

## **SOLID Design Principles with Python Examples**

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## Introduction

An efficient algorithm sets the base of an efficient software application. Once the algorithm is in place, the next most important thing in Software Engineering would be to ensure that the software or the application is designed with best designing and architecting practices. Many researchers and experts have defined various best practices towards efficient designing of software applications. One of the most popular among these are the design principles popular by the acronym – SOLID.

### What are SOLID Design Principles

One of the most important and most popular are the Design Principles introduced by Robert C Martin (Uncle Bob). Uncle Bob has introduced various Design Principles and among them, the most popular are the five principles acronymic as SOLID Design Principles that are primarily focused on Object-Oriented Software Designing. These best practices, when considered in designing an object-oriented software application would tend to reduce code complexity, reduce the risk of code breaks, improve the communication between different entities and make code more flexible, readable, and manageable.



## Robert C Martin (Uncle Bob)

(Pic Courtesy: Wikipedia)

## Uncle Bob's SOLID principles are as below:

- S Single Responsibility Principle
- O Open-Closed Principle
- L Liskov Substitution Principle
- I Interface Segregation Principle
- **D** Dependency Inversion Principle

In this article, I am sharing my understanding of Robert C. Martin's SOLID Design Principles along with Python examples.

**NOTE:** The code examples that I have shared are minimalist in nature and written with the only aim of explaining the respective principle. They may not be complete or may not adhere to some other principle or best practice. I request readers to kindly consider this aspect while referring to every code example shared with every principle.

# Single Responsibility Principle

## **Single Responsibility Principle**

The Single Responsibility Principle states that a class should have only one primary responsibility and should not take other responsibilities. Robert C. Martin explains this as "A class should have only one reason to change".

Let's take the example of a Telephone Directory application. We are designing a Telephone Directory and that contains a TelephoneDirectory Class which is supposed to handle the primary responsibility of maintaining Telephone Directory entries, i. e Telephone numbers and names of the entities to which the Telephone Numbers belong. Thus, the operations that this class is expected to perform are adding a new entry (Name and Telephone Number), delete an existing entry, change a Telephone Number assigned to an entity Name, and provide a lookup that returns the Telephone Number assigned to a particular entity Name.

Our TelephoneDirectory class could look as below:

```
₱ #Single Responsibility Principle (aka Separation Of Concerns)

    class TelephoneDirectory:
           _init__(self):
        self.telephonedirectory = {}
      def add_entry(self, name, number):
        self.telephonedirectory[name] = number
      def delete_entry(self, name):
        self.telephonedirectory.pop(name)
      def update entry(self, name, number):
        self.telephonedirectory[name] = number
      def lookup number(self, name):
        return self.telephonedirectory[name]
      def __str__(self):
        ret dct =
        for key, value in self.telephonedirectory.items():
          ret_dct += f'{key} : {value}\n'
        return ret_dct
```

```
myTelephoneDirectory = TelephoneDirectory()
myTelephoneDirectory.add_entry("Ravi", 123456)
myTelephoneDirectory.add_entry("Vikas", 678452)
print(myTelephoneDirectory)

myTelephoneDirectory.delete_entry("Ravi")
myTelephoneDirectory.add_entry("Ravi", 123456)
myTelephoneDirectory.update_entry("Vikas", 776589)
print(myTelephoneDirectory.lookup_number("Vikas"))
print(myTelephoneDirectory)

C> Ravi : 123456
Vikas : 678452
776589
Vikas : 776589
Ravi : 123456
```

Till now, our *TelephoneDirectory* class looks good and it has exactly implemented the expected features.

Now let's say that there are two more requirements in the project – Persist the contents of the Telephone Directory to a Database and transfer the contents of Telephone Directory to a file.

So, we can add two more methods to the TelephoneDirectory class as below:

Now, this is where we broke the Single Responsibility Design Principle. By adding the functionalities of persisting to the database and saving to file, we gave additional responsibilities to *TelephoneDirectory* class which are not its primary responsibility. This class now has additional features that can cause it to change. In the future, if there are any requirements related to persisting the data then those can cause changes to the *TelephoneDirectory* class. Thus, *TelephoneDirectory* is prone to changes due to the reasons that are not its primary responsibility.

The Single Responsibility Principle asks us not to add additional responsibilities to a class so that we don't have to modify a class unless there is a change to its primary responsibility. We can handle the current situation by having separate classes that would handle database persistence and saving to file. We can pass the *TelephoneDirectory* object to the objects of those classes and write any additional features in those classes.

