

# Python Classes

## Classes

Classes and objects are the two main aspects of object-oriented programming.

A class is the blueprint from which individual objects are created. In the real world, for example, there may be thousands of cars in existence, all of the same make and model.

Each car was built from the same set of blueprints, and therefore contains the same components. In object-oriented terms, we say that your car is an instance (object) of the class Car.

## Creating a Class

To create your own custom object in Python, you first need to define a class, using the keyword `class`.

Suppose you want to create objects to represent information about cars. Each object will represent a single car. You'll first need to define a class called `Car`.

Here's the simplest possible class (an empty one):



Here the `pass` statement is used to indicate that this class is empty.

## The `__init__()` Method

`__init__()` is the special method that initializes an individual object. This method runs automatically each time an object of a class is created.

The `__init__()` method is generally used to perform operations that are necessary before the object is created.

A code editor window with a dark background and three colored window control buttons (red, yellow, green) in the top left corner. The code inside the editor is:

```
class Car:

    def __init__(self):

        pass
```

Whenever you define an init method, its first parameter should be self.

### The self Parameter

The self parameter refers to the individual object itself. It is used to fetch or set attributes of the particular instance.

This parameter doesn't have to be called self, you can call it whatever you want, but it is standard practice, and you should probably stick with it.

### Attributes

Every class you write in Python has two basic features: attributes and methods.

Attributes are the individual things that differentiate one object from another. They determine the appearance, state, or other qualities of that object.

In our case, the 'Car' class might have the following attributes:

Style: Sedan, SUV, Coupe

Color: Silver, Black, White

Wheels: Four

Attributes are defined in classes by variables, and each object can have its own values for those variables.

**There are two types of attributes: Instance attributes and Class attributes**

### 1. Instance Attribute

The instance attribute is a variable that is unique to each object (instance). Every object of that class has its own copy of that variable. Any changes made to the variable don't reflect in other objects of that class.

In the case of our Car() class, each car has a specific color and style.



```
# A class with two instance attributes

class Car:

    # initializer with instance attributes

    def __init__(self, color, style):

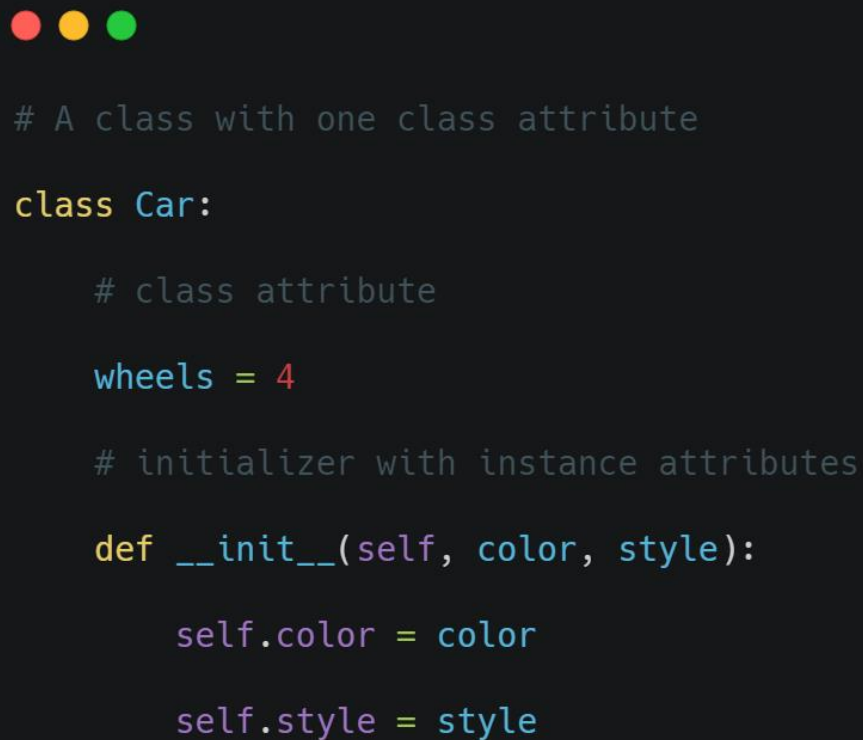
        self.color = color

        self.style = style
```

### 2. Class Attribute

The class attribute is a variable that is the same for all objects. And there's only one copy of that variable that is shared with all objects. Any changes made to that variable will reflect in all other objects.

