

Code Club Challenge: Space Invaders (Part 1)

Setting up

One of the very first computer games was called “Space Invaders”¹ and we are going to recreate it in Python.

To get started, open LXTerminal and use the following command to download the start of the project:

Listing 1: Get the the starting point

```
git clone https://github.com/jrmhaig/space_invaders
```

This should create a new directory called `space_invaders` containing a Python program and some icons. Open the program with:

Listing 2: Opening the starting point

```
$ cd space_invaders
$ idle space_invaders.py
```

Note

We need to use idle (for Python version 2) instead of idle3 (for Python version 3) because the PyGame module only works for Python version 2 on the Raspberry Pi at the moment.

You could also launch Idle from the desktop icon and then browse to the correct directory to open the file.

Controlling the ship

The first thing to do is to add the ship that you (the player) will control. This will move left and right along the bottom of the screen while the aliens, which you have to shoot, will go at the top. Look at the script below and see what you need to change.

Note

Can you identify the parts that:

- Finds the picture file to use for the ship?
- Tells the computer where to put the ship?
- Finds out if you are pressing the left or right buttons?

¹It was apparently originally created in 1978, which makes it almost as old as me!

Listing 3: Controlling the ship

```
import pygame

# Colours
WHITE = (255,255,255)

5 # Size of the screen
WIDTH = 400
HEIGHT = 300

10 pygame.init()
clock = pygame.time.Clock()
game_speed = 85
screen = pygame.display.set_mode((WIDTH, HEIGHT), 0)
pygame.key.set_repeat(1, 10)

15 # Images # New
ship_image = pygame.image.load('icons/ship.png') # New

# Position of the ship # New
20 ship = { # New
    'x': 150, # New
    'y': 260, # New
} # New

25 run = True

while run:
    screen.fill(WHITE)

30 for event in pygame.event.get():
    if event.type == pygame.QUIT:
        run = False
    elif event.type == pygame.KEYDOWN: # New
        # A key has been pressed # New
        if event.key == pygame.K_LEFT: # New
            # Move the ship left # New
            ship['x'] = ship['x'] - 1 # New
        elif event.key == pygame.K_RIGHT: # New
            # Move the ship right # New
            ship['x'] = ship['x'] + 1 # New

40 # Put the ship on the screen # New
```

```
screen.blit(ship_image, (ship['x'], ship['y'])) # New

45 # Refresh the screen
pygame.display.update()
clock.tick(game_speed)
```

Add a bit of *class*

Now we have managed to get the ship moving more easily but do you see what happens when you go to the edge of the window? We will solve this later. First, we are going to introduce a new programming idea; *Classes* and *Objects*.

So far, we have just a single thing in our game – a ship that you can control with the arrow keys. Later we will also have a number of aliens as well as bullets, and all of these have very similar information about them and actions. For example, they all have a position (x and y) and they all need to move. With a Class we can write code for them all once and only once.

Note

Can you see how I stopped the ship going off the side of the window?
Can you work out how to make it move faster or slower?

Listing 4: Adding classes

```
import pygame

# Colours
WHITE = (255,255,255)

5 # Size of the screen
WIDTH = 400
HEIGHT = 300

10 # Directions # New
LEFT = 1 # New
RIGHT = 2 # New
UP = 3 # New
DOWN = 4 # New

15 pygame.init()
clock = pygame.time.Clock()
game_speed=85
screen = pygame.display.set_mode((WIDTH, HEIGHT), 0)
20 pygame.key_set_repeat(1, 10)
```

```
class GamePiece:                                     # New
    def __init__(self, x, y, image):                 # New
        self.x = x                                   # New
        self.y = y                                   # New
        self.speed = 1                               # New
        self.image = image                           # New
        self.min_x = 10                              # New
        self.max_x = 340                             # New

    def move(self, direction):                         # New
        if direction == LEFT:                         # New
            if self.x > self.min_x:                   # New
                self.x = self.x - self.speed          # New
            elif direction == RIGHT:                   # New
                if self.x < self.max_x:                 # New
                    self.x = self.x + self.speed      # New

    def draw(self):                                   # New
        screen.blit(self.image, (self.x, self.y))    # New

# Images
ship_image = pygame.image.load('icons/ship.png')

# Game objects                                     # Changed
ship = GamePiece(150, 260, ship_image)              # Changed

run = True

while run:
    screen.fill(WHITE)

    for event in pygame.event.get():
        if event.type == pygame.QUIT:
            run = False
        elif event.type == pygame.KEYDOWN:
            # A key has been pressed
            if event.key == pygame.K_LEFT:
                # Start moving the ship left
                ship.move(LEFT)                        # Changed
            elif event.key == pygame.K_RIGHT:
                # Start moving the ship right
                ship.move(RIGHT)                       # Changed
```

```
65      # Put the ship on the screen                # Changed
      ship.draw()                                # Changed

      # Refresh the screen
      pygame.display.update()
70      clock.tick(game_speed)
```

