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3rd Edition

# Python® for Data Science

## for dummies®

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Discover the connection  
between Python and data

Prep your data, create visuals,  
and wrangle the results

Tackle data analytics and  
apply your discoveries

**John Paul Mueller  
Luca Massaron**

Coauthors of *Artificial Intelligence For Dummies*



# Python® for Data Science For Dummies®

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# Python® for Data Science

3rd Edition

by John Paul Mueller and Luca Massaron

**for**  
**dummies**<sup>®</sup>  
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## Python® for Data Science For Dummies®, 3rd Edition

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# Introduction

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The growth of the internet has been phenomenal. According to Internet World Stats

(<https://www.internetworldstats.com/emarketing.htm>), 69 percent of the world is now connected in some way to the internet, including developing countries. North America has the highest penetration rate 93.4 percent, which means you now have access to nearly everyone just by knowing how to manipulate data. Data science turns this huge amount of data into capabilities that you use absolutely every day to perform an amazing array of tasks or to obtain services from someone else.

You've probably used data science in ways that you never expected. For example, when you used your favorite search engine this morning to look for something, it made suggestions on alternative search terms. Those terms are supplied by data science. When you went to the doctor last week and discovered that the lump you found wasn't cancer, the doctor likely made the prognosis with the help of data science.

In fact, you may work with data science every day and not even know it. Even though many of the purposes of data science elude attention, you have probably become more aware of the data you generate, and with that awareness comes a desire for control over aspects of your life, such as when and where to shop, or whether to have someone perform the task for you. In addition to all its other uses, data science enables you to add that level of control that you, like many people, are looking for today.

*Python for Data Science For Dummies*, 3rd Edition not only gets you started using data science to perform a wealth of practical tasks but also helps you realize just how many places data science is used. By knowing how to answer data science problems and where to employ data science, you gain a significant advantage over everyone else, increasing your chances at promotion or that new job you really want.

## About This Book

The main purpose of *Python for Data Science For Dummies*, 3rd Edition, is to take the scare factor out of data science by showing you that data science is not only really interesting but also quite doable using Python. You may assume that you need to be a computer science genius to perform the complex tasks normally associated with data science, but that's far from the truth. Python comes with a host of useful libraries that do all the heavy lifting for you in the background. You don't even realize how much is going on, and you don't need to care. All you really need to know is that you want to perform specific tasks, and Python makes these tasks quite accessible.

Part of the emphasis of this book is on using the right tools. You start with either Jupyter Notebook (on desktop systems) or Google Colab (on the web) — two tools that take the sting out of working with Python. The code you place in Jupyter Notebook or Google Colab is presentation quality, and you can mix a number of presentation elements right there in your document. It's not really like using a traditional development environment at all.

You also discover some interesting techniques in this book. For example, you can create plots of all your data science experiments using Matplotlib, and this book gives you all the details for doing that. This book also spends considerable time showing you available resources (such as packages) and how you can use Scikit-learn to perform some very interesting calculations. Many people would like to know how to perform handwriting recognition, and if you're one of them, you can use this book to get a leg up on the process.

Of course, you may still be worried about the whole programming environment issue, and this book doesn't leave you in the dark there, either. At the beginning, you find complete methods you need to get started with data science using Jupyter Notebook or Google Colab. The emphasis is on getting you up and running as quickly as possible, and to make examples straightforward and simple so that the code doesn't become a stumbling block to learning.



This third edition of the book provides you with updated examples using Python 3.x so that you’re using the most modern version of Python while reading. In addition, you find a stronger emphasis on making examples simpler, but also making the environment more inclusive by adding material on deep learning. More important, this edition of the book contains updated datasets that better demonstrate how data science works today. This edition of the book also touches on modern concerns, such as removing personally identifiable information and enhancing data security. Consequently, you get a lot more out of this edition of the book as a result of the input provided by thousands of readers before you.

To make absorbing the concepts even easier, this book uses the following conventions:

- » Text that you’re meant to type just as it appears in the book is in **bold**. The exception is when you’re working through a list of steps: Because each step is bold, the text to type is not bold.
- » When you see words in *italics* as part of a typing sequence, you need to replace that value with something that works for you. For example, if you see “Type **Your Name** and press Enter,” you need to replace *Your Name* with your actual name.
- » Web addresses and programming code appear in monofont. If you’re reading a digital version of this book on a device connected to the internet, note that you can click the web address to visit that website, like this: <http://www.dummies.com>.
- » When you need to type command sequences, you see them separated by a special arrow, like this: File ⇒ New File. In this example, you go to the File menu first and then select the New File entry on that menu.

## Foolish Assumptions

You may find it difficult to believe that we've assumed anything about you — after all, we haven't even met you yet! Although most

assumptions are indeed foolish, we made these assumptions to provide a starting point for the book.

You need to be familiar with the platform you want to use because the book doesn't offer any guidance in this regard. ([Chapter 3](#) does, however, provide Anaconda installation instructions, which supports Jupyter Notebook, and [Chapter 4](#) gets you started with Google Colab.) To provide you with maximum information about Python concerning how it applies to data science, this book doesn't discuss any platform-specific issues. You really do need to know how to install applications, use applications, and generally work with your chosen platform before you begin working with this book.

You must know how to work with Python. This edition of the book no longer contains a Python primer because you can find a wealth of tutorials online (see <https://www.w3schools.com/python/> and <https://www.tutorialspoint.com/python/> as examples).

This book isn't a math primer. Yes, you do encounter some complex math, but the emphasis is on helping you use Python and data science to perform analysis tasks rather than teaching math theory. [Chapters 1](#) and [2](#) give you a better understanding of precisely what you need to know to use this book successfully.

This book also assumes that you can access items on the internet. Sprinkled throughout are numerous references to online material that will enhance your learning experience. However, these added sources are useful only if you actually find and use them.

## ***Icons Used in This Book***

As you read this book, you come across icons in the margins, and here's what those icons mean:



**TIP** Tips are nice because they help you save time or perform some task without a lot of extra work. The tips in this book are time-saving techniques or pointers to resources that you should try in order to get the maximum benefit from Python or in performing data science-related tasks.



**WARNING** We don't want to sound like angry parents or some kind of maniacs, but you should avoid doing anything that's marked with a Warning icon. Otherwise, you may find that your application fails to work as expected, or you get incorrect answers from seemingly bulletproof equations, or (in the worst-case scenario) you lose data.



**TECHNICAL STUFF**

Whenever you see this icon, think advanced tip or technique. You may find that you don't need these tidbits of useful information, or they could contain the solution you need to get a program running. Skip these bits of information whenever you like.



**REMEMBER**

If you don't get anything else out of a particular chapter or section, remember the material marked by this icon. This text usually contains an essential process or a morsel of information that you must know to work with Python or to perform data science-related tasks successfully.

## *Beyond the Book*

This book isn't the end of your Python or data science experience — it's really just the beginning. We provide online content to make this book

more flexible and better able to meet your needs. That way, as we receive email from you, we can address questions and tell you how updates to either Python or its associated add-ons affect book content. In fact, you gain access to all these cool additions:

» **Cheat sheet:** You remember using crib notes in school to make a better mark on a test, don't you? You do? Well, a cheat sheet is sort of like that. It provides you with some special notes about tasks that you can do with Python, IPython, IPython Notebook, and data science that not every other person knows. You can find the cheat sheet by going to [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com) and entering *Python for Data Science For Dummies, 3rd Edition* in the search field. The cheat sheet contains neat information such as the most common programming mistakes, styles for creating plot lines, and common magic functions to use in Jupyter Notebook.

» **Updates:** Sometimes changes happen. For example, we may not have seen an upcoming change when we looked into our crystal ball during the writing of this book. In the past, this possibility simply meant that the book became outdated and less useful, but you can now find updates to the book by searching this book's title at [www.dummies.com](http://www.dummies.com).

In addition to these updates, check out the blog posts with answers to reader questions and demonstrations of useful book-related techniques at <http://blog.johnmuellerbooks.com/>.

» **Companion files:** Hey! Who really wants to type all the code in the book and reconstruct all those plots manually? Most readers would prefer to spend their time actually working with Python, performing data science tasks, and seeing the interesting things they can do, rather than typing. Fortunately for you, the examples used in the book are available for download, so all you need to do is read the book to learn *Python for Data Science For Dummies* usage techniques. You can find these files at [www.dummies.com/go/pythonfordatasciencefd3e](http://www.dummies.com/go/pythonfordatasciencefd3e). You can also

find the source code on author John's website at  
<http://www.johnmuellerbooks.com/source-code/>.

## Where to Go from Here

It's time to start your *Python for Data Science For Dummies* adventure! If you're completely new to Python and its use for data science tasks, you should start with [Chapter 1](#) and progress through the book at a pace that allows you to absorb as much of the material as possible.

If you're a novice who's in an absolute rush to use Python with data science as quickly as possible, you can skip to [Chapter 3](#) (desktop users) or [Chapter 4](#) (web browser users) with the understanding that you may find some topics a bit confusing later. More advanced readers can skip to [Chapter 5](#) to gain an understanding of the tools used in this book.

Readers who have some exposure to Python and know how to use their development environment can save reading time by moving directly to [Chapter 6](#). You can always go back to earlier chapters as necessary when you have questions. However, you should understand how each technique works before moving to the next one. Every technique, coding example, and procedure has important lessons for you, and you could miss vital content if you start skipping too much information.



## Part 1

# Getting Started with Data Science and Python

## IN THIS PART ...

Understanding the connection between Python and data science

Getting an overview of Python capabilities

Defining a Python setup for data science

Using Google Colab for data science tasks

## Chapter 1

# Discovering the Match between Data Science and Python

---

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Discovering the wonders of data science
  - » Exploring how data science works
  - » Creating the connection between Python and data science
  - » Getting started with Python
- 

Data science may seem like one of those technologies that you'd never use, but you'd be wrong. Yes, data science involves the use of advanced math techniques, statistics, and big data. However, data science also involves helping you make smart decisions, creating suggestions for options based on previous choices, and making robots see objects. In fact, people use data science in so many different ways that you almost can't look anywhere or do anything without feeling the effects of data science on your life. In short, data science is the person behind the partition in the experience of the wonderment of technology. Without data science, much of what you accept as typical and expected today wouldn't even be possible. This is the reason that being a data scientist is one of the most interesting jobs of the 21st century.



**REMEMBER** To make data science doable by someone who's less than a math genius, you need tools. You could use any of a number of tools to perform data science tasks, but Python is uniquely suited to making it easier to work with data science. For one thing, Python provides an incredible number of math-related libraries that help you perform tasks with a less-than-perfect understanding of precisely what is going on. However, Python goes further by supporting



multiple coding styles (programming paradigms) and doing other things to make your job easier. Therefore, yes, you could use other languages to write data science applications, but Python reduces your workload, so it's a natural choice for those who really don't want to work hard, but rather to work smart.

This chapter gets you started with Python. Even though this book isn't designed to provide you with a complete Python tutorial, exploring some basic Python issues will reduce the time needed for you to get up to speed. (If you do need a good starting tutorial, please get *Beginning Programming with Python For Dummies*, 3rd Edition, by John Mueller (Wiley)). You'll find that the book provides pointers to tutorials and other aids as needed to fill in any gaps that you may have in your Python education.

## ***Understanding Python as a Language***

This book uses Python as a programming language because it's especially well-suited to data science needs and also supports performing general programming tasks. Common wisdom says that Python is interpreted, but as described in the blog post at <http://blog.johnmuellerbooks.com/2023/04/10/compiling-python/>, Python can act as a compiled language as well. This book uses Jupyter Notebook because the environment works well for learning, but you need to know that Python provides a lot more than you see in this book. With this fact in mind, the following sections provide a brief view of Python as a language.

### ***Viewing Python's various uses as a general-purpose language***

Python isn't a language just for use in data science; it's a general-purpose language with many uses beyond what you need to perform data science tasks. Python is important because after you have built a model, you may need to build a user interface and other structural elements around it. The model may simply be one part of a much larger application, all of which you can build using Python. Here are some

tasks that developers commonly use Python to perform beyond data science needs:

- » Web development
- » General-purpose programming:
  - Performing Create, Read, Update, and Delete (CRUD) operations on any sort of file
  - Creating graphical user interfaces (GUIs)
  - Developing application programming interfaces (API)s
- » Game development (something you can read about at <https://realpython.com/tutorials/gamedev/>)
- » Automation and scripting
- » Software testing and prototyping
- » Language development (Cobra, CoffeeScript, and Go all use a language syntax similar to Python)
- » Marketing and Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- » Common tasks associated with standard applications:
  - Tracking financial transactions of all sorts
  - Interacting with various types of messaging strategies
  - Creating various kinds of lists based on environmental or other inputs
  - Automating tasks like filling out forms

The list could be much longer, but this gives you an idea of just how capable Python actually is. The view you see of Python in this book is limited to experimenting with and learning about data science, but don't let this view limit what you actually use Python to do in the future. Python is currently used as a general-purpose programming language in companies like the following:

Amazon Dropbox

Facebook

Google	IBM	Instagram
Intel	JP Morgan Chase	NASA
Netflix	PayPal	Pinterest
Reddit	Spotify	Stripe
Uber	YouTube	

## ***Interpreting Python***

You see Python used in this book in an interpreted mode. There are a lot of reasons to take this approach, but the essential reason is that it allows the use of literate programming techniques

(<https://notebook.community/sfomel/ipython/LiterateProgramming>), which greatly enhance learning and significantly reduce the learning curve. The main advantages of using Python in an interpreted mode are that you receive instant feedback, and fixing errors is significantly easier. When combined with a notebook environment, using Python in an interpreted mode also makes it easier to create presentations and reports, as well as to create graphics that present outcomes of various analyses.

## ***Compiling Python***

Outside this book, you may find that compiling your Python application is important because doing so can help increase overall application speed. In addition, compiling your code can reduce the potential for others stealing your code and make your applications both more secure and reliable. You do need access to third-party products to compile your code, but you'll find plenty of available products discussed at <https://www.softwaretestinghelp.com/python-compiler/>.

## ***Defining Data Science***

At one point, the world viewed anyone working with statistics as a sort of accountant or perhaps a mad scientist. Many people consider statistics and analysis of data boring. However, data science is one of those occupations in which the more you learn, the more you want to learn. Answering one question often spawns more questions that are even more interesting than the one you just answered. However, the thing that

makes data science so interesting is that you see it everywhere and used in an almost infinite number of ways. The following sections provide more details on why data science is such an amazing field of study.

## **Considering the emergence of data science**

Data science is a relatively new term. William S. Cleveland coined the term in 2001 as part of a paper entitled “Data Science: An Action Plan for Expanding the Technical Areas of the Field of Statistics.” It wasn’t until a year later that the International Council for Science actually recognized data science and created a committee for it. Columbia University got into the act in 2003 by beginning publication of the *Journal of Data Science*.



**REMEMBER** However, the mathematical basis behind data science is centuries old because data science is essentially a method of viewing and analyzing statistics and probability. The first essential use of statistics as a term comes in 1749, but statistics are certainly much older than that. People have used statistics to recognize patterns for thousands of years. For example, the historian Thucydides (in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*) describes how the Athenians calculated the height of the wall of Plataea in fifth century BC by counting bricks in an unplastered section of the wall. Because the count needed to be accurate, the Athenians took the average of the count by several soldiers.

The process of quantifying and understanding statistics is relatively new, but the science itself is quite old. An early attempt to begin documenting the importance of statistics appears in the ninth century when Al-Kindi wrote *Manuscript on Deciphering Cryptographic Messages*. In this paper, Al-Kindi describes how to use a combination of statistics and frequency analysis to decipher encrypted messages. Even in the beginning, statistics saw use in practical application of science to tasks that seemed virtually impossible to complete. Data science continues this process, and to some people it may actually seem like magic.

## ***Outlining the core competencies of a data scientist***

As is true of anyone performing most complex trades today, the data scientist requires knowledge of a broad range of skills to perform the required tasks. In fact, so many different skills are required that data scientists often work in teams. Someone who is good at gathering data may team up with an analyst and someone gifted in presenting information. It would be hard to find a single person with all the required skills. With this in mind, the following list describes areas in which a data scientist could excel (with more competencies being better):

- » **Data capture:** It doesn't matter what sort of math skills you have if you can't obtain data to analyze in the first place. The act of capturing data begins by managing a data source using database management skills. However, raw data isn't particularly useful in many situations — you must also understand the data domain so that you can look at the data and begin formulating the sorts of questions to ask. Finally, you must have data-modeling skills so that you understand how the data is connected and whether the data is structured.
- » **Analysis:** After you have data to work with and understand the complexities of that data, you can begin to perform an analysis on it. You perform some analysis using basic statistical tool skills, much like those that just about everyone learns in college. However, the use of specialized math tricks and algorithms can make patterns in the data more obvious or help you draw conclusions that you can't draw by reviewing the data alone.
- » **Presentation:** Most people don't understand numbers well. They can't see the patterns that the data scientist sees. It's important to provide a graphical presentation of these patterns to help others visualize what the numbers mean and how to apply them in a meaningful way. More important, the presentation must tell a specific story so that the impact of the data isn't lost.

## ***Linking data science, big data, and AI***

Interestingly enough, the act of moving data around so that someone can perform analysis on it is a specialty called Extract, Transformation, and Loading (ETL). The ETL specialist uses programming languages such as Python to extract the data from a number of sources. Corporations tend not to keep data in one easily accessed location, so finding the data required to perform analysis takes time. After the ETL specialist finds the data, a programming language or other tool transforms it into a common format for analysis purposes. The loading process takes many forms, but this book relies on Python to perform the task. In a large, real-world operation, you may find yourself using tools such as Informatica, MS SSIS, or Teradata to perform the task.



**REMEMBER** Data science isn't necessarily a means to an end; it may instead be a step along the way. As a data scientist works through various datasets and finds interesting facts, these facts may act as input for other sorts of analysis and AI applications. For example, consider that your shopping habits often suggest what books you may like or where you may like to go for a vacation. Shopping or other habits can also help others understand other, sometimes less benign, activities as well. *Machine Learning For Dummies*, 2nd Edition and *Artificial Intelligence For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, both by John Mueller and Luca Massaron (Wiley) help you understand these other uses of data science. For now, consider the fact that what you learn in this book can have a definite effect on a career path that will go many other places.

## EXTRACT, LOAD, AND TRANSFORM (ELT)

You may come across a new way of working with data called ELT, which is a variation of ETL. The article "Extract, Load, Transform (ELT)" (<https://www.techtarget.com/searchdatamanagement/definition/Extract-Load-Transform-ELT>), describes the difference between the two. This different approach is often used for nonrelational and unstructured data. The overall goal is to simplify the data gathering and management process,

possibly allowing the use of a single tool even for large datasets. However, this approach also has significant drawbacks. The ELT approach isn't covered in this book, but it does pay to know that it exists.

## ***Creating the Data Science Pipeline***

Data science is partly art and partly engineering. Recognizing patterns in data, considering what questions to ask, and determining which algorithms work best are all part of the art side of data science. However, to make the art part of data science realizable, the engineering part relies on a specific process to achieve specific goals. This process is the data science pipeline, which requires the data scientist to follow particular steps in the preparation, analysis, and presentation of the data. The following list helps you understand the data science pipeline better so that you can understand how the book employs it during the presentation of examples:

- » **Preparing the data:** The data that you access from various sources doesn't come in an easily packaged form, ready for analysis. The raw data not only may vary substantially in format but also need you to transform it to make all the data sources cohesive and amenable to analysis.
- » **Performing exploratory data analysis:** The math behind data analysis relies on engineering principles in that the results are provable and consistent. However, data science provides access to a wealth of statistical methods and algorithms that help you discover patterns in the data. A single approach doesn't ordinarily do the trick. You typically use an iterative process to rework the data from a number of perspectives. The use of trial and error is part of the data science art.
- » **Learning from data:** As you iterate through various statistical analysis methods and apply algorithms to detect patterns, you begin learning from the data. The data may not tell the story that you originally thought it would, or it may have many stories to tell. Discovery is part of being a data scientist. If you have preconceived



ideas of what the data contains, you won't find the information it actually does contain.

- » **Visualizing:** Visualization means seeing the patterns in the data and then being able to react to those patterns. It also means being able to see when data is not part of the pattern. Think of yourself as a data sculptor, removing the data that lies outside the patterns (the outliers) so that others can see the masterpiece of information beneath.
- » **Obtaining insights and data products:** The data scientist may seem to simply be looking for unique methods of viewing data. However, the process doesn't end until you have a clear understanding of what the data means. The insights you obtain from manipulating and analyzing the data help you to perform real-world tasks. For example, you can use the results of an analysis to make a business decision.

