



< Previous



Next >

Part 1: Why APIs?

[Bookmark this page](#)

API Design

Part 1: Why APIs?

Building an API

When learning Python, developers spend a lot of time building applications that run from the command line. Often students on feel a bit uncomfortable with this. There is an impression of building something that 'isn't real world'.

On the University of Washington Python Certificate program it is quite deliberate that we don't worry about the user interface to start with. This is because UI development often requires deeper knowledge than the average beginner has to write good programs.

However, it is possible to use all of the command line programs we write with a user interface, and this is where the concept of APIs comes in. Building APIs helps us to get the best of both worlds.

In this lesson we talk about why, and learn how to build and use a Python web API.

What is an API?

An API is a way to provide access to a program from other programs.

Benefits of APIs

An API can help a developer build applications that can be accessed easily in a number of different ways. For instance, one set of code hidden behind an API can be accessed from a desktop app, a web app, and other apps, either within an organization, or across the Internet. We say that the UI is separate from the rest of the application logic, which has long been recognized as a good design practice.

So building an API to our applications is a worthwhile thing to do. And there are Python packages that make it really easy to implement and consume an API.

You will learn much more about this in course 3. However, for now we are going to learn how to build a very simple API, that you will then develop to enhance the work you did in assignment 9.

We are going to be using a package called Flask for this lesson. Flask is a popular and easy to use framework for building APIs, although it is most often used for building web applications.



< Previous

Next >



© 2024 University of Washington | Seattle, WA. All rights reserved.

[Help Center](#) [Contact Us](#) [Privacy](#) [Terms](#)

Built on  by RACCOONGANG 

edX, Open edX and the edX and Open edX logos are trademarks or registered trademarks of edX Inc.