indices must be integers or None or have an __index__ method

```
1 len(desires) / 2, len(desires) // 2
```

(1.5, 1)

```
1 desires[: len(desires) // 2]
```

['Coffee']



Editing lists

```
1 desires = ["Coffee", "Cake", "Sleep"]
2 desires.append("Gadget")
3 desires
```

```
['Coffee', 'Cake', 'Sleep', 'Gadget']
```

```
1 desires.pop()
```

```
'Gadget'
```

```
1 desires
```

```
['Coffee', 'Cake', 'Sleep']
```

```
1 desires.sort()
2 desires
```

```
['Cake', 'Coffee', 'Sleep']
```

```
1 desires[3] = "Croissant"
```

```
IndexError: list assignment index out of range
```



None

```
1 desires = ["Coffee", "Cake", "Sleep", "Gadget"]
2 sorted_list = desires.sort()
3 sorted_list
```

```
1 type(sorted_list)
```

NoneType

```
1 sorted_list is None
```

True

```
1 bool(sorted_list)
```

False

```
1 desires = ["Coffee", "Cake", "Sleep", "Gadget"]
2 sorted_list = sorted(desires)
3 print(desires)
4 sorted_list
```

['Coffee', 'Cake', 'Sleep', 'Gadget']

['Cake', 'Coffee', 'Gadget', 'Sleep']



Tuples ('immutable' lists)

```
1 weather = ("Sunny", "Cloudy", "Rainy")
2 print(type(weather))
3 print(len(weather))
4 print(weather[-1])
```

```
<class 'tuple'>
```

```
3
```

```
Rainy
```

```
1 weather.append("Snowy")
```

```
AttributeError: 'tuple' object has no attribute 'append'
```

```
1 weather[2] = "Snowy"
```

```
TypeError: 'tuple' object does not support item assignment
```



One-length tuples

```
1 using_brackets_in_math = (2 + 4) * 3
2 using_brackets_to_simplify = (1 + 1 = 2)
```

```
1 failure_of_atuple = ("Snowy")
2 type(failure_of_atuple)
```

str

```
1 happy_solo_tuple = ("Snowy",)
2 type(happy_solo_tuple)
```

tuple

```
1 cheeky_solo_list = ["Snowy"]
2 type(cheeky_solo_list)
```

list



Dictionaries

```
1 phone_book = {"Patrick": "+61 1234", "Café": "(02) 5678"}
2 phone_book["Patrick"]
```

'+61 1234'

```
1 phone_book["Café"] = "+61400 000 000"
2 phone_book
```

{'Patrick': '+61 1234', 'Café': '+61400 000 000'}

```
1 phone_book.keys()
```

dict_keys(['Patrick', 'Café'])

```
1 phone_book.values()
```

dict_values(['+61 1234', '+61400 000 000'])

```
1 factorial = {0: 1, 1: 1, 2: 2, 3: 6, 4: 24, 5: 120, 6: 720, 7: 5040}
2 factorial[4]
```

24



Quiz

```
1 animals = ["dog", "cat", "bird"]
2 animals.append("teddy bear")
3 animals.pop()
4 animals.pop()
5 animals.append("koala")
6 animals.append("kangaroo")
7 print(f"{len(animals)} and {len(animals[-2])}")
```

4 and 5



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if and else

```
1 age = 50
```

```
1 if age ≥ 30:  
2     print("Gosh you're old")
```

Gosh you're old

```
1 if age ≥ 30:  
2     print("Gosh you're old")  
3 else:  
4     print("You're still young")
```

Gosh you're old



The weird part about Python...

```
1 if age ≥ 30:  
2     print("Gosh you're old")  
3 else:  
4     print("You're still young")
```

IndentationError: expected an indented block after 'else' statement on line 3 (2212277638.py, line 4)



Warning

Watch out for mixing tabs and spaces!



