

Python Programming

Beginners Workshop

held at the Fablab Lisbon
January 2016

Requirements for the Workshop

- Installation of the Python program
Download from <http://www.python.org> the current version of python3
- At <http://python-rocks.blogspot.com> there is a growing number of articles, that give additional explanations and useful links for this workshop.

The installation of Python provides us with a simple editor and a console window to execute Python commands and programs:

IDLE

There are better editors and development tools available, but for the beginning, IDLE should work well.

„I need more information!“

Many sources of help and useful information are available:

- The original Python documentation (F1 in the IDLE)
➡ create a link to the local documentation in your working environment
- Python documentation online at <https://docs.python.org/3/>
- There are many online tutorials on the web,
e.g.: http://www.python-course.eu/python3_course.php
or, more advanced: <http://docs.python-guide.org> (hitchhiker's guide)
- Documentation and tutorials are also available in portuguese:
<https://wiki.python.org/moin/PortugueseLanguage>
- Ask your tutor (by mail: python-ws@bodens.de)

➡ **Go and search the Internet**

Usage of the Python shell (console)

Use of literal values

- Enter numbers, like: 3, 17 or 23482398473982457293487592465
- Enter simple calculations: like 2+3 or 7*12
- Try divisions, like: 12/4, 9/3, 11/5
- See the difference between integers and floating point numbers (3.14)
- Enter text strings, like: „hallo world“ or 'I am tired'
- Try out different mathematical operators: +, -, *, **, /, //, %, &, |
- Try the logical operators: <, >, ==, !=



The Python shell can be used as a calculator

More usage of the Python shell

Use of variables

- Try to assign a name to a value (variable), like: `a=7`, `b=2*3.9`, `t="what"`
- Enter the name of the variable
- Understand the difference between a name and a (literal) value

Call of functions

- `print()`
- `len()` - length of strings
- `int()` - convert a value to an integer, like: `int("765")`, `int(3.75)`
- `max()`, `min()` - for numeric values
- `input()` - what does happen here?

Writing a first program

The infamous „Hello World“

- Use the IDLE editor (or any editor of your choice)
- Write a print statement
- Save the program text as a .py file
- Execute it (in the IDLE shell or on the command line)

The second program: Interaction with the user

- Ask the user for his/her name
- Write a greeting message like: „Hello Alice, it's nice to meet you“
- Save and execute the script

Control the flow

Conditional execution of a statement

- Let the user enter a number,
- then tell him/her, if the number is even or odd
- Use an if ... else ... statement

➡ **Indentation matters (no braces! - but colons!)**

- Execute a print statement several times
- Use a for loop and the range function
- Save and execute the script

Iterations

„for item in list:“

- Loop over an iteration
- Use „break“ to leave the loop
- Use „continue“ to skip the rest of the block
- „for“ also has an optional „else“ part

„while condition == True:“

- Loop with a condition expression
- Infinite loops can be useful
- Usage of „break“ and „continue“ as in „for“ loops

Import of Modules

Import of modules from the Python standard library

- Math-Module
 - import math - offers these functions (examples):
 - math.sqrt() calculates the square root
 - math.sin(math.radians(30)) => 0.5
- Time-Module
 - import time
 - time.time() - returns the current time in seconds (as a float)
 - time.sleep(2.0) - waits for 2 seconds
- Random-Module
 - import random
 - x = random.random() - returns a float: $0.0 \leq x < 1.0$
 - x = random.choice(list-of-items) – returns one of the items in the list

Workshop Projects (1)

Things we could do in the next few weeks

- Sure not all of them – the time is too short
- Perhaps not each of them – some may be too complex
- Easy Projects:
 - Rock, Scissor, Paper (simple game against the computer)
 - Hangman (word guessing)
 - Mastermind (decode numbers)
 - Towers of Hanoi (a puzzle)



Workshop Projects (2)

Things we could do in the next few weeks

- Useful Projects
 - Work with files and directories, search and rename Files
 - Music player
 - Read and write Office documents (Excel), process data
 - WebScraper – Get data from the Internet
 - ScreenBot – Automate browser games (not only for games)
 - Gui-Application programming
- Simulations
 - Game of Life
 - Elevator Simulation

Workshop Projects (3)

Things we could do in the next few weeks

- Artistic and Creative
 - Maze generator
 - Fractal graphics
 - Fractal Gallery (work with HTML)
 - Turtle graphics
- Other
 - Work with the Laser Cutter (SVG)
 - Work with the Raspberry Pi
 - Client-Server-App (Group Chat application)
 - Text-Adventure game
 - Puzzle solving

Rock, Paper, Scissor

Write a Program to play RPS with the computer

- The rules are simple:
 - Rock wins against Scissor (makes it 'unsharp')
 - Scissor wins against Paper (cuts it)
 - Paper wins against Rock (wraps it)
 - Equal bets are draws, no win points
- The computer makes an internal bet on R, P or S
- The user enters his bet
- The computer shows the result. (my bet, your bet, I win, you win, draw)
- The computer counts the win points.
- Who first gets 10 win points, wins the game

*==> A **detailed step-by-step description** of a possible solution is now **online**.*

Even - Odd

Write a Program to distinguish even and odd numbers

- The program asks the user for a number
- It determines if the number is even or odd
- A message is written about the result
- The user is asked again, until he/she wants to quit

