Python Programming Essentials

Unit 2: Structured Python

CHAPTER 6: DEFINING FUNCTIONS

DR. ERIC CHOU

IEEE SENIOR MEMBER

Objectives

LECTURE 1



Objectives

- •To understand why programmers divide programs up into sets of cooperating functions.
- To be able to define new functions in Python.
- •To understand the details of function calls and parameter passing in Python.
- •To write programs that use functions to reduce code duplication and increase program modularity.

What is a Function is Python?

LECTURE 2



The Function of Functions

So far, we've seen four different types of functions:

- Our programs comprise a single function called main().
- Built-in Python functions (print, abs)
- Functions from the standard libraries (math.sqrt)
- Functions from the graphics module (p.getX())



The Function of Functions

Having similar or identical code in more than one place has some drawbacks.

- Issue one: writing the same code twice or more.
- Issue two: This same code must be maintained in two separate places.

Functions can be used to reduce code duplication and make programs more easily understood and maintained.



- A function is like a subprogram, a small program inside of a program.
- •The basic idea we write a sequence of statements and then give that sequence a name. We can then execute this sequence at any time by referring to the name.



- The part of the program that creates a function is called a function definition.
- •When the function is used in a program, we say the definition is *called* or *invoked*.



Function Definition:

- •When Python comes to a function call, it initiates a four-step process:
 - 1. The calling program suspends execution at the point of the call
 - 2. The formal parameters of the function get assigned the values supplied by the actual parameters in the call.
 - 3. The body of the function is executed.
 - 4. Control returns to the point just after where the function was called.



```
Happy Birthday lyrics...
def main():
    print("Happy birthday to you!" )
    print("Happy birthday to you!" )
    print("Happy birthday, dear Fred...")
    print("Happy birthday to you!")
Gives us this...
>>> main()
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday, dear Fred...
Happy birthday to you!
```



•There's some duplicated code in the program!

```
(print("Happy birthday to you!"))
```

•We can define a function to print out this line:

```
def happy():
    print("Happy birthday to you!")
```

•With this function, we can rewrite our program.



```
•The new program –
def happy():
    print("Happy birthday to you!")
def singFred():
    happy()
    happy()
    print ("Happy birthday, dear Fred...")
    happy()
•Gives us this output –
>>> singFred()
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday, dear Fred...
Happy birthday to you!
```



- Creating this function saved us a lot of typing!
- •What if it's Lucy's birthday? We could write a new singLucy function!

```
def singLucy():
    happy()
    happy()
    print("Happy birthday, dear Lucy...")
    happy()
```



•We could write a main program to sing to both Lucy and Fred

```
def main():
    singFred()
    print()
    singLucy()
```

•This gives us this new output

```
>>> main()
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday, dear Fred..
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday, dear Lucy...
Happy birthday to you!
```



- •This is working great! But... there's still a lot of code duplication.
- •The only difference between singFred and singLucy is the name in the third print statement.
- •These two routines could be collapsed together by using a parameter.



•The generic function sing
def sing(person):
 happy()
 happy()
 print("Happy birthday, dear", person + ".")
 happy()

•This function uses a parameter named person. A *parameter* is a variable that is initialized when the function is called.



•Our new output –

```
>>> sing("Fred")
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday, dear Fred.
Happy birthday to you!
```

•We can put together a new main program!



•Our new main program:

```
def main():
    sing("Fred")
    print()
    sing("Lucy")
```

•Gives us this output:

```
>>> main()
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday, dear Fred.
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday, dear Lucy.
Happy birthday to you!
```

Case Study Future Value

LECTURE 3



Future Value with a Function

•In the future value graphing program, we see similar code twice:

```
# Draw bar for initial principal
bar = Rectangle(Point(0, 0), Point(1, principal))
bar.setFill("green")
bar.setWidth(2)
bar.draw(win)

bar = Rectangle(Point(year, 0), Point(year+1, principal))
bar.setFill("green")
bar.setWidth(2)
bar.draw(win)
```



Future Value with a Function

To properly draw the bars, we need three pieces of information.

- The year the bar is for
- How tall the bar should be
- The window the bar will be drawn in

These three values can be supplied as parameters to the function.



