



# DICTIONARY BASICS

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**Dictionaries** store key-value pairs, where keys are used to look up values

- **Keys** must be unique & immutable (*simple data types like strings are immutable*)
- **Values** do not need to be unique and can be any data type

**EXAMPLE** | Looking up the inventory status for goggles

```
inventory_status = {'skis': 'in stock',  
                   'snowboard': 'sold out',  
                   'goggles': 'sold out',  
                   'boots': 'in stock'}
```

Dictionaries are created with curly braces `{}`  
Keys and values are separated by colons `:`  
Key-value pairs are separated by commas `,`

```
inventory_status['goggles']
```

To retrieve dictionary values, simply enter the associated key

'sold out'

- NOTE: You cannot look up dictionary values or indices

```
inventory_status['in stock']
```

**KeyError: 'in stock'**

```
inventory_status[2]
```

**KeyError: 2**

The **KeyError** will be returned if a given key is not in the dictionary



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Dictionary values can be lists, so to access individual attributes:

1. Retrieve the **list** by looking up its **key**
2. Retrieve the **list element** by using its **index**

**EXAMPLE** | Looking up the stock quantity for skis

```
item_details = {'skis': [249.99, 10, 'in stock'],  
                'snowboard': [219.99, 0, 'sold out'],  
                'goggles': [99.99, 0, 'sold out'],  
                'boots': [79.99, 7, 'in stock']}
```

The key is the item name, and the value is a list storing item price, inventory, and inventory status

```
item_details['skis']
```

```
[249.99, 10, 'in stock']
```

```
item_details['skis'][1]
```

```
10
```

This returns the second element (index of 1) in the list stored as the value for the key 'skis'



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You can conduct **membership tests** on dictionary keys

```
item_details = {'skis': [249.99, 10, 'in stock'],
                'snowboard': [219.99, 0, 'sold out'],
                'goggles': [99.99, 0, 'sold out'],
                'boots': [79.99, 7, 'in stock']}

print('skis' in item_details)
print('bindings' in item_details)
```

True  
False

And you can **loop through\*** them

```
for item in item_details:
    print(item, item_details[item])
```

```
skis [249.99, 10, 'in stock']
snowboard [219.99, 0, 'sold out']
goggles [99.99, 0, 'sold out']
boots [79.99, 7, 'in stock']
```

*Note that the items that are being looped over are the dictionary keys*

\*Prior to Python 3.7, python dictionaries were not ordered – which meant the order of key-value pairs could change each time we iterated through them. This isn't the case anymore, but in some workplaces, you may encounter an older version of Python being used.