This is easier than the RPS project, but it shall be written, using functions

- Use a function for the main part of the program
- Use a function for the user input
 - This function could also check, if the user input is „valid“
- Use a function for the even-odd checking

OOTS Scripts

Out Of The Shell - Show Python at work

- OOTS scripts are lists of python expressions and statements
- The scripts are converted into PDF documents
- Each page shows a number of „expressions“ and „statements“
 - '#' (green) are comments. Comments try to explain, what's goin on
 - '>>>' (black) are the expressions or statements
 - '...' (black) is for the continuation of a multi-line statement
 - '==>' (blue) are results or return values
 - 'p()' (violet) shows printed output
 - 'err' (red) displays error descriptions

OOTS Scripts

Out Of The Shell - Show Python at work

- The black lines are „expressions“ or „statements“
 - They are „evaluated“ or „executed“ like in a Python shell
 - The difference is either obvious or not important. It will become clear over time
 - executed statements (like assignments) have no return value
 - evaluated expressions return a value, but it may be None
 - both can have side effects (like printing some text, defining a name, ...)

OOTS Scripts

OOTS Documents - Learn Python by example

Each OOTS document tries to cover one important concept of Python.

Each page of an OOTS document should be understandable by itself.

The OOTS documents are presented during the workshop and are available for download from the workshop homepage.

The input text and a „text-version“ of the output text file are also available for examination.

Its **an exercise**, to look at the statements and **determine the output**

If the output of a statement is not completely clear: **ASK!**

Exercise: Basic_Gui

Using a simplified Graphical User Interface

The first sample projects were executed on the command line. Program output is written to the screen, User input is entered on the command line, followed by more program output. Its easy to understand and to code, but not exactly beautiful.

To learn about GUI-Programming, the first step is to use a simplified GUI interface. This is still text-oriented, but allows us to understand the GUI control flow, which is different from the 'normal' control flow.

Normal control flow means, that we know where the program starts and we can follow the execution of statements step-by-step until the program ends

In a GUI application this is different. The program initializes the GUI and then gives up control.

Exercise: Basic_Gui

The magical 'event-loop'

A GUI tool is a complex piece of software, which does most of its work in the background. After the GUI gets control, it paints the visible parts of the application to the screen and then enters the event loop.

The event-loop is the part of the GUI tool, that reacts to user actions. Most of the user-actions (=events) are handled by the GUI autonomously. The GUI handles resizing of the window, scrolling of text, opening and closing menus, and much more, even the termination of the application. The application program (our code) does not know anything about what happens on the screen.

Only in very special cases, the event loop may decide to give up control for a short moment, by calling a callback function in our application code. The callback functions should react on the data, which is eventually delivered, and give back control as soon as possible (return from the callback).

Exercise: Basic_Gui

GUI design and event-handlers

Writing an App with a graphical user interface requires many steps:

- Design the elements and the layout of UI elements like menus, buttons, entry fields, data tables, images, colours, scroll-bars,
- Setup of the GUI toolkit, trying to get our design expressed in the language of the toolkit (which may be incredibly hard).
- Write all the code, which should handle some or many user actions.
- The code we write will also try to update the elements of the GUI
- Connecting our pieces of program code to some elements of the GUI in the form of 'callback functions'.
- Also connect our code to other elements of the GUI to achieve the desired changes in the visible parts of the GUI.

Exercise: Basic_Gui

For learning purposes: Use a prepared GUI-Application

Download the basic_gui.py from the github scripts folder (it has changed)

Put that file in the same folder, which will contain your application.

Open a new python file and start to edit it:

```
# python 3
import basic_gui
```

Start a class definition, which we need to save some global variables

```
class G():
    appgui = None
    # more variables can be added here later
```

The class G is used as a global container for variables we will need for our application

Exercise: Basic_Gui

Create a CmdlAppGui Object

Define our main function, which will start the GUI application

```
def main():  
    G.appgui = basic_gui.CmdlAppGui("Title Text", text_input)  
    G.appgui.start()
```

We save the appgui object as a global variable in G (as a member of G)

The G.xxxx format is called 'member access'. We can create new 'member objects' and access existing members at any time.

The name 'text_input' refers to a function, which we will define next. This will be used as 'callback function'.

Exercise: Basic_Gui

Define the callback function

Define this:

```
def text_input(text):  
    print("received input: '{}'".format(text))  
    G.appgui.put_msg("> {} \n".format(text), style=0)  
    G.appgui.put_data("Data: '{}' \n".format(text), style=1)  
    if text == 'exit':  
        G.appgui.finish()
```

This is a very simple version of a callback.

It shows, which methods are available on the appgui object:

- receive the text, which the user entered in the input field
- send a text to the left window: put_msg()
- send a text to the right window: put_data()
- call the finish method to end the application

Exercise: Basic_Gui

Extend 'text_input()' to build your own application

Proposal: build the RPS game in the GUI style. Make a smart use of the 2 windows.

Where is the benefit?

Understanding the callback mechanism is very useful for a number of possible applications. All graphical user interfaces use this technique.

Webserver applications work on the basis of callbacks.

As soon as some hardware is involved, like in micro-controllers, this callback mechanism is probably used. Same is true for many simulations.

Last, not least: Its fun!

Access to Files

„open() for reading“

- Open returns a „file“ object
- Beware: strings are not bytes. Encoding matters
- A file can be used as an iterator over the lines
- Closing files „.close()“ is recommended, can be manually, or automatically: „with“ context



