

Lecture 3

DataFrame; Spyder IDE; Scrapping Web-tables with `pd.read_html()`

Byeong-Hak Choe

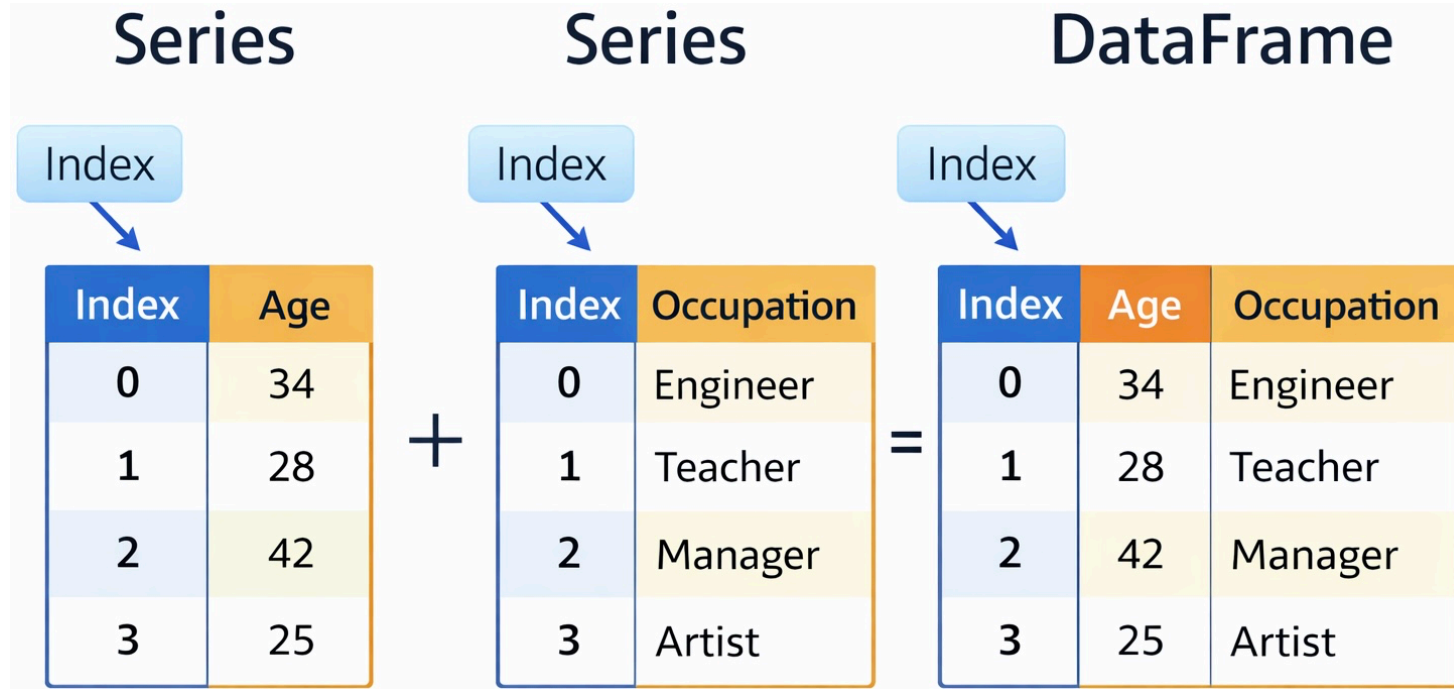
bchoe@geneseo.edu

SUNY Geneseo

February 9, 2026

Pandas Series and DataFrame

Pandas Series and DataFrame



- **Series:** A one-dimensional object containing a sequence of values (like a list).
- **DataFrame:** A two-dimensional table made of multiple **Series** columns sharing a common *index*.