This would ensure that TelephoneDirectory class has only one reason to change that is any change in its primary responsibility

```
class persist_to_database:
    #functionality of the class
    def __init__(self, object_to_persist):
        pass

class save_to_file:
    #functionality of the class
    def __init__(self, object_to_save):
        pass
```

You can find the above code examples as downloadable files on GitHub location: https://github.com/amodiahs/SOLID\_Design\_Principles/tree/master/Single\_Responsibility\_Principle

## **Open-Closed Principle**

Open Closed Principle was first conceptualized by Berterd Meyer in 1988. Robert C. Martin mentioned this as "the most important principle of object-oriented design".

Open Closed Principle states that "Software entities (classes, modules, functions, etc.) should be open for extension, but closed for modification."

Following this principle ensures that a class is well defined to do what it is supposed to do. Adding any further features can be done by creating new entities that extend the existing class's features and add more features to itself. Thus preventing frequent and trivial changes to a well-established low-level class.

E.g.

Let's say we have an application for an apparel store. Among various features in the system, there is also a feature to apply select discounts based on the type of apparel.

The below example shows one way of implementing this requirement.

In the below example we have a class *DiscocuntCalculator* that has a property to hold the type of apparel. It has a function that calculates the discount based on the type of apparel and returns the new cost after deducting the discount amount.

```
#Open - Close Principle - Incorrect implementation
    from enum import Enum
    class Products(Enum):
      SHIRT = 1
      TSHIRT = 2
      PANT = 3
    class DiscountCalculator():
           _init__(self, product_type, cost):
        self.product_type = product_type
        self.cost = cost
      def get discounted price(self):
        if self.product type == Products.SHIRT:
          return self.cost - (self.cost * 0.10)
        elif self.product_type == Products.TSHIRT:
          return self.cost - (self.cost * 0.15)
        elif self.product_type == Products.PANT:
          return self.cost - (self.cost * 0.25)
    dc_Shirt = DiscountCalculator(Products.SHIRT, 100)
    print(dc_Shirt.get_discounted_price())
    dc TShirt = DiscountCalculator(Products.TSHIRT, 100)
    print(dc_TShirt.get_discounted_price())
    dc_Pant = DiscountCalculator(Products.PANT, 100)
    print(dc_Pant.get_discounted_price())
    90.0
Г→
    85.0
    75.0
```

This design breaches the Open-Closed principle because this class will need modification if a). A new apparel type is to be included and b). If the discount amount for any apparel changes.

This feature can be implemented efficiently as below.

```
#Open - Close Principle - Correct implementation
    from enum import Enum
    from abc import ABCMeta, abstractmethod
    class DiscountCalculator():
      Mabstractmethod
      def get_discounted_price(self):
    class DiscountCalculatorShirt(DiscountCalculator):
      def __init__(self, cost):
       self.cost = cost
      def get discounted price(self):
          return self.cost - (self.cost * 0.10)
    class DiscountCalculatorTshirt(DiscountCalculator):
      def __init__(self, cost):
        self.cost = cost
     def get_discounted_price(self):
          return self.cost - (self.cost * 0.15)
    class DiscountCalculatorPant(DiscountCalculator):
      def __init__(self, cost):
        self.cost = cost
      def get_discounted_price(self):
          return self.cost - (self.cost * 0.25)
    dc_Shirt = DiscountCalculatorShirt(100)
    print(dc_Shirt.get_discounted_price())
    dc_TShirt = DiscountCalculatorTshirt(100)
    print(dc_TShirt.get_discounted_price())
    dc Pant = DiscountCalculatorPant(100)
    print(dc_Pant.get_discounted_price())
₽ 90.0
    75.0
```

As shown in the above example we have now a very simple base class *DiscountCalculator* that has a single abstract method get\_discounted\_price. We have created new classes for apparel that extends the base *DiscountCalculator* class. Hence now every subclass would need to implement the discount part on itself. By doing this we have now removed the previous constraints that required modification to the base class. Now without modifying the base class we can add more apparels as well as we can change the discount amount of individual apparel as needed.

