



**API Mania!**

**FinTech**  
Lesson 5.2



# Class Objectives

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By the end of today's class, you will be able to:



Register for an API key & use it to fetch authenticated requests using the Requests Library.



Set/Export environment variables in Windows and Mac and retrieve them in Python.



Explain the difference between an API and SDK.



Set authentication for a Python SDK.



Use a Python SDK to fetch financial data.



Use SDKs to analyze personal financial data.

# The Rise of APIs

# APIs in FinTech

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There are a number of FinTech APIs available that grant users the ability to create and execute analytic pipelines on various forms of financial data.

Because APIs often offer practical services, they may require subscriptions or payment.



# API Keys

# API Keys

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API keys are like keys to a house or car: they're used to get access to resources.

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A key must be provided with every request for APIs that require keys.



# API Keys

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Companies use API keys as a means to secure data, as well as monitor traffic. Using keys in this manner allows companies to limit and block requests as needed.

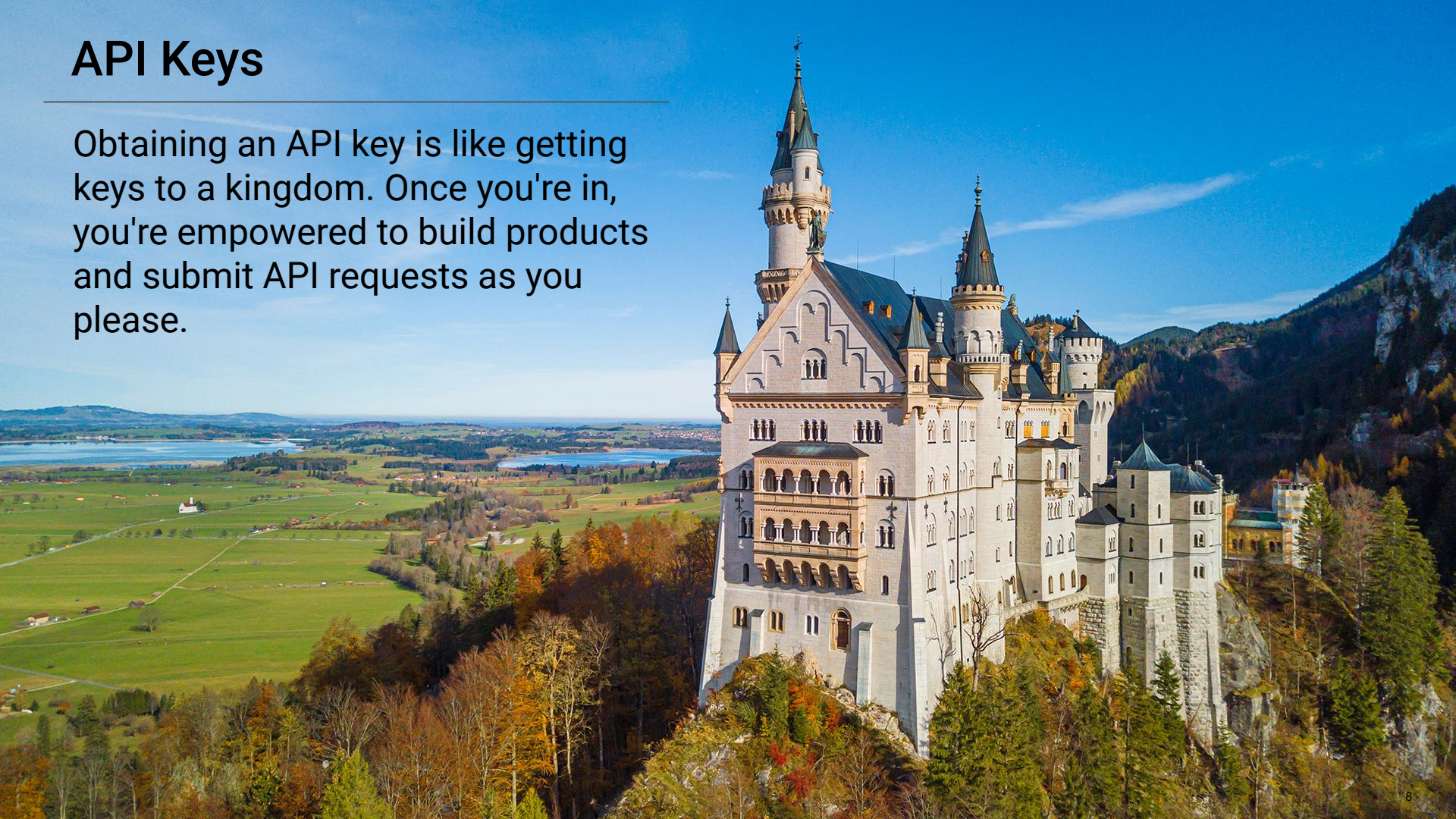




# API Keys

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Obtaining an API key is like getting keys to a kingdom. Once you're in, you're empowered to build products and submit API requests as you please.





# Environment Variables

# Environment Variables

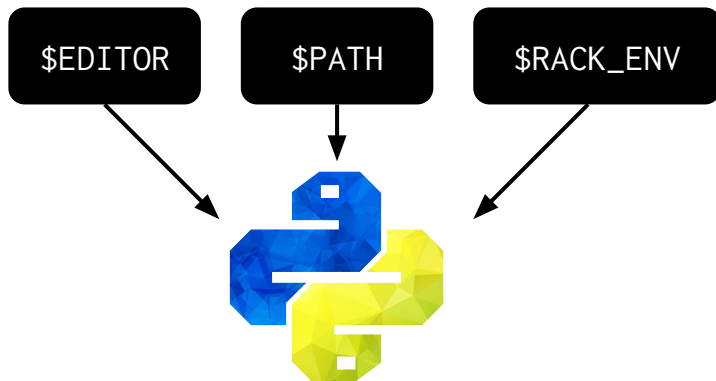
API keys are accessed when stored as environment variables.