## ***Understanding Python's Role in Data Science***

Given the right data sources, analysis requirements, and presentation needs, you can use Python for every part of the data science pipeline. In fact, that's precisely what you do in this book. Every example uses Python to help you understand another part of the data science equation. Of all the languages you could choose for performing data science tasks, Python is the most flexible and capable because it supports so many third-party libraries devoted to the task. The following sections help you better understand why Python is such a good choice for many (if not most) data science needs.

### ***Considering the shifting profile of data scientists***

Some people view the data scientist as an unapproachable nerd who performs miracles on data with math. The data scientist is the person behind the curtain in an Oz-like experience. However, this perspective is changing. In many respects, the world now views the data scientist as either an adjunct to a developer or as a new type of developer. The ascendance of applications of all sorts that can learn is the essence of this change. For an application to learn, it has to be able to manipulate

large databases and discover new patterns in them. In addition, the application must be able to create new data based on the old data — making an informed prediction of sorts. The new kinds of applications affect people in ways that would have seemed like science fiction just a few years ago. Of course, the most noticeable of these applications define the behaviors of robots that will interact far more closely with people tomorrow than they do today.

From a business perspective, the necessity of fusing data science and application development is obvious: Businesses must perform various sorts of analysis on the huge databases it has collected — to make sense of the information and use it to predict the future. In truth, however, the far greater impact of the melding of these two branches of science — data science and application development — will be felt in terms of creating altogether new kinds of applications, some of which aren't even possibly to imagine with clarity today. For example, new applications could help students learn with greater precision by analyzing their learning trends and creating new instructional methods that work for that particular student. This combination of sciences may also solve a host of medical problems that seem impossible to solve today — not only in keeping disease at bay, but also by solving problems, such as how to create truly usable prosthetic devices that look and act like the real thing.

## ***Working with a multipurpose, simple, and efficient language***

Many different ways are available for accomplishing data science tasks. This book covers only one of the myriad methods at your disposal. However, Python represents one of the few single-stop solutions that you can use to solve complex data science problems. Instead of having to use a number of tools to perform a task, you can simply use a single language, Python, to get the job done. The Python difference is the large number scientific and math libraries created for it by third parties. Plugging in these libraries greatly extends Python and allows it to easily perform tasks that other languages could perform, but with great difficulty.



**TIP** Python's libraries are its main selling point; however, Python offers more than reusable code. The most important thing to consider with Python is that it supports four different coding styles:

- » **Functional:** Treats every statement as a mathematical equation and avoids any form of state or mutable data. The main advantage of this approach is having no side effects to consider. In addition, this coding style lends itself better than the others to parallel processing because there is no state to consider. Many developers prefer this coding style for recursion and for lambda calculus.
- » **Imperative:** Performs computations as a direct change to program state. This style is especially useful when manipulating data structures and produces elegant, but simple, code.
- » **Object-oriented:** Relies on data fields that are treated as objects and manipulated only through prescribed methods. Python doesn't fully support this coding form because it can't implement features such as data hiding. However, this is a useful coding style for complex applications because it supports encapsulation and polymorphism. This coding style also favors code reuse.
- » **Procedural:** Treats tasks as step-by-step iterations where common tasks are placed in functions that are called as needed. This coding style favors iteration, sequencing, selection, and modularization.

## *Learning to Use Python Fast*

It's time to try using Python to see the data science pipeline in action. The following sections provide a brief overview of the process you explore in detail in the rest of the book. You won't actually perform the tasks in the following sections. In fact, you don't install Python until [Chapter 3](#), so for now, just follow along in the text. This book uses a specific version of Python and an IDE called Jupyter Notebook, so please wait until [Chapter 3](#) to install these features (or skip ahead, if you insist, and install them now). (You can also use Google Colab with the

source code in the book, as described in [Chapter 4](#).) Don't worry about understanding every aspect of the process at this point. The purpose of these sections is to help you gain an understanding of the flow of using Python to perform data science tasks. Many of the details may seem difficult to understand at this point, but the rest of the book will help you understand them.



**REMEMBER** The examples in this book rely on a web-based application named Jupyter Notebook. The screenshots you see in this and other chapters reflect how Jupyter Notebook looks in Chrome on a Windows 10/11 system. The view you see will contain the same data, but the actual interface may differ a little depending on platform (such as using a notebook instead of a desktop system), operating system, and browser. Don't worry if you see some slight differences between your display and the screenshots in the book.



**TIP** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter in by hand. In fact, it's a lot easier if you use the downloadable source (see the Introduction for details on downloading the source code). The source code for this chapter appears in the `P4DS4D3_01_Quick_Overview.ipynb` source code file.

## *Loading data*

Before you can do anything, you need to load some data. The book shows you all sorts of methods for performing this task. In this case, [Figure 1-1](#) shows how to load a dataset called California Housing that contains housing prices and other facts about houses in California. It was obtained from StatLib repository (see [https://www.dcc.fc.up.pt/~ltorgo/Regression/cal\\_housing.html](https://www.dcc.fc.up.pt/~ltorgo/Regression/cal_housing.html) for details). The code places the entire dataset in the `housing` variable and then places parts of that data in variables named `x` and `y`. Think of variables as you would storage boxes. The variables are important

because they make it possible to work with the data. The output shows that the dataset contains 20,640 entries with eight features each. The second output shows the name of each of the features.

## **Training a model**

Now that you have some data to work with, you can do something with it. All sorts of algorithms are built into Python. [Figure 1-2](#) shows a linear regression model. Again, don't worry precisely how this works; later chapters discuss linear regression in detail. The important thing to note in [Figure 1-2](#) is that Python lets you perform the linear regression using just two statements and to place the result in a variable named hypothesis.

## **Learning to Use Python Fast**

### **Loading data**

```
In [1]: from sklearn.datasets import fetch_california_housing
housing = fetch_california_housing()
X, y = housing.data, housing.target
print("The size of the data set is {}".format(X.shape))
print("The names of the data columns are {}", housing.feature_names)

The size of the data set is (20640, 8)
The names of the data columns are {} ['MedInc', 'HouseAge', 'AveRooms', 'AveBedrms', 'Population', 'AveOccup', 'Latitude', 'Longitude']
```

[FIGURE 1-1:](#) Loading data into variables so that you can manipulate it.

### **Training a model**

```
In [2]: from sklearn.linear_model import LinearRegression
hypothesis = LinearRegression()
hypothesis.fit(X,y)

Out[2]: LinearRegression()
```

[FIGURE 1-2:](#) Using the variable content to train a linear regression model.

## **Viewing a result**

Performing any sort of analysis doesn't pay unless you obtain some benefit from it in the form of a result. This book shows all sorts of ways to view output, but [Figure 1-3](#) starts with something simple. In this case,

you see the coefficient output from the linear regression analysis. Notice that there is one coefficient for each of the dataset features.

### Viewing a result

```
In [3]: print(hypothesis.coef_)
```

```
[ 4.36693293e-01  9.43577803e-03 -1.07322041e-01  6.45065694e-01
 -3.97638942e-06 -3.78654265e-03 -4.21314378e-01 -4.34513755e-01]
```

**FIGURE 1-3:** Outputting a result as a response to the model.



**TIP** One of the reasons that this book uses Jupyter Notebook is that the product helps you to create nicely formatted output as part of creating the application. Look again at [Figure 1-3](#), and you see a report that you could simply print and offer to a colleague. The output isn't suitable for many people, but those experienced with Python and data science will find it quite usable and informative.



## Chapter 2

# Introducing Python's Capabilities and Wonders

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## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Getting a quick start with Python
  - » Considering Python's special features
  - » Defining and exploring the power of Python for the data scientist
- 

All computers run on just one kind of language — machine code. However, unless you want to learn how to talk like a computer in 0s and 1s, machine code isn't particularly useful. You'd never want to try to define data science problems using machine code. It would take an entire lifetime (if not longer) just to define one problem. Higher-level languages make it possible to write a lot of code that humans can understand quite quickly. The tools used with these languages make it possible to translate the human-readable code into machine code that the machine understands. Therefore, the choice of languages depends on the human need, not the machine need. With this in mind, this chapter introduces you to the capabilities that Python provides that make it a practical choice for the data scientist. After all, you want to know why this book uses Python and not another language, such as Java or C++. These other languages are perfectly good choices for some tasks, but they're not as suited to meet data science needs.

The chapter begins with some simple Python examples to give you a taste for the language. As part of exploring Python in this chapter, you discover all sorts of interesting features that Python provides. Python gives you access to a host of libraries that are especially suited to meet the needs of the data scientist. In fact, you use a number of these libraries throughout the book as you work through the coding examples.

Knowing about these libraries in advance will help you understand the programming examples and why the book shows how to perform tasks in a certain way.



**REMEMBER** Even though this chapter shows examples of working with Python, you don't really begin using Python in earnest until [Chapter 6](#). This chapter offers an overview so that you can better understand what Python can do. [Chapter 3](#) shows how to install the particular version of Python used for this book. [Chapters 4](#) and [5](#) are about tools you can use, with [Chapter 4](#) emphasizing Google Colab, an alternative environment for coding. In short, if you don't quite understand an example in this chapter, don't worry: You get plenty of additional information in later chapters.

## **Working with Python**

This book doesn't provide you with a full Python tutorial. (However, you can get a great start with *Beginning Programming with Python For Dummies*, 3rd Edition, by John Paul Mueller (Wiley)). For now, it's helpful to get a brief overview of what Python looks like and how you interact with it, as in the following sections.



**TIP** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter manually; using the downloadable source a lot easier (see the Introduction for details on downloading the source code). The source code for this chapter appears in the `P4DS4D3_02_Using_Python.ipynb` file.

## **Contributing to data science**

Because this is a book about data science, you're probably wondering how Python contributes to better data science and what the word *better* actually means in this case. Knowing that a lot of organizations use

Python doesn't help you because it doesn't really say much about how they use Python, and if you want to match your choice of language to your particular need, understanding how other organizations use Python becomes important.

One such example appears at

<https://www.datasciencegraduateprograms.com/python/>. In this case, the article talks about [Forecastwatch.com](https://forecastwatch.com) (<https://forecastwatch.com>), which actually does watch the weather and try to make predictions better. Every day, [Forecastwatch.com](https://forecastwatch.com) compares 36,000 forecasts with the weather that people actually experience and then uses the results to create better forecasts. Trying to aggregate and make sense of the weather data for 800 U.S. cities is daunting, so [Forecastwatch.com](https://forecastwatch.com) needed a language that could do these tasks with the least amount of fuss. Here are the reasons [Forecast.com](https://forecast.com) chose Python:

- » **Library support:** Python provides support for a large number of libraries, more than any one organization will ever need. According to <https://www.python.org/about/success/forecastwatch/>, [Forecastwatch.com](https://forecastwatch.com) found the regular expression, thread, object serialization, and gzip data compression libraries especially useful.
- » **Parallel processing:** Each of the forecasts is processed as a separate thread so that the system can work through them quickly. The thread data includes the web page URL that contains the required forecast, along with category information, such as city name.
- » **Data access:** This huge amount of data can't all exist in memory, so [Forecast.com](https://forecast.com) relies on a MySQL database accessed through the MySQLdb (<https://sourceforge.net/projects/mysql-python/>) library, which is one of the few libraries that hasn't moved on to Python 3.x yet. However, the associated website promises the required support soon. In the meantime, if you need to use MySQL with Python 3.x, then using mysqlclient (<https://pypi.org/project/mysqlclient/>) will be a good replacement because it adds Python 3.x support to MySQLdb.

» **Data display:** Originally, the PHP scripting language produced the [Forecastwatch.com](http://www.mems-exchange.org/software/quixote/) output. However, by using Quixote (<https://www.mems-exchange.org/software/quixote/>), which is a display framework, [Forecastwatch.com](http://www.mems-exchange.org/software/quixote/) was able to move everything to Python. (An update of this framework is DurusWorks, at <https://www.mems-exchange.org/software/DurusWorks/>.)

## ***Getting a taste of the language***

Python is designed to provide clear language statements but to do so in an incredibly small space. A single line of Python code may perform tasks that another language usually takes several lines to perform. For example, if you want to display something on-screen, you simply tell Python to print it, like this:

```
print("Hello There!")
```

The point is that you can simply tell Python to output text, an object, or anything else using a simple statement. You don't really need too much in the way of advanced programming skills. When you want to end your session using a command line environment such as IDLE, you simply type `quit()` and press Enter. This book relies on a much better environment, Jupyter Notebook (or Google Colab as an alternative), which really does make your code look as though it came from someone's notebook.

## ***Understanding the need for indentation***

Python relies on indentation to create various language features, such as conditional statements. One of the most common errors that developers encounter is not providing the proper indentation for code. You see this principle in action later in the book, but for now, always be sure to pay attention to indentation as you work through the book examples. For example, here is an `if` statement (a conditional that says that if something meets the condition, perform the code that follows) with proper indentation.

```
if 1 < 2:  
    print("1 is less than 2")
```



**WARNING** The print statement must appear indented below the conditional statement. Otherwise, the condition won't work as expected, and you may see an error message, too.

## **Working with Jupyter Notebook and Google Colab**

The vast majority of this book relies on Jupyter Notebook (with code also tested using Google Colab), which is part of the Anaconda installation you create in [Chapter 3](#). Jupyter Notebook is used in [Chapter 1](#) and again later in the book. The presentation for Google Colab is similar to, but not precisely the same as, Jupyter Notebook, and you see Google Colab in detail in [Chapter 4](#). The purpose behind using an Integrated Development Environment (IDE) such as Jupyter Notebook and Google Colab is that they help you create correct code and perform some tasks, such as indentation, automatically. An IDE can also give your code a nicer appearance and give you a means for making report-like output with graphics and other noncode features.

## **Performing Rapid Prototyping and Experimentation**

Python is all about creating applications quickly and then experimenting with them to see how things work. The act of creating an application design in code without necessarily filling in all the details is *prototyping*. Python uses less code than other languages to perform tasks, so prototyping goes faster. The fact that many of the actions you need to perform are already defined as part of libraries that you load into memory makes things go faster still.

Data science doesn't rely on static solutions. You may have to try multiple solutions to find the particular solution that works best. This is where experimentation comes into play. After you create a prototype, you use it to experiment with various algorithms to determine which algorithm works best in a particular situation. The algorithm you use

varies depending on the answers you see and the data you use, so there are too many variables to consider for any sort of canned solution.



TECHNICAL STUFF

The prototyping and experimentation process occurs in several phases. As you go through the book, you discover that these phases have distinct uses and appear in a particular order. The following list shows the phases in the order in which you normally perform them.

- 1. Building a data pipeline.** To work with the data, you must create a pipeline to it. It's possible to load some data into memory. However, after the dataset gets to a certain size, you need to start working with it on disk or by using other means to interact with it. The technique you use for gaining access to the data is important because it impacts how fast you get a result.
- 2. Performing the required shaping.** The shape of the data — the way in which it appears and its characteristics (such as data type), is important in performing analysis. To perform an apples-to-apples comparison, like data has to be shaped the same. However, just shaping the data the same isn't enough. The shape has to be correct for the algorithms you employ to analyze it. Later chapters (starting with [Chapter 7](#)) help you understand the need to shape data in various ways.
- 3. Analyzing the data.** When analyzing data, you seldom employ a single algorithm and call it good enough. You can't know which algorithm will produce the most useful results at the outset. To find the best result from your dataset, you experiment on it using several algorithms. This practice is emphasized in the later chapters of the book when you start performing serious data analysis.
- 4. Presenting a result.** A picture is worth a thousand words, or so they say. However, you need the picture to say the correct words or your message gets lost. Using the MATLAB-like plotting functionality

provided by the Matplotlib library, you can create multiple presentations of the same data, each of which describes the data graphically in different ways. (MATLAB, found at <https://www.mathworks.com/products/matlab.html>, is a widely used mathematical modeling program; see *MATLAB For Dummies*, 2nd Edition, by John Paul Mueller and Jim Sizemore [Wiley] for more details.) To ensure that your meaning really isn't lost, you must experiment with various presentation methods and determine which one works best.

## ***Considering Speed of Execution***

Computers are known for their prowess in crunching numbers. Even so, analysis takes considerable processing power. The datasets are so large that you can bog down even an incredibly powerful system. In general, the following factors control the speed of execution for your data science application:

- » **Dataset size:** Data science relies on huge datasets in many cases. Yes, you can make a robot see objects using a modest dataset size, but when it comes to making business decisions, larger is better in most situations. The application type determines the size of your dataset in part, but dataset size also relies on the size of the source data. Underestimating the effect of dataset size is deadly in data science applications, especially those that need to operate in real time (such as self-driving cars).
- » **Loading technique:** The method you use to load data for analysis is critical, and you should always use the fastest means at your disposal, even if it means upgrading your hardware to do so. Working with data in memory is always faster than working with data stored on disk. Accessing local data is always faster than accessing it across a network. Performing data science tasks that rely on internet access through web services is probably the slowest method of all. [Chapter 6](#) helps you understand loading techniques in more detail. You also see the effects of loading technique later in the book.

- » **Coding style:** Some people will likely try to tell you that Python's programming paradigms make writing a slow application nearly impossible. They're wrong. Anyone can create a slow application using any language by employing coding techniques that don't make the best use of programming language functionality. To create fast data science applications, you must use best-of-method coding techniques. The techniques demonstrated in this book are a great starting point.
- » **Machine capability:** Running data science applications on a memory-constrained system with a slower processor is an extremely painful process akin to sitting in the dentist's chair for a root canal without Novocain. The system you use needs to have the best hardware you can afford. Given that data science applications are both processor and disk bound, you can't really cut corners in any area and expect great results.
- » **Analysis algorithm:** The algorithm you use determines the kind of result you obtain and controls execution speed. Many of the chapters in the latter parts of this book demonstrate multiple methods to achieve a goal using different algorithms. However, you must still experiment to find the best algorithm for your particular dataset.



**REMEMBER** A number of the chapters in this book emphasize performance, most notably speed and reliability, because both factors are critical to data science applications. Even though database applications tend to emphasize the need for speed and reliability to some extent, the combination of huge dataset access (disk-bound issues) and data analysis (processor-bound issues) in data science applications makes the need to make good choices even more critical.

## *Visualizing Power*

Python makes it possible to explore the data science environment without resorting to using a debugger or debugging code, as would be

needed in many other languages. The `print()` function and `dir()` function let you examine any object interactively. In short, you can load something up and play with it for a while to see just how the developer put it together. Playing with the data, visualizing what it means to you personally, can often help you gain new insights and create new ideas. Judging by many online conversations, playing with the data is the part of data science that its practitioners find the most fun.

To get an idea of how the `print()` and `dir()` functions work, you can try the following code that appears in the downloadable source:

```
from sklearn.utils import Bunch
items = dir(Bunch)
for item in items:
    if 'key' in item:
        print(item)
```

Don't worry if you don't understand this code, you'll discover more about it later. Beginning with [Chapter 4](#), you start to play with code more, and the various sections give you more details. You can also obtain the book *Beginning Programming with Python For Dummies*, 3rd Edition, by John Paul Mueller (Wiley) if you want a more detailed tutorial. Just follow along with the concept of playing with data for now. You see the following output when you run this code:

```
fromkeys
keys
```

Scikit-learn datasets appear within *bunches* (a bunch is a kind of data structure). When you import a dataset, that dataset will have certain functions that you can use with it that are determined by the code used to define the data structure — a bunch. This code shows which functions deal with *keys* — the data identifiers for the *values* (one or more columns of information) in the dataset. Each row in the dataset has a unique key, even if the values in that row repeat another row in the dataset. You can use these functions to perform useful work with the dataset as part of building your application.

Before you can work with a dataset, you must provide access to it in the local environment. The following code shows the import process and

demonstrates how you can use the `keys()` function to display a list of keys that you can use to access data within the dataset.

```
from sklearn.datasets import fetch_california_housing
housing = fetch_california_housing()
print(housing.keys())
```

The output from this code shows that you can access a variety of information about the dataset:

```
dict_keys(['data', 'target', 'frame', 'target_names',
          'feature_names', 'DESCR'])
```

You don't have to know what all these names mean for now, but `feature_names` tells you about the data columns used in the dataset. When you have a list of keys you can use, you can access individual data items. For example, the following code shows a list of all the feature names contained in the California Housing dataset. Python really does make it possible to know quite a lot about a dataset before you have to work with it in depth.

```
print(housing.feature_names)
```

In this case, you see the following column names for the data:

```
['MedInc', 'HouseAge', 'AveRooms', 'AveBedrms',
 'Population', 'AveOccup', 'Latitude', 'Longitude']
```

## ***Using the Python Ecosystem for Data Science***

You have already seen the need to load libraries in order to perform data science tasks in Python. The following sections provide an overview of the libraries you use for the data science examples in this book. Various book examples show the libraries at work.