Observations in DataFrame

- **Rows** in a **DataFrame** represent individual units or entities for which data is collected.
- **Examples:**
 - *Student Information:* Each row = one student
 - *Employee Information:* Each row = one employee
 - *Daily S&P 500 Index Data:* Each row = one trading day
 - *Household Survey Data:* Each row = one household

Variables in DataFrame

- **Columns** in a **DataFrame** represent attributes or characteristics measured across multiple *observations*.
- **Examples:**
 - *Student Data:* **Name, Age, Grade, Major**
 - *Employee Data:* **EmployeeID, Name, Age, Department**
 - *Customer Data:* **CustomerID, Name, Age, Income, HousingType**

Note

- In a **DataFrame**, a **variable** is a **column** of data.
- In general programming, a **variable** is the **name of an object**.

✨ Tidy DataFrame

Variables, Observations, and Values

country	year	cases	population
Afghanistan	1999	18145	19987071
Afghanistan	2000	18666	20095360
Brazil	1999	31737	172006362
Brazil	2000	80488	174004898
China	1999	211258	1272015272
China	2000	210766	128042583

variables

country	year	cases	population
Afghanistan	1999	18145	19987071
Afghanistan	2000	18666	20095360
Brazil	1999	31737	172006362
Brazil	2000	80488	174004898
China	1999	211258	1272015272
China	2000	210766	128042583

observations

country	year	cases	population
Afghanistan	1999	18145	19987071
Afghanistan	2000	18666	20095360
Brazil	1999	31737	172006362
Brazil	2000	80488	174004898
China	1999	211258	1272015272
China	2000	210766	128042583

values

- A **DataFrame** is *tidy* if it follows three rules:
 1. Each **variable** has its own *column*.
 2. Each **observation** has its own *row*.
 3. Each **value** has its own *cell*.
- A tidy **DataFrame** keeps your data organized, making it easier to understand, analyze, and share in any data analysis.



Spyder IDE

Anaconda Distribution

- **Anaconda is a free Python distribution** that includes Python, Conda (Python environment manager), and many commonly used data analytics packages.
- Install Anaconda from the official download page:
 - **Anaconda Distribution**
 - Click **Get Started**, then follow the installer steps for your operating system.



What is a Python Script?

- A Python script (*.py) is a plain-text file that contains Python code you can run from your computer (or an IDE like Spyder).
 - It is the standard format for writing **reusable Python programs**, such as data-cleaning pipelines, web scrapers, and automation tasks.
 - Scripts are commonly used in real-world analytics and software projects.
 - Compared to notebooks, scripts are typically better for **organized, production-style code** (functions, modules, and repeatable workflows).
- For **data collection** topics, we will write and run Python scripts mainly in **Spyder**, using **Anaconda Distribution** as our Python environment.



Script Editor

The screenshot displays the Script Editor interface with three main components:

- Script Editor (Left):** A Python script named `google_trends_api.py` is open. It includes imports for `pandas`, `numpy`, and `pytrends`, and defines variables for `us_states` and `years`.
- Variable Explorer (Top Right):** A table showing the current state of variables in the script. A red box highlights this panel.
- Console (Bottom Right):** A terminal window showing the execution of the script. A red box highlights this panel.

Variable Explorer Data:

Name	Type	Size	Value
df	DataFrame	(32, 5)	Column names: Unname...
keywords	list	2	['climate change', '...
month	list	12	[1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7...
pi	float	1	3.14192
sep	str	9	September
us_states	list	6	['US-CT', 'US-MA', '...
years	list	16	['2006-01-01 2006-12...

Console Output:

```
File "/var/folders/07/nm9t4t294vb5jz6vtqnb6pxm0000gn/T/ipykernel_25773/2493917274.py", line 1, in <cell>
line: 1>
    print(pi)
NameError: name 'pi' is not defined

In [13]: pi = 3.14192
In [14]: sep = 'September'
In [15]:
```

- From **Script Editor** (red box), we can create, open and edit files.



