Intro to the Next.Tech Platform

Why has Springboard partnered with Next.Tech?

Springboard has created a ton of **proprietary, hands-on learning content** for our Data Science Career Track Prep course, and we want our students to be able to learn and practice in an **intuitive and supporting environment**.

The **Next.Tech** platform helps our students engage with our content and materials via a **learn-by-doing all-inclusive interface**!

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What we'll cover here

1. **Overview of Platform Terms**
2. **Different Parts of the Platform**
3. **The Menu Bar**
4. **Working on Tasks**
5. **Watch Someone Complete a Task**
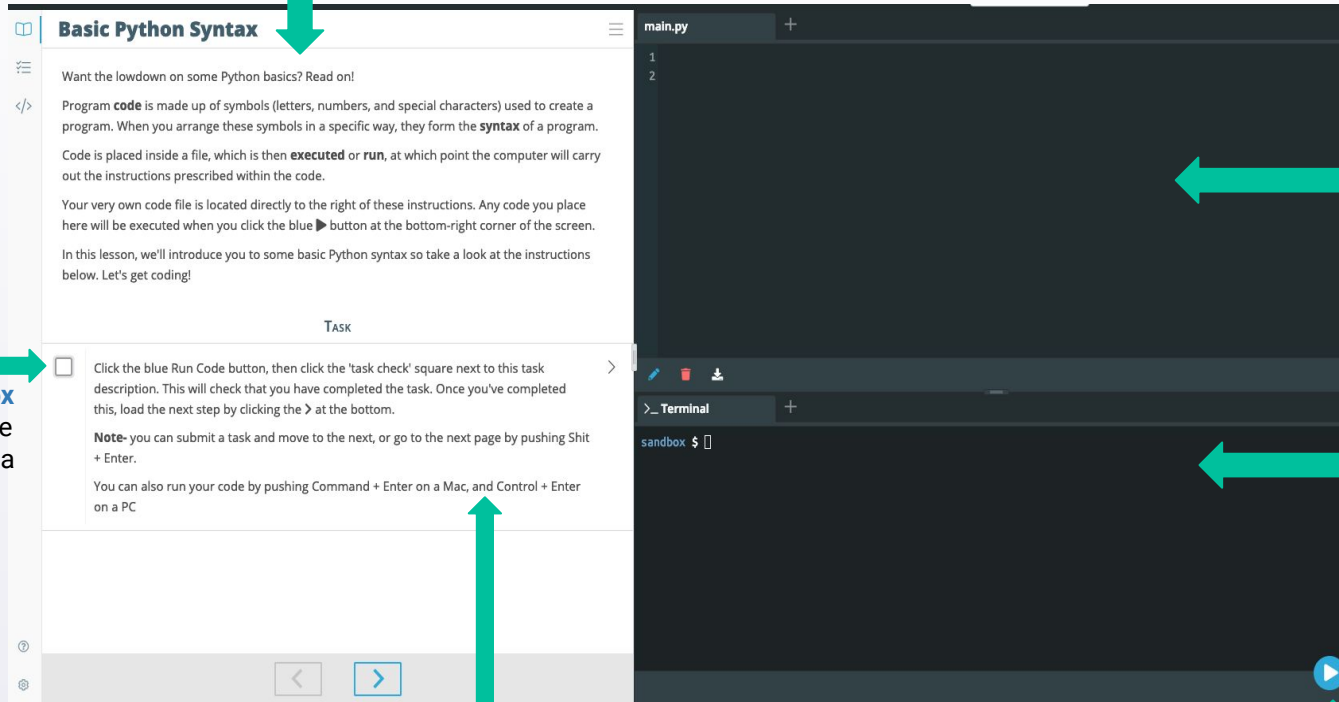
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Overview of platform terms

- **Lesson:** While working through the Springboard curriculum, you'll be given links to lessons hosted on Next.Tech. (For example, the first lesson you'll work on is ***Python Syntax***.)

  Each lesson contains:

  - A series of **pages** (In the Python Syntax lesson, the first three exercises are *Python Syntax*, *Output,* and *Errors*)
  - **Tasks:** You'll work through tasks to practice the concepts you learn in each exercise
  - Some lessons also include a **mini-project**, which will help you to further sharpen the skills you'll learn from the pages and tasks.

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Main sections of the coding platform

This **instructions console** includes introductory material that explains the topic covered in this page (in this case, basic Python syntax). You can make this window wider for easy reading.

This **code file** is where you type your code when you're working on a task

Basic Python Syntax

Want the lowdown on some Python basics? Read on!

Program **code** is made up of symbols (letters, numbers, and special characters) used to create a program. When you arrange these symbols in a specific way, they form the **syntax** of a program.

Code is placed inside a file, which is then **executed** or **run**, at which point the computer will carry out the instructions prescribed within the code.

Your very own code file is located directly to the right of these instructions. Any code you place here will be executed when you click the blue ▶ button at the bottom-right corner of the screen.