### ***Accessing scientific tools using SciPy***

The SciPy stack (<http://www.scipy.org/>) contains a host of other libraries that you can also download separately. These libraries provide support for mathematics, science, and engineering. When you obtain SciPy, you get a set of libraries designed to work together to create applications of various sorts. These libraries are

- » NumPy
- » SciPy
- » Matplotlib
- » Jupyter
- » Sympy
- » pandas

The SciPy library itself focuses on numerical routines, such as routines for numerical integration and optimization. SciPy is a general-purpose library that provides functionality for multiple problem domains. It also provides support for domain-specific libraries, such as Scikit-learn, Scikit-image, and statsmodels.

## ***Performing fundamental scientific computing using NumPy***

The NumPy library (<http://www.numpy.org/>) provides the means for performing n-dimensional array manipulation, which is critical for data science work. The California Housing dataset used in the examples in [Chapters 1](#) and 2 is an example of an n-dimensional array, and you couldn't easily access it without NumPy functions that include support for linear algebra, Fourier transform, and random-number generation (see the listing of functions at <http://docs.scipy.org/doc/numpy/reference/routines.html>).

## ***Performing data analysis using pandas***

The pandas library (<http://pandas.pydata.org/>) provides support for data structures and data analysis tools. The library is optimized to perform data science tasks especially fast and efficiently. The basic principle behind pandas is to provide data analysis and modeling support for Python that is similar to other languages, such as R.

## ***Implementing machine learning using Scikit-learn***

The Scikit-learn library (<http://scikit-learn.org/stable/>) is one of a number of Scikit libraries that build on the capabilities provided by

NumPy and SciPy to allow Python developers to perform domain-specific tasks. In this case, the library focuses on data mining and data analysis. It provides access to the following sorts of functionality:

- » Classification
- » Regression
- » Clustering
- » Dimensionality reduction
- » Model selection
- » Preprocessing

A number of these functions appear as chapter headings in the book. As a result, you can assume that Scikit-learn is the most important library for the book (even though it relies on other libraries to perform its work).

## ***Going for deep learning with Keras and TensorFlow***

Keras (<https://keras.io/>) is an application programming interface (API) that is used to train deep learning models. An API often specifies a model for doing something, but it doesn't provide an implementation. Consequently, you need an implementation of Keras to perform useful work, which is where the machine learning platform TensorFlow (<https://www.tensorflow.org/>) comes into play because Keras runs on top of it.

When working with an API, you're looking for ways to simplify things. Keras makes things easy by offering the following features:

- » **A consistent interface:** The Keras interface is optimized for common use cases with an emphasis on actionable feedback for fixing user errors.
- » **A building-block approach:** Using a black-box approach makes it easy to create models by connecting configurable building blocks together with only a few restrictions on how you can connect them.

- » **Extendability:** You can easily add custom building blocks to express new ideas for research that include new layers, loss functions, and models.
- » **Parallel processing:** To run applications fast today, you need good parallel processing support. Keras runs on both CPUs and GPUs. It will also make use of multiple CPUs, when available.
- » **Direct Python support:** You don't have to do anything special to make the TensorFlow implementation of Keras work with Python, which can be a major stumbling block when working with other sorts of APIs.

## ***Performing analysis efficiently using XGBoost***

You use XGBoost (<https://xgboost.readthedocs.io/en/stable/>), which stands for extreme gradient boosting, to perform data analysis in an efficient, flexible, and portable manner. This library makes it easier to perform analysis using gradient boosting, which is explained in [Chapter 20](#). [Chapter 20](#) also shows how to work with XGBoost to get the most benefit from the analysis process. You can use this library to solve regression, classification, and ranking problems. XGBoost has proven its capabilities by helping individuals and teams win virtually every Kaggle structured-data competition. In addition, XGBoost supports Python, R, Java, Scala, Julia, Perl, and other languages.

## ***Plotting the data using Matplotlib***

The Matplotlib library (<http://matplotlib.org/>) gives you a MATLAB-like interface for creating data presentations of the analysis you perform. The library is currently limited to 2-D output, but it still provides you with the means to express graphically the data patterns you see in the data you analyze. Without this library, you couldn't create output that people outside the data science community could easily understand. [Chapter 10](#) offers a great introduction to Matplotlib.

## ***Creating graphs with NetworkX***

To properly study the relationships between complex data in a networked system (such as that used by your GPS setup to discover

routes through city streets), you need a library to create, manipulate, and study the structure of network data in various ways. In addition, the library must provide the means to output the resulting analysis in a form that humans understand, such as graphical data. NetworkX (<https://networkx.github.io/>) enables you to perform this sort of analysis. The advantage of NetworkX is that nodes can be anything (including images) and edges can hold arbitrary data. These features allow you to perform a much broader range of analysis with NetworkX than using custom code would (and such code would be time consuming to create).

## Chapter 3

# Setting Up Python for Data Science

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## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Using Anaconda to work with Python
  - » Creating an Anaconda installation on Linux, Mac OS, and Windows
  - » Getting and installing the datasets and example code
- 

Before you can do too much with Python or use it to solve data science problems, you need a workable installation. In addition, you need access to the datasets and code used for this book. Downloading the sample code and installing it on your system is the best way to absorb more understanding from the book. This chapter helps you get your system set up so that you can easily follow the examples in the remainder of the book.

This book relies on Jupyter Notebook version 6.5.2 supplied with the Anaconda 3 environment (version 2023.03) that supports the Python version 3.10.9 to create the coding examples. For the examples to work, you must use Python 3.10.9 and the packages present in Anaconda 3 version 2023.03 (listed as conda version 23.1.0). Older versions of both Python and its packages tend to lack needed features, and newer versions tend to produce breaking changes. If you use some other version of Python, the examples likely won't work as intended. As an alternative to working with Jupyter Notebook on a desktop system, you can also work on Google Colab on your mobile device, as described in [Chapter 4](#).



**REMEMBER** Using the downloadable source doesn't prevent you from typing the examples on your own, following them using a debugger, expanding them, or working with the code in all sorts of ways. The

downloadable source is there to help you get a good start with your data science and Python learning experience. After you see how the code works when it's correctly typed and configured, you can try to create the examples on your own. If you make a mistake, you can compare what you've typed with the downloadable source and discover precisely where the error exists. You can find the downloadable source for this chapter in the `P4DS4D3_03_Sample.ipynb` and `P4DS4D3_03_Dataset_Load.ipynb` files. (The Introduction tells you where to download the source code for this book.)

## ***Working with Anaconda***

Anaconda is actually a collection of tools, as described at <https://docs.anaconda.com/free/navigator/overview/>. Jupyter Notebook is just one of those tools, and it's the one used most often in this book. However, it's also helpful to know about the other tools that Anaconda provides because they can help you create Python applications faster and also work with some other languages. The following sections describe the two Anaconda tools that are used in this book.

### ***Using Jupyter Notebook***

Jupyter Notebook is an Integrated Development Environment (IDE) that promotes the concept of literate programming as originally defined by Donald Knuth (<https://guides.nyu.edu/datascience/literate-prog>). The idea behind literate programming is to make learning as easy as possible as well as provide a means of presenting code that can include graphics and explanatory text. Such an environment works incredibly well in a book because you can both easily experiment and obtain detailed information as you work through the source code.

This chapter doesn't focus much on Jupyter Notebook usage because it's similar to working with Google Colab, which [Chapter 4](#) explains fully. Even though there are slight differences in commands and appearance between the two, the products are essentially the same.

However, you do want to check your versions of Anaconda, Jupyter Notebook, and Python before going too far in the book, and you can use the following code to check them. You also find this code in the P4DS4D3\_03\_Sample.ipynb file of the downloadable source:

```
import sys
print('Python Version:\n', sys.version)

import os
result = os.popen('conda --version').read()
print('\nAnaconda Version:\n', result)

result = os.popen('conda list notebook$').read()
print('\nJupyter Notebook Version:\n', result)
```



**REMEMBER** This code essentially opens command prompts, executes commands, and returns with the configuration information. Don't worry about how it precisely works for now; the goal is to discover which versions of products you have installed on your system. The outputs show you the versions you have installed. The source code for this book was tested (and mostly written) using these version numbers:

```
Python Version:
3.10.9 | packaged by Anaconda, Inc. | ...

Anaconda Version:
conda 23.1.0


Jupyter Notebook Version:
# packages in environment at C:\Users\John\anaconda3:
#
# Name                  Version ...
notebook                6.5.2    ...
```

## ***Accessing the Anaconda Prompt***

You use the Anaconda Prompt to perform many command-line tasks related to working with Jupyter Notebook. For example, you can use it to discover the version numbers of products and libraries you have

installed, as in the previous section does. The Anaconda Prompt also provides access to the conda utility, which is used to perform various configuration tasks, such as installing libraries and creating environments so that you can test your code in multiple ways. In short, the Anaconda Prompt provides a gateway to allowing maximum flexibility with your Python programming environment, which is a significant advantage over using Google Colab (where it's a take-it-or-leave-it proposition).

The Anaconda Prompt is available in several places. The easiest way to locate it is in Anaconda Navigator. You can also access it on Windows using the Start ⇒ Anaconda Prompt (Anaconda3) command.



**REMEMBER** When you open the Anaconda Prompt, you see a window that looks much like any other command window except that the prompt will say something like “(base) C:\Users\John>.” The (base) part of the prompt is important because it tells you which environment you’re using. The (base) environment is the default and is the one you use most in the book.

## WINDOWS 10 DIFFERENCES

You may see slight differences in the Start menu organization if you’re using Windows 10. For example, to access an Anaconda prompt, you may see the entry as Start ⇒ Anaconda 3 ⇒ Anaconda Prompt. These slight differences won’t affect your ability to work with Anaconda Navigator in Windows 10.

## *Installing Anaconda on Windows*

Anaconda comes with a graphical installation application for Windows, so getting a good install means using a wizard, much as you would for any other installation. Of course, you need a copy of the installation file before you begin. The best place to find a particular version of

Anaconda is at the Anaconda archive, at <https://repo.anaconda.com/archive/>. The following procedure should work fine on any Windows system, whether you use the 32-bit or the 64-bit version of Anaconda:

### **1. Locate the downloaded copy of Anaconda on your system.**

The name of this file varies, but normally it appears as Anaconda3-2023.03-1-Windows-x86\_64.exe. The download is currently more than 786 MB, so you may not want to try it using the free connection at your favorite coffee shop. The version number is embedded as part of the filename. In this case, the filename refers to version 2023.03, which is the version used for this book. If you use some other version, you may experience problems with the source code and need to make adjustments when working with it.

### **2. Double-click the installation file.**

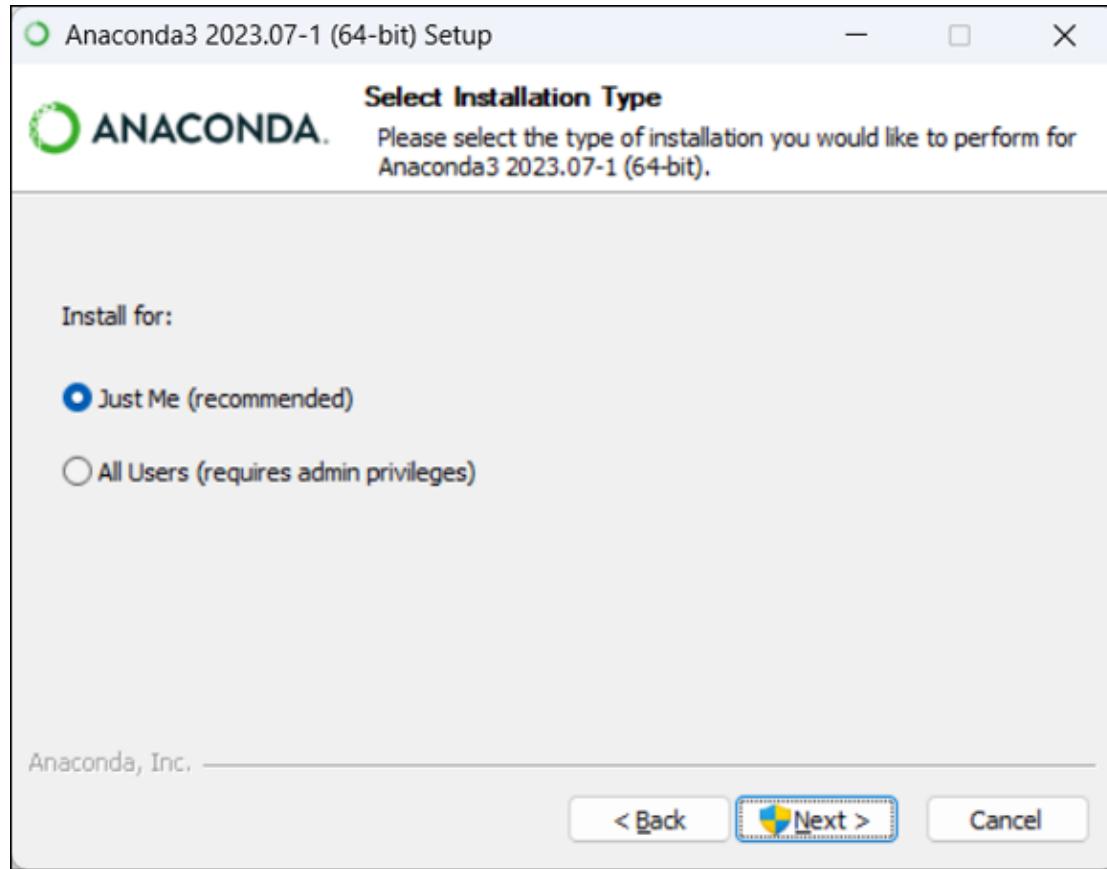
(You may see an Open File – Security Warning dialog box that asks whether you want to run this file. Click Run if you see this dialog box pop up.) You see an Anaconda 3 Setup dialog box. The exact dialog box you see depends on which version of the Anaconda installation program you download. If you have a 64-bit operating system, it's always best to use the 64-bit version of Anaconda so that you obtain the best possible performance. This first dialog box tells you when you have the 64-bit version of the product.

### **3. Click Next.**

The wizard displays a licensing agreement. Be sure to read through the licensing agreement so that you know the terms of usage.

### **4. Click I Agree if you agree to the licensing agreement.**

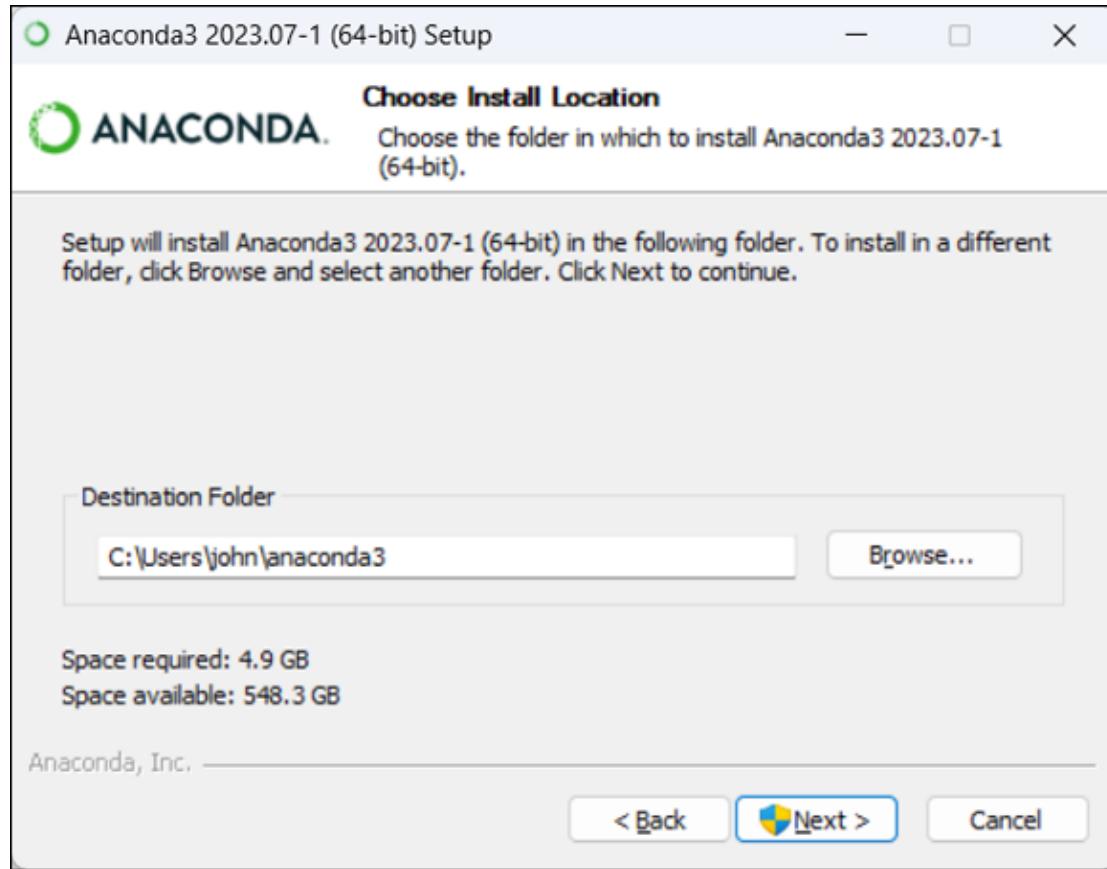
You're asked what sort of installation type to perform, as shown in [Figure 3-1](#). In most cases, you want to install the product just for yourself. The exception is if you have multiple people using your system and they all need access to Anaconda.



**FIGURE 3-1:** Tell the wizard how to install Anaconda on your system.

## 5. Choose one of the installation types and then click Next.

The wizard asks where to install Anaconda on disk, as shown in [Figure 3-2](#). The book assumes that you use the default location. If you choose some other location, you may have to modify some procedures later in the book to work with your setup.

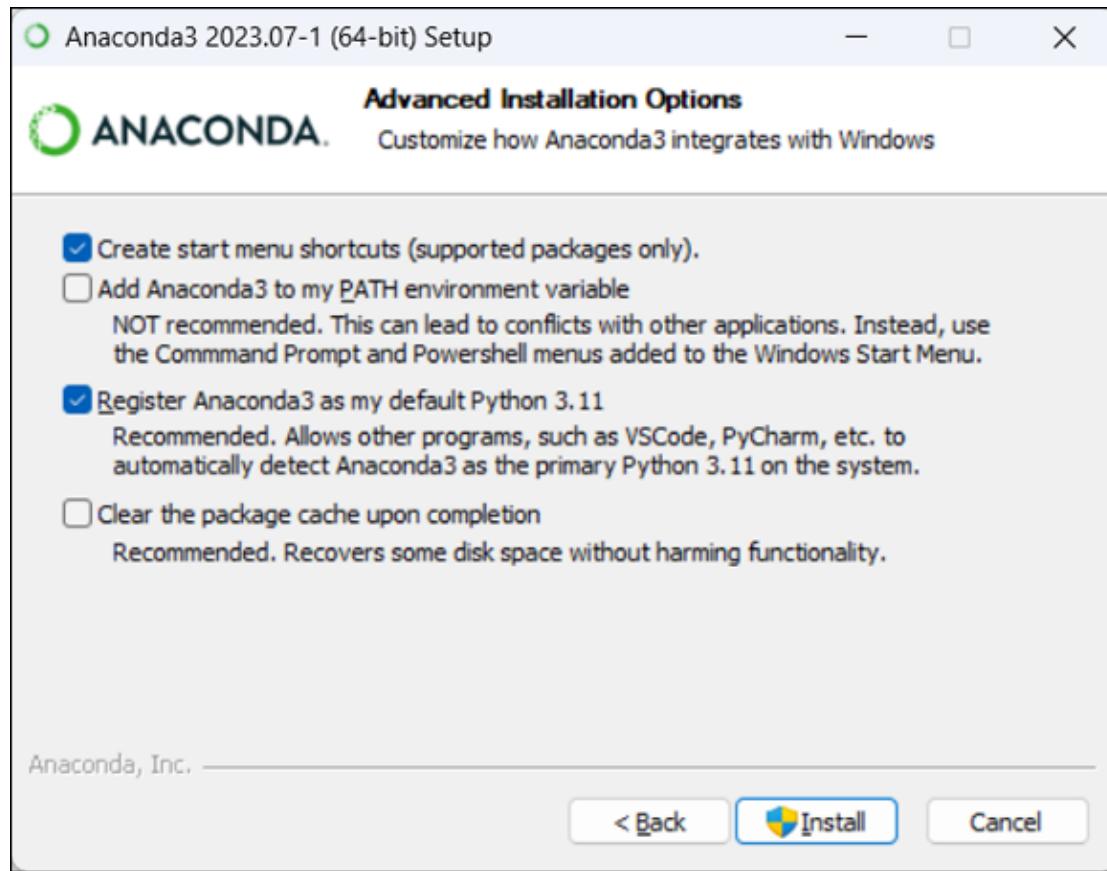


**FIGURE 3-2:** Specify an installation location.

## 6. Choose an installation location (if necessary) and then click Next.

You see the Advanced Installation Options, shown in [Figure 3-3](#).

