Modules, Packages and Programs

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Objectives

- To learn about packages, modules and programs.
- To understand the reusability of Python Packages and how they could be imported into another program.
- To learn how to create packages and modules.
- To learn how to create standalone programs and run them from the interactive prompt.
- To understand how to move away from interactive programming to creating standalone programs with function calls, namespaces and deriving the the desired output.

First Standalone Program

- Create a file called ex1.py in your local machine. And open it in edit mode.
- Write the following piece of code.

```
print('Hello, World!')
```

- The line should print the message on the screen when it is executed.
- To run the file, we'll use the interactive prompt (terminal for Mac users).
- At the prompt, we'll say python ex1.py and hit return.
- The message "Hello, World!" should come up on the prompt.

Command Line Arguments

- Arguments can be passed to our program directly from the command line as well.
- Lets create a second file called ex2.py and write the following line of code in it.

```
import sys
print('Program arguments : ', sys.argv)
```

- Execute the code from the command prompt as "python ex2.py".
- You will notice that the name of the python file was printed as an argument to the command.
- Passing a couple of more argument, we can understand that the arguments are internally converted into a list and the first argument to the program is always the file name itself.

Importing Modules

- A module is only a file of Python code that can be reused.
- Modules are reused by simply importing them into the current program. Example:

dice.py

```
def throw_dice():
        """Throw your dice like a player!"""
        from random import choice
        possibilities = [1,2,3,4,5,6]
        return choice(possibilities)
```

ex3.py

```
        import dice
        side = dice.throw_dice()
        print("You have rolled a ",side)
```

Explanation

- In the example, we see two types of import statements.
- In dice.py, we import only the choice function from the random module. This is usually a best practice as it saves on memory and avoids unnecessary code imports.
- The random module is a fully standalone python code with multiple functions and choice is one amongst them.
- In the ex3.py file, we import the dice.py module and using dice as a handle, we call the throw_dice() function of it.
- Remember that throw_dice() method is a property of the dice object (In python, everything is treated as an object).
- The dot notation is used to call the property as seen in dice.throw_dice().
- We are basically qualifying the content of the dice module with the module's name itself.

Using Aliases for Module Names

- Modules can be imported with an alias name as well.
- The new alias name can then be used to access any property of the imported module and this results in ease of typing. Example,

```
import numpy as np
arr = np.array([1,2,3,4,5])
print(arr.shape)
```

- In the code, we assigned an alias name to the numpy module as 'np'.
- It is later used to call the array function of the module as "np.array()".

Packages

- Modules can be further organized into file hierarchies called Packages.
- Maybe in the previous exercise, we may want to roll one die and sometimes roll two dices.
- One way to structure this is to have two separate modules, one for a single dice and another for a pair of dices and each of them will have a function called roll.
- It will look something like this.

single.py

```
def roll_dice():
        """Roll your dice like a player!"""
        from random import choice
        possibilities = [1,2,3,4,5,6]
        return choice(possibilities)
```

Packages

```
#double.py
def roll_dice():
        """Roll a pair of dice"""
        from random import choice
        possibilites = [1,2,3,4,5,6]
        return(choice([(one, two)
        for one in possibilites
        for two in possibilites]))

#__init__.py
from roll import single
from roll import double
```

Packages

```
#ex5.py

from roll import single,double

side = single.roll_dice()
print("You have rolled a {}".format(side))

sides = double.roll_dice()
print("You have rolled {} and {}".
format(sides[0],sides[1]))
```

When the above code is executed, the modules single and double will be imported from the package roll.

Packages

- The way to create a package is to place all the modules in single directory that has been named with the desired Package's name.
- The next step is to place a python file called __init__.py for Python to identify the directory as a Package.
- Once that is done, we are free to import the entire package or just the select modules from the package into our program.
- The methods of the module can be called by by the module name or the name(alias) assigned to the module as part of the import.

Summary

- We understood the use of modules in importing additional functionality into our code that gives us more firepower to work with.
- Using command line arguments help us with more control over providing inputs to the code, while debugging especially.
- Use of Packages to package all methods and classes together gives us more options to save the code for later reuse.