

# Functions

- functions
- return
- scoping
- arguments
- keyword arguments
- \*, \*\*
- global variables

# (Simple) functions

- You can define your own functions using:

```
def function-name (var1, ..., vark):  
    body code
```

*var*<sub>1</sub>, ..., *var*<sub>*k*</sub> are the *formal parameters*

- If the body code executes

return *expression*

the result of *expression* will be returned by the function. If expression is omitted or the body code terminates without performing return, then None is returned

- When calling a function *name* (*value*<sub>1</sub>, ..., *value*<sub>*k*</sub>) body code is executed with *var*<sub>*i*</sub>=*value*<sub>*i*</sub>

## Python shell

```
> def sum3(x, y, z):  
    return x + y + z  
  
> sum3(1, 2, 3)  
| 6  
> sum3(5, 7, 9)  
| 21  
  
> def powers(L, power):  
    P = [x**power for x in L]  
    return P  
  
> powers([2,3,4], 3)  
| [8, 27, 64]
```

# Questions – `poly(3, "10", '3')` ?

```
def poly(z, x, y):  
    return z * x + y
```

- a) 33
- b) 1010103
- c) '33'
- d) '1010103'
- e) TypeError
- f) Don't know

# Why functions ?

- Avoid writing the same code multiple times,  
*re-usability*
- Be able to *name a functionality*
- Clearly state the functionality of a piece of code, *abstraction*:  
*Input* = arguments, *output* = return value (and/or side effects)
- *Encapsulate* code with clear interface to the dependency to the outside world/code
- Share functionality in modules/libraries/packages with other users,  
*code sharing*
- Increase *readability* of code, smaller independent blocks of code
- Easier systematically *testing* of code
- ...

**Some other Python language features helping structuring programs**

- Object orientation
- Modules
- Decorators
- Context managers
- Exceptions
- Doc strings
- doctest

# Local variables in functions

- The formal arguments and variables assigned to in the body of a function are created as temporary *local variables*

Global variables	Local variables
sum3 <function>	x 4
a 3	y 5
y 42	z 6
	a 9
	b 15

state just before return b

## Python shell

```
> def sum3(x, y, z):
    a = x + y
    b = a + z
    return b

> a = 3
> y = 42
> w = sum3(4, 5, 6)
> w
| 15
> a
| 3
> b
| NameError: name 'b' is not defined
> x
| NameError: name 'x' is not defined
> y
| 42
> sum3
| <function sum3 at 0x0356DA98>
```

# Global variables

- Variables in function bodies that are only read, are considered access to *global variables*

## Python shell

```
> prefix = 'The value is'  
  
> def nice_print(x):  
    print(prefix, x)  
  
> nice_print(7)  
| The value is 7  
> prefix = 'Value ='  
> nice_print(42)  
| Value = 42
```

Global variables	Local variables
nice_print <function> prefix 'Value ='	x 42

state just before returning from 2<sup>nd</sup> nice\_print

# Global vs local variables

- If a function contains an assignment to a variable, the variable is local throughout the function – also before the first assignment

## Python shell

```
> x = 42
> def f():
    print(x)    # refers to local variable
    x = 7       # x declared local variable
> f()
| UnboundLocalError: local variable 'x' referenced before assignment
```



# global

- Global variables that should be updated in the function body must be declared global in the body:

global *variable*, *variable*, ...

- Note: If you only need to read a global variable, it is not required to be declared global (but would be polite to the readers of your code)

Since `counter` assigned in body, `counter` will be considered to be a local variable

## Python shell

```
> counter = 1
> def counted_print(x):
    global counter
    print(f'({counter}) {x}')
    counter += 1
> counted_print(7)
| (1) 7
> counted_print(42)
| (2) 42
> def counted_print(x):
    print(f'({counter}) {x}')
    counter += 1
> counted_print(7)
| UnboundLocalError: local variable
| 'counter' referenced before
| assignment!
```

# Question – What value is printed ?

```
x = 1  
def f(a):  
    global x  
    x = x + 1  
    return a + x  
print(f(2) + f(4))
```

- a) 6
- b) 7
- c) 8
- d) 9
- e) 10
- f) 11
- g) 12
- h) Don't know

# Arbitrary number of arguments

- If you would like your function to be able to take a variable number of additional arguments in addition to the required, add a *\*variable* as the *last* argument
- In a function call *variable* will be assigned a tuple with all the additional arguments