These options are selected by default and there isn't a good reason to change them in most cases.



**FIGURE 3-3:** Configure the advanced installation options.



**TIP** The Add Anaconda to My PATH Environment Variable option is cleared by default, and you should leave it cleared. Adding it to the PATH environment variable does offer the ability to locate the Anaconda files when using a standard command prompt, but if you have multiple versions of Anaconda installed, only the first version you installed is accessible. Opening an Anaconda Prompt instead is far better so that you gain access to the version you expect.

## 7. Change the advanced installation options (if necessary) and then click Install.

You see an Installing dialog box with a progress bar. The installation process can take a few minutes, so get yourself a cup of coffee and read the comics for a while. When the installation process is over, you see a Next button enabled.

## 8. Click Next.

The wizard tells you that the installation is complete.

## 9. Click Finish.

You're ready to begin using Anaconda.

### A WORD ABOUT THE SCREENSHOTS

As you work your way through the book, you'll use an IDE of your choice to open the Python and Jupyter Notebook files containing the book's source code. Every screenshot in this book that contains IDE-specific information relies on Anaconda because Anaconda runs on all the platforms supported by the book. The use of Anaconda doesn't imply that it's the best IDE or that the authors are making any sort of recommendation for it; it simply works well as a demonstration product.

When you work with Anaconda, the name of the graphical (GUI) environment, Jupyter Notebook, is precisely the same across all three platforms, and you won't even see any significant difference in the presentation. The differences you do see are minor, and you should ignore them as you work through the book. With this in mind, the book does rely heavily on Windows screenshots. When working on a Linux or Mac OS X, you should expect to see some differences in presentation, but these differences shouldn't reduce your ability to work with the examples.

## *Installing Anaconda on Linux*

You use the command line to install Anaconda on Linux — there is no graphical installation option. Before you can perform the install, you must download a copy of the Linux software from the Anaconda site at <https://repo.anaconda.com/archive/>. On most Linux systems, you can type `curl https://repo.anaconda.com/archive/Anaconda3-2023.03-Linux-x86_64.sh --output Anaconda3-2023.03-Linux-x86_64.sh` and press Enter in the terminal window to get your copy. The following procedure should work fine on any Linux system, whether you use the 32-bit or the 64-bit version of Anaconda.

### 1. Open a copy of Terminal.



You see the Terminal window appear.

**2. Change directories to the downloaded copy of Anaconda on your system.**

The name of this file varies, but normally it appears as Anaconda3-2023.03-1-Linux-x86\_64.sh. The version number is embedded as part of the filename. In this case, the filename refers to version 2023.03, which is the version used for this book. If you use some other version, you may experience problems with the source code and need to make adjustments when working with it.

**3. Type bash Anaconda3-2023.03-1-Linux-x86\_64.sh and press Enter.**

An installation wizard starts that asks you to accept the licensing terms for using Anaconda. Note that this isn't a GUI installation; it's text-based.

**4. Read the licensing agreement and accept the terms using the method required for your version of Linux, which normally consists of typing yes and pressing Enter.**

The wizard asks you to provide an installation location for Anaconda. The book assumes that you use the default location of /home/<user name>/anaconda3. If you choose some other location, you may have to modify some procedures later in the book to work with your setup.

**5. Provide an installation location (if necessary) and press Enter (or click Next).**

You see the application extraction process begin. After the extraction is complete, you see a series of installation messages.

**6. Type yes and press Enter to initialize Anaconda 3 by running the conda init command.**

You see a series of setup messages as conda performs the required initialization tasks.

**7. Close the terminal window and open a new one before you try to work with Anaconda 3.**

When you reopen the terminal, the prompt will change to (base) <username>@<machine name>:~\$ unless you specify that you don't want conda starting during the startup process.



**TIP** To keep conda from automatically starting each time you log in, type **conda config --set auto\_activate\_base false** and press Enter at the conda prompt. If you're accessing Jupyter Notebook on a Linux server from a remote browser, follow the instructions at <https://docs.anaconda.com/free/anaconda/jupyter-notebooks/remote-jupyter-notebook/>.

## ***Installing Anaconda on Mac OS X***

The Mac OS X installation comes only in one form: 64-bit. Before you can perform the install, you must download a copy of the Mac OS X software from the Anaconda site at <https://repo.anaconda.com/archive/>. The following steps help you install Anaconda 64-bit on a Mac system.

### **1. Locate the downloaded copy of Anaconda on your system.**

The name of this file varies, but normally it appears as Anaconda3-2023.03-1-MacOSX-x86\_64.pkg. The version number is embedded as part of the filename. In this case, the filename refers to version 2023.03, which is the version used for this book. If you use some other version, you may experience problems with the source code and need to make adjustments when working with it.

### **2. Double-click the installation file.**

You see an introduction dialog box.

### **3. Click Continue.**

The wizard asks whether you want to review the Read Me materials. You can read these materials later. For now, you can safely skip the information.

#### 4. Click Continue.

The wizard displays a licensing agreement. Be sure to read through the licensing agreement so that you know the terms of usage.

#### 5. Click I Agree if you agree to the licensing agreement.

The wizard asks you to provide a destination for the installation. The destination controls whether the installation is for an individual user or a group.



**WARNING** You may see an error message stating that you can't install Anaconda on the system. The error message occurs because of a bug in the installer and has nothing to do with your system. To get rid of the error message, choose the Install Only for Me option. You can't install Anaconda for a group of users on a Mac system.

#### 6. Click Continue.

The installer displays a dialog box containing options for changing the installation type. Click Change Install Location if you want to modify where Anaconda is installed on your system (the book assumes that you use the default path of ~/anaconda). Click Customize if you want to modify how the installer works. For example, you can choose not to add Anaconda to your PATH statement. However, the book assumes that you have chosen the default install options and there isn't a good reason to change them unless you have another copy of Python 2.7 installed somewhere else.

#### 7. Click Install.

You see the installation begin. A progress bar tells you how the installation process is progressing. When the installation is complete, you see a completion dialog box.

#### 8. Click Continue.

You're ready to begin using Anaconda.



## **Downloading the Datasets and Example Code**

This book is about using Python to perform data science tasks. Of course, you could spend all your time creating the example code from scratch, debugging it, and only then discovering how it relates to data science, or you can take the easy way and download the prewritten code so that you can get right to work. Likewise, creating datasets large enough for data science purposes would take quite a while. Fortunately, you can access standardized, precreated datasets quite easily using features provided in some of the data science libraries. The following sections help you download and use the example code and datasets so that you can save time and get right to work with data science-specific tasks.

### ***Using Jupyter Notebook***

To make working with the relatively complex code in this book easier, you use Jupyter Notebook or Google Colab (see [Chapter 4](#)). This interface makes it easy to create Python notebook files that can contain any number of examples, each of which can run individually. The program runs in your browser, so which platform you use for development doesn't matter; as long as it has a browser, you should be OK.

### ***Starting Jupyter Notebook***

Most platforms provide an icon to access Jupyter Notebook. All you need to do is open this icon to access Jupyter Notebook. For example, on a Windows system, you choose Start ⇒ Jupyter Notebook (Anaconda 3) (or Start ⇒ Anaconda3 ⇒ Jupyter Notebook on a Windows 10 system). The precise appearance on your system depends on the browser you use and the kind of platform you have installed.

If you have a platform that doesn't offer easy access through an icon, you can normally type **jupyter notebook** and press Enter while in one of the conda environments. To access a conda environment, open an Anaconda Prompt or type **conda activate** and press Enter at the terminal prompt.



## **Stopping the Jupyter Notebook server**

No matter how you start Jupyter Notebook (or just Notebook, as it appears in the remainder of the book), the system generally opens a command prompt or terminal window to host Notebook. This window contains a server that makes the application work. After you close the browser window when a session is complete, select the server window and press Ctrl+C or Ctrl+Break to stop the server. Type **y** and press Enter if asked to do so. To exit the conda environment, type **conda deactivate** and press Enter.

## **Defining the code repository**

The code you create and use in this book will reside in a repository on your hard drive. Think of a *repository* as a kind of filing cabinet where you put your code. Notebook opens a drawer, takes out the folder, and shows the code to you. You can modify it, run individual examples within the folder, add new examples, and simply interact with your code in a natural manner. The following sections get you started with Notebook so that you can see how this whole repository concept works.

### **Defining a new folder**

You use folders to hold your code files for a particular project. The project for this book is P4DS4D3 (which stands for *Python for Data Science For Dummies*, 3rd Edition). The following steps help you create a new folder for this book.

#### **1. Choose New ⇒ Folder.**

Notebook creates a new folder for you. The name of the folder can vary, but for Windows users, it's simply listed as Untitled Folder. You may have to scroll down the list of available folders to find the folder in question.

#### **2. Place a check in the box next to Untitled Folder.**

#### **3. Click Rename at the top of the page.**

You see the Rename Directory dialog box, shown in [Figure 3-4](#).



**FIGURE 3-4:** Create a folder to use to hold the book's code.

#### 4. Type P4DS4D3 and press Enter.

Notebook renames the folder for you.

### *Creating a new notebook*

Every new notebook is like a file folder. You can place individual examples within the file folder, just as you would sheets of paper into a physical file folder. Each example appears in a cell. You can put other sorts of things in the file folder, too, but you see how these things work as the book progresses. Use these steps to create a new notebook.

#### 1. Click the P4DS4D3 entry on the Home page.

You see the contents of the project folder for this book, which will be blank if you're performing this exercise from scratch.

#### 2. Choose New ⇒ Python 3 (ipykernel).

You see a new tab open in the browser with the new notebook. Notice that the notebook contains a cell and that Notebook has highlighted the cell so that you can begin typing code in it. The title of the notebook is Untitled right now. That's not a particularly helpful title, so you need to change it.

#### 3. Click Untitled on the page.

Notebook asks whether you want to use a new name.

#### 4. Type P4DS4D3\_03\_Sample and press Enter.

The new name tells you that this is a file for *Python for Data Science For Dummies*, 3rd Edition, Chapter 3, Sample.ipynb. Using this

naming convention will let you easily differentiate these files from other files in your repository.

## ***Adding notebook content***

Of course, the Sample notebook doesn't contain anything just yet. This book follows a convention of putting the source code files together that makes them easy to use. The following steps tell you about this convention:

- 1. Choose Markdown from the drop-down list that currently contains the word *Code*.**

A Markdown cell contains documentation text. You can put anything in a Markdown cell because Notebook won't interpret it. By using Markdown cells, you can easily document precisely what you mean when writing code.

- 2. Type # Downloading the Datasets and Example Code and click Run (the button with the right-pointing arrow on the toolbar).**

The hash mark (#) creates a heading. A single # creates a first-level heading. The text that follows contains that actual heading information. Clicking Run turns the formatted text into a heading. Notice that Notebook automatically creates a new cell for you to use.

- 3. Choose Markdown, type ## Defining the code repository, and click Run.**

Notebook creates a second-level heading, which looks smaller than a first-level heading.

- 4. Choose Markdown, type ### Adding notebook content, and click Run.**

Notebook creates a third-level heading. Your headings now match the hierarchy that starts with the first-level heading for this section. Using this approach helps you to easily locate a particular piece of code in the downloadable source. As always, Notebook creates a new cell for you, and the cell type automatically changes to Code, so you're ready to type some code for this example.

- 5. Type `print('Python is really cool!')` and click Run.**

Notice that the code is color coded so that you can tell the difference between a function (`print`) and its associated data ('Python is really cool!'). You see the combined output of the various markdown and coding steps in [Figure 3-5](#). The output is part of the same cell as the code. However, Notebook visually separates the output from the code so that you can tell them apart. Notebook automatically creates a new cell for you.

## Downloading the Datasets and Example Code

### Defining the code repository

### Adding notebook content

```
In [1]: print('Python is really cool!')  
Python is really cool!
```

[FIGURE 3-5:](#) Notebook uses cells to store your code.

When you finish working with a notebook, shutting it down is important. To close a notebook, choose File ⇒ Close and Halt. You return to the P4DS4D3 page, where you can see the notebook you just created added to the list.

### Exporting a notebook

It isn't much fun to create notebooks and keep them all to yourself. At some point, you want to share them with other people. To perform this task, you must export your notebook from the repository to a file. You can then send the file to someone else who will import it into their repository.

The previous section shows how to create a notebook named P4DS4D3\_03\_Sample. You can open this notebook by clicking its entry in the repository list. The file reopens so that you can see your code

again. To export this code, choose File ⇒ Download As ⇒ Notebook (.ipynb). What you see next depends on your browser, but you generally see some sort of dialog box for saving the notebook as a file. Use the same method for saving the Notebook file as you use for any other file you save using your browser.

## ***Removing a notebook***

Sometimes notebooks get outdated or you simply don't need to work with them any longer. Rather than allow your repository to get clogged with files you don't need, you can remove these unwanted notebooks from the list. Notice the check box next to the P4DS4D3\_03\_Sample.ipynb entry. Use these steps to remove the file:

- 1. Select the check box next to the P4DS4D3\_03\_Sample.ipynb entry.**
- 2. Click the Delete (trashcan) icon.**

You see a Delete notebook warning message.

- 3. Click Delete.**

Notebook removes the notebook file from the list.

## ***Importing a notebook***

To use the source code from this book, you must import the downloaded files into your repository. The source code comes in an archive file that you extract to a location on your hard drive. The archive contains a list of .ipynb (IPython Notebook) files containing the source code for this book (see the Introduction for details on downloading the source code). The following steps tell how to import these files into your repository:

- 1. Click Upload on the Notebook P4DS4D3 page.**

What you see depends on your browser. In most cases, you see some type of File Upload dialog box that provides access to the files on your hard drive.

- 2. Navigate to the directory containing the files you want to import into Notebook.**

### 3. Highlight one or more files to import and click the Open (or other, similar) button to begin the upload process.

You see the file added to an upload list. The file isn't part of the repository yet — you've simply selected it for upload.

### 4. Click Upload.

Notebook places the file in the repository so that you can begin using it.

## ***Understanding the datasets used in this book***

This book uses a number of datasets, all of which appear in the Scikit-learn library. These datasets demonstrate various ways in which you can interact with data, and you use them in the examples to perform a variety of tasks. The following list provides a quick overview of the functions used to import each of the datasets into your Python code:

- » `fetch_openml()`: An open repository for machine learning data and experiments. Anyone can upload open datasets to allow access to them.
- » `fetch_california_housing()`: Regression analysis with the California housing dataset.
- » <https://archive.ics.uci.edu/ml/machine-learning-databases/statlog/german/>: Analysis with the German Credit dataset described at [https://archive.ics.uci.edu/ml/datasets/statlog+\(german+credit+data\)](https://archive.ics.uci.edu/ml/datasets/statlog+(german+credit+data)).
- » <https://raw.githubusercontent.com/allisonhorst/palmerpenguins/main/inst/extdata/penguins.csv>: Analysis with the Palmer Penguins dataset described at <https://allisonhorst.github.io/palmerpenguins/articles/intro.html>.
- » <http://files.grouplens.org/datasets/movielens/ml-1m.zip>: Analysis with the MovieLens dataset described at <https://grouplens.org/datasets/movielens/>.

The technique for loading each of these datasets is similar across examples (some of them require extra code provided with the book). The following example shows how to load the California Housing dataset. You can find the code in the P4DS4D3\_03\_Dataset\_Load.ipynb notebook.

```
from sklearn.datasets import fetch_california_housing
housing = fetch_california_housing()
print(housing.data.shape)
```

To see how the code works, click Run Cell. The output from the print call is (20640, 8). You can see the output shown in [Figure 3-6](#). (Be patient; the dataset load can require a few seconds to complete.)

## Downloading the Datasets and Example Code

### Understanding the datasets used in this book

```
In [1]: from sklearn.datasets import fetch_california_housing
housing = fetch_california_housing()
print(housing.data.shape)
```

```
(20640, 8)
```

**FIGURE 3-6:** The housing object contains the loaded dataset.

## Chapter 4

# Working with Google Colab

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## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Understanding Google Colab
  - » Accessing Google and Colab
  - » Performing essential Colab tasks
  - » Obtaining additional information
- 

### Colaboratory

(<https://colab.research.google.com/notebooks/welcome.ipynb>), or Colab for short, is a free Google cloud-based service that replicates Jupyter Notebook in the cloud. You don't have to install anything on your system to use it. In most respects, you use Colab as you would a desktop installation of Jupyter Notebook (often shortened to Notebook with an uppercase *N* throughout the book). This chapter explores Colab and discusses techniques for working with notebooks using either Jupyter Notebook or Colab.



**REMEMBER** Because you may not be using the same versions of products that appear in this book, the book's example source code may or may not work precisely as described in the text when you use Colab. Also when using Colab, you may not see the results as presented in this book because of the differences in hardware between platforms. The introductory sections of this chapter go into more detail about Colab and help you understand what you can expect from it. To use Colab, you must have a free Google account and then access Colab using your account. Otherwise, most of the Colab features won't work.

As with Notebook, you can use Colab to perform specific tasks in a cell-oriented paradigm. The next sections of the chapter go through a range of task-related topics that start with the use of notebooks. If you've used Notebook in previous chapters, you notice a strong resemblance between Notebook and Colab. Of course, you also want to perform other sorts of tasks, such as creating various cell types and using them to create notebooks that look like those you create with Notebook.

Finally, this chapter can't address every aspect of Colab, so the final section of the chapter serves as a handy resource for locating the most reliable information about Colab.

## ***Defining Google Colab***

Google Colab is the cloud version of Notebook. In fact, the Welcome page makes this fact apparent. It even uses IPython (the previous name for Jupyter) Notebook (.ipynb) files for the site. That's right: You're viewing a Notebook right there in your browser. Even though the two applications are similar and they both use .ipynb files, they do have some differences that you need to know about. The following sections help you understand the Colab differences.

### ***Understanding what Google Colab does***

You can use Colab to perform many tasks, but for the purpose of this book, you use it to write and run code, create its associated documentation, and display graphics, just as you do with Notebook. The techniques you use are similar, in fact, to using Notebook, but later in the chapter, you find out the small differences between the two. Even so, the downloadable source for this book will run without much effort on your part.

Notebook is a localized application in that you use local resources with it. You could potentially use other sources, but doing so could prove inconvenient or impossible in some cases. For example, according to <https://help.github.com/articles/working-with-jupyter-notebook-files-on-github/>, your Notebook files will appear as static HTML pages when you use a GitHub repository

(<https://docs.github.com/en/get-started/quickstart/create-a-repo>). In fact, some features won't work at all. Colab enables you to fully interact with your notebook files using GitHub as a repository. In fact, Colab supports a number of online storage options, so you can regard Colab as your online partner in creating Python code.

The other reason that you really need to know about Colab is that you can use it with your alternative device. During the writing process, some of the example code was tested on an Android-based tablet (an ASUS ZenPad 3S 10). The target tablet has Chrome installed and executes the code well enough to follow the examples. All this said, you likely won't want to try to write code using a tablet of that size — the text was incredibly small, for one thing, and the lack of a keyboard could be a problem, too. The point is that you don't absolutely have to have a Windows, Linux, or OS X system to try the code, but the alternatives may not provide quite the performance you expect.



**REMEMBER** Google Colab generally doesn't work with browsers other than Chrome or Firefox. In most cases, you see an error message and no other display if you try to start Colab in a browser that it doesn't support. Your copy of Firefox may also need some configuration to work properly (see the “[Using local runtime support](#)” section, later in this chapter, for details). The amount of configuration that you perform depends on which Colab features you choose to use. Many examples work fine in Firefox without any modification.

## ***Considering the online coding difference***

For the most part, you use Colab just as you would Notebook. However, some features work differently. For example, to execute the code within a cell, you select that cell and click the Run button (right-facing arrow) for that cell. The current cell remains selected, which means that you must actually initiate the selection of the next cell as a separate action. A block next to the output lets you clear just that output without affecting any other cell. Hovering the mouse over the block tells you when

someone executed the content. On the right side of the cell, you see a vertical ellipsis that you can click to see a menu of options for that cell. The result is the same as when using Notebook, but the process for achieving the result is different.

## SOME FIREFOX ODDITIES

Even with online help, you may still find that your copy of Firefox displays a `SecurityError: The operation is insecure.` error message. The initial error dialog box will point to some unrelated issue, such as cookies, but you see this error message when you click Details. Simply dismissing the dialog box by clicking OK will make Colab appear to be working because it displays your code, but you won't see results from running the code.