Future Value with a Function

•The resulting function looks like this:

```
def drawBar(window, year, height):
    # Draw a bar in window starting at year with given height
    bar = Rectangle(Point(year, 0), Point(year+1, height))
    bar.setFill("green")
    bar.setWidth(2)
    bar.draw(window)
```

•To use this function, we supply the three values. If win is a Graphwin, we can draw a bar for year 0 and principal of \$2000 using this call:

```
drawBar(win, 0, 2000)
```



Case Study: futval_graph3.py

```
from graphics import *
# function definition
def drawBar(window, year, height):
    # Draw a bar in window starting at year with given height
    bar = Rectangle(Point(year, 0), Point(year+1, height))
    bar.setFill("green")
    bar.setWidth(2)
    bar.draw(window)
```



Case Study: futval_graph3.py

```
def main():
    #Introduction
    print ("This program plots the growth of a 10-year investment.")
    #Get principal and interest rate
    principal = eval(input("Enter the initial principal: "))
    apr = eval(input("Enter the Annualized Interest Rate:"))
    # Create Window
    win = GraphWin("Investment Growth Chart", 640, 480)
    win.setBackground("white")
    win.setCoords (-1.75, -200, 11.5, 10400)
    Text(Point(-1,0), '0.0K').draw(win)
    Text (Point (-1, 2500), '2.5K') . draw (win)
    Text (Point (-1,5000), '5.0K').draw (win)
    Text (Point (-1, 7500), '7.5K').draw (win)
    Text (Point (-1, 10000), '10.0K').draw (win)
    drawBar(win, 0, principal)
```



Case Study: futval_graph3.py

```
# Draw bars for successive years
    for year in range(1,11):
        principal = principal * (1+apr)
        drawBar(win, year, principal)
    # Close window
    input("Press <Enter> to quit window")
    win.close()
main()
```

Function and its Parameters



- •It makes sense to include the year and the principal in the drawBar function, but why send the window variable?
- •The *scope* of a variable refers to the places in a program a given variable can be referenced.



- •Each function is its own little subprogram. The variables used inside of a function are *local* to that function, even if they happen to have the same name as variables that appear inside of another function.
- •The only way for a function to see a variable from another function is for that variable to be passed as a parameter.



- •Since the GraphWin in the variable win is created inside of main, it is not directly accessible in drawBar.
- •The window parameter in drawBar gets assigned the value of win from main when drawBar is called.



•A function definition looks like this:

```
def <name>(<formal-parameters>):
     <body>
```

- The name of the function must be an identifier
- •Formal-parameters is a (possibly empty) list of variable names



•Formal parameters, like all variables used in the function, are only accessible in the body of the function. Variables with identical names elsewhere in the program are distinct from the formal parameters and variables inside of the function body.



•A function is called by using its name followed by a list of actual parameters or arguments.

```
<name> (<actual-parameters>)
```

•When Python comes to a function call, it initiates a fourstep process.



- The calling program suspends execution at the point of the call.
- The formal parameters of the function get assigned the values supplied by the actual parameters in the call.
- The body of the function is executed.
- Control returns to the point just after where the function was called.



•Let's trace through the following code:

```
sing("Fred")
print()
sing("Lucy")
```

- •When Python gets to sing ("Fred"), execution of main is temporarily suspended.
- •Python looks up the definition of sing and sees that it has one formal parameter, person.



•The formal parameter is assigned the value of the actual parameter. It's as if the following statement had been executed:

```
person = "Fred"
```



Note that the variable person has just been initialized.



- •At this point, Python begins executing the body of sing.
- •The first statement is another function call, to happy. What happens next?
- •Python suspends the execution of sing and transfers control to happy.
- •happy consists of a single print, which is executed and control returns to where it left off in sing.



- •Execution continues in this way with two more trips to happy.
- When Python gets to the end of sing, control returns to main and continues immediately following the function call.



```
def main():
    sing("Fred")
    print()
    print()
    sing("Lucy")

def sing(person):
    happy()
    happy()
    print ("Happy birthday, dear", person + ".")
    happy()
```

- •Notice that the person variable in sing has disappeared!
- •The memory occupied by local function variables is reclaimed when the function exits.
- Local variables do not retain any values from one function execution to the next.



