

# `tkinter` Graphics Reference

April 29th, 2020

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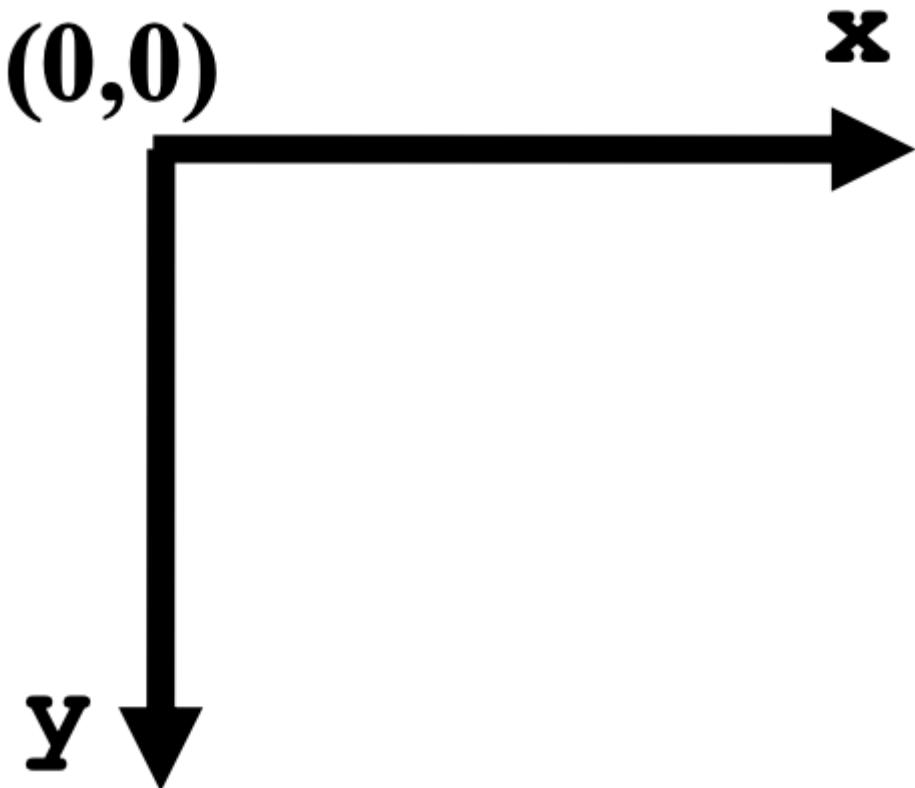
## Using Tk

One of the most common libraries to create graphics in Python is called Tk. To use the Tk library in a program you must import it at the top of your program (as shown below). The actual library name is named `tkinter`.

```
import tkinter
```

## The Canvas

The drawing model in Tk is that you have a canvas (much like a painting) where you are going to draw various shapes. The canvas is simply a grid of pixels that have  $x$ ,  $y$  values. The coordinate  $(0, 0)$  is in the upper left-hand corner of the canvas. The values of  $x$  increase as you move to the right. The values of  $y$  increase as you move down. So, you can think of the canvas as follows:



When we want to draw shapes on a canvas, we call functions on that canvas that “create” the shape we want to draw. These shapes then appear on the canvas. In CS106A, we will generally provide the code that creates the canvas for you, so all you need to worry about is adding shapes to that canvas. For the remainder of this handout, we will assume that an object named `canvas` has already been created, and it represents the Tk canvas that you’ll be drawing on. Below we provide a brief tour of some of the different shapes you can draw in a canvas as well as highlight a few of the options you have with regard to how those shapes look.

## Drawing lines

To draw lines on a canvas, the function we call is named `create_line`, and we would use it as shown below:

```
canvas.create_line(x1, y1, x2, y2)
```

The parameters  $(x_1, y_1)$  set the starting point of the line and  $(x_2, y_2)$  set the ending point of the line.

For example, the following command would draw a line from location  $(10, 20)$  to  $(100, 50)$  on the canvas:

```
canvas.create_line(10, 20, 100, 50)
```

We can also create colored lines, by including the named parameter `fill=` as shown below (here the line drawn will be green). Note that the name of the color is specified as a string (i.e., it should be inside single/double quotes).

```
canvas.create_line(x1, y1, x2, y2, fill='green')
```