As a first step to fixing this problem, make sure that your copy of Firefox is current; older versions won't provide the required support. After you've updated your copy, setting the `network.websocket.allowInsecureFromHTTPS` preference using `About:Config` to `True` should resolve the problem, but sometimes it doesn't. In this case, verify that Firefox actually does allow third-party cookies by selecting Always for the Accept Third Party Cookies and Site Data option and selecting Remember History in the History section on the Privacy & Security tab of the Options dialog box. Restart Firefox after each change and then try Colab again. If none of these fixes works, you must use Chrome to work with Colab on your system.



**REMEMBER** The actual process for working with the code also differs from Notebook. Yes, you still type the code as you always have and the resulting code executes without problem in Colab. The difference is in the way you can manage the code. You can upload code from your local drive as desired and then save it to a Google Drive or GitHub. The code becomes accessible from any device at this point by accessing those same sources. All you need to do is load Colab to access it.

If you use Chrome when working with Colab and choose to sync your copy of Chrome among various devices, all your code becomes available

on any device you choose to work with. Syncing transfers your choices to all your devices as long as those devices are also set to synchronize their settings. Consequently, you can write code on your desktop, test it on your tablet, and then review it on your smart phone. It's all the same code, all the same repository, and the same Chrome setup, just a different device.

What you may find, however, is that all this flexibility comes at the price of speed and ergonomics. In reviewing the various options, a local copy of Notebook generally executes the code in this book faster than a copy of Colab using any of the available configurations (even when working with a local copy of the .ipynb file). So, you trade speed for flexibility when working with Colab. In addition, viewing the source code on a tablet is hard; viewing it on a smart phone is nearly impossible. If you make the text large enough to see, you can't see enough of the code to make any sort of reasonable editing possible. At best, you could review the code one line at a time to determine how it works.



**TIP** Using Notebook has other benefits, too. For example, when working with Colab, you have options to download your source files only as .ipynb or .py files. Colab doesn't include all the other download options, including (but not limited to) HTML, LaTeX, and PDF. Consequently, your options for creating presentations from the online content are also limited to some extent. In short, using Colab and Notebook provides different coding experiences to some degree. They're not mutually exclusive, however, because they share file formats. Theoretically, switching between the two as needed is possible.

One thing to consider when using Notebook and Colab is that the two products use most of the same terminology and many of the same features, but they're not completely the same. The methods used to perform tasks differ, and some of the terminology does as well. For example, a Markdown cell in Notebook is a Text cell in Colab. The

“[Performing Common Tasks](#)” section of this chapter tells you about other differences you need to consider.

## **Using local runtime support**

The only time you really need local runtime support is when you want to work within a team environment and you need the speed or resource access advantage offered by a local runtime. When using the local runtime support, Colab connects to a local copy of Notebook, so you have to have Notebook installed on your local system. Using a local runtime normally produces better speed than you obtain when relying on the cloud. In addition, a local runtime enables you to access files on your machine. A local runtime also gives you control over the version of Notebook used to execute code. You can read more about local runtime support at <https://research.google.com/colaboratory/local-runtimes.html>.



**WARNING** You need to consider several issues when determining the need for local runtime support. The most obvious is that you need a local runtime, which means that this option won’t work with your laptop or tablet unless your laptop has Windows, Linux, or OS X and the appropriate version of Notebook installed. Your laptop or tablet will also need an appropriate browser; Internet Explorer is almost guaranteed to cause problems, assuming that it works at all.

The most important consideration when using a local runtime, however, is that your machine is now open to possible infection from Notebook code. You need to trust the party supplying the code. The local runtime option doesn’t open your machine to others that you share code with, however; they must either use their own local runtimes or rely on the cloud to execute code.



**TIP** When working with Colab on using local runtime support and Firefox, you must perform some special setups. Make sure to read the Browser Specific Setups section on the Local Runtimes page to ensure that you have Firefox configured correctly. Always verify your setup. Firefox may appear to work correctly with Colab. However, a configuration issue arises when you perform tasks with it, and Colab shows error messages that say the code didn't execute (or something else that isn't particularly helpful).

## **Working with Notebooks**

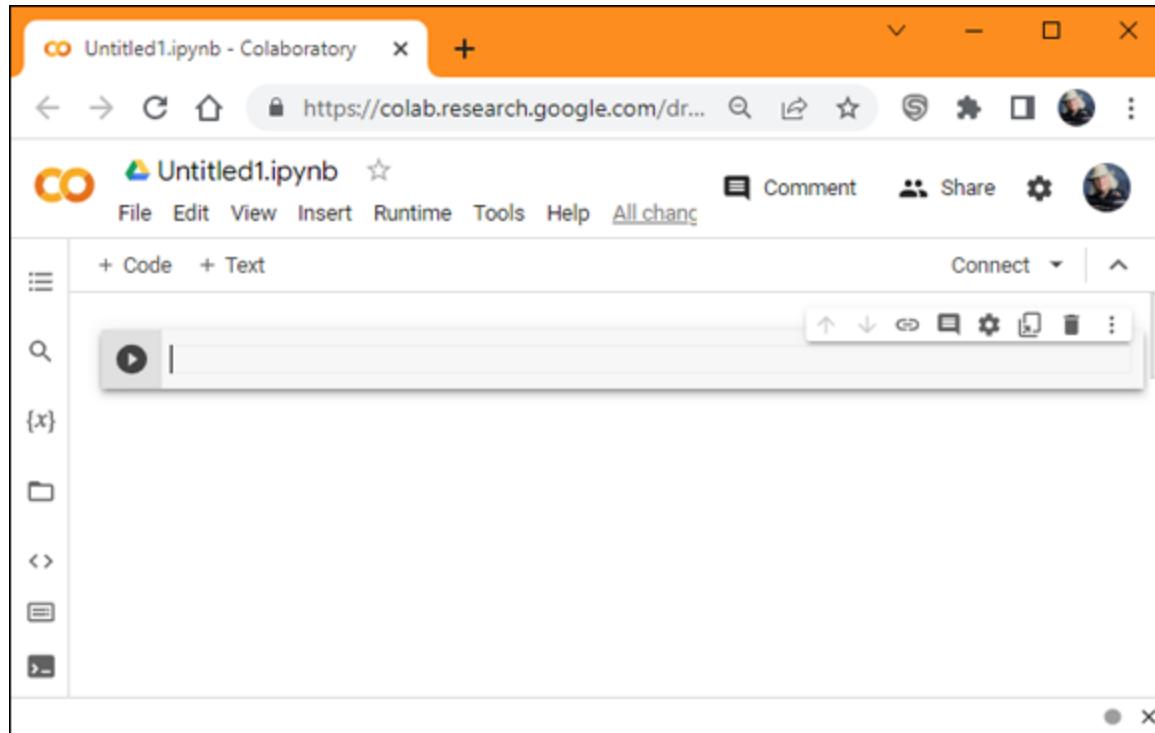
As with Jupyter Notebook, the notebook forms the basis of interactions with Colab. In fact, Colab is built on notebooks, as previously mentioned. When you place the mouse on certain parts of the Welcome page at

<https://colab.research.google.com/notebooks/welcome.ipynb>,

you see opportunities for interacting with the page by adding either code or text entries (which you can use for notes as needed). These entries are active, so you can interact with them. You can also move cells around and copy the resulting material to your Google Drive. Of course, while interacting with the Welcome page is both unexpected and fun, the real purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how to interact with Colab notebooks. The following sections describe how to perform basic notebook-related tasks with Colab.

### ***Creating a new notebook***

To create a new notebook, choose File ⇒ New Notebook. You see a new Python 3 notebook like the one shown in [Figure 4-1](#). The new notebook looks similar to, but not precisely the same as, those found in Notebook. However, all the same functionality exists.

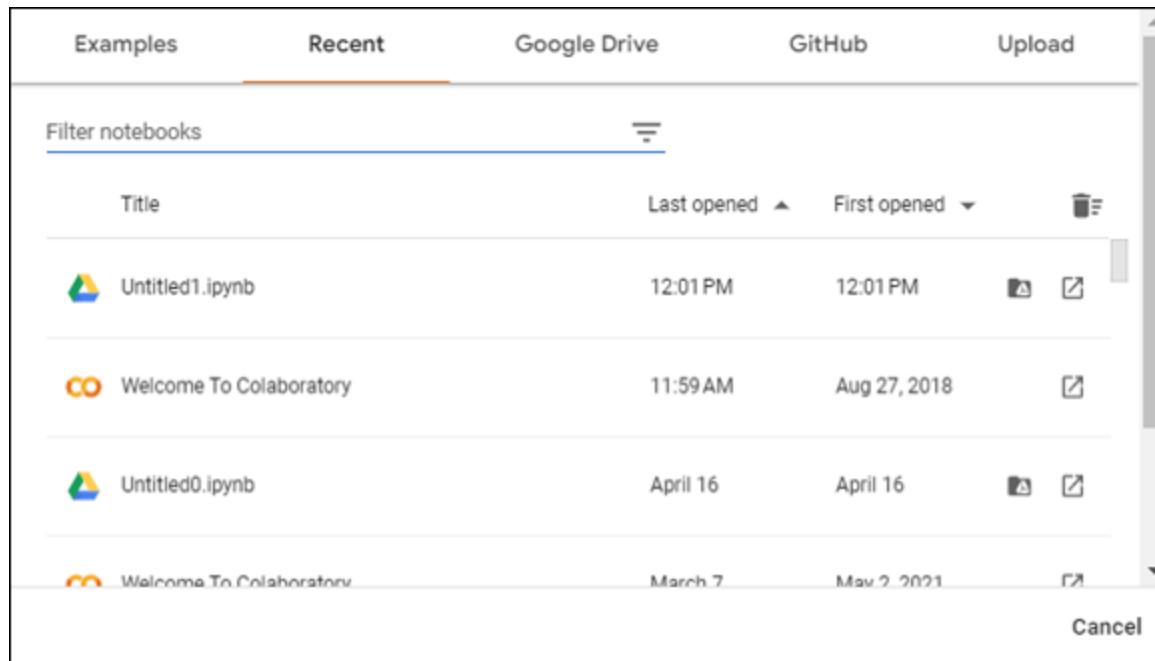


**FIGURE 4-1:** Create a new Python 3 Notebook using the same techniques as normal.

The notebook shown in [Figure 4-1](#) lets you change the filename by clicking on it, just as you do when working in Notebook. Some features work differently but provide the same results. For example, to run the code in a particular cell, you click the right-pointing arrow on the left side of that cell. In contrast to Notebook, the cell focus doesn't change to the next cell, so you must choose the next cell directly or by clicking the Next Cell or Previous Cell buttons on the toolbar.

## ***Opening existing notebooks***

You can open existing notebooks found in local storage, on Google Drive, or on GitHub. You can also open any of the Colab examples or upload files from sources that you can access, such as a network drive on your system. In all cases, you begin by choosing File ⇒ Open Notebook. You see the dialog box shown in [Figure 4-2](#).



**FIGURE 4-2:** Use this dialog box to open existing notebooks.

The default view shows all the files you opened recently, regardless of location. The files appear in alphabetical order. You can filter the number of items displayed by typing a string into the Filter Notebooks field. Across the top are other options for opening notebooks.



**TIP** Even if you're not logged in, you can still access the Colab example projects. These projects help you understand Colab but won't allow you to do anything with your own projects. Even so, you can still experiment with Colab without logging into Google first. The following sections discuss these options in more detail.

## ***Using Google Drive for existing notebooks***

Google Drive is the default location for many operations in Colab, and you can always choose it as a destination. When working with Drive, you see a list of files. To open a particular file, you click its link in the dialog box. The file opens in the current tab of your browser.

## ***Using GitHub for existing notebooks***

When working with GitHub, you initially need to provide the location of the source code online. Make sure to select Include Private Repos if you want to work with your private projects in addition to the public ones.

After you make the connection to GitHub, you see two lists: repositories, which are containers for code related to a particular project; and branches, a particular implementation of the code. Selecting a repository and branch displays a list of notebook files that you can load into Colab. Simply click the required link and it loads as if you were using a Google Drive.

### ***Using local storage for existing notebooks***

If you want to use the downloadable source for this book, or any local source for that matter, you select the Upload tab of the dialog box. In the center is a single button, Choose File. Clicking this button opens the File Open dialog box for your browser. You locate the file you want to upload, just as you normally would for opening any file.



**REMEMBER** Selecting a file and clicking Open uploads the file to Google Drive. If you make changes to the file, those changes appear on Google Drive, not on your local drive. Depending on your browser, you usually see a new window open with the code loaded.

However, you could also simply see a success message, in which case you must now open the file using the same technique as you would when using Google Drive. In some cases, your browser asks whether you want to leave the current page. You should tell the browser to do so.



**TIP** The File ⇒ Upload Notebook command also uploads a file to Google Drive. In fact, uploading a notebook works like uploading any other kind of file, and you see the same dialog box. If you want to upload other kinds of files, using the File ⇒ Upload Notebook command is likely faster.

## Saving notebooks

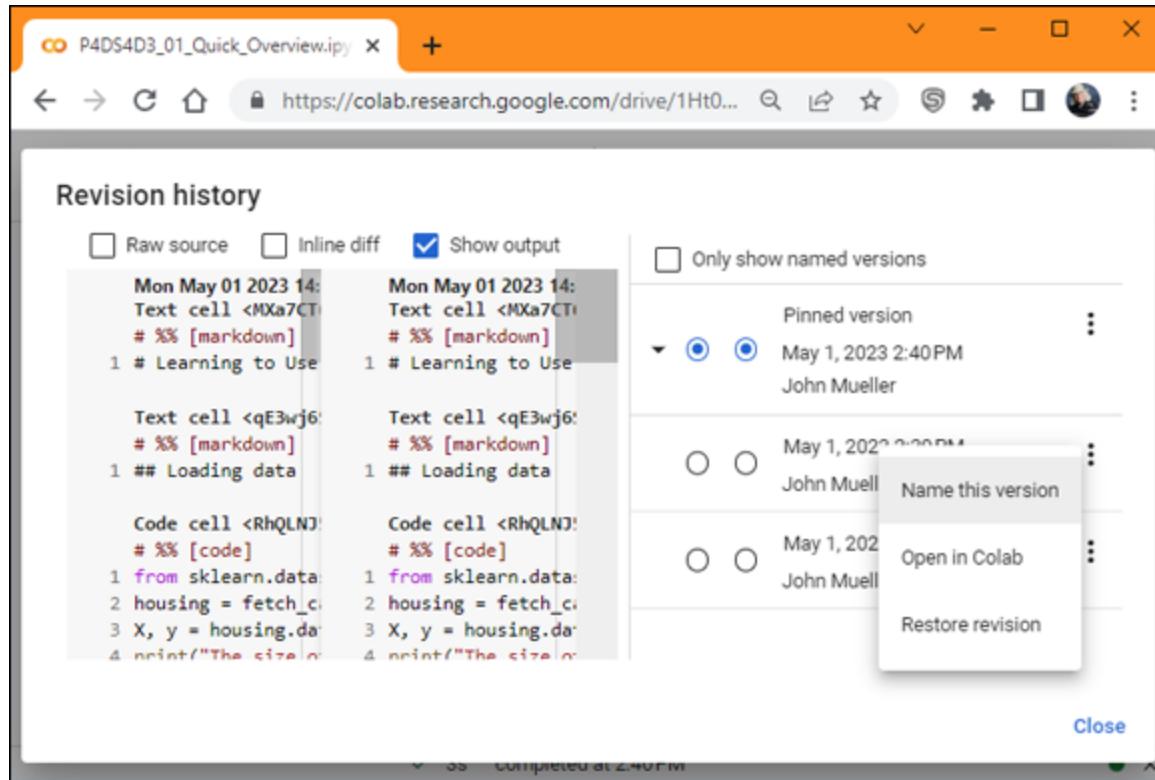
Colab provides a significant number of options for saving your notebook. However, none of these options works with your local drive. After you upload content from your local drive to Google Drive or GitHub, Colab manages the content in the cloud and not on your local drive. To save updates to your local drive, you must download the file using the techniques found in the “[Downloading notebooks](#)” section, later in this chapter. The following sections review the cloud-based options for saving notebooks.

### Using Drive to save notebooks

The default location for storing your data is Google Drive (<https://drive.google.com/>). When you choose File ⇒ Save, the content you create goes to the root directory of your Google Drive. If you want to save the content to a different folder, you need to select that folder in Google Drive.



**REMEMBER** Colab tracks the versions of your project as you perform saves. However, as these revisions age, Colab removes the older versions. To save a version that won't age, you use the File ⇒ Save and Pin Revision command. To see the revisions for your project, choose File ⇒ Revision History. You see the output shown in [Figure 4-3](#). Notice that the first entry is pinned. You can also pin entries by checking the entry in the History list. The revision history also shows you the modification date, who made the revision, and the size of the resulting file.



**FIGURE 4-3:** Colab maintains a history of the revisions for your project.

Click the vertical ellipsis (three dots) next to an entry to see the additional options shown in [Figure 4-3](#). You can name the revision, open it in Colab, or restore the current code to the selected revision. Naming a revision makes it easier to find, and you can use this technique for revisions that have special significance.

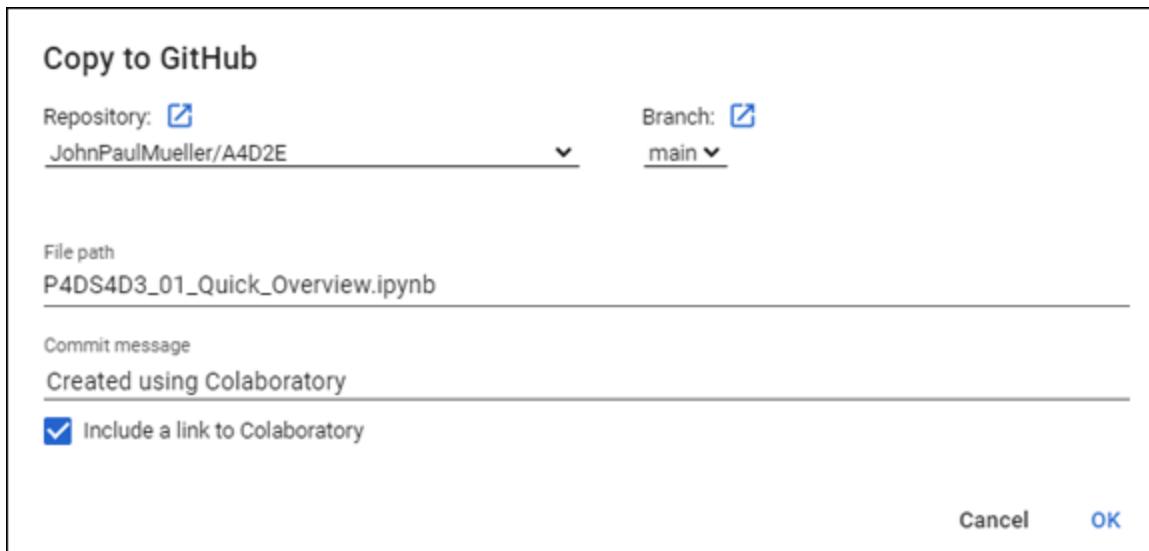
You can also save a copy of your project by choosing File ⇒ Save a Copy In Drive. The copy receives the word *Copy* as part of its name. Of course, you can rename it later. Colab stores the copy in the current Google Drive folder.

### ***Using GitHub to save notebooks***

GitHub provides an alternative to Google Drive for saving content. It offers an organized method of sharing code for the purpose of discussion, review, and distribution. You can find GitHub at <https://github.com/>.

To save a file to GitHub, choose File ⇒ Save a Copy in GitHub. If you aren't already signed into GitHub, Colab displays a window that requests

your sign-in information. After you sign in, you see a dialog box similar to the one shown in [Figure 4-4](#).



[FIGURE 4-4:](#) Using GitHub means storing your data in a repository.