- The next statement is the bare print, which produces a blank line.
- •Python encounters another call to sing, and control transfers to the sing function, with the formal parameter "Lucy".



•The body of sing is executed for Lucy with its three side trips to happy and control returns to main.





•One thing not addressed in this example was multiple parameters. In this case the formal and actual parameters are matched up based on *position*, e.g. the first actual parameter is assigned to the first formal parameter, the second actual parameter is assigned to the second formal parameter, etc.



- •As an example, consider the call to drawBar: drawBar (win, 0, principal)
- •When control is passed to drawBar, these parameters are matched up to the formal parameters in the function heading:

```
def drawBar (window, year, height):
```



 The net effect is as if the function body had been prefaced with three assignment statements:

```
window = win
year = 0
height = principal
```

Function With Return Value

LECTURE 5



- Passing parameters provides a mechanism for initializing the variables in a function.
- Parameters act as inputs to a function.
- •We can call a function many times and get different results by changing its parameters.



•We've already seen numerous examples of functions that return values to the caller.

```
discRt = math.sqrt(b*b - 4*a*c)
```

- •The value b*b 4*a*c is the actual parameter of math.sqrt.
- •We say sqrt returns the square root of its argument.



•This function returns the square of a number:

```
def square(x):
    return x*x
```

- •When Python encounters return, it exits the function and returns control to the point where the function was called.
- •In addition, the value(s) provided in the return statement are sent back to the caller as an expression result.



```
>>> square(3)
>>> print(square(4))
16
>>> x = 5
>>> y = square(x)
>>> print(y)
25
>>> print(square(x) + square(3))
34
```



•We can use the square function to write a routine to calculate the distance between (x_1,y_1) and (x_2,y_2) .



Case Study: triangle2.py

```
# triangle2.pyw
import math
from graphics import *
def square(x):
    return x * x
def distance(p1,p2):
    dist = math.sqrt(square(p2.getX()-p1.getX())+square(p2.getY()-p1.getY()))
    return dist
def main():
    win= GraphWin("Draw a Triangle")
    win.setCoords(0.0,0.0,10.0,10.0)
    message = Text(Point(5,0.5),"Click for 3 points")
    message.draw(win)
```



Case Study: triangle2.py

```
#Get and draw three vertices of triagnle
  p1 = win.getMouse()
  pl.draw(win)
  p2 = win.getMouse()
  p2.draw(win)
  p3 = win.getMouse()
  p3.draw(win)
   # Use Polygon object to draw the triangle
   triangle = Polygon(p1, p2, p3)
   triangle.setFill("peachpuff")
   triangle.setOutline("cyan")
   triangle.draw(win)
```

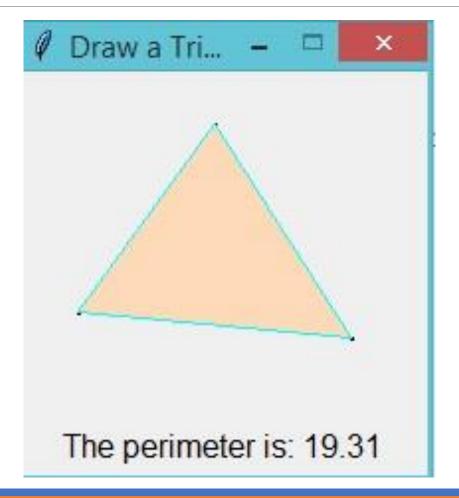


Case Study: triangle2.py

```
# New
    # Calculate the perimeter of the triangle
    perim = distance(p1, p2) + distance(p2, p3) + distance(p3, p1)
    message.setText("The perimeter is: {0:0.2f}".format(perim))
    #Wait for another click to exit
    win.getMouse()
    win.close()
main()
```



Case Study: triangle2.py Results





- •The order of the function definitions in the program is not important.
- •We just have to make sure a function is defined before the program actually tries to run it.
- •Since our call to main does not usually happen until the every last line of the module, all of the functions will be defined before the program starts running.