You can find the above code examples as downloadable files on GitHub location: https://github.com/amodiahs/SOLID\_Design\_Principles/tree/master/Open\_Closed\_Principle

## Liskov Substitution Principle

## **Liskov Substitution Principle**

Liskov Substitution Principle was one of the toughest principles for me to understand and I had to look at various examples on the internet to understand it correctly. But I feel that once understood properly, it is one of the easiest principles to adhere to while designing Object-Oriented Applications.

Liskov Substitution Principle states that "Objects in a program should be replaceable with instances of their subtypes without altering the correctness of that program."

Liskov Substitution Principle was introduced by **Barbara Liskov** through a subtyping relation called Strong Behavioral Subtyping. This principle states that if a class *Sub* is a subtype of a class *Sup*, then in the program, objects of type *Sup* should be easily substituted with objects of type *Sub* without needing to change the program. Uncle Bob included this as one of the top 5 SOLID Design Principles definition.

#### E.g.

Let's say we have a base class *Car* that would indicate what is the type of a car. The *Car* class is inherited by subclass *PetrolCar*. Similarly, the base class *Car* can be inherited by other classes which can extend the features as desired.

As we can see here, there is no standard specification to add properties of the *Car* and it is left to the developers to implement in the way convenient to them. One developer may implement it as a Dictionary and another may implement it as a Tuple and thus it can be implemented in multiple ways.

Till here there is no problem. But let's say that there is a requirement to find all Red colored cars. Let's try to write a function that would take all the Cars and try to find out Red cars based on the implementation of the object of the "*Car*" Super Class.

```
#Breaking - Liskov Substitution Principle
     class Car():
   def __init
         def __init__(self, type):
    self.type = type
     class PetrolCar(Car):
      def __init__(self, type):
    self.type = type
     car = Car("SUV")
car.properties = {"Color": "Red", "Gear": "Auto", "Capacity": 6}
     petrol_car = PetrolCar("Sedan")
petrol_car.properties = ("Blue", "Manual", 4)
     cars = [car, petrol_car]
     def find_red_cars(cars):
  red_cars = 0
  for car in cars:
        if car.properties['Color'] == "Red":
       red_cars += 1
print(f'Number of Red Cars = {red_cars}')
     find_red_cars(cars)
г
     TypeError Traceback (most recent call last)
Sipthon-input-5-0f0b83b0e35e> in <module>()
23     print(f'Number of Red Cars = {red_cars}')
24
     ---> 25 find_red_cars(cars)
    TypeError: tuple indices must be integers or slices, not str
```

As we can see here, we are trying to loop through a list of car objects. And here we break the Liskov Substitution principle as we cannot replace Super type *Car*'s objects with objects of Subtype *PetrolCar* in the function written to find Red cars.

A better way to implement this would be to introduce setter and getter methods in the Superclass *Car* using which we can set and get *Car*'s properties without leaving that implementation to individual developers. This way we just get the properties through a setter method and its implementation remains internal to the Superclass.

By doing this we can comply with Liskov's Substitution Principle as shown below:

```
[] #Correct implementation - Liskov Substitution Principle
    class car():
        def __init__(self, type):
        self.type = type
        self.car_properties = {}

        def set_properties(self, color, gear, capacity):
        self.car_properties = {"Color": color, "Gear": gear, "Capacity": capacity}

        def get_properties(self):
            return self.car_properties

        class petrol_car(car):
        def __init__(self, type):
            self.type = type
            self.car_properties = {}

        car = car("SUV")
        car.set_properties("Red", "Auto", 6)

        petrol_car = petrol_car("Sedan")
        petrol_car = petrol_car("Blue", "Manual", 4)

        cars = [car, petrol_car]

        def find_red_cars(cars):
        red_cars + 0
        for car in cars:
        if car.get_properties()['Color'] == "Red":
            red_cars + 1
            print(f'Number of Red Cars = {red_cars}')

        find_red_cars(cars)

C. Number of Red Cars = 1
```

You can find the above code examples as downloadable files on GitHub location: https://github.com/amodiahs/SOLID\_Design\_Principles/tree/master/Liskov\_Substitution\_Principle

# **Interface Segregation Principle**

## **Interface Segregation Principle**

The Interface Segregation Principle states that "No client should be forced to depend on methods it does not use".

The Interface Segregation Principle was introduced by Robert C Martin while he was consulting for Xerox.

The Interface Segregation Principle suggests creating smaller interfaces known as "role interfaces" instead of a large interface consisting of multiple methods. By segregating the role-based methods into smaller role interfaces, the clients would depend only on the methods that are relevant to it.

