



Type Checking

Type Checking

Verify that the rules for using different types are obeyed, and that the correct types are used in function calls, assignments, and other program elements.

Example:

```
lst = ["cat", "dog", "rat"]
sum( lst )           # type error
for x in range(1.0,4.0):
    # type error: int required
    print(x)
```

Static

static - fixed, unchanging, immobile

In computer programming:

anything that is done or known before run-time.

"**static content**" - fixed content in a web application, such as images, fonts, CSS files, fixed web pages.

"**static type checking**" - type checking done before the program is run.
- may be done by compiler or static type checking tool.

Dynamic

dynamic - characterized by change or activity

In computer programming:

*anything that is done, created, or known
only when the code is run.*

"**dynamic content**" - web pages generated at run-time from a template. Content that changes over time.

"**dynamic type checking**" - verify type rules while the program is running.

Does Python Do Dynamic Type Checking?

Answer is not obvious.

Consider this:

```
# what type is required for x and y?  
def join(x, y):  
    return x + y  
  
join(2, 3)  
join("hi", "bye")  
join(Fraction(1,2), Fraction(2,3))
```

What Some People Say

Python does dynamic type checking.

Python associates types with *values* rather than *variables*.

Type checking is done on *values*.

Static versus Dynamic Binding

"**Binding**" refers to association of names with particular pieces of code.

Static Binding - a name is "bound" to particular code in an unchanging (static) way.

Dynamic Binding - a name is "bound" to code in a dynamic, changing way (at run-time).

@staticmethod

```
class Fraction:
    @staticmethod
    def gcd( m, n):
        """greatest common divisor"""
        # use Euclid's algorithm
```

gcd is statically bound. We know exactly **what code** will be **invoked** even **before** the program is run!

```
x = Fraction.gcd(60, 75)
```


Dynamic binding

```
lst = [ Fraction(2,3), "hello",  
        datetime.now() ]
```

```
for x in lst:  
    print( str(x) )
```

2/3

'hello'

2019-11-17 15:50:34

str(x) is **dynamically bound** to the `__str__()` method of a particular class (Fraction, string, datetime).

We don't know **until run-time** what kind of object `x` refers to, or which class's `__str__()` method should be invoked.

Dynamic Binding and Polymorphism

Dynamic binding is needed to enable polymorphism.

The example from previous slide uses polymorphism.

```
lst = [ Fraction(2,3), "hello",  
        datetime.now() ]
```

```
for x in lst:
```

```
    print( str(x) )
```

```
2/3                - called str() of Float
```

```
'hello'           - called str() of string
```

```
2019-11-17 15:50:34
```

```
                - called str() of datetime
```

Static Checking & Software Correctness

We want our software to be correct (of course).

Static type checking finds some programming errors
before the program is run.

Some type errors may also indicate *logic errors*.

Example

```
class Scorecard:
    """Accumulate scores and compute their average."""
    def __init__(self):
        self.scores = []

    def add_score(self, score):
        self.scores.append(score)

    def average(self):
        """return average of all scores"""
        return sum(self.scores)/len(self.scores)

if __name__ == "__main__":
    scores = Scorecard()
    n = input("input a score: ")
    scores.add_score(n)
    n = input("input another score: ")
    scores.add_score(n)
    print("The average is " + scores.average())
```

This simple code contains 2 distinct errors. As written, most IDE won't detect them.

Exercise

1. Download scorecard.py to an empty directory.
2. Open in your favorite IDE.
3. Does the IDE flag any errors?
4. Add *type hints* ... one at a time.

Please don't add them all at once.

"hint" the parameter to addScore. What happens?

"hint" the scores List (from typing import List).

What happens?

For VS Code, if you don't have Pylint extension, then install it. See any difference?

Typing and Encapsulation

In Scorecard, the scores are assumed to be numbers.