- Sometimes a function needs to return more than one value.
- •To do this, simply list more than one expression in the return statement.

```
def sumDiff(x, y):

sum = x + y

diff = x - y

return sum, diff
```



•When calling this function, use simultaneous assignment.

```
num1, num2 = eval(input("Enter two numbers (num1, num2) "))
s, d = sumDiff(num1, num2)
print("The sum is", s, "and the difference is", d)
```

•As before, the values are assigned based on position, so *s* gets the first value returned (the sum), and *d* gets the second (the difference).



- •One "gotcha" all Python functions return a value, whether they contain a return statement or not. Functions without a return hand back a special object, denoted None.
- •A common problem is writing a value-returning function and omitting the return!



•If your value-returning functions produce strange messages, check to make sure you remembered to include the return!



- Return values are the main way to send information from a function back to the caller.
- •Sometimes, we can communicate back to the caller by making changes to the function parameters.
- •Understanding when and how this is possible requires the mastery of some subtle details about how assignment works and the relationship between actual and formal parameters.



•Suppose you are writing a program that manages bank accounts.

One function we would need to do is to accumulate interest on the account. Let's look at a first-cut at the function.

```
def addInterest(balance, rate):
   newBalance = balance * (1 + rate)
   balance = newBalance
```



- •The intent is to set the balance of the account to a new value that includes the interest amount.
- •Let's write a main program to test this:

```
def test():
   amount = 1000
   rate = 0.05
   addInterest(amount, rate)
   print(amount)
```



•We hope that that the 5% will be added to the amount, returning 1050.

```
>>> test()
1000
```

•What went wrong? Nothing!



•The first two lines of the test function create two local variables called amount and rate which are given the initial values of 1000 and 0.05, respectively.

```
def addInterest(balance, rate):
    newBalance = balance * (1 + rate)
    balance = newBalance
def test():
    amount = 1000
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest (amount, rate)
    print(amount)
```



- •Control then transfers to the addInterest function.
- •The formal parameters balance and rate are assigned the values of the actual parameters amount and rate.
- •Even though rate appears in both, they are separate variables (because of scope rules).

```
def addInterest(balance, rate):
    newBalance = balance * (1 + rate)
    balance = newBalance
def test():
    amount = 1000
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest(amount, rate)
    print(amount)
```



•The assignment of the parameters causes the variables balance and rate in addInterest to refer to the values of the actual parameters!

```
def addInterest(balance, rate):
    newBalance = balance*(1 + rate)
    balance = newBalance
def test():
    amount = 1000
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest (amount, rate)
    print(amount)
```



```
balance=amount
rate=rate
                                                def addInterest(balance, rate):
def test():
                                                    newBalance = balance * (1 + rate)
    amount = 1000
                                                    balance = newBalance
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest(amount, rate)
    print(amount)
                                                        balance
                    1000
amount
                                                        rate
                    0.05
 rate
```



- •Executing the first line of addInterest creates a new variable, newBalance.
- •balance is then assigned the value of newBalance.

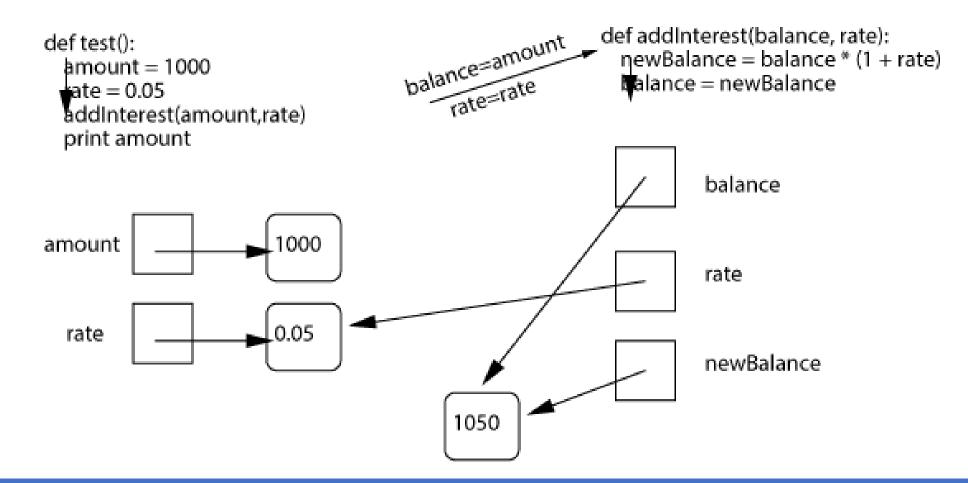
```
def addInterest(balance, rate):
    newBalance = balance * (1 + rate)
    balance = newBalance
def test():
    amount = 1000
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest (amount, rate)
    print(amount)
```