Let's say we are designing an application for different communication devices. We identify that a communication device is a device that would have one or many of these features — a) to make calls, b). send SMS and c). browse the Internet. So, we create an interface named *CommunicationDevice* and add the respective abstract methods for each of these features such that any implementing class would need to implement these methods.

We then create a class *SmartPhone* using the *CommunicationDevice* interface and implement the functionalities of the abstract methods. Till here it's all fine.

Now say that we want to implement a traditional Landline phone. This also is a communication device, so we create a new class *LandlinePhone* using the same *CommunicationDevice* interface. This is exactly when we face the problem due to a large *CommunicationDevice* interface we created. In the class *LanlinePhone*, we implement the *make\_calls()* method, but as we also inherit abstract methods *send\_sms()* and *browse\_internet()* we have to provide an implementation of these two abstract methods also in the *LandlinePhone* class even if these are not applicable to this class *LandlinePhone*. We can either throw an exception or just write pass in the implementation, but we still need to provide an implementation.

```
#Interface Substitution Principle - Incorrect Implementation
class CommunicationDevice():
  @abstractmethod
  def make_calls():
    pass
  def send_sms():
  @abstractmethod
class SmartPhone(CommunicationDevice):
   def make_calls():
    #implementation
  def send sms():
    #implementation
  def browse_internet():
    #implementation
  class LandlinePhone(CommunicationDevice):
    def make_calls():
    #implementation
    def send_sms():
      #just pass or raise exception as this feature is not supported
      #just pass or raise exception as this feature is not supported
```

This can be corrected by following the Interface Segregation Principle as in the below example. Instead of creating a large interface, we create smaller role interfaces for each method. The respective classes would only use related interfaces.

```
from abc import ABCMeta, abstractmethod

#interface Substitution Principle - Correct Implementation

class CallingDevice():
    @abstractmethod
    def make_calls():
        pass

class MessagingDevice():
    @abstractmethod
    def send_sms():
        pass

class InternetbrowsingDevice():
    @abstractmethod
    def browse_internet():
        pass

class SmartPhone(CallingDevice, MessagingDevice, InternetbrowsingDevice):
    def make_calls():
        #implementation
        pass

def send_sms():
        #implementation
        pass

def browse_internet():
        #implementation
        pass

class LandlinePhone(CallingDevice):
    def make_calls():
        #implementation
        pass

class LandlinePhone(CallingDevice):
    def make_calls():
        #implementation
        pass
```

You can find the above code examples as downloadable files on GitHub location:

https://github.com/amodiahs/SOLID\_Design\_Principles/tree/master/Interface\_Segregation\_Principle

# **Dependency Inversion Principle**

## **Dependency Inversion Principle**

The Dependency Inversion Principle states that:

- a). High level module should not depend on low level modules. Both should depend on abstractions
- b). Abstractions should not depend on details. Details should depend on abstractions.

If your code follows the Open-Closed Principle and Liskov Substitution Principle, then it will be implicitly aligned to be compliant to the Dependency Inversion Principle also.

By following the Open-Closed Principle, you create Interfaces that can be used to provide different high-level implementations. By following Liskov Substitution Principle you ensure that you can replace the low-level class objects with high-level class objects without causing any adverse effect on the application. Thus, by following these two principles you ensure that your high-level classes and low-level classes depend on interfaces. Hence you would implicitly follow the Dependency Inversion Principle.

E.g.

As shown in the below code we have a class Student that we use to create Student entities and a class TeamMemberships which holds memberships of different students into different teams.

Now we define a high-level class Analysis where we need to find out all students belonging to the RED team.

```
♣ #Dependency Inversion Principle - Incorrect implementation
      from abc import ABCMeta, abstractmethod
     class Teams(Enum):
        BLUE_TEAM = 1
        RED TEAM = 2
        GREEN_TEAM = 3
     class Student:
        def __init__(self, name):
          self.name = name
              init (self):
          self.team_memberships = []
        def add_team_memberships(self, student, team):
    self.team_memberships.append((student, team))
     class Analysis():
        def __init__(self, team_student_memberships):
    memberships = team_student_memberships.team_memberships
          for members in memberships:
  if members[1] == Teams.RED_TEAM:
               print(f'{members[0].name} is in RED team')
     student1 = Student('Ravi')
     student3 = Student('James')
     team memberships = TeamMemberships()
      team_memberships.add_team_memberships(student1, Teams.BLUE_TEAM)
     team_memberships.add_team_memberships(student2, Teams.RED_TEAM)
team_memberships.add_team_memberships(student3, Teams.GREEN_TEAM)
Archie is in RED team
```