Explanation

In the previous section we added a *Class* called `GamePiece`. By itself, this does not do anything to it provides a pattern from which we created an *Object* for the ship. Later, we will add another object for an alien and our code will contain:

Listing 5: Object creation example

```
ship = GamePiece(150, 260, ship_image)
alien = GamePiece(150, 30, alien_image)
```

Each of these is separate from the other and has its own x and y coordinates. They also both know how to move and draw themselves in the correct position in the window if we call the functions:

Listing 6: Function call example

```
ship.move(LEFT)

ship.draw()
```

and we can even set their speeds with:

Listing 7: Setting object variables

```
ship.speed = 0.6
alien.speed = 0.3
```

Note

This may be the answer to one of the questions in the last section!

As well as the move and draw functions you will see another function called `__init__` (that is a double `'_'` before and after the word `'init'`). This is a special function that is always run once when the object is created with `ship = GamePiece(150, 260, ship_image)`. This makes sure that all the variables have the correct values at the start.

Add an alien

The real Space Invaders game has lots of aliens in rows but for the moment we will start with just one. As I said in the last section, a lot of the work is already done for us as we can use the `GamePiece` class.

First, make some changes to the `GamePiece` class to let the alien know which way it is going and then “bounce” when it reaches the side of the screen.

Listing 8: Changes to the class

```
...

class GamePiece:
    def __init__(self, x, y, image):
5         self.x = x
            self.y = y
            self.speed = 1
            self.direction = 0                                # New
            self.bounce = False                               # New
10         self.image = image
            self.min_x = 10
            self.max_x = 340

    def move(self, direction = None):                          # Changed
15         if direction == None:                               # New
            # The function was called as: move()              # New
            direction = self.direction                        # New

            if direction == LEFT:
20                 if self.x > self.min_x:
                    self.x = self.x - self.speed
                    elif self.bounce:                          # New
                        self.y = self.y + 5                    # New
                        self.direction = RIGHT                  # New
25         elif direction == RIGHT:
            if self.x < self.max_x:
                self.x = self.x + self.speed
                elif self.bounce:                                # New
                    self.y = self.y + 5                          # New
30                 self.direction = LEFT                        # New

    def draw(self):
        screen.blit(self.image, (self.x, self.y))
```

```
35 ...
```

Next, this is all that is needed to create the alien.

Listing 9: Create the alien object

```
...

# Images
ship_image = pygame.image.load('icons/ship.png')
5 alien_image = pygame.image.load('icons/alien1.png')      # New

ship = GamePiece(150, 260, ship_image)
alien = GamePiece(150, 30, alien_image)                  # New

10 # Make the alien move by itself                        # New
    alien.direction = LEFT                               # New
    # Make the alien bounce when it hits the edge        # New
    alien.bounce = True                                  # New
    # Make the alien a bit slower                         # New
15 alien.speed = 0.3                                     # New

...
```

Listing 10: Use the alien object

```
...

    # Put the ship on the screen
    ship.draw()

5    # Move and draw the alien                            # New
    alien.move()                                          # New
    alien.draw()                                          # New

    # Refresh the screen
10    pygame.display.update()
    clock.tick(game_speed)
```

