Python: if \_\_name\_\_ == '\_\_main\_\_'

Printing the following

print \_\_name\_\_

yields

\_\_main\_\_

Before python runs any file it sets a few special variables. name is one of them.

Consider program 1 named as first\_module.py:

print (“First module’s name: {}”.format(\_\_name\_\_)

returns:

First module’s name: \_\_main\_\_

Consider program 2 named as second\_module.py:

import first\_module

print (“Second module’s name: {}”.format(\_\_name\_\_)

returns:

First module’s name: first\_module

Second module’s name: \_\_main\_\_

In the case above, import first\_module means it is run by another file, while the next line states it is being run directly by python.

Using the statement if \_\_name\_\_ == ‘\_\_main\_\_’ ensures us that python is directly running the code.

Now if we want to run the main() of first\_module.py from second\_module.py, then use the following in the second\_module.py:

first\_module.main()