An example of aging

```
1 age = 16
2
3 if age < 18:
4     friday_evening_schedule = "School things"
5 if age < 30:
6     friday_evening_schedule = "Party 🎉🍷"
7 if age ≥ 30:
8     friday_evening_schedule = "Work"
```

```
1 print(friday_evening_schedule)
```

Party 🎉🍷



Using `elif`

```
1 age = 16
2
3 if age < 18:
4     friday_evening_schedule = "School things"
5 elif age < 30:
6     friday_evening_schedule = "Party 🎉🍷"
7 else:
8     friday_evening_schedule = "Work"
9
10 print(friday_evening_schedule)
```

School things



for Loops

```
1 desires = ["coffee", "cake", "sleep"]
2 for desire in desires:
3     print(f"Patrick really wants a {desire}.")
```

Patrick really wants a coffee.
Patrick really wants a cake.
Patrick really wants a sleep.

```
1 for i in range(3):
2     print(i)
```

0
1
2

```
1 for i in range(3, 6):
2     print(i)
```

3
4
5

```
1 range(5)
```

range(0, 5)

```
1 type(range(5))
```

range

```
1 list(range(5))
```

[0, 1, 2, 3, 4]



Advanced **for** loops

```
1 for i, desire in enumerate(desires):
2     print(f"Patrick wants a {desire}, it is priority #{i+1}.")
```

Patrick wants a coffee, it is priority #1.
 Patrick wants a cake, it is priority #2.
 Patrick wants a sleep, it is priority #3.

```
1 desires = ["coffee", "cake", "nap"]
2 times = ["in the morning", "at lunch", "during a boring lecture"]
3
4 for desire, time in zip(desires, times):
5     print(f"Patrick enjoys a {desire} {time}.")
```

Patrick enjoys a coffee in the morning.
 Patrick enjoys a cake at lunch.
 Patrick enjoys a nap during a boring lecture.



List comprehensions

```
1 [x**2 for x in range(10)]
```

```
[0, 1, 4, 9, 16, 25, 36, 49, 64, 81]
```

```
1 [x**2 for x in range(10) if x % 2 == 0]
```

```
[0, 4, 16, 36, 64]
```

They can get more complicated:

```
1 [x * y for x in range(4) for y in range(4)]
```

```
[0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1, 2, 3, 0, 2, 4, 6, 0, 3, 6, 9]
```

```
1 [[x * y for x in range(4)] for y in range(4)]
```

```
[[0, 0, 0, 0], [0, 1, 2, 3], [0, 2, 4, 6], [0, 3, 6, 9]]
```

but I'd recommend just using **for** loops at that point.



While Loops

Say that we want to simulate $(X \mid X \geq 100)$ where $X \sim \text{Pareto}(1)$. Assuming we have `simulate_pareto`, a function to generate `Pareto(1)` variables:

```
1 samples = []
2 while len(samples) < 5:
3     x = simulate_pareto()
4     if x ≥ 100:
5         samples.append(x)
6
7 samples
```

```
[125.28600493316272,
186.04974709289712,
154.45723763510398,
101.08310878885993,
2852.8305399214996]
```



Breaking out of a loop

```
1 while True:
2     user_input = input(">> What would you like to do? ")
3
4     if user_input == "order cake":
5         print("Here's your cake! 🍰")
6
7     elif user_input == "order coffee":
8         print("Here's your coffee! ☕")
9
10    elif user_input == "quit":
11        break
```

```
>> What would you like to do? order cake
Here's your cake! 🍰
>> What would you like to do? order coffee
Here's your coffee! ☕
>> What would you like to do? order cake
Here's your cake! 🍰
>> What would you like to do? quit
```



Quiz

What does this print out?

```
1 if 1 / 3 + 1 / 3 + 1 / 3 == 1:  
2     if 2**3 == 6:  
3         print("Math really works!")  
4     else:  
5         print("Math sometimes works..")  
6 else:  
7     print("Math doesn't work")
```

Math sometimes works..

What does this print out?

```
1 count = 0  
2 for i in range(1, 10):  
3     count += i  
4     if i > 3:  
5         break  
6 print(count)
```

10



Debugging the quiz code

```
1 count = 0
2 for i in range(1, 10):
3     count += i
4     print(f"After i={i} count={count}")
5     if i > 3:
6         break
```

After i=1 count=1

After i=2 count=3

After i=3 count=6

After i=4 count=10



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Making a function

```
1 def add_one(x):  
2     return x + 1  
3  
4  
5 def greet_a_student(name):  
6     print(f"Hi {name}, welcome to the AI class!")
```

```
1 add_one(10)
```

11

```
1 greet_a_student("Josephine")
```

Hi Josephine, welcome to the AI class!

```
1 greet_a_student("Joseph")
```

Hi Joseph, welcome to the AI class!

Here, **name** is a *parameter* and the value supplied is an *argument*.