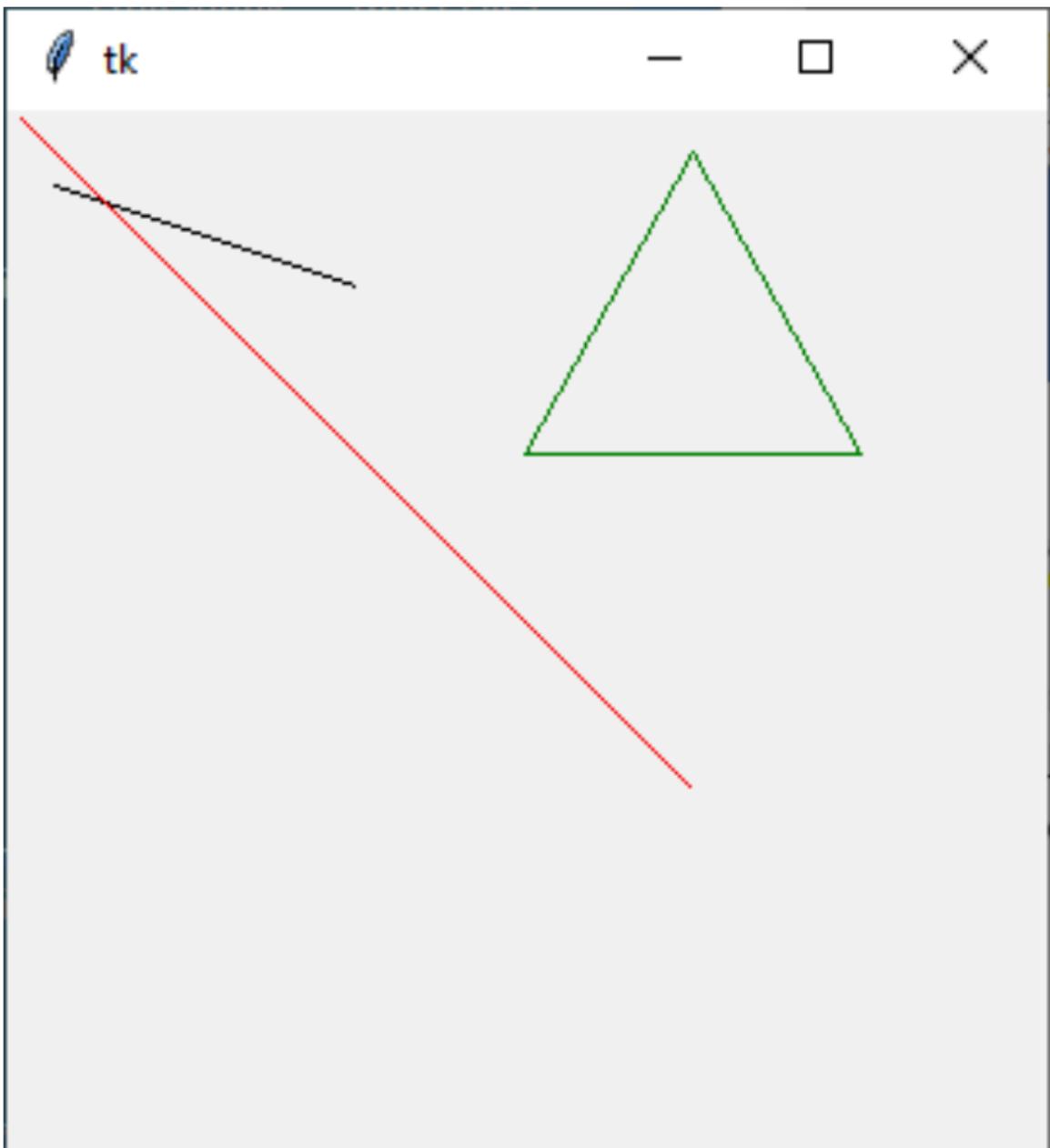
By default (if the `fill=`-parameter is not included), lines will be black. Here is just a sample of some of the common colors you can set in Tk:

```
red  
blue  
green  
yellow  
white  
black  
purple  
brown  
orange  
gray  
pink  
tan  
chartreuse
```

If you're interested, you can find a ridiculously long list of colors in the [Tk documentation](#).

Here is an example of some line drawing code and the resulting image that is produced:

```
def draw(canvas):  
    canvas.create_line(10, 20, 100, 50)  
    canvas.create_line(0, 0, 200, 200, fill='red')  
    canvas.create_line(200, 10, 150, 100, fill='green')  
    canvas.create_line(150, 100, 250, 100, fill='green')  
    canvas.create_line(250, 100, 200, 10, fill='green')
```



## Drawing Rectangles

You can also draw rectangles using the `create_rectangle` function. The parameters for drawing a rectangle use the notion of a “bounding box.” The idea of a bounding box is that you specify the coordinates of the upper left-hand corner and lower right-hand corner of the rectangle you want to draw, which then define the boundaries of the “box” that specifies the rectangle. The `create_rectangle` function is shown below.

