

Scientific Programming

Practical 6

Introduction

Luca Bianco - Academic Year 2018-19
luca.bianco@fmach.it

Functions

A function is a block of code that has a name and that performs a task.

A function can be thought of as a **box** that gets an **input** and returns an **output**.

The basic definition of a function is:

```
def function_name(input) :  
    #code implementing the function  
    ...  
    ...  
    return return_value
```

1. **Reduce code duplication**: put in functions parts of code that are needed several times in the whole program so that you don't need to repeat the same code over and over again;
2. **Decompose a complex task**: make the code easier to write and understand by splitting the whole program in several easier functions

Namespace and scope

Namespaces are mappings from *names* to objects, or in other words places where names are associated to objects.

Namespaces can be considered as **the context**. According to Python's reference a **scope** is a *textual region of a Python program, where a namespace is directly accessible*

1. ****Local****: the innermost that contains local names;
2. ****Enclosing****: the scope of the enclosing function, it does not contain local nor global names;
3. ****Global****: contains the global names;
4. ****Built-in****: contains all built in names (e.g. `print`, `if`, `while`, `for`,...)

LEGB order for finding variable

Functions

Example: define a function that gets a list of integers and returns its sum.

```
def my_sum(myList):  
    ret = 0  
    for el in myList:  
        ret += el  
    return ret
```

```
A = [1,2,3,4,5,6]
```

```
s = my_sum(A)
```

```
print("List:", A)
```

```
print("Sum:", s)
```

```
List: [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]
```

```
Sum: 21
```

Functions

Example: define a function that gets a list of integers and returns its sum.

Importantly enough, a function needs to be defined (i.e. its code has to be written) before it can actually be used.

```
A = [1,2,3]
my_sum(A)

def my_sum(myList):
    ret = 0
    for el in myList:
        ret += el
    return ret
```

```
-----
NameError                                Traceback (most recent call last)
<ipython-input-7-585169a2991a> in <module>()
      1 A = [1,2,3]
----> 2 my_sum(A)
      3
      4 def my_sum(myList):
      5     ret = 0

NameError: name 'my_sum' is not defined
```

Functions

Example: Let's write a function that, given a list of integers, returns the number of elements, the maximum and minimum.

```
def get_info(myList):  
    """returns len of myList, min and max value (assumes elements are integers)"""  
    tmp = myList[:] #copy the input list  
    tmp.sort()  
    return len(tmp), tmp[0], tmp[-1] #return type is a tuple  
  
A = [7, 1, 125, 4, -1, 0]  
  
print("Original A:", A, "\n")  
result = get_info(A)  
print("Len:", result[0], "Min:", result[1], "Max:", result[2], "\n" )  
  
print("A now:", A)
```

Original A: [7, 1, 125, 4, -1, 0]

Len: 6 Min: -1 Max: 125

A now: [7, 1, 125, 4, -1, 0]

Argument passing

Things to remember

1. Passing an argument is actually assigning an object to a local variable name;
2. Assigning an object to a variable name within a function **does not affect the caller**;
3. Changing a **mutable** object variable name within a function **affects the caller**

Argument passing

1. Passing an argument is actually assigning an object to a local variable name;
2. Assigning an object to a variable name within a function **does not affect the caller**;
3. Changing a **mutable** object variable name within a function **affects the caller**

```
"""Assigning the argument does not affect the caller"""  
  
def my_f(x):  
    x = "local value" #local  
    print("Local: ", x)  
  
x = "global value" #global  
my_f(x)  
print("Global:", x)  
my_f(x)
```

```
Local:  local value  
Global: global value  
Local:  local value
```


Argument passing

1. Passing an argument is actually assigning an object to a local variable name;
2. Assigning an object to a variable name within a function **does not affect the caller**;
3. Changing a **mutable** object variable name within a function **affects the caller**

```
"""Changing a mutable affects the caller"""
```

```
def my_f(myList):  
    myList[1] = "new value1"  
    myList[3] = "new value2"  
    print("Local: ", myList)
```

```
myList = ["old value"]*4  
print("Global:", myList)  
my_f(myList)  
print("Global now: ", myList)
```

```
Global: ['old value', 'old value', 'old value', 'old value']  
Local:  ['old value', 'new value1', 'old value', 'new value2']  
Global now:  ['old value', 'new value1', 'old value', 'new value2']
```

Argument passing by keyword and defaults

```
def print_parameters(a="defaultA", b="defaultB", c="defaultC"):
    print("a:", a)
    print("b:", b)
    print("c:", c)

print_parameters("param_A")
print("\n#####\n")
print_parameters(b="PARAMETER_B")
```

```
a: param A
b: defaultB
c: defaultC
```

```
#####
```

```
a: defaultA
b: PARAMETER_B
c: defaultC
```

File Input/Output

With files you need to:

Open, read/write, close

Result	Built-in function	Meaning
file	<code>open(str, [str])</code>	Get a handle to a file

Result	Method	Meaning
str	<code>file.read()</code>	Read all the file as a single string
list of str	<code>file.readlines()</code>	Read all lines of the file as a list of strings
str	<code>file.readline()</code>	Read one line of the file as a string
None	<code>file.write(str)</code>	Write one string to the file
None	<code>file.close()</code>	Close the file (i.e. flushes changes to disk)

File Input/Output

With files you need to:

Open, read/write, close

Opening mode: “r”, “w”, “a”, “b”,...

```
file_handle = open("file_name", "file_mode")
```

Read

1. `content = fh.read()` reads the whole file in the content string. Good for small and not structured files.
2. `line = fh.readline()` reads the file one line at a time storing it in the string `line`
3. `lines = fh.readlines()` reads all the lines of the file storing them as a list `lines`
4. using the iterator:

```
for line in f:  
    #process the information
```

which is the most convenient way for big files.

Write

```
file_handle.write(data_to_be_written)
```

```
file_handle.close()
```

String formatting

```
I like python more than java.  
I like python more than java or C++.  
I like C++ more than java or python.  
I like java more than C++ or python.  
The square root of 2 is 1.414214.  
The square root of 2 is 1.41.
```

N	sqrt	square
0	0.000	0
1	1.000	1
2	1.414	4
3	1.732	9
4	2.000	16
5	2.236	25
6	2.449	36
7	2.646	49
8	2.828	64
9	3.000	81
10	3.162	100
11	3.317	121
12	3.464	144
13	3.606	169
14	3.742	196
15	3.873	225
16	4.000	256
17	4.123	289
18	4.243	324
19	4.359	361

```
#simple empty placeholders  
print("I like {} more than {}.\\n".format("python", "java"))  
  
#indexed placeholders, note order  
print("I like {0} more than {1} or {2}.\\n".format("python", "java", "C++"))  
print("I like {2} more than {1} or {0}.\\n".format("python", "java", "C++"))  
  
#indexed and named placeholders  
print("I like {1} more than {c} or {0}.\\n".format("python", "java", c="C++"))  
  
#with type specification  
import math  
print("The square root of {0} is {1:f}.\\n".format(2, math.sqrt(2)))  
  
#with type and format specification (NOTE: {:.2f})  
print("The square root of {0} is {1:.2f}.\\n".format(2, math.sqrt(2)))  
  
#spacing data properly  
print("{:2s}|{:5s}|{:6s}".format("N", "sqrt", "square"))  
for i in range(0,20):  
    print("{:2d}|{:5.3f}|{:6d}".format(i,math.sqrt(i),i*i))
```

<http://qcbsciprolab.readthedocs.io/en/latest/practical6.html>