Console Pane

The screenshot displays a Jupyter Notebook environment. The main editor shows a Python script for interacting with the Google Trends API. The Variable Explorer on the right shows the state of the variables in the current cell. The Console pane at the bottom shows the execution of the script, including a NameError and the subsequent assignment of variables.

```
1 #!/usr/bin/env python3
2 # -*- coding: utf-8 -*-
3
4 Created on Tue May 17 00:58:42 2022
5
6 @author: byeong-hakchoe
7
8
9 import pandas as pd
10 import numpy as np
11 from pytrends.request import TrendReq
12 import time
13 pytrend = TrendReq(hl='en-US', tz=360)
14
15
16 us_states = [
17     "US-CT",
18     "US-MA",
19     "US-NJ",
20     "US-NY",
21     "US-PA",
22     "US-VT"]
23
24
25 years = ['2006-01-01 2006-12-31',
26         '2007-01-01 2007-12-31',
27         '2008-01-01 2008-12-31',
28         '2009-01-01 2009-12-31',
29         '2010-01-01 2010-12-31',
30         '2011-01-01 2011-12-31',
31         '2012-01-01 2012-12-31',
32         '2013-01-01 2013-12-31',
33         '2014-01-01 2014-12-31',
34         '2015-01-01 2015-12-31',
35         '2016-01-01 2016-12-31',
36         '2017-01-01 2017-12-31',
37         '2018-01-01 2018-12-31',
38         '2019-01-01 2019-12-31',
39         '2020-01-01 2020-12-31',
40         '2021-01-01 2021-12-31',
41         '2022-01-01 2022-12-31']
```

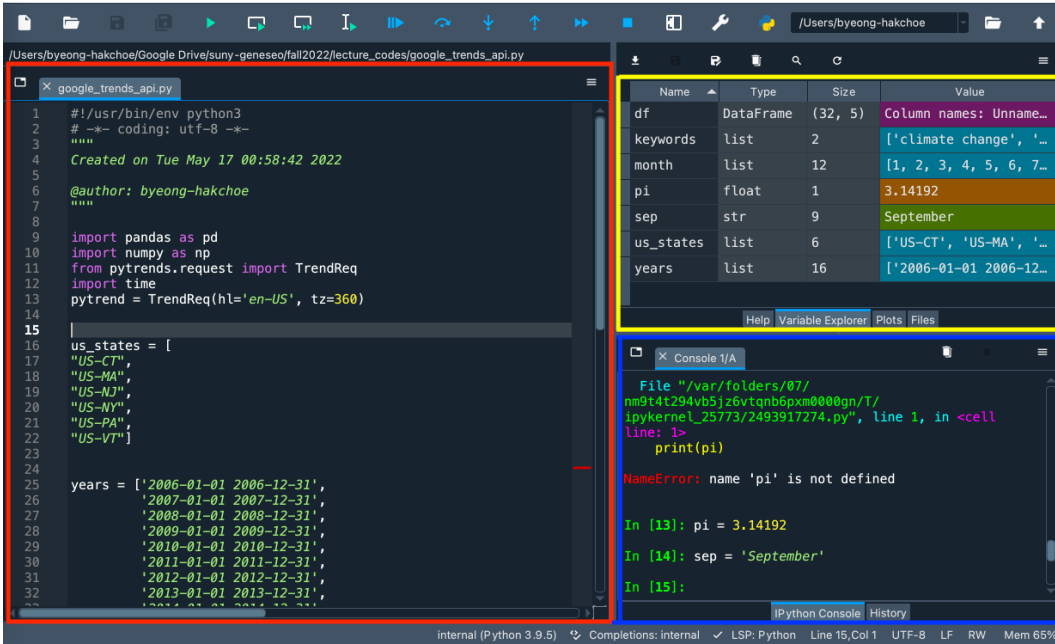
Name	Type	Size	Value
df	DataFrame	(32, 5)	Column names: Unname...
keywords	list	2	['climate change', '...
month	list	12	[1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7...
pi	float	1	3.14192
sep	str	9	September
us_states	list	6	['US-CT', 'US-MA', '...
years	list	16	['2006-01-01 2006-12...

```
File "/var/folders/07/
nm9t4t294vb5jz6vtqnb6pxm0000gn/T/
ipykernel_25773/2493917274.py", line 1, in <cell
line: 1>
    print(pi)
NameError: name 'pi' is not defined

In [13]: pi = 3.14192
In [14]: sep = 'September'
In [15]:
```

- From **Console Pane** (blue box), we can interact directly with the Python interpreter, and type commands where Python will immediately execute them.