•balance now refers to the same value as newBalance, but this had no effect on amount in the test function.

```
def addInterest(balance, rate):
    newBalance = balance * (1 + rate)
    balance = newBalance
def test():
    amount = 1000
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest(amount, rate)
    print (amount)
```







- •Execution of addInterest has completed and control returns to test.
- •The local variables, including the parameters, in addInterest go away, but amount and rate in the test function still refer to their initial values!

```
def addInterest(balance, rate):
    newBalance = balance * (1 + rate)
    balance = newBalance

def test():
    amount = 1000
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest(amount, rate)
    print(amount)
```



- •To summarize: the formal parameters of a function only receive the *values* of the actual parameters. The function does not have access to the variable that holds the actual parameter.
- Python is said to pass all parameters by value.



- •Some programming languages (C++, Ada, and many more) do allow variables themselves to be sent as parameters to a function. This mechanism is said to pass parameters by reference.
- •When a new value is assigned to the formal parameter, the value of the variable in the calling program actually changes.



•Since Python doesn't have this capability, one alternative would be to change the addInterest function so that it returns the newBalance.



```
def addInterest(balance, rate):
    newBalance = balance * (1 + rate)
    return newBalance
def test():
    amount = 1000
    rate = 0.05
    amount = addInterest(amount, rate)
   print(amount)
test()
```



- •Instead of looking at a single account, say we are writing a program for a bank that deals with many accounts. We could store the account balances in a list, then add the accrued interest to each of the balances in the list.
- •We could update the first balance in the list with code like:

```
balances[0] = balances[0] * (1 + rate)
```



- •This code says, "multiply the value in the 0th position of the list by (1 + rate) and store the result back into the 0th position of the list."
- •A more general way to do this would be with a loop that goes through positions 0, 1, ..., length 1.



```
# addinterest3.py
     Illustrates modification of a mutable parameter (a list).
def addInterest(balances, rate):
    for i in range(len(balances)):
        balances[i] = balances[i] * (1+rate)
def test():
    amounts = [1000, 2200, 800, 360]
   rate = 0.05
    addInterest (amounts, 0.05)
   print(amounts)
test()
```



Remember, our original code had these values:

```
[1000, 2200, 800, 360]
```

The program returns:

```
[1050.0, 2310.0, 840.0, 378.0]
```

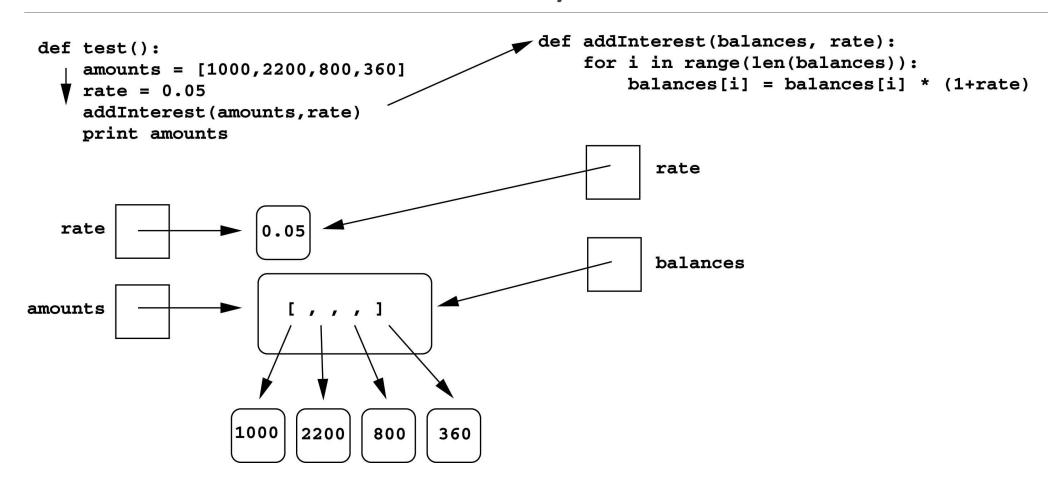
•What happened? Python passes parameters by value, but it looks like amounts has been changed!