## Environment Variables

Child process gets copies of parent's environment variables



Terminal



## Local Variables



Child process doesn't get any copies of local variables



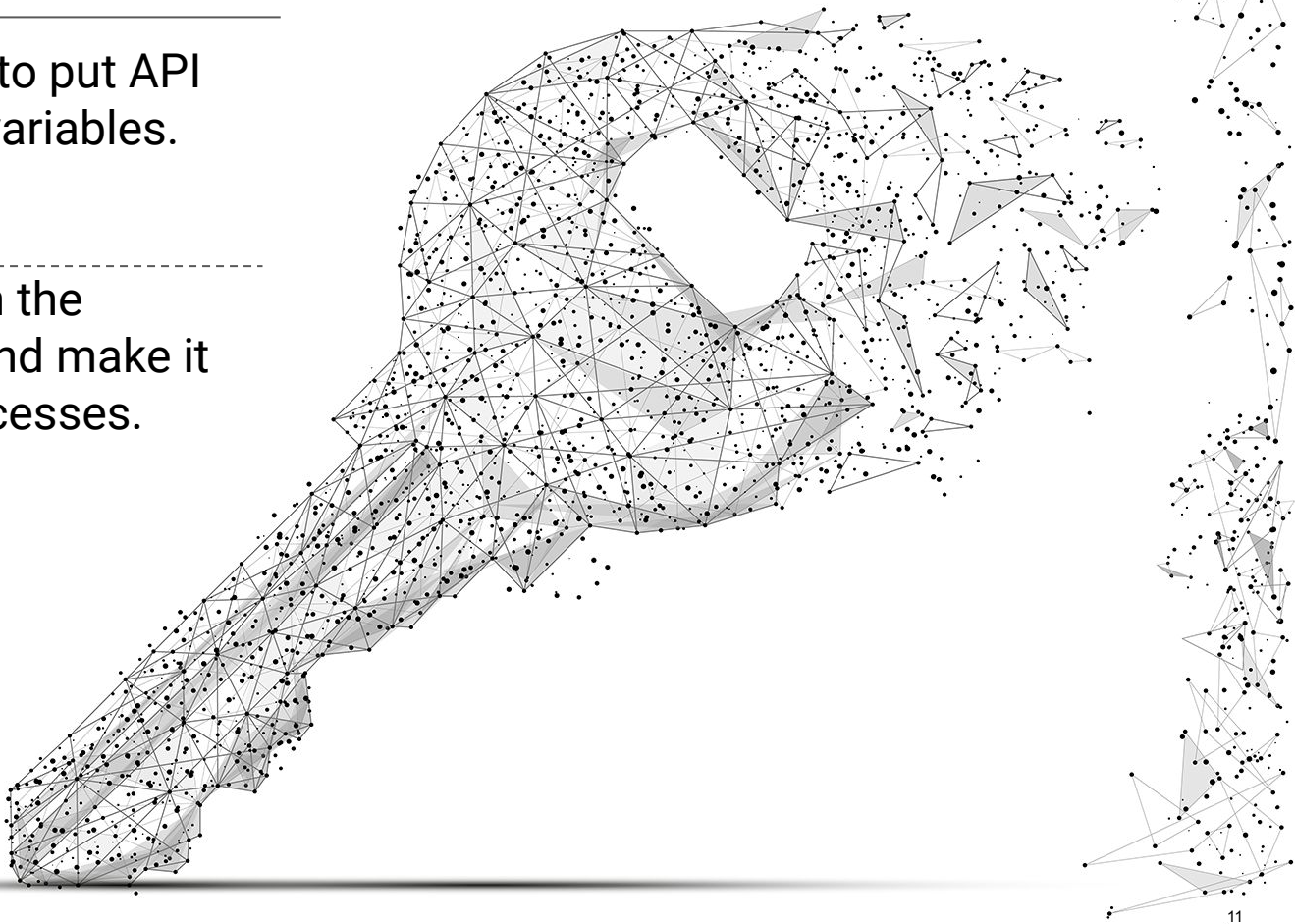
# Environment Variables

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A `.env` file can be used to put API keys into environment variables.