Variable Explorer



The screenshot displays a Jupyter Notebook environment with three main components:

- Code Editor (Left):** Contains a Python script named `google_trends_api.py`. The script imports `pandas`, `numpy`, and `pytrends`, and defines variables `us_states` and `years`.
- Variable Explorer (Top Right):** A panel showing the current state of the notebook's memory. It lists variables: `df` (DataFrame), `keywords` (list), `month` (list), `pi` (float), `sep` (str), `us_states` (list), and `years` (list). The `pi` variable is highlighted in yellow.
- IPython Console (Bottom Right):** Shows the execution history of the notebook. It displays the output of the `print(pi)` statement, which is `3.14192`.

- From **Variable Explorer** (yellow box), we can see the values of variables, data frames, and other objects that are currently stored in memory.



Data Containers in Variable Explorer

The screenshot shows the Spyder Python IDE interface. The main editor displays a Python script with the following code:

```
1 #!/usr/bin/env python3
2 # -*- coding: utf-8 -*-
3
4 Created on Tue Jan 24 10:10:28 2023
5
6 @author: byeong-hakchoe
7
8
9 3
10 2
11 "danl"
12
13 a = 10
14
15
16 # Here we assign the integer value 5 to the variable x.
17 x = 5
18 # Now we can use the variable x in the next line.
19 y = x + 12
20 y
21
22
23 a = 7
24
25
26 list_example = [10, 1.23, "like this", True, None]
27 print(list_example)
28 type(list_example)
29
30
```

The Variable Explorer on the right shows the following variables:

Name	Type	Size	Value
a	int	1	7
list_example	list	5	[10, 1.23, ...]
x	int	1	5
y	int	1	17

The IPython Console at the bottom shows the following output:







```
... y = x + 12
... y
...
... a = 7
...
... list_example = [10, 1.23, "like
this", True, None]
... print(list_example)
... type(list_example)
[10, 1.23, 'like this', True, None]
Out[1]: list

In [2]:
```

- If we double-click the objects such as `list` and `DataFrame` objects, we can see what data are contained in such objects.



Keyboard Shortcuts

- General shortcuts
 - **Undo:** Ctrl + z (command + z for Mac users)
 - **Redo:** Ctrl + Shift + z (command + shift + z for Mac users)
 - **Selection:** Ctrl + Shift + Arrow (   )
 - **Page Up/Down:** Fn +  / 
- Default shortcuts
 - **Comment (#):** Ctrl + 1 (command + 1 for Mac users)
 - **Block-comment:** Ctrl + 4 (command + 4 for Mac users)
 - **Run selection (or a current line):** F9
 - **Run cell:** Ctrl + Enter (**# %%** defines a **cell**)

Comments, Code Cells, and Keyboard Shortcuts

```
1  # %%  
2  # =====  
3  # SECTION TITLE  
4  # =====  
5  a = 1
```

- The **#** mark is Spyder's **comment** character.
- It is recommended to use a **coding block** (defined by **# %%**) with **block commenting** (Ctrl/command + 4) for separating code sections.
- To set your keyboard shortcuts,
 - **Preferences > Keyboard Shortcuts > Search “run” and/or “comment”**
 - Set the shortcuts for (1) run selection; (2) run cell; (3) toggle comment; and (4) blockcomment
 - I use **command + return** for **running a current line (selection)**

Scrapping web tables with `pd.read_html()`

Scrapping Tables with `pd.read_html()`

- Let's scrap the two tables in the following webpage:
 - **National Park Visitation Sets New Record as Economic Engines**

```
1 import pandas as pd
2
3 url = "https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1207/national-park-visitation-sets-new-record-as-economic-engines"
4 tables = pd.read_html(url)
5 len(tables)
6 df_0 = tables[0]
```

- `read_html()` read HTML tables into a **list** of `DataFrame` objects.