Default arguments

Assuming we have `simulate_standard_normal`, a function to generate $\text{Normal}(0, 1)$ variables:

```
1 def simulate_normal(mean=0, std=1):  
2     return mean + std * simulate_standard_normal()
```

```
1 simulate_normal() # same as 'simulate_normal(0, 1)'
```

0.47143516373249306

```
1 simulate_normal(1_000) # same as 'simulate_normal(1_000, 1)'
```

998.8090243052935

Note

We'll cover random numbers next week (using `numpy`).



Use explicit parameter name

```
1 simulate_normal(mean=1_000) # same as 'simulate_normal(1_000, 1)'
```

1001.4327069684261

```
1 simulate_normal(std=1_000) # same as 'simulate_normal(0, 1_000)'
```

-312.6518960917129

```
1 simulate_normal(10, std=0.001) # same as 'simulate_normal(10, 0.001)'
```

9.999279411266635

```
1 simulate_normal(std=10, 1_000)
```

SyntaxError: positional argument follows keyword argument (1723181129.py, line 1)



Why would we need that?

E.g. to fit a Keras model, we use the `.fit` method:

```
1 model.fit(x=None, y=None, batch_size=None, epochs=1, verbose='auto',  
2           callbacks=None, validation_split=0.0, validation_data=None,  
3           shuffle=True, class_weight=None, sample_weight=None,  
4           initial_epoch=0, steps_per_epoch=None, validation_steps=None,  
5           validation_batch_size=None, validation_freq=1,  
6           max_queue_size=10, workers=1, use_multiprocessing=False)
```

Say we want all the defaults except changing
`use_multiprocessing=True`:

```
1 model.fit(None, None, None, 1, 'auto', None, 0.0, None, True, None,  
2           None, 0, None, None, None, 1, 10, 1, True)
```

but it is *much nicer* to just have:

```
1 model.fit(use_multiprocessing=True)
```



Quiz

What does the following print out?

```

1 def get_half_of_list(numbers, first=True):
2     if first:
3         return numbers[: len(numbers) // 2]
4     else:
5         return numbers[len(numbers) // 2 :]
6
7 nums = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]
8 chunk = get_half_of_list(nums, False)
9 second_chunk = get_half_of_list(chunk)
10 print(second_chunk)

```

[4]

```
1 f"nums → {nums[:len(nums)//2]} and {nums[len(nums)//2:]}"
```

'nums → [1, 2, 3] and [4, 5, 6]'

```
1 f"chunk → {chunk[:len(chunk)//2]} and {chunk[len(chunk)//2:]}"
```

'chunk → [4] and [5, 6]'



Multiple return values

```
1 def limits(numbers):  
2     return min(numbers), max(numbers)  
3  
4 limits([1, 2, 3, 4, 5])
```

(1, 5)

```
1 type(limits([1, 2, 3, 4, 5]))
```

tuple

```
1 min_num, max_num = limits([1, 2, 3, 4, 5])  
2 print(f"The numbers are between {min_num} and {max_num}.")
```

The numbers are between 1 and 5.

```
1 _, max_num = limits([1, 2, 3, 4, 5])  
2 print(f"The maximum is {max_num}.")
```

The maximum is 5.

```
1 print(f"The maximum is {limits([1, 2, 3, 4, 5])[1]}.")
```

The maximum is 5.



Tuple unpacking

```
1 lims = limits([1, 2, 3, 4, 5])
2 smallest_num = lims[0]
3 largest_num = lims[1]
4 print(f"The numbers are between {smallest_num} and {largest_num}.")
```

The numbers are between 1 and 5.

```
1 smallest_num, largest_num = limits([1, 2, 3, 4, 5])
2 print(f"The numbers are between {smallest_num} and {largest_num}.")
```

The numbers are between 1 and 5.

This doesn't just work for functions with multiple return values:

```
1 RESOLUTION = (1920, 1080)
2 WIDTH, HEIGHT = RESOLUTION
3 print(f"The resolution is {WIDTH} wide and {HEIGHT} tall.")
```

The resolution is 1920 wide and 1080 tall.