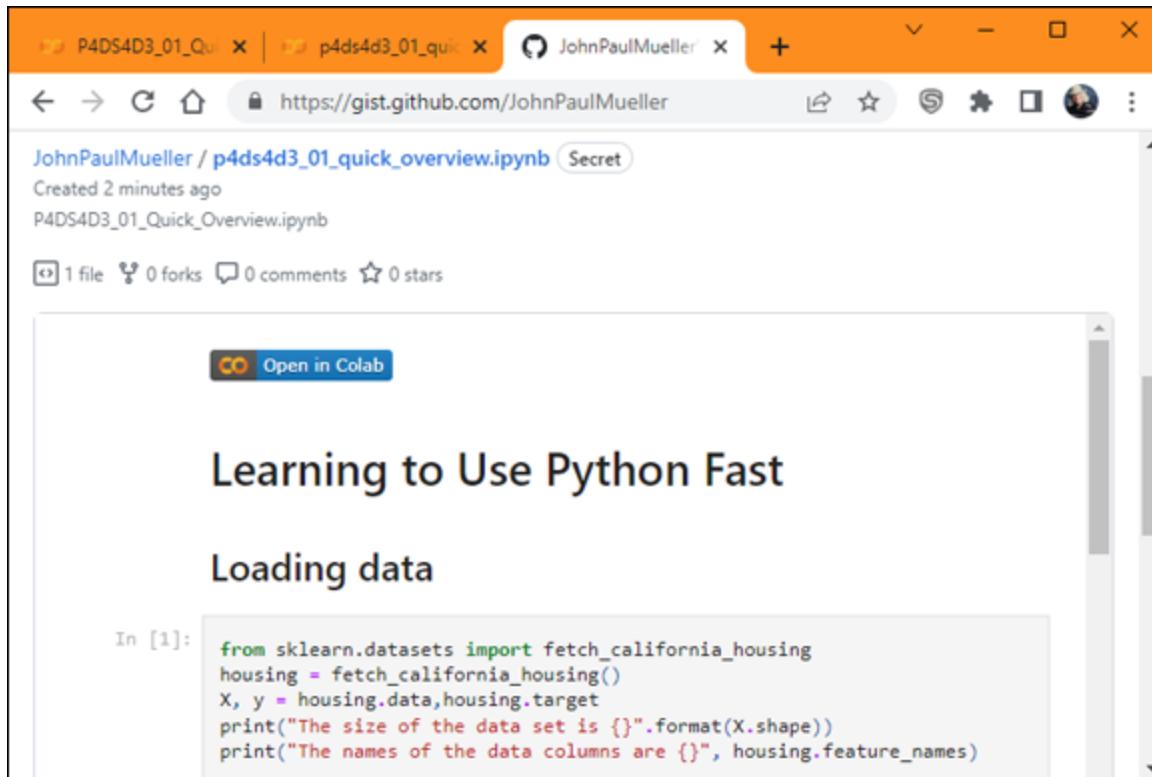
**TIP** The best way to work with GitHub is to create the repository on your GitHub account first, and then access it from Colab. This approach lets you do things like create the `Readme.md` file, set public or private access, invite others to view the code, and set up any required security. You can go to your repositories by clicking the button next to Repository, shown in [Figure 4-4](#).

### ***Using GitHub gists to save notebooks***

You use GitHub gists as a means of sharing single files or other resources with other people. Some people use them for full projects as well, but the idea is that you have a concept that you want to share — something that isn't quite fully formed and doesn't represent a usable application. You can read more about gists at <https://help.github.com/articles/about-gists/>.

As with GitHub's public and private repositories, gists come in both public and secret (private) form. You can access both public and secret gists from Colab, but Colab automatically keeps your files secret. To

save your current project as a gist, you choose File ⇒ Save a Copy as a GitHub Gist. Unlike GitHub, you don't need to create a repository or do anything fancy in this case. The file saves as a gist without any extra effort. The resulting entry always contains an Open in Colab button link, as shown in [Figure 4-5](#).



[FIGURE 4-5:](#) Use gists to store individual files or other resources.

## Downloading notebooks

Colab supports two methods for downloading notebooks to your local drive: .ipynb files (using File ⇒ Download .ipynb) and .py files (using File ⇒ Download .py). In both cases, the file appears in the default download directory for your browser; Colab doesn't offer a method for downloading the file to a specific directory.

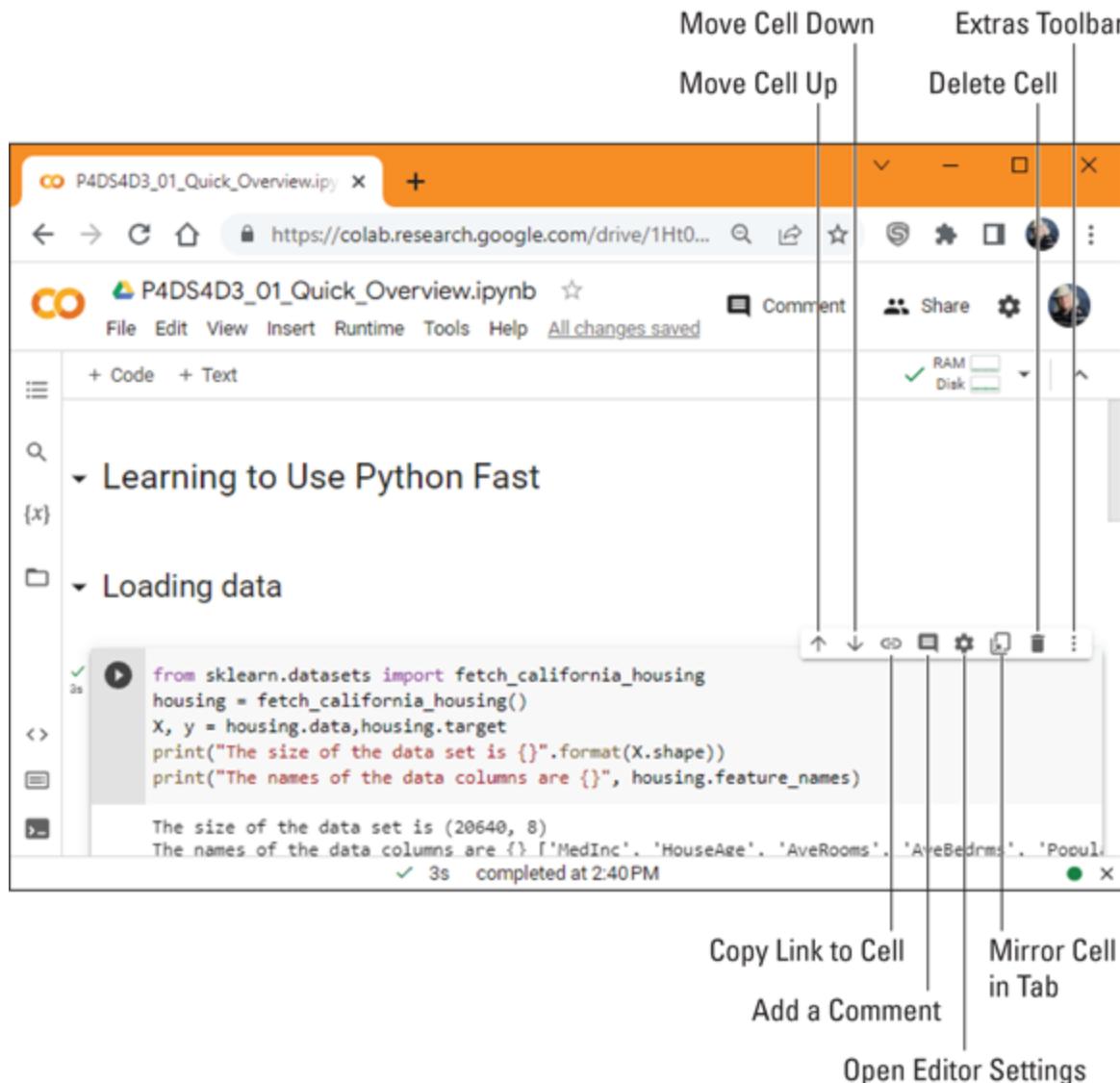
## Performing Common Tasks

Most tasks in Colab work similar to their Notebook counterparts. For example, you can create code cells just as you do in Notebook. Markdown cells come in three forms: text, heading, and table of

contents. They work somewhat differently from the markdown cells found in Notebook, but the idea is the same. You can also edit and move cells, just as you do with Notebook. One important difference is that you can't change a cell type. A cell that you create as a header can't suddenly transform into a code cell. The following sections provide a brief overview of the various features.

## ***Creating code cells***

The first cell that Colab creates for you is a code cell. The code you create in Colab uses all the same features that you find in Notebook. However, off to the side of the cell, you see a menu of extras that you can use with Colab that aren't present in Notebook. You can access some of these options by clicking the vertical ellipsis, shown at the rightmost end of the toolbar menu at the side of the cell in [Figure 4-6](#).



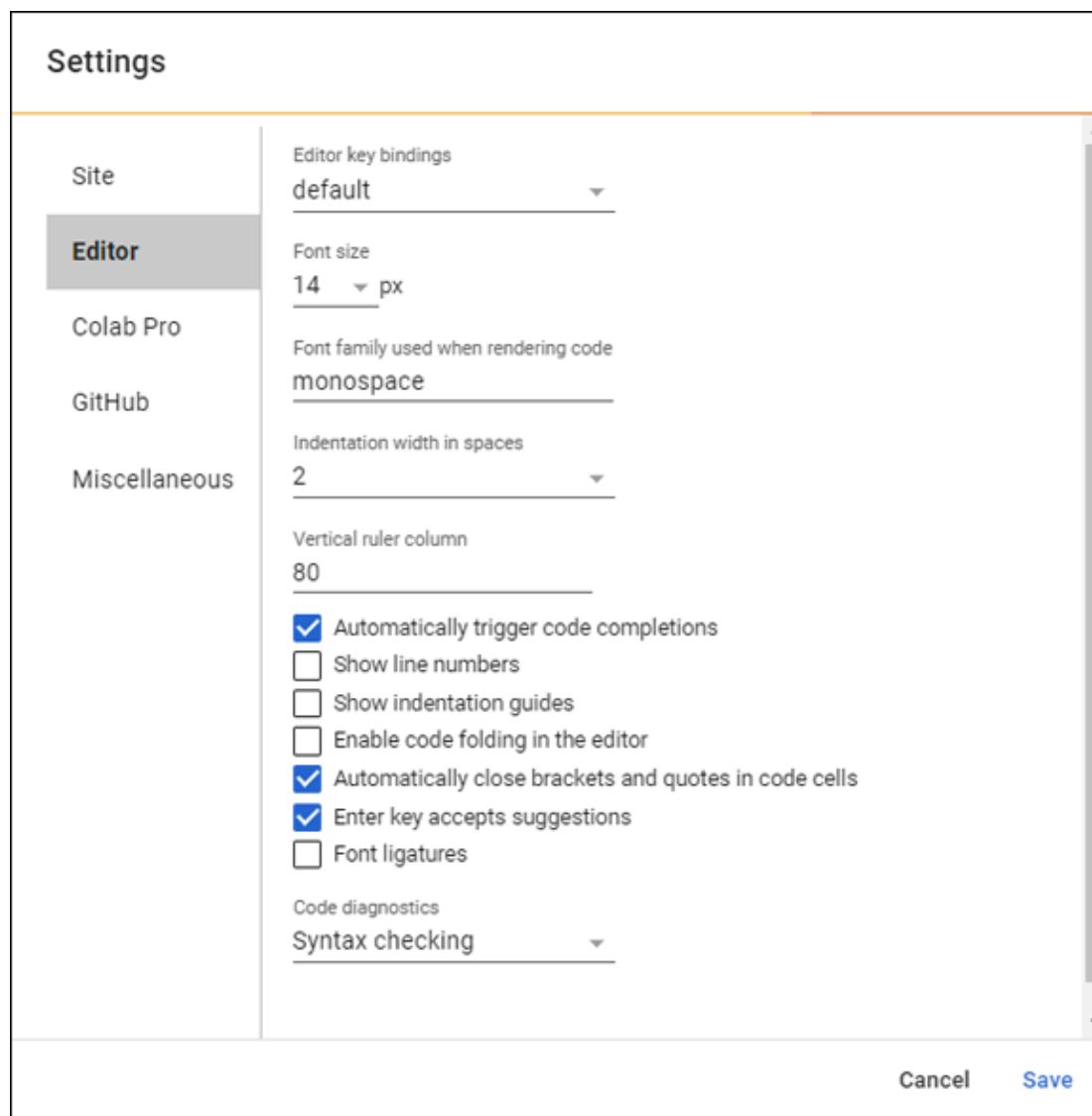
**FIGURE 4-6:** Colab code cells contain a few extras not found in Notebook.

You use the options shown in [Figure 4-6](#) to augment your Colab code experience. The following list (shown in order of appearance in [Figure 4-6](#)) provides a short description of these features:

- » **Move Cell Up:** Moves the selected cell up in the hierarchy of cells by one position.
- » **Move Cell Down:** Moves the selected cell down in the hierarchy of cells by one position.
- » **Copy Link to Cell:** Places a link to the selected cell on the Clipboard. You can use this link to access a specific cell within the

notebook. You can embed this link anywhere on a web page or within a notebook to allow someone to access that specific cell. The person still sees the entire notebook but doesn't have to search for the cell you want to discuss.

- » **Add a Comment:** Creates a comment balloon to the right of the cell. This is not the same as a code comment, which exists in line with the code but affects the entire cell. You can edit, delete, or resolve comments. A resolved comment is one that has received attention and is no longer applicable.
- » **Open Editor Settings:** Displays the dialog box shown in [Figure 4-7](#) that you can use to modify Colab's behavior.



**FIGURE 4-7:** Use the Editor tab of the Settings dialog box to modify the behavior of the editor.

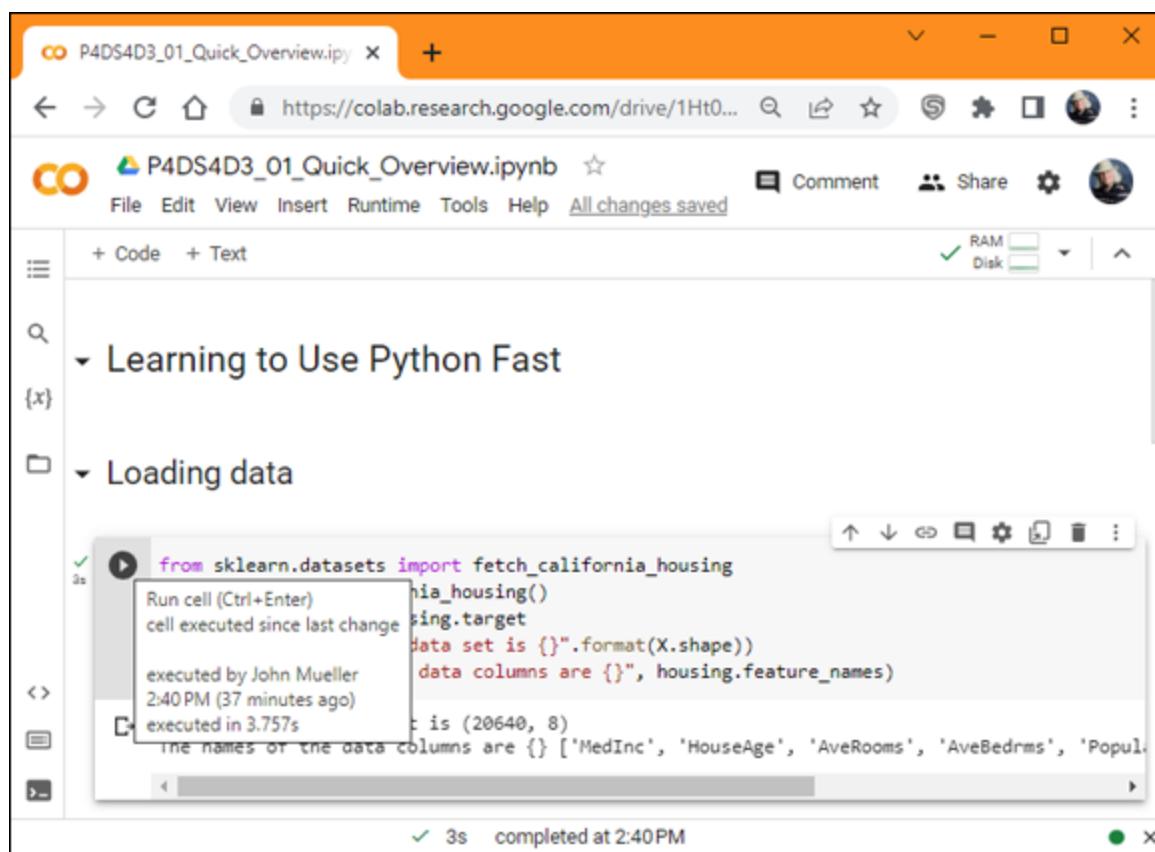
- » **Mirror Cell in Tab:** Creates a mirror view of the selected tab in a side window for more detailed editing.
- » **Delete Cell:** Removes the cell from the notebook.
- » **Ellipsis Entries:** Click the vertical ellipsis to see these entries:
  - **Select Cell:** Selects all the text in the cell.
  - **Copy Cell:** Copies the selected content in the current cell and places it on the Clipboard.
  - **Cut Cell:** Removes the selected content from the current cell and places it on the Clipboard.
  - **Clear Output:** Removes the output from the cell. You must run the code again to regenerate the output.
  - **View Output Fullscreen:** Displays the output (not the entire cell or any other part of the notebook) in full-screen mode on the host device. This option is useful when displaying a significant amount of content or when a detailed view of graphics helps explain a topic. Press Esc to exit full-screen mode.
  - **Add a Form:** Inserts a form into the cell to the right of the code. You use forms to provide a graphical input for parameters. Forms don't appear in Notebook, but because of how you create them, they won't prevent you from running the code in Notebook. You can read more about forms at <https://colab.research.google.com/notebooks/forms.ipynb>.

Code cells also tell you about the code and its execution. The little run icon next to the output displays information about the execution when you hover your mouse over it, as shown in [Figure 4-8](#). Clicking the output icon below it clears the output. You must run the code again to regenerate the output.

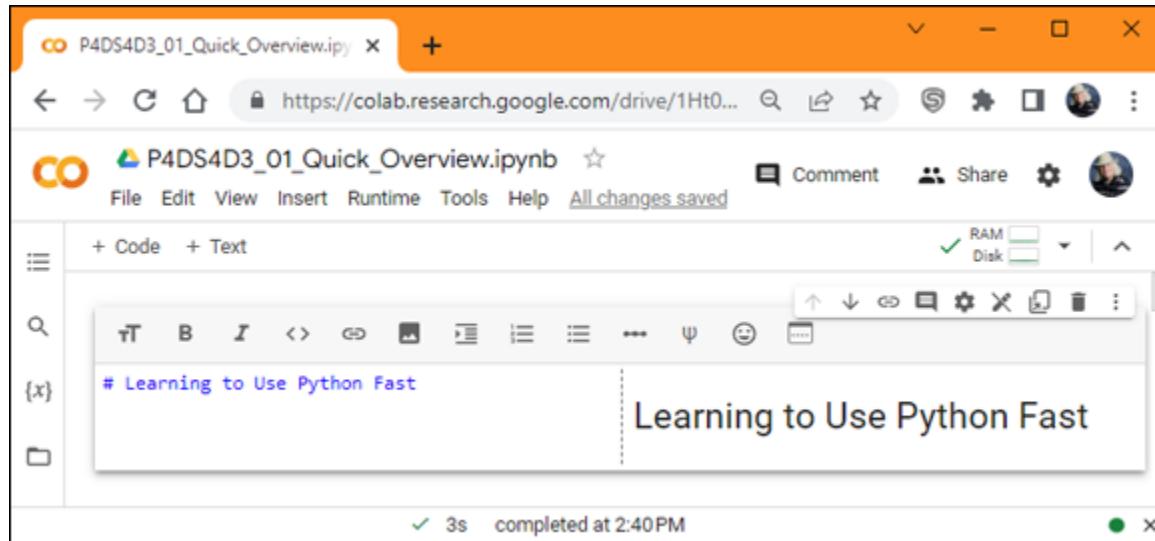
## Creating text cells

Text cells work much like Markup cells in Notebook. However, [Figure 4-9](#) shows that you receive additional help in formatting the text using a graphical interface. The markup is the same, but you have the option of allowing the GUI to help you create the markup. For example, in this case, to create the # sign for a heading, you click the double T icon that appears first in the list. Clicking the double T icon again would increase the header level. To the right, you see how the text will appear in the notebook.

Notice the menu to the right of the text cell. This menu contains many of the same options that a code cell does. For example, you can create a list of links to help people access specific parts of your notebook through an index. Unlike Notebook, you can't execute text cells to resolve the markup they contain.



**FIGURE 4-8:** Colab code cells contain a few extras not found in Notebook.



**FIGURE 4-9:** Use the GUI to make formatting your text easier.

## *Creating special cells*

The special cells that Colab provides are variations of the text cell. These special cells, which you access using the Insert menu option, make creating the required cells faster. Of these additions, section headers are the most interesting. When you choose Insert ⇒ Section Header Cell, you see a new cell created below the currently selected cell that has the appropriate header level 1 entry in it. You can increase the heading level by clicking the double *T* icon. The GUI looks the same as the one in [Figure 4-9](#), so you have all the standard formatting features for your text.

## *Editing cells*

Both Colab and Notebook have Edit and View menus that contain the options you expect, such as the ability to cut, copy, and paste cells. The two products have some interesting differences. For example, Notebook allows you to split and merge cells. Colab contains an option to show or hide the code as a toggle. These differences give the products slightly different flavors but don't really change your ability to use them to create and modify Python code.