In this lesson, we'll introduce you to some basic Python syntax so take a look at the instructions below. Let's get coding!

TASK

The **Check box** shows the status of a task

Click the blue Run Code button, then click the 'task check' square next to this task description. This will check that you have completed the task. Once you've completed this, load the next step by clicking the ❯ at the bottom.

Note- you can submit a task and move to the next, or go to the next page by pushing Shit + Enter.

You can also run your code by pushing Command + Enter on a Mac, and Control + Enter on a PC

The **terminal** is where your code gets executed (this is where your output will appear)
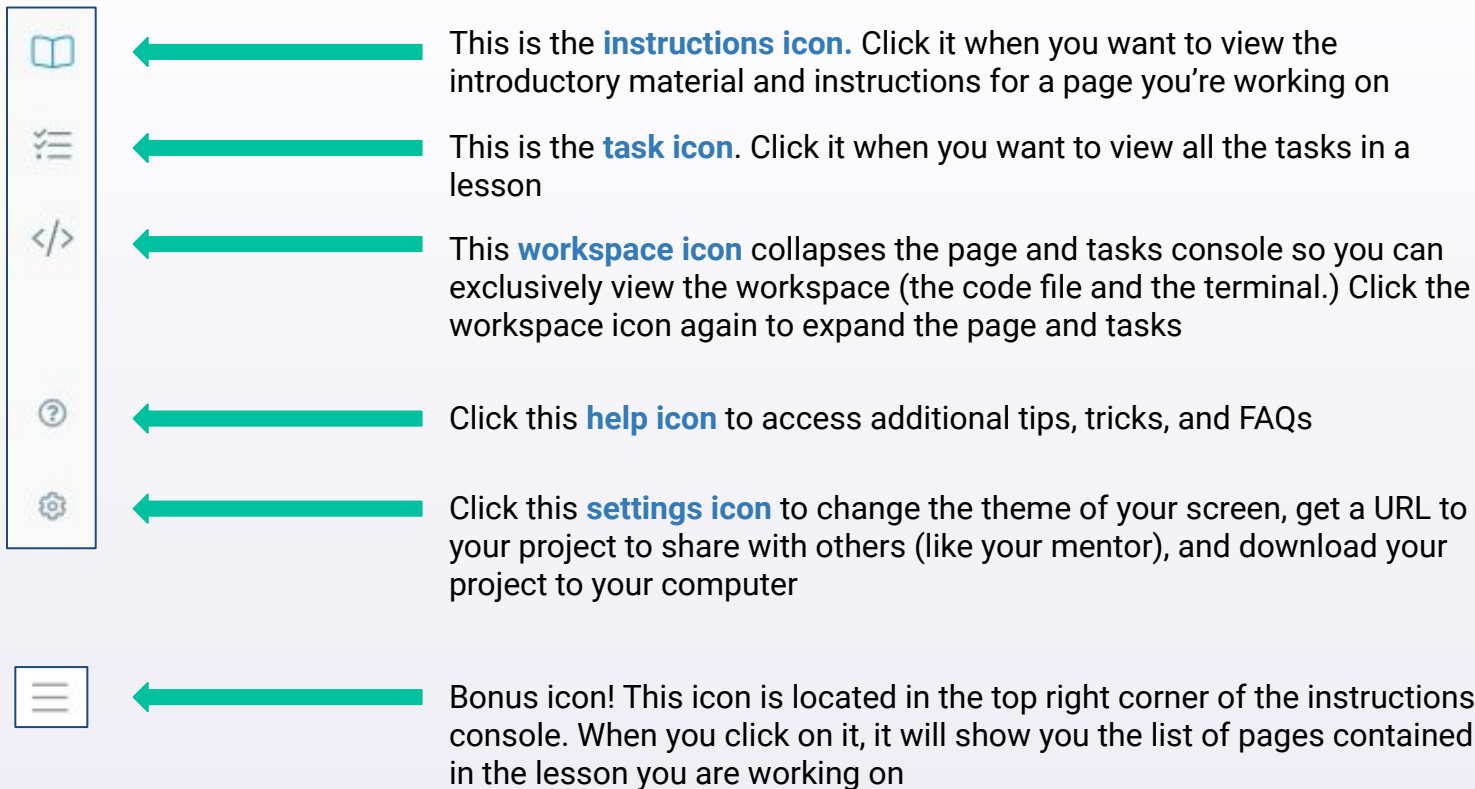
`main.py`

`sandbox $`

Click this blue **Run Code button** when you want to run the code you've written. The output will appear in the terminal (*or push "cntrl + enter" on a PC // "cmd + enter" on a Mac*)

Click this **Next button** to move to the next exercise (*or push "shift + enter"*)

The **tasks** on each page are your chance to practice the topics covered in the introductory material. When you complete a task, click the **check box** next to the text (*or "shift + enter"*)

The menu bar - The menu bar is located on the left edge of the platform

This is the **instructions icon.** Click it when you want to view the introductory material and instructions for a page you're working on

This is the **task icon**. Click it when you want to view all the tasks in a lesson

This **workspace icon** collapses the page and tasks console so you can exclusively view the workspace (the code file and the terminal.) Click the workspace icon again to expand the page and tasks

Click this **help icon** to access additional tips, tricks, and FAQs

Click this **settings icon** to change the theme of your screen, get a URL to your project to share with others (like your mentor), and download your project to your computer

Bonus icon! This icon is located in the top right corner of the instructions console. When you click on it, it will show you the list of pages contained in the lesson you are working on

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Tips for when working on a task

1 Read through the introductory material of the page in order to learn the concepts you'll need to understand to complete each task.