Short-circuiting

```

1 def is_positive(x):
2     print("Called is_positive")
3     return x > 0
4
5 def is_negative(x):
6     print("Called is_negative")
7     return x < 0
8
9 x = 10

```

```

1 x_is_positive = is_positive(x)
2 x_is_positive

```

Called is_positive

True

```

1 x_is_negative = is_negative(x)
2 x_is_negative

```

Called is_negative

False

```

1 x_not_zero = is_positive(x) or is_negative(x)
2 x_not_zero

```

Called is_positive

True



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Python standard library

```
1 import os  
2 import time
```

```
1 time.sleep(0.1)
```

```
1 os.getlogin()
```

'plaub'

```
1 os.getcwd()
```

'/home/plaub/Dropbox/Lecturing/ACTL3143/DeepLearningForActuaries/Artificial-Intelligence'



Import a few functions

```
1 from os import getcwd, getlogin  
2 from time import sleep
```

```
1 sleep(0.1)
```

```
1 getlogin()
```

'plaub'

```
1 getcwd()
```

'/home/plaub/Dropbox/Lecturing/ACTL3143/DeepLearningForActuaries/Artificial-Intelligence'



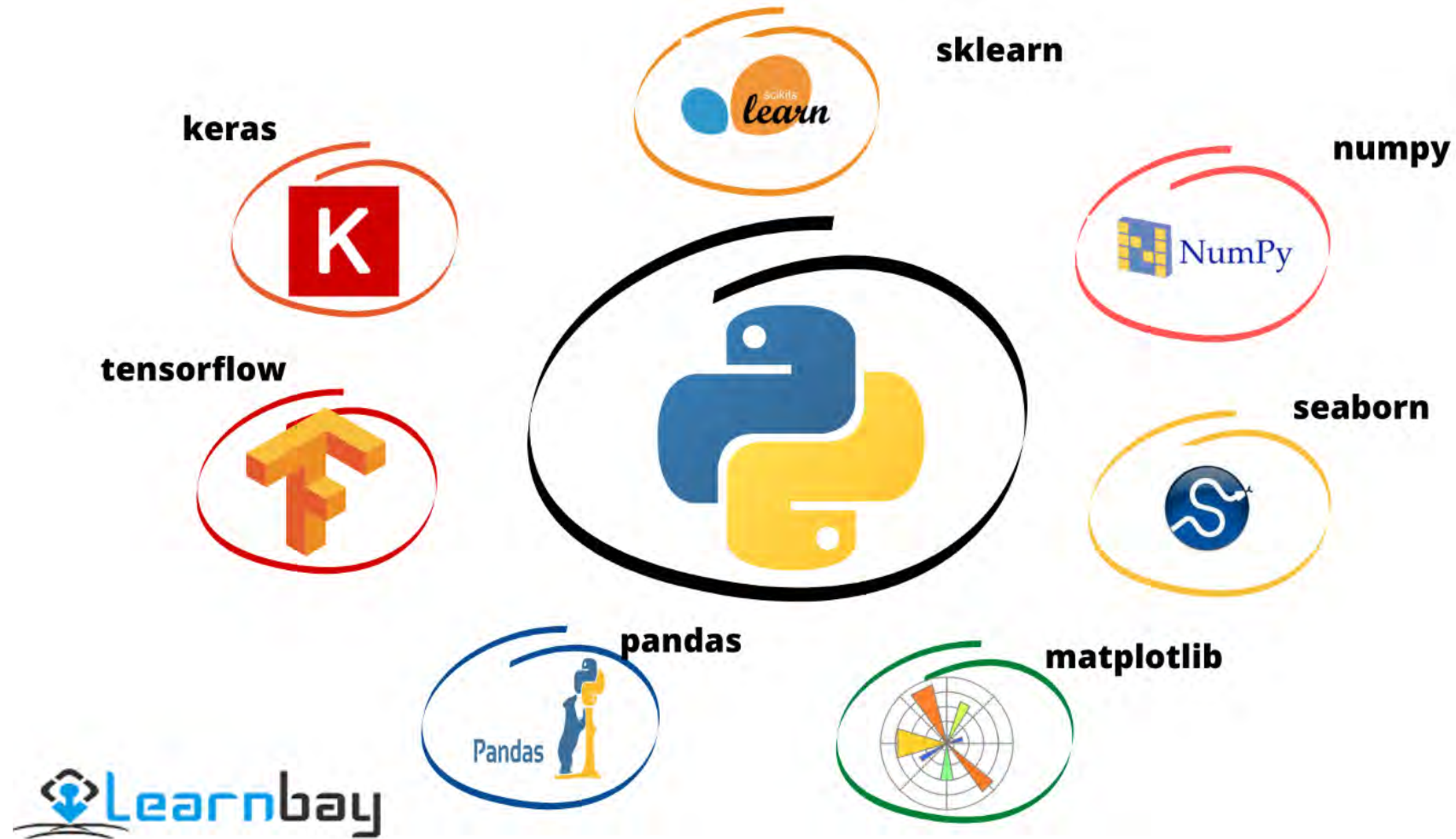
Timing using pure Python

```
1 from time import time
2
3 start_time = time()
4
5 counting = 0
6 for i in range(1_000_000):
7     counting += 1
8
9 end_time = time()
10
11 elapsed = end_time - start_time
12 print(f"Elapsed time: {elapsed} secs")
```