## Python shell

```
> def my_print(x, y, *L):
    print('x =', x)
    print('y =', y)
    print('L =', L)

> my_print(2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
| x = 2
| y = 3
| L = (4, 5, 6, 7)
> my_print(42)
| TypeError: my_print() missing 1
              required positional argument: 'y'
```

# Unpacking a list of arguments in a function call

- If you have list  $L$  (or tuple) containing the arguments to a *function call*, you can unpack them in the function call using  $*L$

```
L = [x, y, z]  
f(*L)
```

is equivalent to calling

```
f(L[0], L[1], L[2])
```

i.e.

```
f(x, y, z)
```

- Note that  $f(L)$  would pass a single argument to  $f$ , namely a list
- In a function call several  $*$  expressions can appear, e.g.  $f(*L1, x, *L2, *L3)$

## Python shell

```
> import math
> def norm(x, y):
    return math.sqrt(x * x + y * y)
> norm(3, 5)
| 5.830951894845301
> point = (3, 4)
> print(*point, sep=':')
| 3:4
> norm(point)
| TypeError: norm() missing 1 required positional argument: 'y'
> norm(*point)
| 5.0
> def dist(x0, y0, x1, y1):
    return math.sqrt((x1 - x0) ** 2 + (y1 - y0) ** 2)
> p = 3, 7
> q = 7, 4
> dist(p, q)
| TypeError: dist() missing 2 required positional arguments: 'x1' and 'y1'
> dist(*p, *q)
| 5.0
```

# Question – How many arguments should f take ?

```
a = [1, 2, 3]
b = [4, 5]
c = (6, 7, 8)
d = (9, 10)
f (*a, b, c, *d)
```

- a) 4
- b) 5
- c) 6
- d) 7
- e) 8
- f) 9
- g) 10
- h) Don't know

# Question – What is `list(zip(*zip(*L)))` ?

```
L = [[1, 2, 3], [4, 5], [6, 7, 8]]
```

- a) [([([1, 2, 3],),), ([([4, 5],),), ([([6, 7, 8],),)])]
- b) [(1, 4, 6), ((2, 5, 7),)]
- c) [(1, 2), (4, 5), (6, 7)]
- d) [(1, 2, 3), (4, 5), (6, 7, 8)]
- e) [[1, 2, 3], [4, 5], [6, 7, 8]]]
- f) Don't know

## Python shell

```
> list(zip((1, 2, 3), (4, 5, 6)))
| [(1, 4), (2, 5), (3, 6)]
```

# Keyword arguments

- Previously we have seen the following (strange) function calls

```
print(7, 14, 15, sep=':', end=' ')
enumerate(my_list, start=1)
```

- name*= refers to one of the formal arguments, known as a **keyword argument**
- A *name* can appear at most once in a function call
- In function calls keyword arguments must follow positional arguments
- Improves readability when arguments have non-obvious order

```
complicated_function(
    name='Mickey',
    city='Duckburg',
    state='Calisota',
    occupation='Detective',
    gender='Male'
)
```

Python shell
> def sub(x, y):       return x - y
> sub(9, 4)   5
> sub(y=9, x=4)   -5

# Keyword arguments, default values

Python shell

```
> def my_print(a, b, c=5, d=7):  
    print(f'{a=} {b=} {c=} {d=}')  
  
> my_print(2, d=3, b=4)  
| a=2, b=4, c=5, d=3
```

- When calling a function arguments can be omitted if the corresponding arguments in the function definition have default values *argument=value*
- Arguments with default values must be after those without
- Default values are e.g. also available in Javascript, C++ and C#, and keyword arguments in e.g. Javascript and C#s

# Question – What is `f(6, z=2)` ?

```
def f(x, y=3, z=7):  
    return x + y + z
```

- a) 10
- b) 11
- c) 16
- d) `TypeError: f() missing 1 required positional argument: 'y'`
- e) Don't know

# Keyword arguments, mutable default values



- Be carefull: Default value will be shared among calls (which can be usefull)

## The Python Language Reference 8.7 Function definitions

"Default parameter values are evaluated from left to right **when the function definition is executed**. This means that the expression is evaluated once, when the function is defined, and that the same "pre-computed" value is used for each call. This is especially important to understand when a default parameter is a mutable object, such as a list or a dictionary: if the function modifies the object (e.g. by appending an item to a list), the default value is in effect modified. This is generally not what was intended. A way around this is to use None as the default"