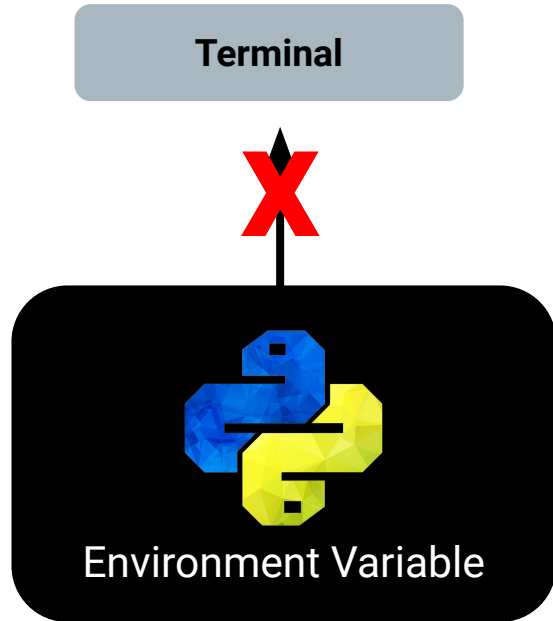
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The `.env` file will contain the environment variable, and make it accessible by child processes.

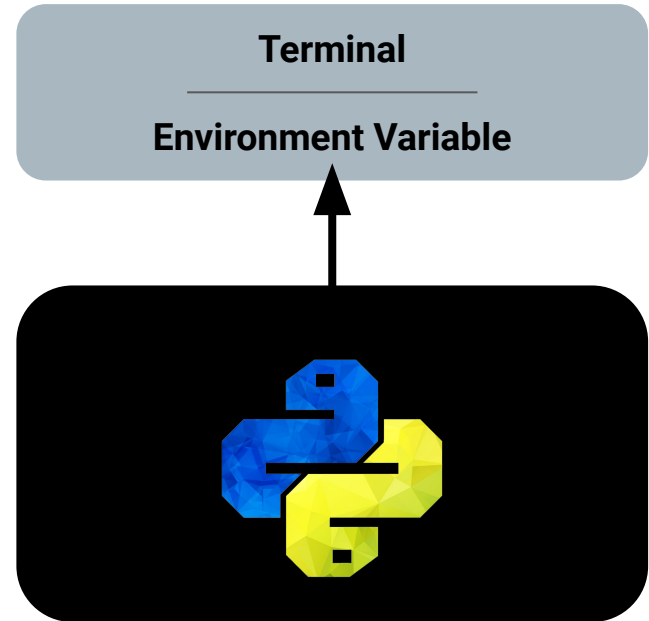


# Environment Variables

An environment variable created in Python **cannot** be accessed by a terminal.