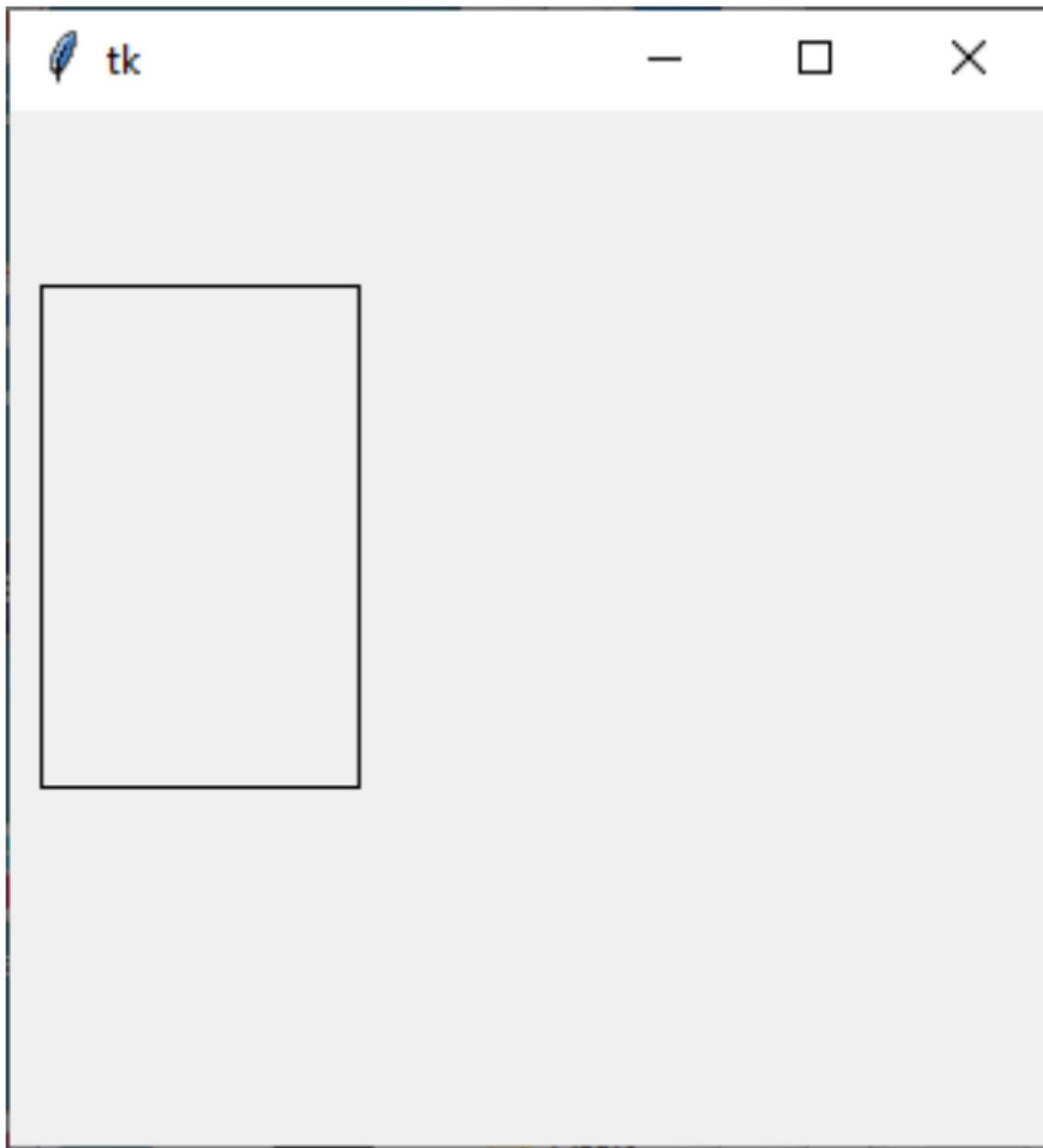
```
canvas.create_rectangle(up_left_x, up_left_y, low_right_x, low_right_y)
```

The parameters (`up_left_x`, `up_left_y`) specify the (x, y) location of the upper left-hand corner of the rectangle. The parameters (`low_right_x`, `low_right_y`) specify the (x, y) location of the lower right-hand corner of the rectangle.