- •The first two lines of test create the variables amounts and rate.
- •The value of the variable amounts is a list object that contains four int values.

```
def addInterest(balances, rate):
    for i in range(len(balances)):
        balances[i] = balances[i] *
                      (1+rate)
def test():
    amounts = [1000, 2200, 800, 360]
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest (amounts, 0.05)
    print(amounts)
```



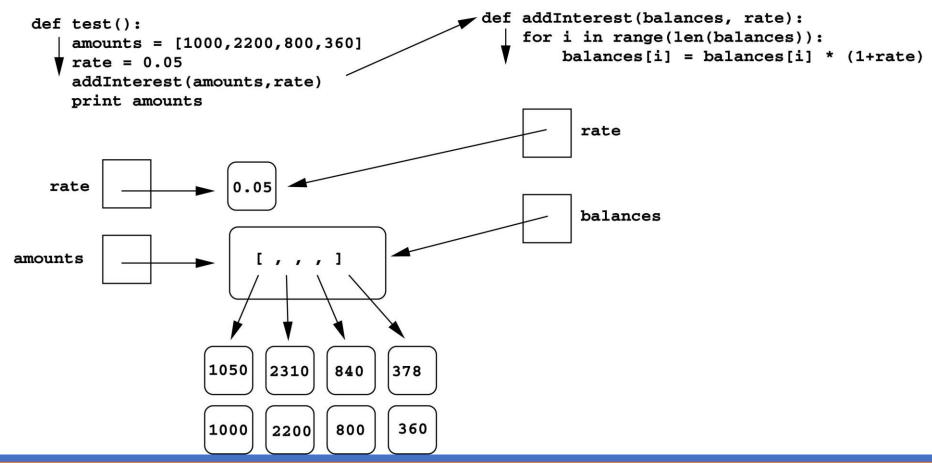




•Next, addInterest executes.
The loop goes through each index in the range 0, 1, ..., length -1 and updates that value in balances.

```
def addInterest(balances, rate):
    for i in range(len(balances)):
        balances[i]=balances[i]*(1+rate)
def test():
    amounts = [1000, 2200, 800, 360]
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest (amounts, 0.05)
    print(amounts)
```







- •In the diagram the old values are left hanging around to emphasize that the numbers in the boxes have not changed, but the new values were created and assigned into the list.
- •The old values will be destroyed during garbage collection.

```
def addInterest(balances, rate):
    for i in range(len(balances)):
        balances[i] = balances[i] *
                     (1+rate)
def test():
    amounts = [1000, 2200, 800, 360]
    rate = 0.05
    addInterest (amounts, 0.05)
    print amounts
```



- •When addInterest terminates, the list stored in amounts now contains the new values.
- •The variable amounts wasn't changed (it's still a list), but the state of that list has changed, and this change is visible to the calling program.



- •Parameters are always passed by value. However, if the value of the variable is a mutable object (like a list of graphics object), then changes to the state of the object will be visible to the calling program.
- •This situation is another example of the aliasing issue discussed in Chapter 4!

Program Structure

LECTURE 7



- •So far, functions have been used as a mechanism for reducing code duplication.
- •Another reason to use functions is to make your programs more *modular*.
- •As the algorithms you design get increasingly complex, it gets more and more difficult to make sense out of the programs.



- •One way to deal with this complexity is to break an algorithm down into smaller subprograms, each of which makes sense on its own.
- •This topic will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.



```
def main():
    # Introduction
    print ("This program plots the growth of a 10 year investment.")
    # Get principal and interest rate
    principal = eval(input("Enter the initial principal: "))
    apr = eval(input("Enter the annualized interest rate: "))
    # Create a graphics window with labels on left edge
    win = GraphWin("Investment Growth Chart", 320, 240)
    win.setBackground("white")
    win.setCoords(-1.75,-200, 11.5, 10400)
    Text(Point(-1, 0), ' 0.0K').draw(win)
    Text(Point(-1, 2500), ' 2.5K').draw(win)
```



```
Text(Point(-1, 5000), ' 5.0K').draw(win)
Text(Point(-1, 7500), ' 7.5k').draw(win)
Text (Point (-1, 10000), '10.0K').draw(win)
# Draw ba for initial principal
drawBar(win, 0, principal)
# Draw a bar for each subsequent year
for year in range (1, 11):
    principal = principal * (1 + apr)
    drawBar(win, year, principal)
input("Press <Enter> to quit.")
win.close()
```