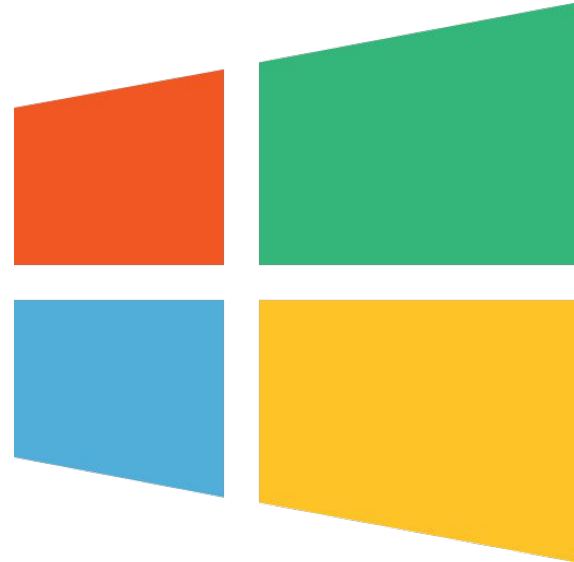
An environment variable created in a terminal **can** be accessed by Python.



# Environment Variables

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Because environment variables are at the **operating system level**, variables can be passed down from parent processes to child processes.







# Instructor Demonstration

## Creating Environment Variables

# Calling Environment Variables

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In order to make environment variables inheritable, they have to be exported and sourced.

```
Api_key = os.getenv()
```



# Instructor Demonstration

## Calling Environment Variables



## Activity: Under Lock and Key

In this activity, you will create a Python code that retrieves the environment variable and passes the key with the request URL.  
(Instructions sent via Slack.)

**Suggested Time:**  
20 minutes





**Time's Up!** Let's Review.





SDKs

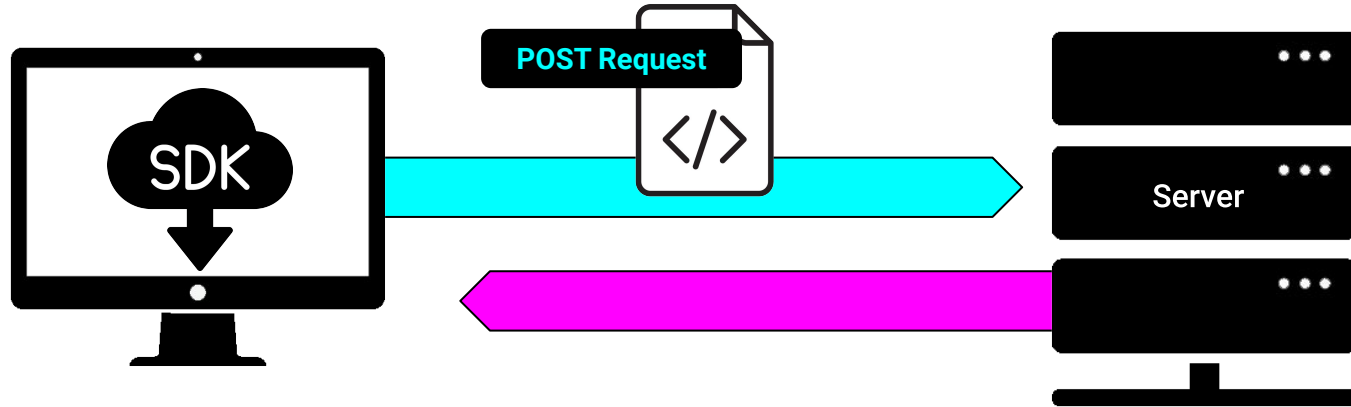
A close-up, high-angle shot of a computer keyboard. The central focus is a large, white, rectangular key with rounded corners. On this key, there is a dark blue icon of a coffee cup with three wavy lines above it representing steam. Below the icon, the word "Break" is printed in a dark blue, serif font. The key is set against a light-colored, textured keyboard surface. Surrounding the main key are other keys, including one with a double quote symbol to the left and one with a dash/slash symbol to the right, all slightly out of focus.