## *Moving cells*

The same technique you use for moving cells in Notebook also works with Colab. The only difference is that Colab relies exclusively on

toolbar buttons, while Notebook also has cell movement options on the Edit menu.

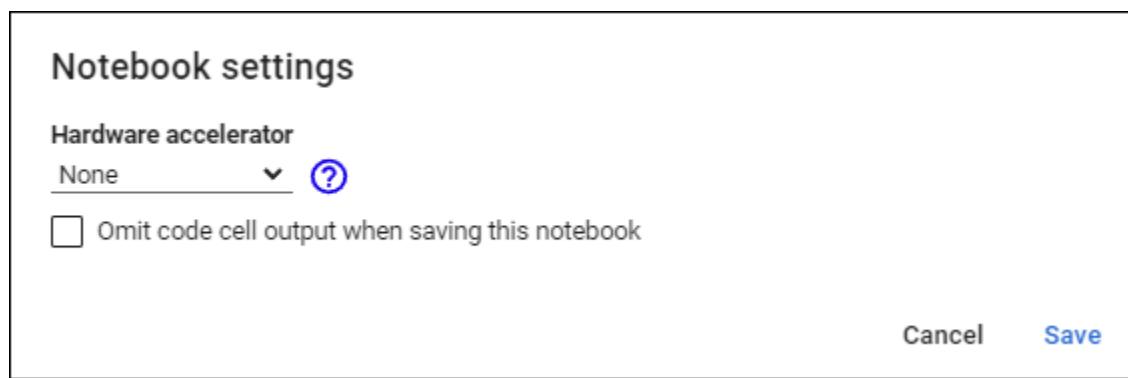
## Using Hardware Acceleration

Your Colab code executes on a Google server. All your computing device does is host a browser that displays the code and its results. Consequently, any special hardware on your computing device is ignored unless you choose to execute code locally.



**TIP** Fortunately, you do have another option when working with Colab. Choose Edit ⇒ Notebook Settings to display the Notebook Settings dialog box shown in [Figure 4-10](#). This dialog box gives you a way to add GPU and TPU execution for your code. The article at

<https://research.google.com/colaboratory/faq.html#gpu-availability> provides additional details on how this feature works. The availability of a GPU isn't an invitation to run large computations using Colab. The research site article tells you about the limitations of the Colab hardware acceleration (including that it may not be available when you need it).



**FIGURE 4-10:** Hardware acceleration speeds code execution.

The Notebook Settings dialog box also lets you choose whether to include cell output when saving the notebook. Given that you store your

notebook in the cloud in most cases and that loading large files into your browser can be time consuming, this feature enables you to restart a session more quickly. Of course, the trade-off is that you must now regenerate all the outputs you need.

## ***Executing the Code***

For your notebook to be useful, you need to run it at some point. Previous sections have mentioned the right-pointing arrow that appears in the current cell. Clicking it runs just the current cell. Of course, you have other options than clicking the right-pointing arrow, and all these options appear on the Runtime menu. The following list summarizes these options:

- » **Running the current cell:** Besides clicking the right-pointing arrow, you can also choose Runtime ⇒ Run the Focused Cell to execute the code in the current cell.
- » **Running other cells:** Colab provides options on the Runtime menu for executing the code in the next cells, the previous cells, or a selection of cells. Simply choose the option that matches the cell or set of cells you want to execute.
- » **Running all the cells:** In some cases, you want to execute all the code in a notebook. In this case, choose Runtime ⇒ Run All. Execution starts at the top of the notebook, in the first cell containing code, and continues to the last cell that contains code in the notebook. You can stop execution at any time by choosing Runtime ⇒ Interrupt Execution.



**TIP** Choosing Runtime ⇒ Manage Sessions displays a dialog box containing a list of all the sessions that are currently executing for your account on Colab. You can use this dialog box to determine when the code in that notebook last executed and how much memory the notebook consumes. Click Terminate to end execution for a particular notebook. Click Close to close the dialog box and return to your current notebook.

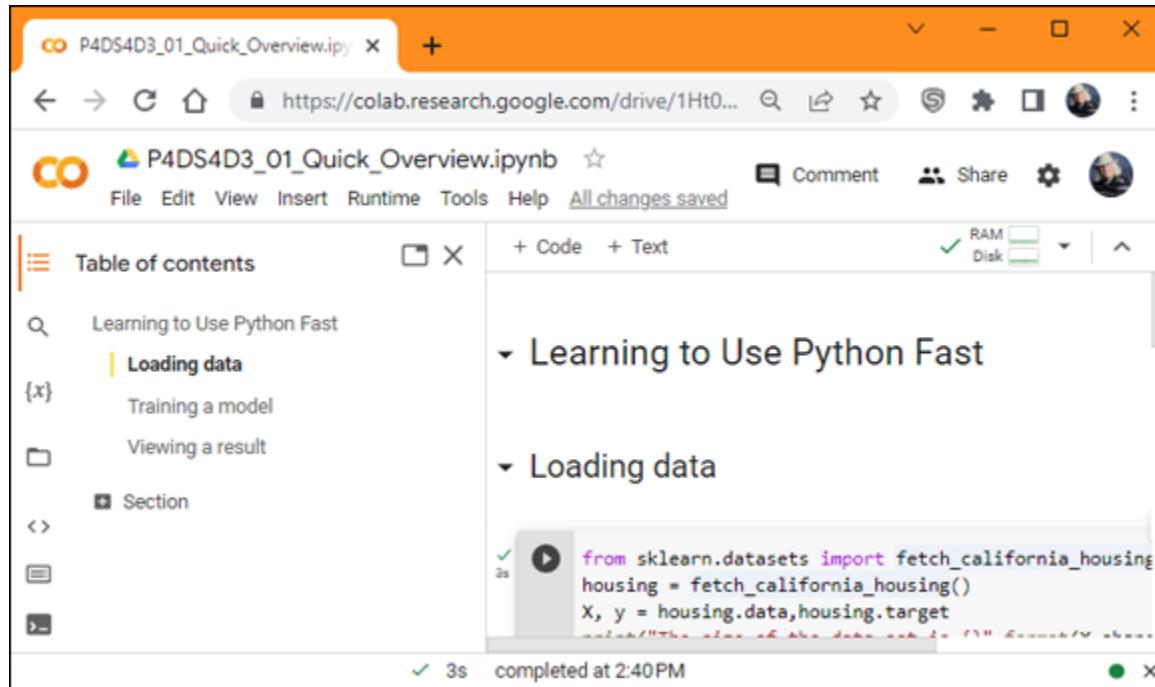
Use the Runtime ⇒ Restart Runtime command to restart your runtime after working with the code for a while. Doing so resets everything so that you can verify that your code works as intended after making a lot of changes.

## ***Viewing Your Notebook***

A notebook has a Table of Contents icon in its right margin. Clicking this icon displays a pane containing tabs that show various kinds of information about your notebook. You can also choose specific pieces of information to see from the View menu. To close this pane, click the *X* in the upper-right corner of the pane. The following sections describe each of these pieces of information.

### ***Displaying the table of contents***

Choose View ⇒ Table of Contents to see a table of contents for your notebook, as shown in [Figure 4-11](#). Clicking any of the entries takes you to that section of the notebook.

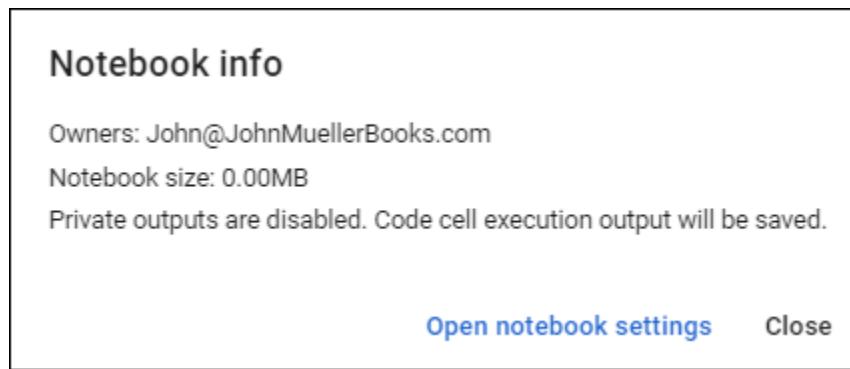


**FIGURE 4-11:** Use the table of contents to navigate your notebook.

At the bottom of the pane is a + Section button. Click this button to create a new header cell below the currently selected cell.

## ***Getting notebook information***

When you choose View ⇒ Notebook Info, you see a dialog box open as shown in [Figure 4-12](#). This dialog box contains the notebook size, settings, and owner.



**FIGURE 4-12:** The notebook information includes both size and settings.

The Notebook Info tab also includes a link to Open Notebook Settings (see [Figure 4-10](#)) in which you can choose whether the notebook relies

on hardware acceleration, as described in the “[Using Hardware Acceleration](#)” section, earlier in this chapter.

### ***Checking code execution***

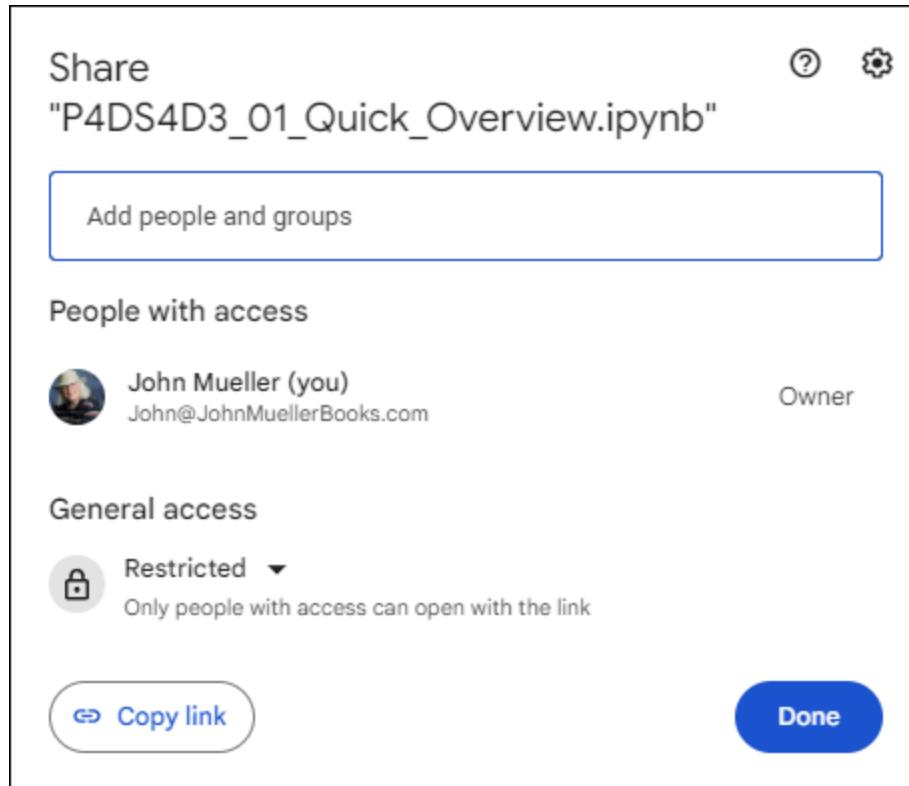
Colab keeps track of your code as you execute it. Choose View ⇒ Executed Code History to display the Executed Code tab in the pane at the right of the window. Note that the number associated with the entries in the Executed Code tab may not match the numbers associated with the associated cells. In addition, each unique execution of code receives a separate number.

## ***Sharing Your Notebook***

You can share your Colab notebooks in a number of ways. For example, you can save them to GitHub or GitHub gists. However, the two most direct methods are the following:

- » Create a share message and send it to the recipient.
- » Obtain a link to the code and send the link to the recipient.

In both cases, you click the Share button in the upper right of the Colab window. The Share dialog box opens (see [Figure 4-13](#)).



**FIGURE 4-13:** Send a message or obtain a link to share your notebook.

When you enter one or more names in the People field, an additional field opens in which to add a sharing message. You can type a message and click Send to send the link immediately. If you click Advanced (when available) instead, you see another dialog box, where you can define how to share the notebook.

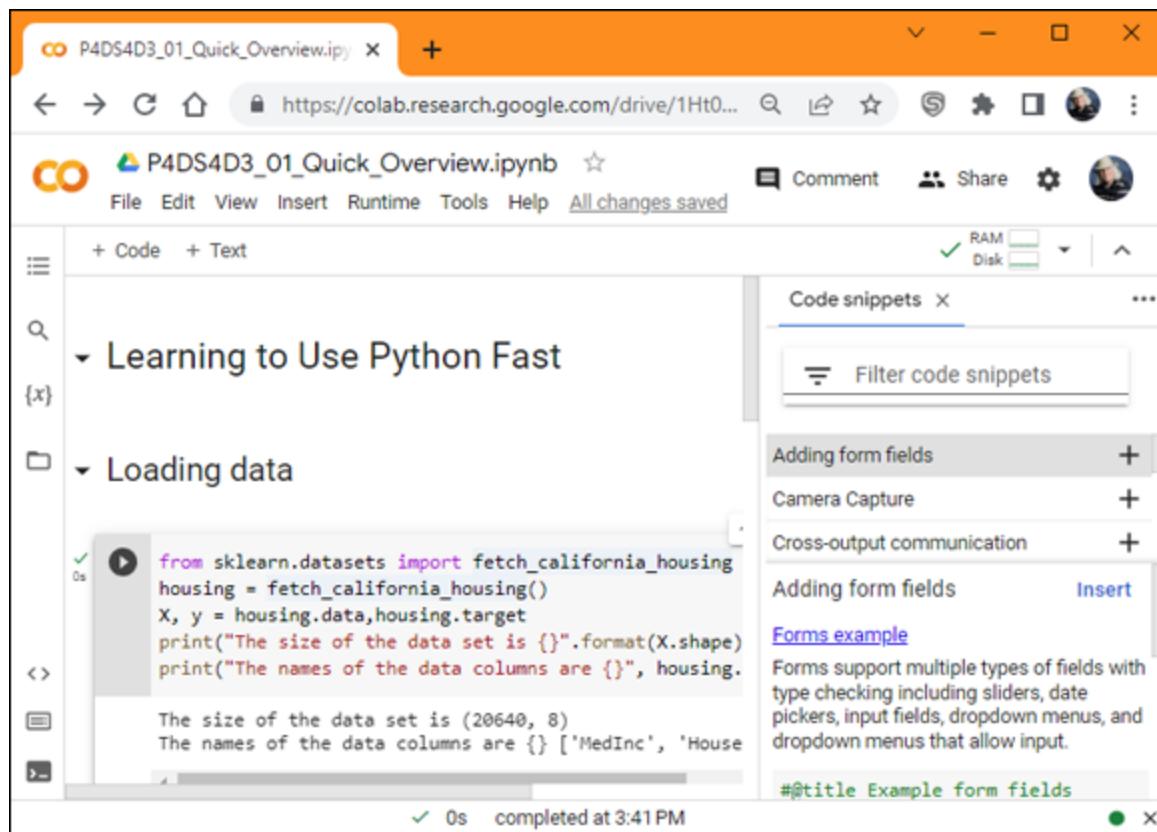
At the bottom of the Share dialog box, you see the Copy Link button. Clicking Copy Link places the URL on the Clipboard for your device, and you can paste it into messages or other forms of communication with others.

## Getting Help

The most obvious place to obtain help with Colab is from the Colab Help menu. This menu contains all the usual entries for accessing frequently asked questions (FAQs) pages. The menu doesn't have a link to general help, but you can find general help at <https://colab.research.google.com/notebooks/welcome.ipynb>

(which requires you to log into the Colab site). The menu also provides options for submitting a bug and sending feedback.

One of the more intriguing Help menu entries is Search Code Snippets. This option opens the pane shown in [Figure 4-14](#), in which you can search for example code that could meet your needs with a little modification. Clicking the Insert button inserts the code at the current cursor location in the cell that has focus. Each of the entries also shows an example of the code.



**FIGURE 4-14:** Use code snippets to write your applications more quickly.



## Part 2

# Getting Your Hands Dirty with Data

## IN THIS PART ...

- Setting up your data science toolbox
- Performing essential data interactions
- Taming data for use in data science
- Bending data to your will
- Putting everything together

## Chapter 5

# Working with Jupyter Notebook

---

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Working with Jupyter Notebook
  - » Interacting with multimedia and graphics
- 

Up to this point, the book spends a lot of time working with Python to perform data science tasks without actually engaging the tools provided by Anaconda much. Yes, a good deal of what you do involves typing in code and seeing what happens. However, if you don't actually know how to use your tools well, you miss opportunities to perform tasks easier and faster. Automation is an essential part of performing data science tasks in Python.

This chapter is about working with Jupyter Notebook. Earlier chapters give you some experience with this tool, but those chapters don't explore Jupyter Notebook in any detail, and you need to know it a lot better for upcoming chapters. The skills you develop in this chapter will help you perform tasks in later chapters with greater speed and far less effort.

The chapter also looks at tasks you can perform with your newfound skills. You develop even more skills as the book progresses, but these tasks help put your new skills into perspective and appreciate how you can use them to make working with Python even easier.



**REMEMBER** You don't have to manually type the source code for this chapter. In fact, it's a lot easier if you use the downloadable source. The source code for this chapter appears in the P4DS4D3\_05\_Understanding\_the\_Tools.ipynb source code file. (See the Introduction for details on where to locate this file.)

# Using Jupyter Notebook

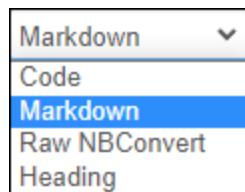
The Jupyter Notebook Integrated Development Environment (IDE) is part of the Anaconda suite of tools. The following sections help you understand some of the interesting things that Jupyter Notebook (simply called Notebook) can help you do.

## Working with styles

Here's one of the ways in which Notebook excels over just about any other IDE that you'll ever use: It helps you to create nice-looking output. Rather than have a screen full of a whole bunch of plain-old code, you can use Notebook to create sections and add styles so that the output is nicely formatted. What you can end up with is a good-looking report that just happens to contain executable code. The reason for this improved output is the use of styles.

When you type code into Notebook, you place the code in a cell. Each section of code that you create goes into a separate cell. When you need to create a new cell, you click Insert Cell Below (the button with a plus sign) on the toolbar. Likewise, when you decide that you no longer need a cell, you select it and then click Cut Cell (the button with a scissors) to place the deleted cell on the Clipboard, or choose Edit ⇒ Delete Cells to remove it completely.

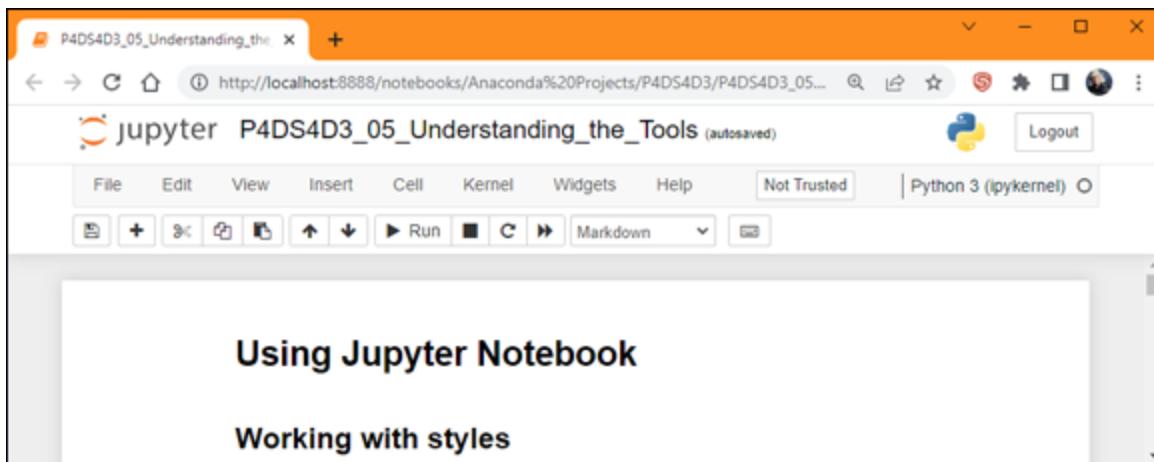
The default style for a cell is Code. However, when you click the down arrow next to the Code entry, you see a listing of styles, as shown in [Figure 5-1](#).