For example, the following command would draw a rectangle with upper left-hand corner at (5, 50) and lower right-hand corner at (100, 200) on the canvas:

```
canvas.create_rectangle(5, 50, 100, 200)
```

That would appear as:

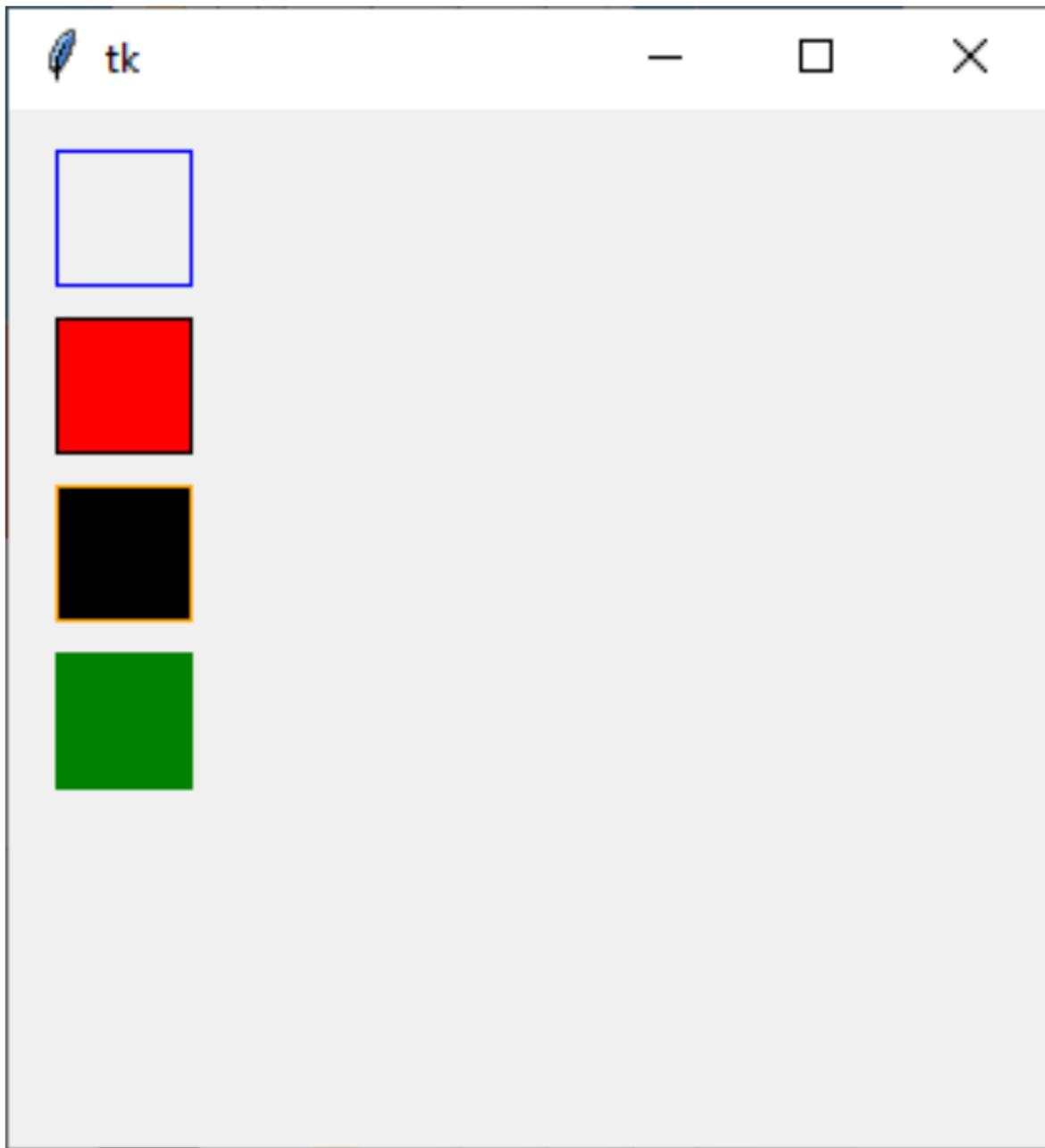


By default, rectangles are black outlines (the rectangle is not filled in). As with lines, we can create colored rectangles. Here we can set the color of the outline of the rectangle using the named parameter `outline=` and we can also specify a color to fill in the rectangle using the named parameter `fill=`. Note that the outline and fill are separate, so if you want a rectangle that is a solid both on its outline and filled in interior, you need to specify both parameters. By default (if the `outline=` and/or `fill=` parameter are not included), the color will be black.

Examples of using these parameters are shown in the example below:

```
canvas.create_rectangle(10, 10, 50, 50, outline='blue')
canvas.create_rectangle(10, 60, 50, 100, fill='red')
canvas.create_rectangle(10, 110, 50, 150, fill='black', outline='orange')
canvas.create_rectangle(10, 160, 50, 200, fill='green', outline='green')
```

Immediately below we show the resulting image that is produced (the rectangles shown in the picture below are in descending order, corresponding to the order of the commands that created them). It might be difficult to see, but the second rectangle has a black outline around it (since the `outline=` parameter was not set in the second rectangle, so the default outline color is black). The third rectangle, which is filled in with black, actually has an orange outline around it. The fourth rectangle is all green since both its fill and outline are set to green.



