

Create an importable python package for our `utils.py` module so it's functions, constants and classes can be shared by applications in different folders

Ref: <https://towardsdatascience.com/understanding-python-imports-init-py-and-pythonpath-once-and-for-all-4c5249ab6355>

### Task:

You have a collection of utilities which you would like to use in other programs.

To start, you created a module, `utils.py`, and placed it in the same directory as the application that's using it like so;

```
(data301) >tree
.
├── 32_categorical_variables.ipynb
└── utils.py
```

but things stop working as soon as you try to access `utils` from outside the current directory. Like so;

```
(data301) >tree
.
├── week_3
│   ├── 32_categorical_variables.ipynb
│   └── utils.py
├── week_4
│   └── 41_wants_to_use_utils.ipynb
```

The problem is that `utils.py` cannot be found by `41_wants_to_use_utils.ipynb` because `utils.py` is not located in a directory in the system path or the `PYTHONPATH`. To solve this, make `utils.py` into a package, and update the path as needed. The following is 1 way to do this;

### A solution:

1. Create a separate folder for `utils.py`. I will call it `utils`, but it can be whatever you want.
2. In the `utils` folder, add a file called `__init__.py`.

```
.
├── utils
│   ├── __init__.py
│   └── utils.py
├── week_3
│   ├── 32_categorical_variables.ipynb
├── week_4
│   └── 41_wants_to_use_utils.ipynb
```

`__init__.py` defines the objects exported from the modules in the directory (caveat: it can also define exports from modules in other directories)

3. Assuming `utils.py` has the following function that you would like to export:

```
def generate_tshirt_order(numb_small=100, numb_medium=100, numb_large=100):  
    ...
```

4. Add the following line to `__init__.py` if you want to import everything from the `utils` module

```
from utils.utils import *
```

```
#or you can import selective bits like this
```

```
#from utils.utils import generate_tshirt_order
```

```
#from utils.utils import PROCESSED_DATA
```

5. You now have a package called `utils`. To import it, the python interpreter must be able to find it. No worries, add your packages parent directory to the system path in the file that needs to import `utils.py`. So add this code to `41_wants_to_use_utils.ipynb`.

```
# I need to add the parent directory of utils in order to find it
```

```
#it happens to be up 1 directory.
```

```
import os
```

```
import sys
```

```
PROJECT_ROOT = os.path.abspath(os.path.join(  
    os.getcwd(),  
    os.pardir)
```

```
)
```

```
#only add it once
```

```
if (PROJECT_ROOT not in sys.path):
```

```
    sys.path.append(PROJECT_ROOT)
```

Now you can use it like any other package.