Python Classes/Objects

Python is an object oriented programming language.

Almost everything in Python is an object, with its properties and methods.

A Class is like an object constructor, or a "blueprint" for creating objects.

### Example

Create a class named MyClass, with a property named x:

class MyClass:  
  x = 5

p1 = MyClass()  
print(p1.x)

## The \_\_init\_\_() Function

The examples above are classes and objects in their simplest form, and are not really useful in real life applications.

To understand the meaning of classes we have to understand the built-in \_\_init\_\_() function.

All classes have a function called \_\_init\_\_(), which is always executed when the class is being initiated.

Use the \_\_init\_\_() function to assign values to object properties, or other operations that are necessary to do when the object is being created:

### Example

Create a class named Person, use the \_\_init\_\_() function to assign values for name and age:

class Person:  
  def \_\_init\_\_(self, name, age):  
    self.name = name  
    self.age = age  
  
p1 = Person("John", 36)  
  
print(p1.name)  
print(p1.age)

**Note:** The \_\_init\_\_() function is called automatically every time the class is being used to create a new object.

## Object Methods

Objects can also contain methods. Methods in objects are functions that belong to the object.

Let us create a method in the Person class:

### Example

Insert a function that prints a greeting, and execute it on the p1 object:

class Person:  
  def \_\_init\_\_(self, name, age):  
    self.name = name  
    self.age = age  
  
  def myfunc(self):  
    print("Hello my name is " + self.name)  
  
p1 = Person("John", 36)  
p1.myfunc()

**Note:** The self parameter is a reference to the current instance of the class, and is used to access variables that belong to the class.

## The self Parameter

The self parameter is a reference to the current instance of the class, and is used to access variables that belongs to the class.

It does not have to be named self , you can call it whatever you like, but it has to be the first parameter of any function in the class:

### Example

Use the words mysillyobject and abc instead of self:

class Person:  
  def \_\_init\_\_(mysillyobject, name, age):  
    mysillyobject.name = name  
    mysillyobject.age = age  
  
  def myfunc(abc):  
    print("Hello my name is " + abc.name)  
  
p1 = Person("John", 36)  
p1.myfunc()

## Modify Object Properties

You can modify properties on objects like this:

class Person:

def \_\_init\_\_(self, name, age):

self.name = name

self.age = age

def myfunc(self):

print("Hello my name is " + self.name)

p1 = Person("John", 36)

p1.age = 40

print(p1.age)

## Delete Object Properties and Delete Objects

You can delete properties on objects by using the del keyword and You can delete objects by using the del keyword:

class Person:

def \_\_init\_\_(self, name, age):

self.name = name

self.age = age

def myfunc(self):

print("Hello my name is " + self.name)

p1 = Person("John", 36)

del p1.age

del p1

## The pass Statement

class definitions cannot be empty, but if you for some reason have a class definition with no content, put in the pass statement to avoid getting an error.

### Example

class Person:  
  pass

Python Inheritance

* Inheritance allows us to define a class that inherits all the methods and properties from another class.
* **Parent class** is the class being inherited from, also called base class.
* **Child class** is the class that inherits from another class, also called derived class.

## Create a Parent Class

Any class can be a parent class, so the syntax is the same as creating any other class:

### Example

Create a class named Person, with firstname and lastname properties, and a printname method:

class Person:  
  def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):  
    self.firstname = fname  
    self.lastname = lname  
  
  def printname(self):  
    print(self.firstname, self.lastname)  
  
#Use the Person class to create an object, and then execute the printname method:  
  
x = Person("John", "Doe")  
x.printname()

## Create a Child Class

To create a class that inherits the functionality from another class, send the parent class as a parameter when creating the child class:

class Person:

def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):

self.firstname = fname

self.lastname = lname

def printname(self):

print(self.firstname, self.lastname)

class Student(Person):

pass

x = Student("Mike", "Olsen")

x.printname()

## Add the \_\_init\_\_() Function

So far we have created a child class that inherits the properties and methods from its parent.

We want to add the \_\_init\_\_() function to the child class (instead of the pass keyword).

**Note:** The \_\_init\_\_() function is called automatically every time the class is being used to create a new object.

### Example

Add the \_\_init\_\_() function to the Student class:

class Student(Person):  
  def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):  
    self.fname = fname

self.lname = lname

When you add the \_\_init\_\_() function, the child class will no longer inherit the parent's \_\_init\_\_() function.

**Note:** The child's \_\_init\_\_() function **overrides** the inheritance of the parent's \_\_init\_\_() function.

To keep the inheritance of the parent's \_\_init\_\_() function, add a call to the parent's \_\_init\_\_() function:

### Example

class Person:

def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):

self.firstname = fname

self.lastname = lname

class Student(Person):  
  def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):  
    Person.\_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname)

Now we have successfully added the \_\_init\_\_() function, and kept the inheritance of the parent class, and we are ready to add functionality in the \_\_init\_\_() function.

## Use the super() Function

Python also has a super() function that will make the child class inherit all the methods and properties from its parent:

### Example

class Student(Person):  
  def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):  
    super().\_\_init\_\_(fname, lname)

By using the super() function, you do not have to use the name of the parent element, it will automatically inherit the methods and properties from its parent.

## Add Properties

### Example

Add a property called graduationyear to the Student class:

class Person:

def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):

self.firstname = fname

self.lastname = lname

def printname(self):

print(self.firstname, self.lastname)

class Student(Person):

def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):

super().\_\_init\_\_(fname, lname)

self.graduationyear = 2019

x = Student("Mike", "Olsen")

print(x.graduationyear)

In the example below, the year 2019 should be a variable, and passed into the Student class when creating student objects. To do so, add another parameter in the \_\_init\_\_() function:

### Example

Add a year parameter, and pass the correct year when creating objects:

## class Person:

## def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):

## self.firstname = fname

## self.lastname = lname

## def printname(self):

## print(self.firstname, self.lastname)

## class Student(Person):

## def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname, year):

## super().\_\_init\_\_(fname, lname)

## self.graduationyear = year

## x = Student("Mike", "Olsen", 2019)

## print(x.graduationyear)

## Add Methods

### Example

Add a method called welcome to the Student class:

class Person:

def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname):

self.firstname = fname

self.lastname = lname

def printname(self):

print(self.firstname, self.lastname)

class Student(Person):

def \_\_init\_\_(self, fname, lname, year):

super().\_\_init\_\_(fname, lname)

self.graduationyear = year

def welcome(self):

print("Welcome", self.firstname, self.lastname, "to the class of", self.graduationyear)

x = Student("Mike", "Olsen", 2019)

x.welcome()

If you add a method in the child class with the same name as a function in the parent class, the inheritance of the parent method will be overridden.