## Drawing Ovals

You can also draw ovals using the `create_oval` function. The parameters for drawing an oval are similar to those for a rectangle and use the notion of a “bounding box.” Here, the bounding box for the oval is that you specify the coordinates of the upper left-hand corner and lower right-hand corner of an imaginary rectangle that specifies the size of the oval to draw. Basically, the oval drawn will have its top, bottom, right, and left just touching the sides of the bounding box you specify.

The `create_oval` function is shown below.

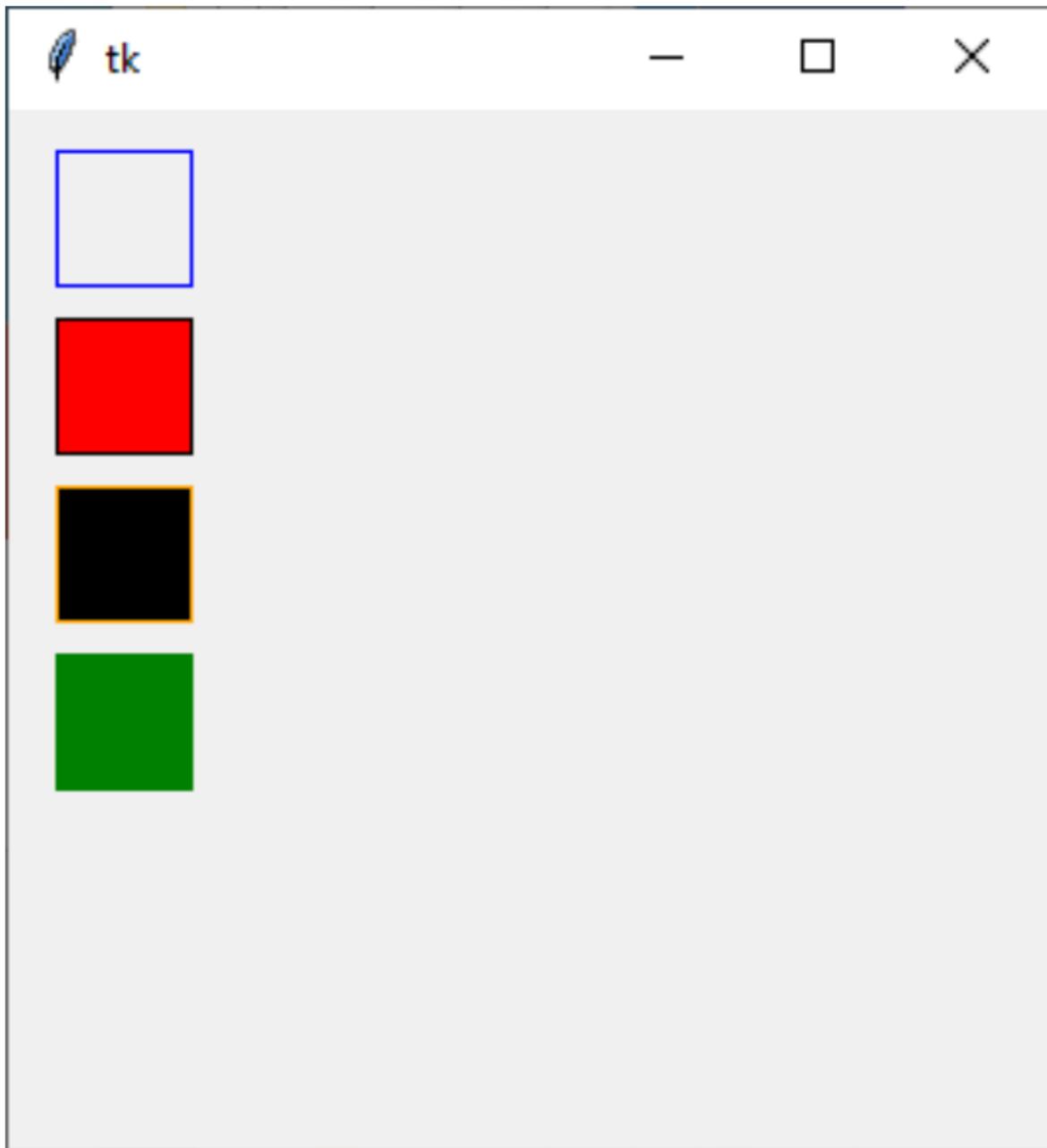
```
canvas.create_oval(up_left_x, up_left_y, low_right_x, low_right_y)
```

The parameters (`up_left_x`, `up_left_y`) specify the (x, y) location of the upper left-hand corner of the bounding box for the oval. The parameters (`low_right_x`, `low_right_y`) specify the (x, y) location of the lower right-hand corner of the bounding box for the oval.