## Python shell

```
> def list_append(e, L=[]):
    L.append(e)
    return L
> list_append('x', ['y', 'z'])
['y', 'z', 'x']
> list_append('a')
['a']
> list_append('b')
['a', 'b']
> list_append('c')
['a', 'b', 'c']
```



## Python shell

```
> def list_append(e, L=None):
    if L == None:
        L = []
    L.append(e)
    return L
> list_append('x', ['y', 'z'])
['y', 'z', 'x']
> list_append('a')
['a']
> list_append('b')
['b']
> list_append('c')
['c']
```

# Function call, dictionary of keyword arguments

- If you happen to have a *dictionary* containing the keyword arguments you want to pass to function, you can give all dictionary items as arguments using the single argument `**dictionary`

Python shell

```
> print(3, 4, 5, sep=':', end='#\n')
| 3:4:5#
> print_kwarg = {'sep': ':', 'end': '#\n'}
> print(3, 4, 5, **print_kwarg)
| 3:4:5#
```

# Function definition, arbitrary keyword arguments

- If you want a function to accept arbitrary keyword arguments, add an argument `**argument` to the function definition
- When the function is called `argument` will be assigned a dictionary containing the excess keyword arguments

```
Python shell
> def my_print(a, b=3, **c):
    print('a =', a)
    print('b =', b)
    print('c =', c)

> my_print(x=27, y=42, a=7)
| a = 7
| b = 3
| c = {'x': 27, 'y': 42}
```

# Example

## Python shell

```
> L1 = [1, 'a']
> L2 = ['b', 2, 3]
> D1 = {'y':4, 's':10}
> D2 = {'t':11, 'z':5.0}

> def f(a, b, c, d, e, *f, q=0, x=1, y=2, z=3, **kw) :
    print(f'{a=}, {b=}, {c=}, {d=}, {e=}, {f=}\n'
          f'{q=}, {x=}, {y=}, {z=}, {kw=} ')
> f(7, *L1, 9, *L2, x=7, **D1, w=42, **D2)
| a=7, b=1, c=a, d=9, e=b, f=(2, 3)
| q=0, x=7, y=4, z=5.0, kw={'w': 42, 's': 10, 't': 11}
```

non-keyword arguments must appear before keyword arguments

all arguments must have distinct names

# A confusing example

Python shell

```
> def f(*a, **kw):
    print(f' {a=} {kw=} ')
> f(a=42)  # no positional arguments
| a=() kw={'a': 42}
```

# Forwarding function arguments

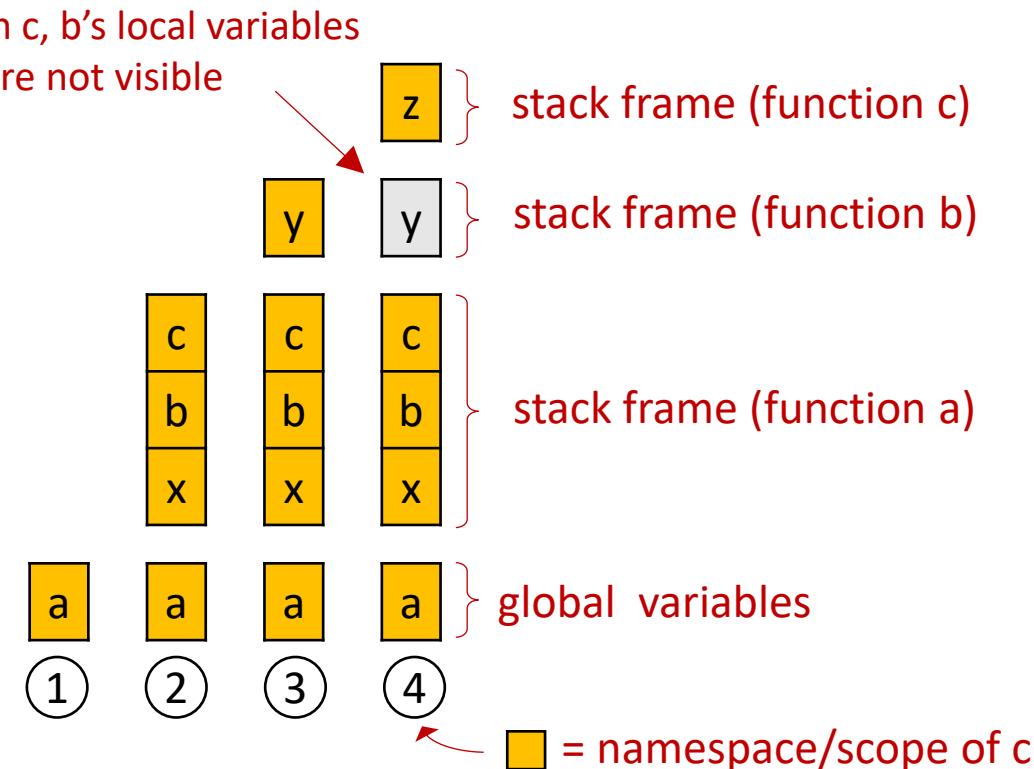
- \* and \*\* can e.g. be used to forward (unknown) arguments to other function calls