Setting Column Names

- How can we set the **first row** of a DataFrame as its **column names**?
- How can we **remove** the first row ?

```
1 df_0 = tables[0]
2 df_0.columns = df_0.iloc[0] # Set the first row as column names
3 df_0 = df_0[1:] # Remove the first row
```

Dot Operators, Methods, and Attributes

Dot operator

- The dot operator (`DataFrame.`) is used for an **attribute** or a **method** on objects.

Method

- A method (`DataFrame.METHOD()`) is a **function** that we can call on a `DataFrame` to perform operations, modify data, or derive insights.
 - e.g., `df.info()`

Attribute

- An attribute (`DataFrame.ATTRIBUTE`) is a **property** that provides information about the `DataFrame`'s structure or content without modifying it.
 - e.g., `df.columns`



Getting a Summary of a DataFrame

```
1 df_0.info()      # method
2 df_0.count()     # method
```

```
1 df_0.shape       # attribute
2 df_0.columns     # attribute
```

- Every **DataFrame** object has a `.info()` method that provides a summary of a DataFrame:
 - Variable names (`.columns`)
 - Number of observations and variables (`.shape`)
 - Number of non-missing values in each variable (`.count()`)
 - ▶ Pandas often displays missing values as **NaN**.

Absolute Pathnames

- An **absolute pathname** tells the computer the *exact location* of a file, starting from the very top folder of your computer.
 - This location never changes, no matter where you are working in Python.
- In Python, you can see the **working directory** — the folder where Python is currently “looking” for files — by running `os.getcwd()` in the **Console**.
- Examples of an absolute pathname for `custdata_rev.csv`:
 - On a Mac:
`/Users/user/documents/data/custdata_rev.csv`
 - On Windows:
`C:\\Users\\user\\Documents\\data\\custdata_rev.csv`
 - ▶ Note: In Windows, we use **double backslashes** (`\\`) because a single backslash (`\\`) is treated as a special character in R.

Relative Pathnames

- A **relative pathname** specifies the location of a file *relative to the working directory*.
- Examples of a relative pathname for **custdata_rev.csv**:
 - Absolute pathname:
`/Users/user/documents/data/custdata_rev.csv`
 - Working directory:
`/Users/user/documents/`
 - Relative pathname:
`data/custdata_rev.csv`

Finding the Absolute Path of a File/Folder

Windows 11

- **Step 1:** Navigate to your folder using File Explorer.
- **Step 2:** Right-click the desired file or folder.
- **Step 3:** Click **Copy as path**.
- **Step 4:** Paste the path into your Python script (**Ctrl + V**).
- **Step 5:** Adjust backslashes in the path:
 - **Option 1:** Replace backslashes (\) with forward slashes (/).
 - **Option 2:** Replace single backslashes (\) with double backslashes (\\).

Mac

- **Step 1:** Navigate to your folder using Finder.
- **Step 2:** Select the file or folder by clicking on it.
- **Step 3:** Copy the path (**Option + Command + C**).
- **Step 4:** Paste the path into your Python script (**Command + V**).



CSV Files

- A **CSV** (comma-separated values) file is a plain text file where each value is separated by a *comma*.
 - CSV files are widely used for storing data from spreadsheets and databases.
- **Example**
 - <https://bcdanl.github.io/data/tvshows.csv>

Exporting a DataFrame as a CSV File with `to_csv()`

- To export **DataFrame** as a **CSV** file, we use the `to_csv()` method.
 - Before exporting, you can set the **working directory (WD)** to organize and manage the location of CSV files.
 - Create a **data** directory within your **WD**. This helps in keeping your data analysis and exports well-organized.

```
1 # Import the os module to interact with the operating system
2 import os
3
4 # Set the working directory path
5 wd_path = 'PATH_TO_YOUR_DATA_FOLDER' # e.g., '/Users/bchoe/Documents/DANL-210'
6 os.chdir(wd_path) # Change the current working directory to wd_path
7 os.getcwd() # Retrieve and return the current working directory
8
9 # index=False to not write the row index in the CSV output
10 df_0.to_csv('data/table.csv', index =False)
```

Scrapping Tables with `pd.read_html()`

Let's do **Classwork 3!**