For example, the following command would draw an oval with upper left-hand corner at (5, 50) and lower right-hand corner at (100, 200) on the canvas:

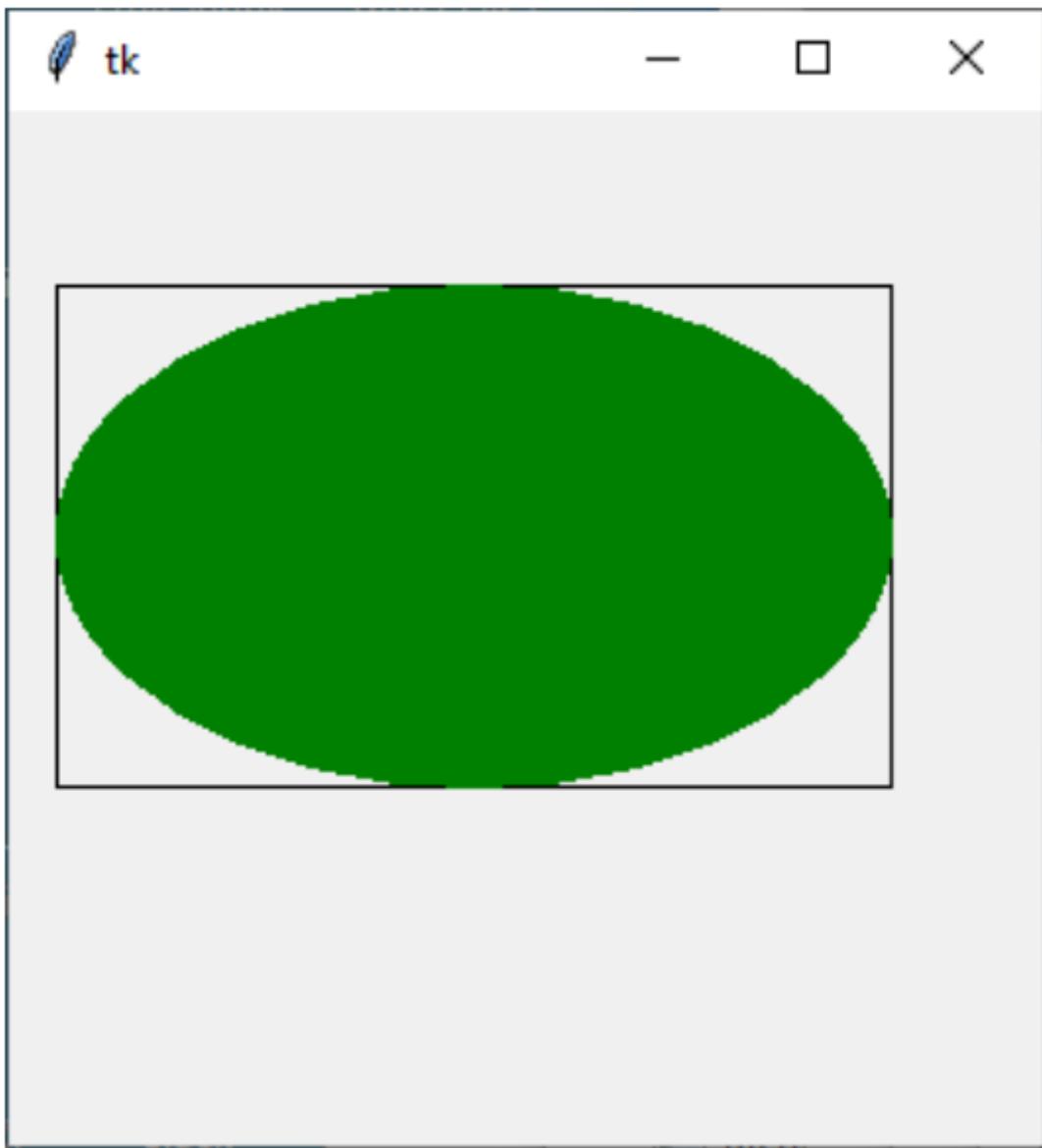
```
canvas.create_oval(5, 50, 100, 200)
```

That would appear as:



As with rectangles, by default, ovals are black outlines (not filled in). But you can create colored ovals by using the named parameters `outline=` and `fill=` which work the same for ovals as they do for rectangles. To make clear the notion of a bounding box, below we draw a green filled oval drawn on top of an outline rectangle, where both the oval and rectangle have the same bounding box coordinates.

```
canvas.create_rectangle(10, 50, 260, 200)
canvas.create_oval(10, 50, 260, 200, outline='green', fill='green')
```



