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while Loops

The `while` statement in Python is one of most general ways to perform iteration. A `while` statement will repeatedly execute a single statement or group of statements as long as the condition is true. The reason it is called a 'loop' is because the code statements are looped through over and over again until the condition is no longer met.

The general format of a while loop is:

```
while test:
    code statements
else:
    final code statements
```

Let's look at a few simple `while` loops in action.

```
In [1]: x = 0

while x < 10:
    print('x is currently: ',x)
    print(' x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x')
    x+=1
```

```
x is currently: 0
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 1
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 2
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 3
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 4
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 5
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 6
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 7
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 8
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 9
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
```

Notice how many times the print statements occurred and how the `while` loop kept going until the True condition was met, which occurred once `x==10`. It's important to note that once this occurred the

code stopped. Let's see how we could add an `else` statement:

```
In [2]: x = 0

while x < 10:
    print('x is currently: ',x)
    print(' x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x')
    x+=1

else:
    print('All Done!')
```

```
x is currently: 0
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 1
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 2
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 3
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 4
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 5
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 6
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 7
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 8
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x is currently: 9
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
All Done!
```

break, continue, pass

We can use `break`, `continue`, and `pass` statements in our loops to add additional functionality for various cases. The three statements are defined by:

- `break`: Breaks out of the current closest enclosing loop.
- `continue`: Goes to the top of the closest enclosing loop.
- `pass`: Does nothing at all.

Thinking about `break` and `continue` statements, the general format of the `while` loop looks like this:

```
while test:
    code statement
    if test:
        break
    if test:
        continue
else:
```

`break` and `continue` statements can appear anywhere inside the loop's body, but we will usually put them further nested in conjunction with an `if` statement to perform an action based on some condition.

Let's go ahead and look at some examples!

```
In [3]: x = 0

while x < 10:
    print('x is currently: ',x)
    print(' x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x')
    x+=1
    if x==3:
        print('x==3')
    else:
        print('continuing...')
        continue
```

```
x is currently: 0
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 1
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 2
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
x==3
x is currently: 3
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 4
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 5
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 6
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 7
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 8
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 9
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
```

Note how we have a printed statement when `x==3`, and a `continue` being printed out as we continue through the outer while loop. Let's put in a `break` once `x ==3` and see if the result makes sense:

```
In [4]: x = 0

while x < 10:
    print('x is currently: ',x)
    print(' x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x')
    x+=1
    if x==3:
        print('Breaking because x==3')
```

```
        break
    else:
        print('continuing...')
        continue
```

```
x is currently: 0
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 1
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
continuing...
x is currently: 2
x is still less than 10, adding 1 to x
Breaking because x==3
```

Note how the other `else` statement wasn't reached and continuing was never printed!

After these brief but simple examples, you should feel comfortable using `while` statements in your code.

A word of caution however! It is possible to create an infinitely running loop with `while` statements. For example:

```
In [ ]: # DO NOT RUN THIS CODE!!!!
        while True:
            print("I'm stuck in an infinite loop!")
```

A quick note: If you *did* run the above cell, click on the Kernel menu above to restart the kernel!