

In this question, notice that you have to return a list of lists.
k is the *number* of integers you can use to sum up to n.
n is the *integer* upto which you have to sum up.

Base Case:

Obtaining this clarity, let's start with the base case. We have two options here:

Option A)

```
if k == 1:
    return [[n]]
```

In other words, here, we need to return all lists of 1 numbers that sum to n. There is only one such list, [n] . Therefore, we return a list of *that* one list, [[n]] .

Option B)

```
if k == 0 and n == 0:
    return [[]]
```

In this case, we need to return all lists of 0 numbers that sum to 0 .
There is only one such list, [] . Therefore, we return a list of *that* one list, [[]] .

Option A & B are two ways you can approach the base case. Option A catches the recursion when you're making lists of k = 1 number and Option B catches the recursion when you're making lists of k = 0 numbers.

In general, it's better to prefer the k == 0 version i.e. Option B. Heuristically speaking, things work out better when you catch the recursion as late as possible. To be clear, not catching the recursion at k == 1 and instead waiting to catch it one step later at k == 0 is "later". This can sometimes lead to solutions that are simpler or require fewer special cases. For example, if we chose Option A i.e. k == 1 case, we would've also needed to support Option B at some point i.e. k == 0 case, and then we'd need a second special case. Moreover, if we wrote k == 0 instead of k == 0 and n == 0, we'd be wrong. There is 1 list of 0 numbers that adds to 0, [], hence the return value should be [[]] . On the other hand, when k == 0 but n != 0, the return value must be [] i.e. just an empty list, because there is *no* list of zero numbers that sums up to an integer other than 0. In other words, there is ZERO list of 0 numbers that adds up to some n != 0.

This is analogous to the success and failure base cases from count_change. When coin == 0 and total > 0, we return 0 because there are no ways to make change for total > 0 with coins of size 0 or smaller. When total == 0, we return 1 because there is one way: no coins.

Recursive Case:

Since we hope to address every single integer before n (and including n), we take the range of 1 (since that's where we start from) until $n+1$ to include the n th element.

Now, notice that s is one of the [k-1st element lists summing to n](#). And since the core issue in *any* recursive problem is to build a recursive solution into a solution for your arguments, we wish to “append” x to that [k-1st element lists summing to n](#) to obtain a k element list of lists. We “append” x to s by writing $[x]$ ¹. Since we want the concatenation to be valid, we write $[x]$.

¹ s is a list and x is an integer.