Break

# SDKs

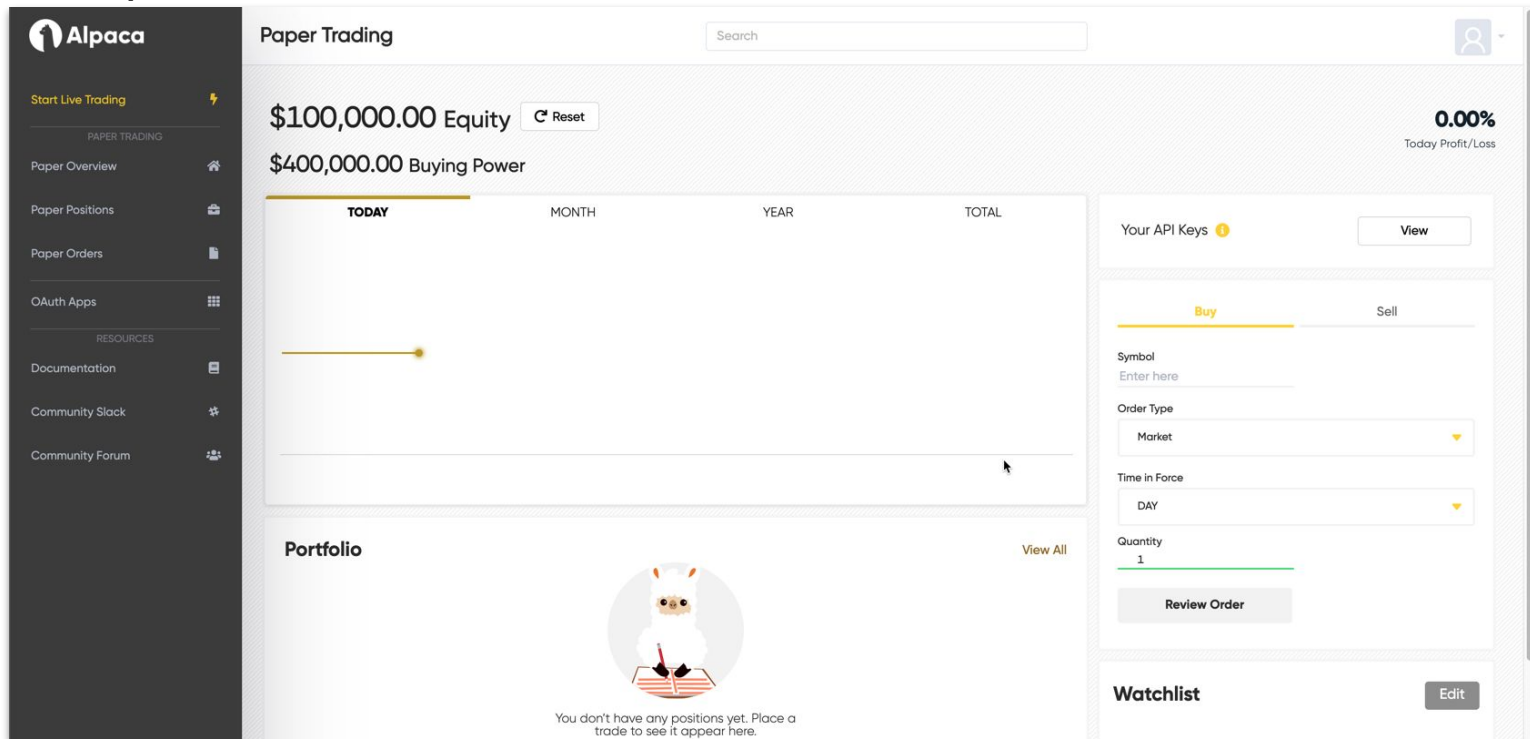
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SDKs work in the same fashion as the Python requests library: they provide functions to submit GET and POST API requests.



# SDKs

Some companies, like Alpaca, offer Software Development Kits as a means to submit requests to their APIs.