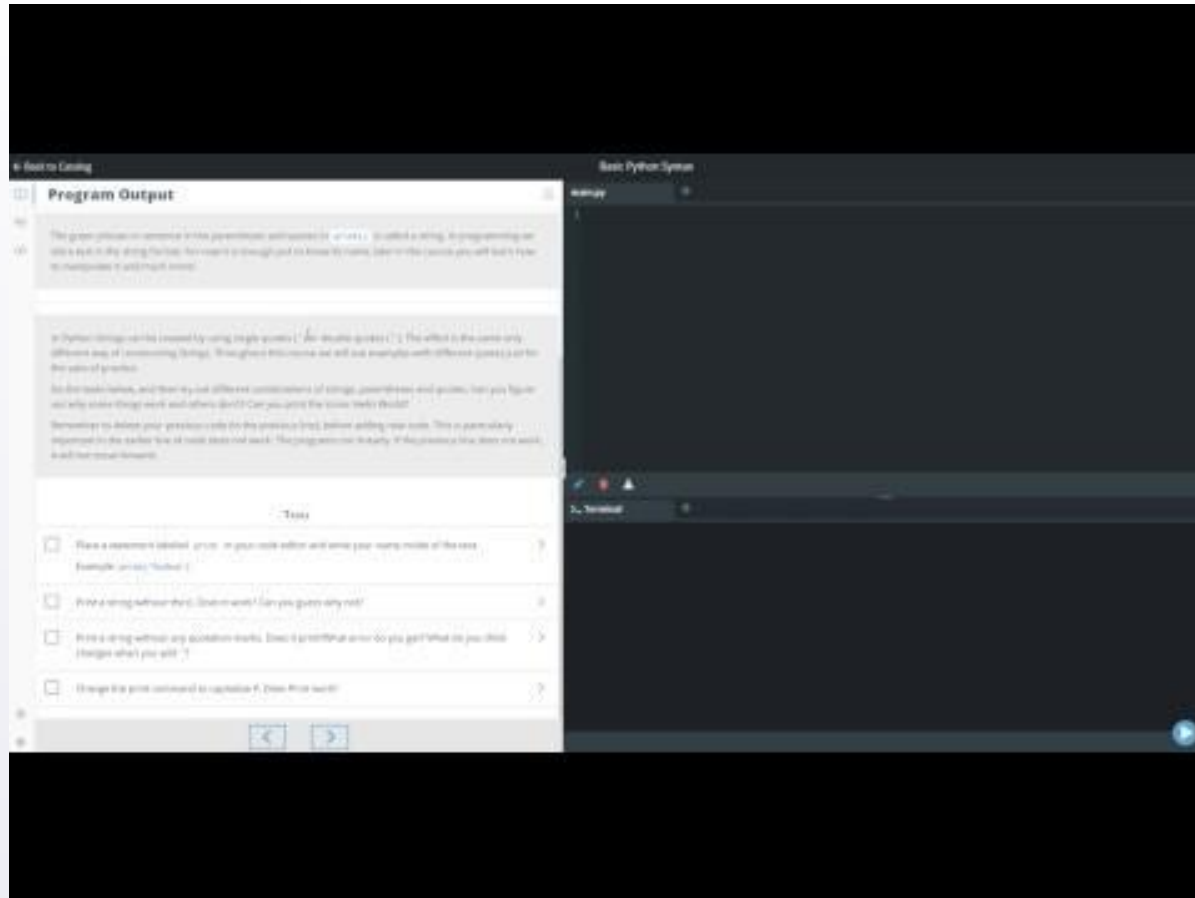**2** Work through the tasks listed at the bottom of the instructions console.

3 As you complete each task, click the checkbox to the left of the task. Clicking the checkbox will force the code you've written in the code file to run, if the task is designed to run (some tasks won't produce anything in the terminal because the task doesn't require running any code).
- When you click the checkbox, you'll find out if you got the answer correct. If you didn't, you'll be given tips for how to correct your work.
- If you run some code and get an error message that you don't understand, Google it! Data scientists run into error codes all the time and use the internet to search for answers.
- If you are sure the code you've written is correct, but the task isn't marking as complete - don't stress - just inform your student advisor or mentor and move on!

4 Once you've completed each task, click the 'Next' button to move on to the next page.

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Watch someone complete a task!

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Enjoy!

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