Shoot the alien

The next thing to do is to let you try to shoot the alien. For this, we need to load an image of a bullet with this line (try to find the correct place to put it):

Listing 11: Load the bullet image

```
bullet_image = pygame.image.load('icons/bullet.png')
```

Now the bullet needs to move up the screen, rather than left or right, and then disappear when it reaches the top. For this we need to add a new variable to the `__init__` function:

Listing 12: New variables

```
def __init__(self, x, y, image):
    self.x = x
    self.y = y
    self.speed = 1
5    self.direction = 0
    self.bounce = False
    self.image = image
    self.min_y = 20                                # New
    self.min_x = 10
10    self.max_x = 340
```

and add a new part to the move function:

Listing 13: New move function

```
def move(self, direction = None):
    if direction == None:
        # The function was called as: move()
        direction = self.direction
5
    if direction == LEFT:
        if self.x > self.min_x:
            self.x = self.x - self.speed
        elif self.bounce:
10            self.y = self.y + 5
            self.direction = RIGHT
    elif direction == RIGHT:
        if self.x < self.max_x:
            self.x = self.x + self.speed
15        elif self.bounce:
            self.y = self.y + 5
            self.direction = LEFT
    elif direction == UP:                                # New
        if self.y > self.min_y:                            # New
20            self.y = self.y - self.speed                # New
```

At the start of the game, the bullet doesn't exist and we can indicate this with:

Listing 14: Initialise bullet

```
# Game objects
bullet = None # New
ship = GamePiece(150, 260, ship_image)
alien = GamePiece(150, 30, alien_image)
```

And finally, the bullet should appear when we press the ‘SPACE’ bar.

Listing 15: Fire!

```

5   for event in pygame.event.get():
        ...
        elif event.type == pygame.KEYDOWN:
            # A key has been pressed
            ... # New (next 4 lines)
            elif event.key == pygame.K_SPACE and bullet == None:
                # Fire the bullet from the mid-point of the ship
                bullet = GamePiece(ship.x+22, ship.y, bullet_image)
                bullet.direction = UP
10   ...

        # Put the ship on the screen
        ship.draw()

15   # Move and draw the bullet # New
        if bullet != None: # New
            bullet.move() # New
            if bullet.y > bullet.min_y: # New
                bullet.draw() # New
20   else: # New
            bullet = None # New
```

Hit the alien

You may have noticed that the bullet currently just goes straight through the alien. This isn’t very good! In the GamePiece class we need a new function to detect if it has been hit.

Listing 16: Detect a hit

```

class GamePiece:
    def __init__(self, x, y, image):
        self.x = x
        self.y = y
5         self.width = 0                                # New
        self.height = 0                                # New
        ...

    def draw(self):
10         self.blit(self.image, (self.x, self.y))

    def detect_hit(self, other):                        # New
        if other.x > self.x \                          # New
            and other.x < self.x + self.width \        # New
            and other.y > self.y \                    # New
            and other.y < self.y + self.height:        # New
15             return True                             # New
        else:                                           # New
            return False                               # New
20         ...

# Make the alien move by itself
alien.direction = LEFT
# Make the alien bounce when it hits the edge
alien.bounce = True
25 alien.speed = 0.3
# Set the height and width of the alien                # New
alien.width = 47                                       # New
alien.height = 22                                     # New

```

At the moment there is only one alien so when it is hit we will put it back at the top and make it move faster. Later, we can have several rows of aliens and try to keep a score.

Listing 17: Hit the alien

```

# Move and draw the bullet
if bullet != None:
    bullet.move()
    if bullet.y > bullet.min_y:
5         bullet.draw()
            if alien.detect_hit(bullet):                # New
                # Move the alien back to the top        # New
                alien.x = 150                           # New

```

```
10         alien.y = 30                                # New
           # Move it a bit faster                      # New
           alien.speed = alien.speed + 0.1            # New
           bullet = None                               # New
    else:
        bullet = None
```

Next steps

There is still some more thing to do to get the full Space Invaders game:

- Several aliens in a number of rows
- Let the aliens fire bullets as well as the player
- Keep a score
- Add some sound

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