In the case of our Car() class, each car has 4 wheels.



```
# A class with one class attribute

class Car:

    # class attribute

    wheels = 4

    # initializer with instance attributes

    def __init__(self, color, style):

        self.color = color

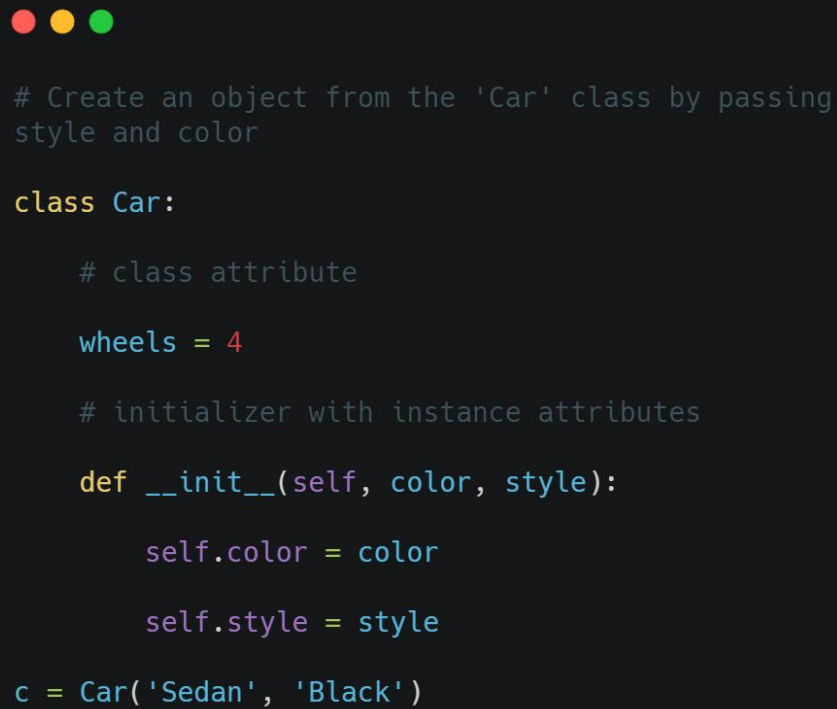
        self.style = style
```

So while each car has a unique style and color, every car will have 4 wheels.

### Creating an Object

You create an object of a class by calling the class name and passing arguments as if it were a function.

Here is an example,



```
# Create an object from the 'Car' class by passing
style and color

class Car:

    # class attribute

    wheels = 4

    # initializer with instance attributes

    def __init__(self, color, style):

        self.color = color

        self.style = style

c = Car('Sedan', 'Black')
```

Here, we created a new object from the Car class by passing strings for the style and color parameters. But, we didn't pass the self argument. This is because, when you create a new object, Python automatically determines what self is (our newly-created object in this case) and passes it to the \_\_init\_\_ method.

### **Access and Modify Attributes**

The attributes of an instance are accessed and assigned to by using dot . notation.



```
# Access and modify attributes of an object
```

```
class Car:
```

```
    # class attribute
```

```
    wheels = 4
```

```
    # initializer with instance attributes
```

```
    def __init__(self, color, style):
```

```
        self.color = color
```

```
        self.style = style
```

```
c = Car('Black', 'Sedan')
```

```
# Access attributes
```

```
print(c.style)
```

```
# Prints Sedan
```

```
print(c.color)
```

```
# Prints Black
```

```
# Modify attribute
```

```
c.style = 'SUV'
```

```
print(c.style)
```

```
# Prints SUV
```

## Methods

Methods determine what type of functionality a class has, how it handles its data, and its overall behavior. Without methods, a class would simply be a structure.

In our case, the 'Car' class might have the following methods:

1. Change color
2. Start engine
3. Stop engine
4. Change gear

Just as there are instance and class attributes, there are also instance and class methods.

Instance methods operate on an instance of a class; whereas class methods operate on the class itself.

### 1. Instance Methods

Instance methods are nothing but functions defined inside a class that operates on instances of that class.

Now let's add some methods to the class.

1. showDescription() method: to print the current values of all the instance attributes
2. changeColor() method: to change the value of 'color' attribute



```
class Car:

    # class attribute

    wheels = 4

    # initializer / instance attributes

    def __init__(self, color, style):

        self.color = color

        self.style = style

    # method 1

    def showDescription(self):

        print("This car is a", self.color, self.style)

    # method 2

    def changeColor(self, color):

        self.color = color

c = Car('Black', 'Sedan')

# call method 1

c.showDescription()

# Prints This car is a Black Sedan

# call method 2 and set color

c.changeColor('White')

c.showDescription()

# Prints This car is a White Sedan
```



## Delete Attributes and Objects

To delete any object attribute, use the del keyword.

```
del c.color
```