The screenshot displays the Alpaca Paper Trading web interface. On the left is a dark sidebar with navigation links: 'Start Live Trading' (with a lightning bolt icon), 'PAPER TRADING' (with a house icon), 'Paper Overview' (with a document icon), 'Paper Positions' (with a briefcase icon), 'Paper Orders' (with a list icon), 'OAuth Apps' (with a grid icon), and 'RESOURCES' (with a book icon). Under 'RESOURCES' are 'Documentation', 'Community Slack', and 'Community Forum'. The main content area is titled 'Paper Trading' and includes a search bar. It shows account balances: '\$100,000.00 Equity' and '\$400,000.00 Buying Power', with a 'Reset' button. A '0.00%' 'Today Profit/Loss' is also shown. Below this is a chart area with tabs for 'TODAY', 'MONTH', 'YEAR', and 'TOTAL'. The 'TODAY' tab is active, showing a flat line at zero. To the right of the chart is a 'Your API Keys' section with a 'View' button. Below that is an order form with fields for 'Symbol' (with a 'Enter here' link), 'Order Type' (set to 'Market'), 'Time in Force' (set to 'DAY'), and 'Quantity' (set to '1'). A 'Review Order' button is at the bottom of the form. At the bottom of the main area is a 'Portfolio' section with a cartoon alpaca icon and the text 'You don't have any positions yet. Place a trade to see it appear here.' and a 'View All' link. A 'Watchlist' section with an 'Edit' button is at the bottom right.

# SDKs

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In addition to the generic GET and POST functions though, SDKs offer functions that are specific to their services/API. For example, the Quandl SDK lets you execute a function that returns historical stock prices.

```
# Using the Python requests library
requests.get("https://www.quandl.com/api/v3/datasets/WIKI/AMD?api_key=1A3")

# Using the Quandl SDK
quandl.get("WIKI/AMD", rows=5)
```



# Introduction to Alpaca

# What is Alpaca

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Alpaca is a trading API that encapsulates banking, security, and regulatory complexity, allowing FinTech startups to build brokerage apps on top for free quickly.

As a FinTech professional, you can use Alpaca to fetch current stock market data free of charge from five different exchanges (IEX, NYSE National, NYSE Chicago, Nasdaq BX, and Nasdaq PSX).



# Installing Alpaca Python SDK

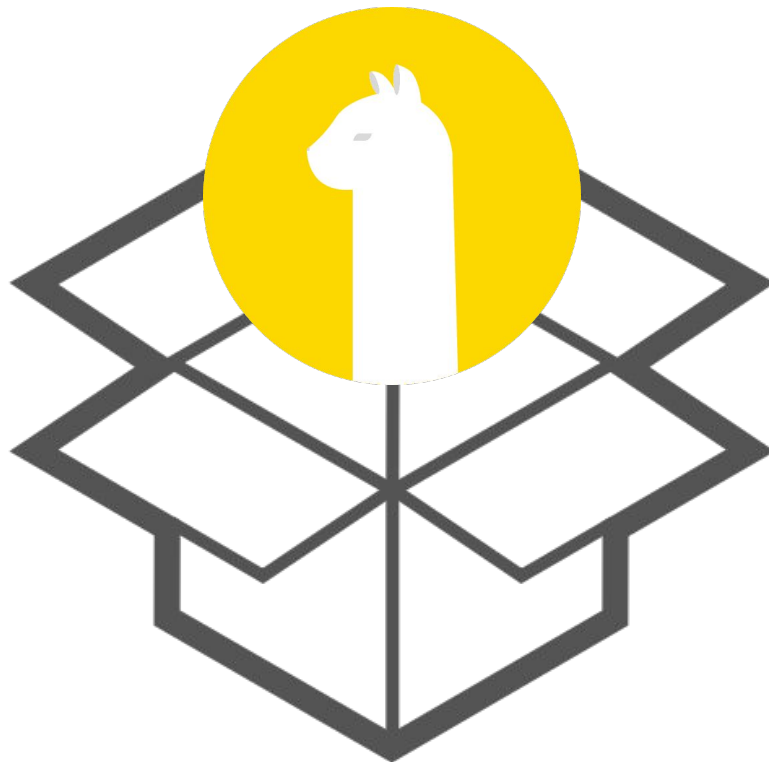
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The Alpaca Python SDK can be downloaded using pip-install:

```
pip install alpaca-trade-api
```

You need to sign-up for Alpaca to create your Alpaca keys.

Remember, it's important to store your Alpaca keys into your **.env** file.





# Instructor Demonstration

## Creating Alpaca Keys



# Instructor Demonstration

## Alpaca Demo





## Activity: Investment Value

In this activity, you will use the Alpaca SDK to calculate the present value of a stock portfolio.  
(Instructions sent via Slack.)

**Suggested Time:**  
20 minutes





**Time's Up!** Let's Review.



Questions?

*The  
End*