As we can see in this implementation, we are directly using <code>team\_student\_memberships.team\_memberships</code> In our high-level class <code>Analysis</code> and we are using the implementation of this list directly in high-level class. As of now, this is fine but imagine a situation in which we need to change this implementation from list to something else. In that case, our high-level class <code>Analysis</code> would break as it is dependent on implementation details of Low-level class <code>TeamMemberships</code>.

Now see the below example where we change this implementation and make it comply to Dependency Inversion Principle

To comply with the Dependency Inversion Principle, we need to ensure that high-level class *Analysis* should not depend on the concrete implementation of low-level class *TeamMemberships*. Instead, it should depend on some abstraction.

So, we create an interface <code>TeamMembershipLookup</code> that contains an abstract method <code>find\_all\_students\_of\_team</code> which is passed to any class that inherits from this interface. We make our <code>TeamMembership</code> class inherit from this interface and hence now <code>TeamMembership</code> class needs to provide an implementation of the <code>find\_all\_students\_of\_team</code> function. This function then yields the results to any other calling entity. We moved the processing that was done in the high-level Analysis class to <code>TeamMemberships</code> class through the interface <code>TeamMembershipLookup</code>.

So, by doing this we have removed the dependency of high-level class *Analysis* from low-level class *TeamMemberships* and transferred this dependency to interface *TeamMembershipLookup*. Now the high-level class doesn't depend on the implementation details of the low-level class. Any changes to the implementation details of the low-level class don't impact the high-level class.

You can find the above code examples as downloadable files on GitHub location: https://github.com/amodiahs/SOLID\_Design\_Principles/tree/master/Dependency\_Inversion\_Principle

#### **Summary:**

Principle	Concept
Single Responsibility Principle	A class should have only one reason to change
Open-Closed Principle	Software entities (classes, modules, functions, etc.) should be open for extension, but closed for modification
Liskov Substitution Principle	Objects in a program should be replaceable with instances of their subtypes without altering the correctness of that program
Interface Segregation Principle	No client should be forced to depend on methods it does not use
Dependency Inversion Principle	a). High level module should not depend on low level modules. Both should depend on abstractions     b). Abstractions should not depend on details. Details should depend on abstractions

Note: All the python code used in this article can be downloaded from my GitHub along with a PDF file of this article.

https://github.com/amodiahs/SOLID\_Design\_Principles

### References/Gratitude:

- a). Dmitri Nesteruk for his Udemy course on Design Patterns
- b). Jordan Hudgens of DevCamp for his tutorials on YouTube
- c). Wikipedia for the amazing informative content

#### **About Me:**

My Name is Hiral Amodia and I am based in Bangalore, India. I am a Software Engineer working in Indian IT Industry for over 16 years now. Currently, I am employed as a Software Engineering Manager at a leading Indian IT services company. I am passionate about learning new technologies and concepts. I strongly believe that teaching is the best way of learning and that caring is the true way of sharing. So, I keep on writing articles on technology/concepts, etc. that I learn.

Feel free to buzz me on my below coordinates if you want to share any feedback or improvement areas that you encounter in my articles.

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One of the most popular and frequently used Software Design Principles is the SOLID Design Principles introduced by Robert C Martin.

In this article, I am sharing my understanding of Robert C. Martin's SOLID Design Principles along with Python examples.

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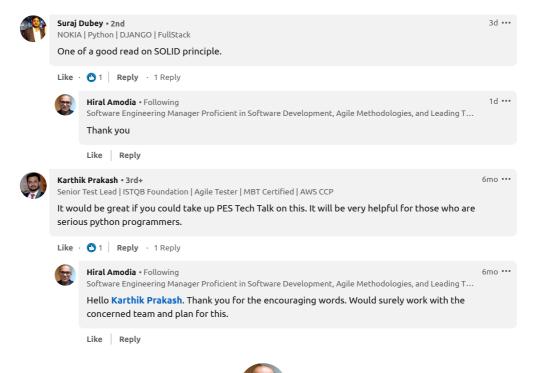
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