•We can make this program more readable by moving the middle eight lines that create the window where the chart will be drawn into a value returning function.



```
def createLabeledWindow():
    window = GraphWin("Investment Growth Chart", 320, 240)
    window.setBackground("white")
    window.setCoords(-1.75,-200, 11.5, 10400)
    Text (Point (-1, 0), ' 0.0K').draw (window)
    Text (Point (-1, 2500), ' 2.5K').draw (window)
    Text(Point(-1, 5000), ' 5.0K').draw(window)
    Text (Point (-1, 7500), ' 7.5k').draw (window)
    Text(Point(-1, 10000), '10.0K').draw(window)
    return window
```



```
def main():
    print ("This program plots the growth of a 10 year investment.")
    principal = eval(input("Enter the initial principal: "))
    apr = eval(input("Enter the annualized interest rate: "))
    win = createLabeledWindow()
    drawBar(win, 0, principal)
    for year in range (1, 11):
        principal = principal * (1 + apr)
        drawBar(win, year, principal)
    input("Press <Enter> to quit.")
    win.close()
```



Case Study: futval_graph4.py

(modularized version)

```
# futval graph4.py
from graphics import *
# Create Window
def createLabeledWindow():
    window = GraphWin("Investment Growth Chart", 640, 480)
    window.setBackground("white")
    window.setCoords(-1.75, -200, 11.5, 10400)
    Text (Point (-1,0), '0.0K').draw (window)
    Text (Point (-1, 2500), '2.5K').draw (window)
    Text (Point (-1,5000), '5.0K').draw (window)
    Text (Point (-1,7500), '7.5K').draw (window)
    Text (Point (-1, 10000), '10.0K').draw (window)
    return (window)
```



Case Study: futval_graph4.py

```
# function definition
def drawBar(window, year, height):
    # Draw a bar in window starting at year with given height
    bar = Rectangle(Point(year, 0), Point(year+1, height))
    bar.setFill("green")
    bar.setWidth(2)
    bar.draw(window)
```

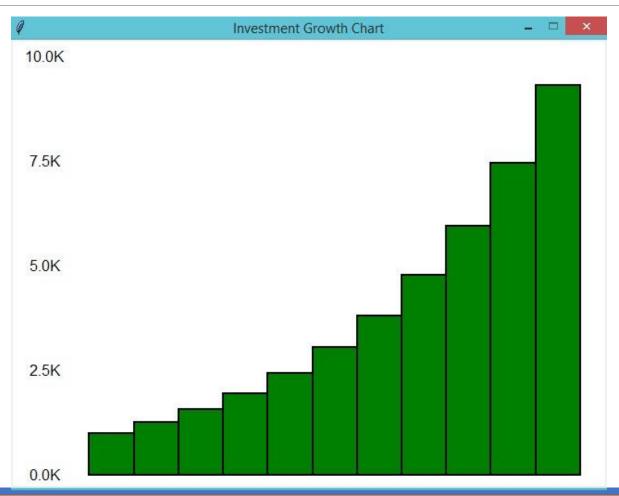


Case Study: futval_graph4.py

```
def main():
    #Introduction
    print ("This program plots the growth of a 10-year investment.")
    #Get principal and interest rate
    principal = eval(input("Enter the initial principal: "))
    apr = eval(input("Enter the Annualized Interest Rate:"))
    win = createLabeledWindow()
    drawBar(win, 0, principal)
    # Draw bars for successive years
    for year in range (1,11):
        principal = principal * (1+apr)
        drawBar(win, year, principal)
    win.getMouse()
    win.close()
main()
```



Result of futval_graph4.py (1000, 0.25)



Homework

LECTURE 8



Homework 6

- Read the chapter Summary
- Work on True/False Questions, Multiple Choice Questions, Discussions
- Programming Exercises: 2, 4, 5