Can we allow scores to be objects?

```
score = Score("Quiz 1", 10.0)
```

In Scorecard we could write:

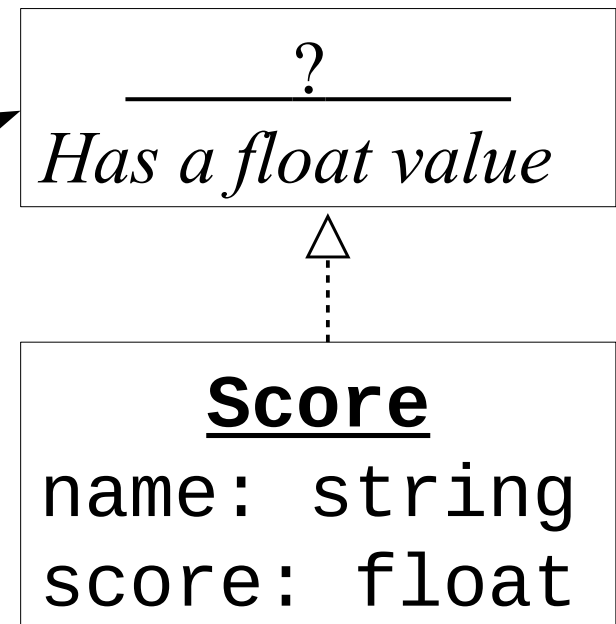
```
def average(self):  
    # add the values of the score objects  
    total = sum(float(x) for x in self.scores)  
    # don't divide by zero if no scores  
    return total/max(1, len(self.scores))
```

Typing and Encapsulation

What is the **required behavior** of a Score object, so that Scorecard can compute the average score?

```
def add_score(self, score: _____):
```

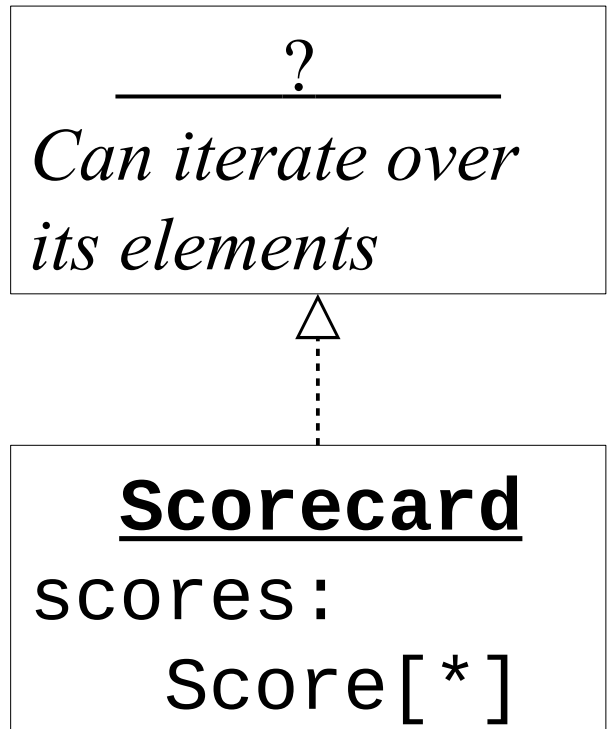
Is there a "type" we can use that specifies: "this object has a float value, and you can call float(x) to get it"?



Typing and Behavior

What is the ***required behavior*** of a Scorecard so that we can use Scorecard as data source in a for loop?

```
scorecard = Scorecard()  
... # add some scores  
  
# can this possibly work?  
for score in scorecard:  
    print(score)
```



"Interface" Types You Should Know

These types specify that a class provides some behavior.

What behavior (methods) does each one guarantee?

Container

Collection

Iterable

Iterator

Dict

Mapping

List

Set

Sequence

Start by reading the `collections.abc` document page.

Very specific interfaces

Sized

- can call `x.__len__()` or `len(x)`

SupportsInt

- can call `x.__int__()` or `int(x)`

SupportsFloat

- can call `x.__float__()` or `float(x)`

Example:

```
class Score(SupportsFloat):  
    """a score has a name and numeric score"""  
    def __float__(self):  
        return self.score
```

Resources

Mai's write-up on "type hinting" in ISP19/problems

<https://github.com/ISP19/problems/tree/master/type-hints>

Python **typing** package

<https://docs.python.org/3/library/typing.html>

Python **abstract base collections** (abc) package

<https://docs.python.org/3/library/collections.abc.html>

This page explains what behavior and methods each collection provides.

Helps you understand "types" in the typing package.

Another Resource

Python Type Checking Guide on *RealPython*

<https://realpython.com/python-type-checking/>

Describes dynamic typing, duck typing, and how to use type hinting.