## Drawing Text

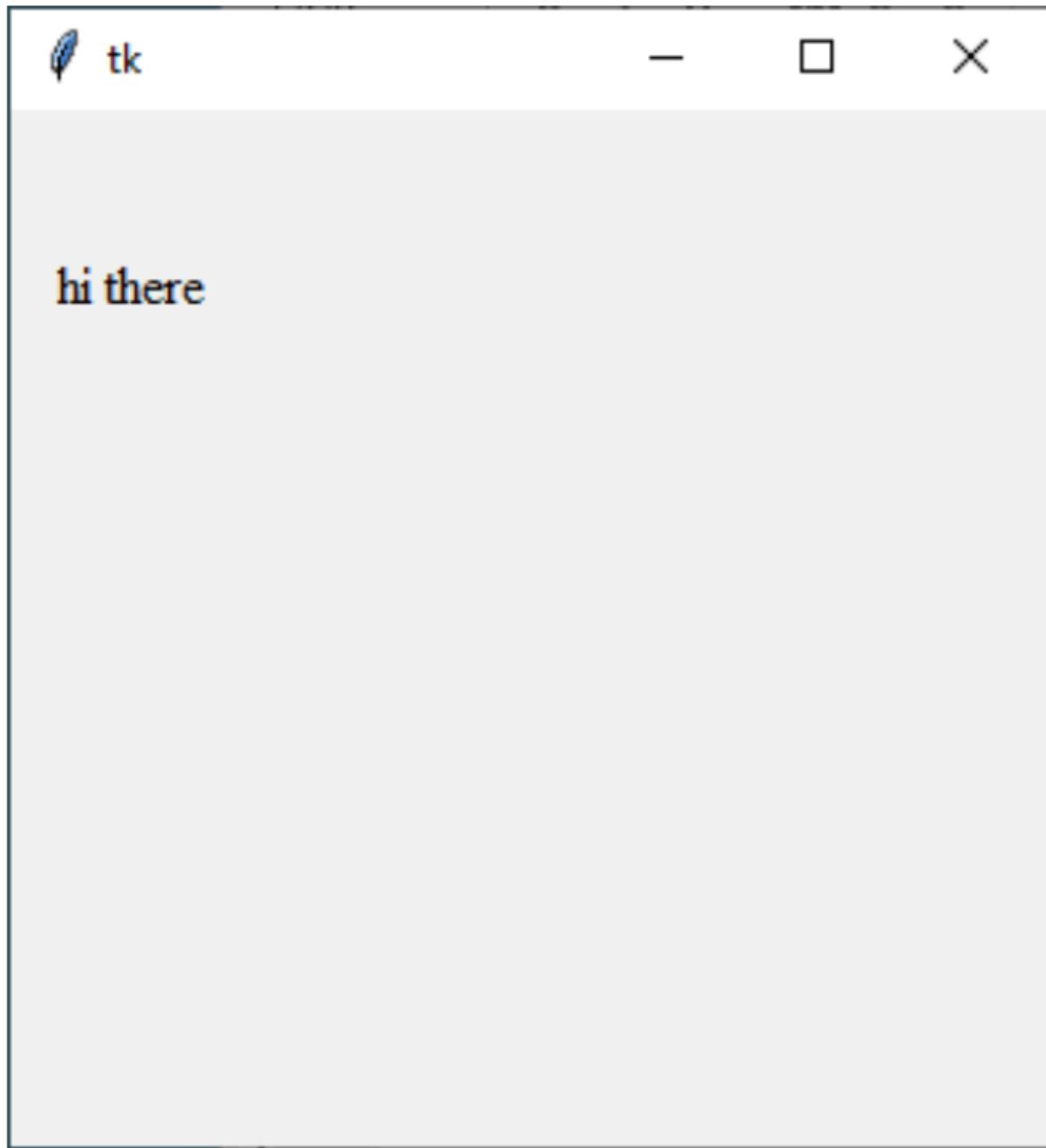
You can draw text using the `create_text` function. The parameters for drawing text include the  $(x, y)$  location on the canvas where the text should appear, the “anchoring” location (we will just use '`w`' for West, which means the  $(x, y)$  location of the text specifies the starting point (left-hand or west side) of the text), the font for the text, and the text to be drawn. An example of the `create_text` function is shown below.

```
canvas.create_text(x, y, anchor='w', font='Times', text='hi there')
```

For example, the following command would draw the text "hi there" in Times font starting at location (10, 5):

```
canvas.create_text(10, 50, anchor='w', font='Times', text='hi there')
```

That would appear as:



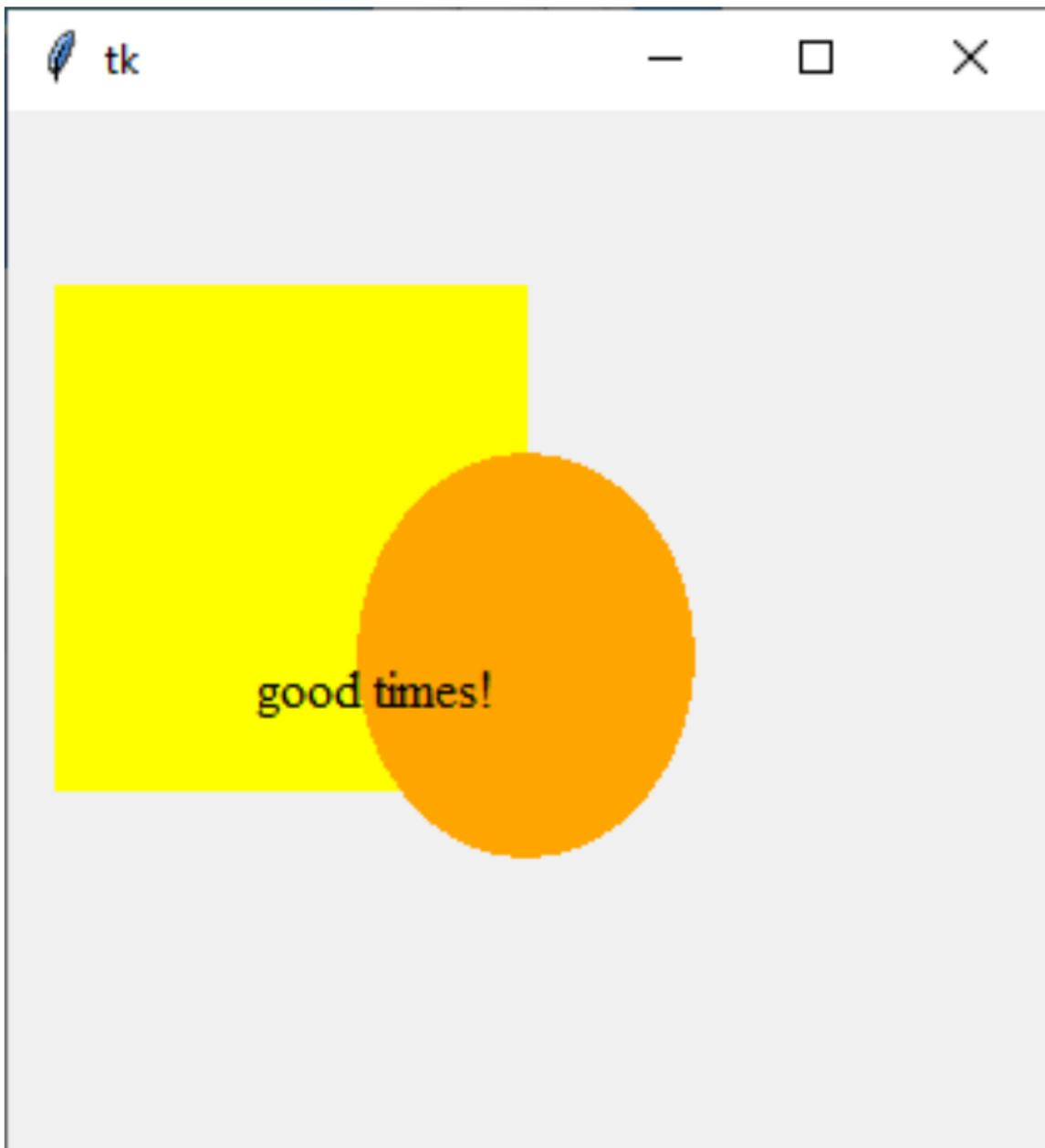
## Ordering of drawings

Objects are drawn on the canvas in the order in which they are created by your code. So, if you draw an object after another some other object in your code, the second object drawn can potentially cover (occlude) part of the object that was drawn first. This is sometimes referred to as the *z-order* of the objects.

As an example, below, we first draw a yellow rectangle, then draw an orange oval (which partly overlaps the rectangle), and then some text (that is on top of both the rectangle and the oval).

```
canvas.create_rectangle(10, 50, 150, 200, fill='yellow', outline='yellow')
canvas.create_oval(100, 100, 200, 220, fill='orange', outline='orange')
canvas.create_text(70, 170, anchor='w', font='Times', text='good times!')
```

That would appear as:



That gives you enough of the basics of drawing with Tk, so you can make some pretty beautiful drawings. Enjoy!