Elapsed time: 0.05615687370300293 secs



Data science packages



Common data science packages

Source: Learnbay.co, [Python libraries for data analysis and modeling in Data science](#), Medium.



Importing using **as**

```

1 import pandas
2
3 pandas.DataFrame(
4     {
5         "x": [1, 2, 3],
6         "y": [4, 5, 6],
7     }
8 )

```

	x	y
0	1	4
1	2	5
2	3	6

```

1 import pandas as pd
2
3 pd.DataFrame(
4     {
5         "x": [1, 2, 3],
6         "y": [4, 5, 6],
7     }
8 )

```

	x	y
0	1	4
1	2	5
2	3	6



Importing from a subdirectory

Want `keras.models.Sequential()`.

```
1 import keras
2
3 model = keras.models.Sequential()
```

Alternatives using `from`:

```
1 from keras import models
2
3 model = models.Sequential()
```

```
1 from keras.models import Sequential
2
3 model = Sequential()
```



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Anonymous 'lambda' functions

Example: how to sort strings by their second letter?

```
1 names = ["Josephine", "Patrick", "Bert"]
```

If you try `help(sorted)` you'll find the `key` parameter.

```
1 for name in names:  
2     print(f"The length of '{name}' is {len(name)}.")
```

The length of 'Josephine' is 9.

The length of 'Patrick' is 7.

The length of 'Bert' is 4.

```
1 sorted(names, key=len)
```

```
['Bert', 'Patrick', 'Josephine']
```



Anonymous 'lambda' functions

Example: how to sort strings by their second letter?

```
1 names = ["Josephine", "Patrick", "Bert"]
```

If you try `help(sorted)` you'll find the `key` parameter.

```
1 def second_letter(name):  
2     return name[1]
```

```
1 for name in names:  
2     print(f"The second letter of '{name}' is '{second_letter(name)}'.")
```

The second letter of 'Josephine' is 'o'.
The second letter of 'Patrick' is 'a'.
The second letter of 'Bert' is 'e'.

```
1 sorted(names, key=second_letter)
```

```
['Patrick', 'Bert', 'Josephine']
```



Anonymous 'lambda' functions

Example: how to sort strings by their second letter?

```
1 names = ["Josephine", "Patrick", "Bert"]
```

If you try `help(sorted)` you'll find the `key` parameter.



with keyword

Example, opening a file:

Most basic way is:

```
1 f = open("haiku1.txt", "r")
2 print(f.read())
3 f.close()
```

Chaos reigns within.
Reflect, repent, and reboot.
Order shall return.

Instead, use:

```
1 with open("haiku2.txt", "r") as f:
2     print(f.read())
```

The Web site you seek
Cannot be located, but
Countless more exist.



Package Versions

```
1 from watermark import watermark
2 print(watermark(python=True, packages="keras,matplotlib,numpy,pandas,seaborn,scipy,torch"))
```

```
Python implementation: CPython
Python version       : 3.11.9
IPython version      : 8.24.0
```

```
keras      : 3.3.3
matplotlib: 3.9.0
numpy      : 1.26.4
pandas     : 2.2.2
seaborn    : 0.13.2
scipy      : 1.11.0
torch      : 2.3.1
tensorflow: 2.16.1
tf_keras   : 2.16.0
```



Links

If you came from C (i.e. are a joint computer science student), and were super interested in Python's internals, maybe you'd be interested in this [How variables work in Python](#) video.



Glossary

- default arguments
- dictionaries
- f-strings
- function definitions
- Google Colaboratory
- `help`
- list
- `pip install ...`
- `range`
- slicing
- tuple
- `type`
- whitespace indentation
- zero-indexing