Python shell

```
> def my_print(*positional_arguments, sep=':', **keyword_arguments):
    print(*positional_arguments, sep=sep, **keyword_arguments)
> my_print(7, 42)
| 7:42
> my_print('x', 'y', end='<')
| x:y<
> my_print('x', 'y', sep='_')
| x_y
```

# Local function definitions and namespaces

- Function definitions can contain (nested) local function definitions, only accessible inside the function
- static/lexical scoping*, i.e. can see from the code which variables are in scope



Python shell

```
> def a(x):
    def b(y):
        print(f'b: {y=} {x=}')
        c(y + 1)
    def c(z):
        print(f'c: {z=} {x=}')
        print(f'a: {x=}')
        b(x + 1)
> a(42)
| a: x=42
| b: y=43 x=42
| c: z=44 x=42
```

# Example – nested function definitions

Python shell

```
> def a(x):
    def b(y):
        print(f'Enter b ({y=}, {x=})')
        c(y + 1)
        print('leaving b')

    def c(x): # x hides argument of function a
        def d(z):
            print(f'Enter d ({z=}, {x=})')
            print('leaving d')

        print(f'Enter c ({x=})')
        d(x + 1)
        print('leaving c')

    print(f'Enter a ({x=})')
    b(x + 1)
    print('leaving a')
```

```
> a(5)
| Enter a (x=5)
| Enter b (y=6, x=5)
| Enter c (x=7)
| Enter d (z=8, x=7)
| leaving d
| leaving c
| leaving b
| leaving a
```

# Functions must be defined before you can call them...

Python shell

```
> f()
| NameError: name 'f' is not defined
> def f():
    print('Hi')
> f()
| Hi
> def f():
    g() # g not yet defined locally
        def g():
            print('Howdy')
> f()
| UnboundLocalError: cannot access local variable 'g' where it is not associated with a value
> def f():
    def g():
        print('Howdy')
    g()
> f()
| Howdy
```



# Example – nested functions and default values

Python shell

```
> def init_none(var_name):
>     print('initializing', var_name)
>     return None # redundant line
>
> def f(a=init_none('a')):
>     def g(b=init_none('b')):
>         print('b =', b)
>         print('a =', a)
>         g(a + 1)
>
>     initializing a
>
> f(10)
>     initializing b !!
>     a = 10
>     b = 11
```

# nonlocal

- The keyword `nonlocal` makes local identifiers refer to previously bound variables in the nearest *enclosing scope excluding globals*
- `nonlocal variable, variable, ...`

## Python shell

```
> x = 0

> def f():
    y = 1
    def f_helper(z):
        global x
        nonlocal y
        print(f'({x}:{y}) {z}')
        y += 1
        x += 3
    f_helper(7)
    f_helper(42)

> f()
| (0:1) 7
| (3:2) 42
> f()
| (6:1) 7
| (9:2) 42
```

# Positional and keyword only arguments

- A function definition can contain `/` and `*` as arguments
- Arguments before `/` must be provided as positional arguments in a call
- Arguments after `*` cannot be positional arguments

## Python shell

```
> def f(a, /, b, *, c):
    print(a, b, c)

> f(a=1, b=2, c=3)
| TypeError: f() got some positional-only arguments passed as keyword arguments: 'a'
> f(1, b=2, c=3)
| 1 2 3
> f(1, 2, c=3)
| 1 2 3
> f(1, 2, 3)
| TypeError: f() takes 2 positional arguments but 3 were given
```

# A note on Python and functions

- Similarities between Python and other languages:
  - functions are widely supported (sometimes called methods and procedures)
  - scoping rules is present in many languages (but details differ)
- Python specific (but nice):
  - how to handle global, local and nonlocal variables
  - keyword arguments
  - \*, \*\*