**FIGURE 5-1:** Notebook makes adding styles to your work easy.

The various styles shown help you format content in various ways. The Markdown style is most definitely used to separate varies entries. To try it for yourself, choose Markdown from the drop-down list, type the

heading for this main chapter section, **# Using Jupyter Notebook**, in the first cell; next, click Run. The content changes to a heading. The single hash (#) tells Notebook that this is a first-level heading. Notice that clicking Run automatically adds a new cell and places the cursor in it. To add a second-level heading, choose Markdown from the drop-down list, type **## Working with styles**, and click Run. [Figure 5-2](#) shows that the two entries are indeed headings and that the second entry is smaller than the first.



[FIGURE 5-2:](#) Adding headings makes separating content in your notebooks easy.

The Markdown style also lets you add HTML content. This markdown content can contain anything a web page contains with regard to standard HTML tags. Another way to create a first-level heading is to define the cell type as Markdown, type **<h1>Using Jupyter Notebook</h1>**, and then click Run. In general, you use HTML to provide documentation and links to outside material. Relying on HTML tags makes it possible to include things like lists or even pictures. In short, you can actually include an HTML document fragment as part of your notebook, which makes Notebook much more than a simple means of writing down code.

The use of the Raw NBConvert formatting option is outside the scope of this book. However, it provides you with the means for including information that shouldn't be modified by the notebook converter (NBConvert). You can output notebooks in a variety of formats, and NBConvert performs this task for you. You can read about this feature at

<https://nbconvert.readthedocs.io/en/latest/>. The goal of the Raw NBConvert style is to allow you to include special content, such as Lamport TeX (LaTeX) content. The LaTeX document system isn't tied to a particular editor — it's simply a means of encoding scientific documents.

## Getting Python help

Notebook provides you with the resources to get the commonly required help you need. To obtain help, select one of the entries on the Help menu, shown in [Figure 5-3](#).

As shown in [Figure 5-3](#), you not only get help with Notebook and the markdown used to create entries for a Markdown cell, but you also get a complete Python reference and references to the most common libraries that developers use. When you choose an entry, a new web page opens containing the help information you require.



**FIGURE 5-3:** The Help menu contains a selection of common help topics.



**TIP** If you need additional help working with the Notepad interface, choose Help ⇒ User Interface Tour. Use the right and left arrows to move between helpful balloons showing the various Notepad features. When you're finished with your review, press Esc to exit the tour.

## ***Using magic functions***

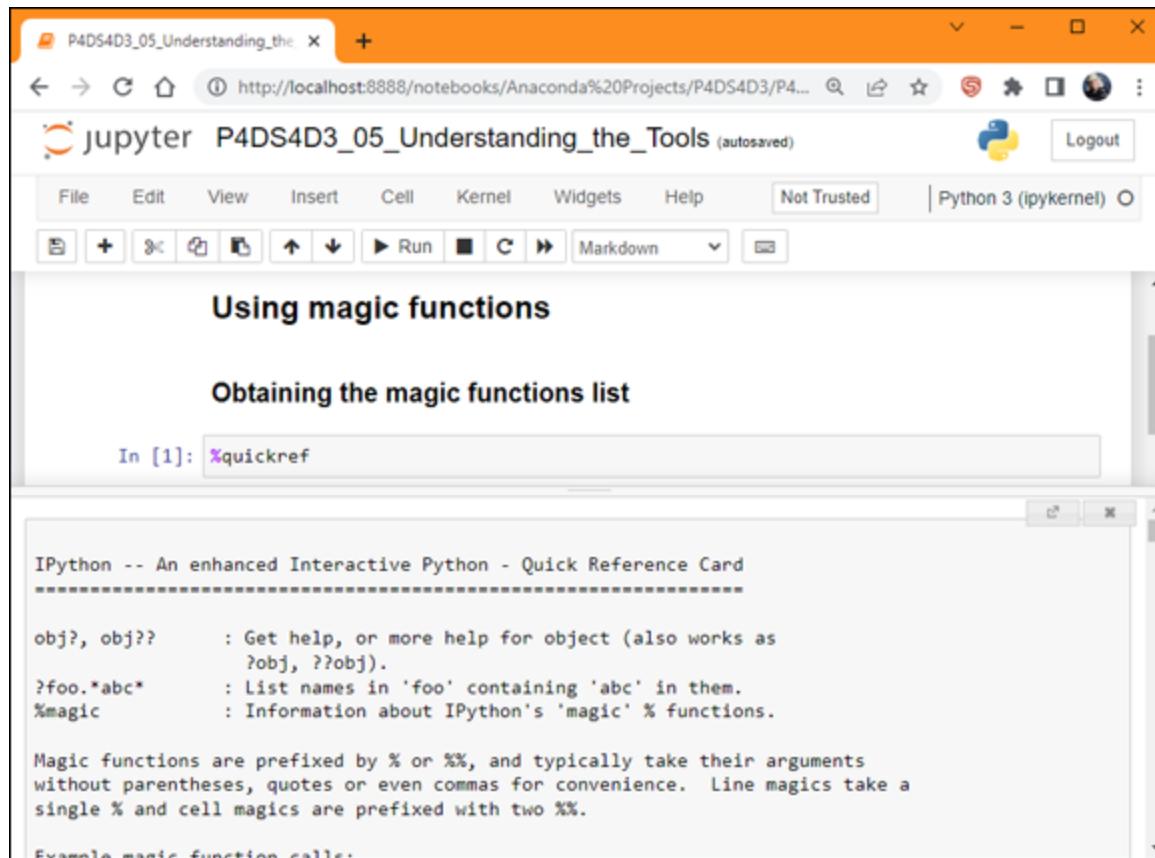
Amazingly, you really can get magic on your computer! Jupyter provides a special feature called magic functions. The functions let you perform all sorts of amazing tasks with your Jupyter console. The following sections provide an overview of the magic functions. Some of them are used later in the book as well. However, it pays to spend some time checking out these functions for yourself.

### ***Obtaining the magic functions list***

The best way to start working with magic functions is to obtain a list of them by typing `%quickref` and pressing Enter. You see a help (pager) window similar to the one shown in [Figure 5-4](#). The listing can be a little confusing to read, so make sure to take your time with it.



**TIP** When you've finished reviewing the material, click the *X* in the pager window that appears in the lower half of [Figure 5-4](#). To the left of the *X* is another button that lets you open the pager window in its own tab in the browser for easier reading.



The screenshot shows a Jupyter Notebook interface with the title "Using magic functions". In the code cell (In [1]), the command "%quickref" is run, displaying a quick reference card for IPython's magic functions. The card includes examples like obj?, obj??, ?foo.\*abc\*, %magic, and descriptions of their usage.

```
IPython -- An enhanced Interactive Python - Quick Reference Card
-----
obj?, obj??      : Get help, or more help for object (also works as
                    ?obj, ??obj).
?foo.*abc*       : List names in 'foo' containing 'abc' in them.
%magic           : Information about IPython's 'magic' % functions.

Magic functions are prefixed by % or %% , and typically take their arguments
without parentheses, quotes or even commas for convenience. Line magics take a
single % and cell magics are prefixed with two %%.

Example magic function calls:
```

**FIGURE 5-4:** Take your time going through the magic function help, which has a lot of information.

## Working with magic functions

Most magic functions start with either a single percent sign (%) or two percent signs (%%). Those with a single percent sign work at the command-line level, and the ones with two percent signs work at the cell level. You generally use magic functions with a single percent sign.



**REMEMBER** Most of the magic functions display status information when you use them by themselves. For example, when you type %cd and click Run, you see the current directory. To change directories, you type %cd plus the new directory location on your system.

## Discovering objects

Python is all about objects. In fact, you can't do anything in Python without working with some sort of object. With this in mind, it's a good idea to know how to discover precisely what object you're working with and what features it provides. The following sections help you discover the Python objects you use as you code.

## ***Getting object help***

You can request information about specific objects using the object name and a question mark (?). For example, if you want to know more about a list object named `mylist`, simply type `mylist?` and click Run. You see a pager window showing the `mylist` type, content in string form, length, and a document string providing a quick overview of `mylist`.

When you need detailed help about `mylist`, you type `help(mylist)` and click Run instead. You see the same help provided as when requesting information about the Python list. However, you receive the information that's appropriate to the particular object you need help with, rather than having to first discover the object type and then request information for that type. In addition, this information appears as part of the cell output, rather than in a separate pager window, which can make referencing the help information easier later.

## ***Obtaining object specifics***

The `dir()` function is often overlooked, but it's an essential way to learn about object specifics. To see a list of properties and methods associated with any object, use `dir(<object name>)`. For example, if you create a list called `mylist` and want to know what sorts of things you can do with it, type `dir(mylist)` and click Run. The cell displays a list of methods and properties that are specific to `mylist`.

## ***Using extended Python object help***

Using a single question mark causes Python to clip long content. If you want to obtain the full content for an object, you need to use the double question mark (??). For example, type `mylist??` and click Run to see any clipped details (although there may not be any additional details).

Whenever possible, Python provides you with the full source code for the object (assuming that the source code is available).

You can also use magic functions with objects. These functions simplify the help output and provide only the information you need, as shown here:

- » `%pdoc`: Displays the docstring for the object
- » `%pdef`: Shows how to call the object (assuming that the object is callable)
- » `%psource`: Displays the source code for the object (assuming that the source is available)
- » `%pfile`: Outputs the name of the file that contains the source code for the object
- » `%pinfo`: Displays detailed information about the object (often more than is provided by help alone)
- » `%pinfo2`: Displays extra detailed information about the object (when available)

## ***Restarting the kernel***

Every time you perform a task in your notebook, you create variables, import modules, and perform a wealth of other tasks that modify the environment. At some point, you can't really be sure that something is working as it should. To overcome this problem, you save your document by clicking Save and Checkpoint (the button containing a floppy disk symbol), and then click Restart Kernel (the button with an open circle with an arrow at one end). You can then run your code again to ensure that it does work as you thought it would.

Sometimes an error also causes the kernel to crash. Your document starts acting oddly, updates slowly, or shows other signs of corruption. Again, the answer is to restart the kernel to ensure that you have a clean environment and that the kernel is running as it should.



**WARNING** Whenever you click Restart Kernel, you see a warning message.

Make sure to pay attention to the warning because you could lose temporary changes during a kernel restart. Always save your document before you restart the kernel.

## ***Restoring a checkpoint***

At some point, you may find that you made a mistake. Notebook is notably missing an Undo button: You won't find one anywhere. Instead, you create checkpoints each time you finish a task. Creating checkpoints when your document is stable and working properly helps you recover faster from mistakes.



**WARNING** To restore your setup to the condition contained in a checkpoint, choose File ⇒ Revert to Checkpoint. You see a listing of available checkpoints. Simply select the one you want to use. When you select the checkpoint, you see a warning message. When you click Revert, any old information is gone and the information found in the checkpoint becomes the current information.

## ***Performing Multimedia and Graphic Integration***

Pictures say a lot of things that words can't say (or at least they do it with far less effort). Notebook is both a coding platform and a presentation platform. You may be surprised at just what you can do with it. The following sections provide a brief overview of some of the more interesting features.

### ***Embedding plots and other images***

At some point, you might have spotted a notebook with multimedia or graphics embedded into it and wondered why you didn't see the same effects in your own files. In fact, all the graphics examples in the book appear as part of the code. Fortunately, you can perform some more

magic by using the `%matplotlib` magic function. The possible values for this function are: 'gtk', 'gtk3', 'inline', 'nbagg', 'osx', 'qt', 'qt4', 'qt5', 'tk', and 'wx', each of which defines a different plotting backend (the code used to actually render the plot) used to present information onscreen.

When you run `%matplotlib inline`, any plots you create appear as part of the document. That's how [Figure 8-1](#) (see the section about using NetworkX basics in [Chapter 8](#)) shows the plot that it creates immediately below the affected code.



TECHNICAL STUFF

Note that, according to

<https://stackoverflow.com/questions/65934740/is-%matplotlib-inline-still-needed>, there are situations in which you no longer need to run `%matplotlib inline` with newer versions of Python and its associated libraries. However, the documentation at <https://pypi.org/project/matplotlib-inline/> still includes this feature and states outright that third-party libraries may continue to need it, so the book will continue to use `%matplotlib inline` to ensure that the examples work as intended.

## ***Loading examples from online sites***

Because some examples you see online can be hard to understand unless you have them loaded on your own system, you should also keep the `%load` magic function in mind. All you need is the URL of an example you want to see on your system. For example, try `%load`[https://matplotlib.org/\\_downloads/pyplot\\_text.py](https://matplotlib.org/_downloads/pyplot_text.py). When you click Run Cell, Notebook loads the example directly in the cell and comments the `%load` call out. You can then run the example and see the output from it on your own system.

## ***Obtaining online graphics and multimedia***

A lot of the functionality required to perform special multimedia and graphics processing appears within `Jupyter.display`. By importing a required class, you can perform tasks such as embedding images into your notebook. Here's an example of embedding one of the pictures from the author's blog into the notebook for this chapter:

```
from urllib.request import Request, urlopen
from IPython import display

req = Request('http://blog.johnmuellerbooks.com/' +
    'wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Layer-Hens.jpg',
    headers={'User-Agent': 'XYZ/3.0'})
image = urlopen(req, timeout=10).read()

display.Image(image)
```

The code begins by importing the required resources. It then makes a request for the file from the website. Notice the inclusion of the `headers` property. If you don't include this property, the call will fail with an error message. The call to `urlopen()` actually retrieves the image, which is then displayed using `display.Image()`. The output you see from this example appears in [Figure 5-5](#).

## Obtaining online graphics and multimedia

In [9]:

```
from urllib.request import Request, urlopen
from IPython import display

req = Request('http://blog.johnmuellerbooks.com/' +
    'wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Layer-Hens.jpg',
    headers={'User-Agent': 'XYZ/3.0'})
image = urlopen(req, timeout=10).read()

display.Image(image)
```

Out[9]:

**FIGURE 5-5:** Embedding images can dress up your notebook presentation.

When working with embedded images on a regular basis, you might want to set the form in which the images are embedded. For example, you may prefer to embed them as PDFs. To perform this task, you use code similar to this:

```
from IPython.display import set_matplotlib_formats
set_matplotlib_formats('pdf', 'svg')
```

You have access to a wide number of formats when working with a notebook. The commonly supported formats are 'png', 'retina', 'jpeg', 'svg', and 'pdf'.



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

Note, you may or may not see a warning message when running certain code in this book. That's because Python relies on a huge

number of libraries that are all updated on different schedules, so that if you're using a copy of Python that's one minor version different from the product used in this book, you can see these messages. The blog post at

<https://blog.johnmuellerbooks.com/2023/05/08/warning-messages-in-jupyter-notebook-example-code/> tells you a lot more about these messages and what to do with them. Warning messages are just that, warnings — they don't keep the downloadable source from running and are generally nothing to worry about.

The IPython display system is nothing short of amazing, and this section hasn't even begun to scratch the surface for you. For example, you can import a YouTube video and place it directly into your notebook as part of your presentation if you want. You can see quite a few more of the display features demonstrated at

<http://nbviewer.jupyter.org/github/ipython/ipython/blob/1.x/examples/notebooks/Part%205%20-%20Rich%20Display%20System.ipynb>.

## Chapter 6

# Working with Real Data

---

### IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Manipulating data streams
  - » Working with flat and unstructured files
  - » Interacting with relational databases
  - » Using NoSQL as a data source
  - » Interacting with web-based data
- 

Data science applications require data by definition. It would be nice if you could simply go to a data store somewhere, purchase the data you need in an easy-open package, and then write an application to access that data. However, data is messy. It appears in all sorts of places, in many different forms, and you can interpret it in many different ways. Every organization has a different method of viewing data and stores it in a different manner as well. Even when the data management system used by one company is the same as the data management system used by another company, the chances are slim that the data will appear in the same format or even use the same data types. In short, before you can do any data science work, you must discover how to access the data in all its myriad forms. Real data requires a lot of work to use, and fortunately, Python is up to the task of manipulating it as needed.

This chapter helps you understand the techniques required to access data in a number of forms and locations. For example, memory streams represent a form of data storage that your computer supports natively; flat files exist on your hard drive; relational databases commonly appear on networks (although smaller relational databases, such as those found in Access, could appear on your hard drive as well); and web-based data usually appears on the internet. You won't visit every form of data storage available (such as that stored on a point-of-sale, or POS, system).

An entire book on the topic probably wouldn't suffice to cover the topic of data formats in any detail. However, the techniques in this chapter demonstrate how to access data in the formats you most commonly encounter when working with real-world data.



**TIP** The Scikit-learn library includes a number of *toy* datasets (small datasets meant for you to play with). These datasets are complex enough to perform a number of tasks, such as experimenting with Python to perform data science tasks. Because this data is readily available and it's a bad idea to make the examples too complicated to understand, this book relies on toy datasets as input for many of the examples. Still, the demonstrated techniques work equally well on real-world data.

You don't have to type the source code for this chapter, and in fact, using the downloadable source is a lot easier (see the Introduction for download instructions). The source code for this chapter appears in the P4DS4D3\_06\_Dataset\_Load.ipynb file.



**WARNING** The Colors.txt, Titanic.csv, Values.xls, Colorblk.jpg, and XMLData.xml files that come with the downloadable source code must appear in the same folder (directory) as your Notebook files. Otherwise, the examples in the following sections fail with an input/output (IO) error. The file location varies according to the platform you're using. For example, on a Windows system, you find the notebooks stored in the C:\Users\Username\P4DS4D3 folder, where *Username* is your login name. (The book assumes that you've used the prescribed folder location of P4DS4D3, as described in the "[Defining the code repository](#)" section of [Chapter 3](#).) To make the examples work, simply copy the four files from the downloadable source folder into your Notebook folder.

# Uploading, Streaming, and Sampling Data

Storing data in local computer memory represents the fastest and most reliable means to access it. The data could reside anywhere. However, you don't actually interact with the data in its storage location. You load the data into memory from the storage location and then interact with it in memory. This is the technique the book uses to access all the toy datasets found in the Scikit-learn library, so you see this technique used relatively often in the book.



**REMEMBER** Data scientists call the columns in a database *features* or *variables*. The rows are *cases*. Each row represents a collection of variables that you can analyze.

## Uploading small amounts of data into memory

The most convenient method that you can use to work with data is to load it directly into memory. This technique shows up a couple of times earlier in the book but uses the toy dataset from the Scikit-learn library. This section uses the `Colors.txt` file, which contains the following color names and numeric equivalents:

Color	Value	Color	Value
Red	1	Orange	2
Yellow	3	Green	4
Blue	5	Purple	6
Black	7	White	8

The example also relies on native Python functionality to get the task done. When you load a file (of any type), the entire dataset is available at all times and the loading process is quite short. Here is an example of how this technique works.

```
with open("Colors.txt", 'r') as open_file:  
    print('Colors.txt content:\n' + open_file.read())
```

The example begins by using the `open()` method to obtain a `file` object. The `open()` function accepts the filename and an access mode. In this case, the access mode is `read(r)`. It then uses the `read()` method of the `file` object to read all the data in the file. If you were to specify a size argument as part of `read()`, such as `read(15)`, Python would read only the number of characters that you specify or stop when it reaches the End Of File (`EOF`). When you run this example, you see the following output:

```
Colors.txt content:  
Color      Value  
Red        1  
Orange     2  
Yellow     3  
Green      4  
Blue       5  
Purple     6  
Black      7  
White      8
```



**WARNING** The entire dataset is loaded from the library into free memory.

Of course, the loading process will fail if your system lacks sufficient memory to hold the dataset. When this problem occurs, you need to consider other techniques for working with the dataset, such as streaming it or sampling it. In short, before you use this technique, you must ensure that the dataset will actually fit in memory. You won't normally experience any problems when working with the toy datasets in the Scikit-learn library.

### ***Streaming large amounts of data into memory***

Some datasets will be so large that you won't be able to fit them entirely in memory at one time. In addition, you may find that some datasets load slowly because they reside on a remote site. Streaming solves both issues by enabling you to work with the data a little at a time. You download individual pieces so that you can work with just part of the

data as you receive it, rather than waiting for the entire dataset to download. Here's an example of how you can stream data using Python:

```
with open("Colors.txt", 'r') as open_file:  
    for observation in open_file:  
        print('Reading Data: ' + observation , end="")
```

This example relies on the `Colors.txt` file, which contains a header and then a number of records that associate a color name with a value. The `open_file` file object contains a pointer to the open file.

As the code performs data reads in the `for` loop, the file pointer moves to the next record. Each record appears one at a time in `observation`. The code outputs the value in `observation` using a `print` statement. You should receive this output:

```
Reading Data: Color      Value  
Reading Data: Red        1  
Reading Data: Orange     2  
Reading Data: Yellow     3  
Reading Data: Green      4  
Reading Data: Blue       5  
Reading Data: Purple     6  
Reading Data: Black      7  
Reading Data: White      8
```

Python streams each record from the source. This means that you must perform a read for each record you want.

## ***Generating variations on image data***

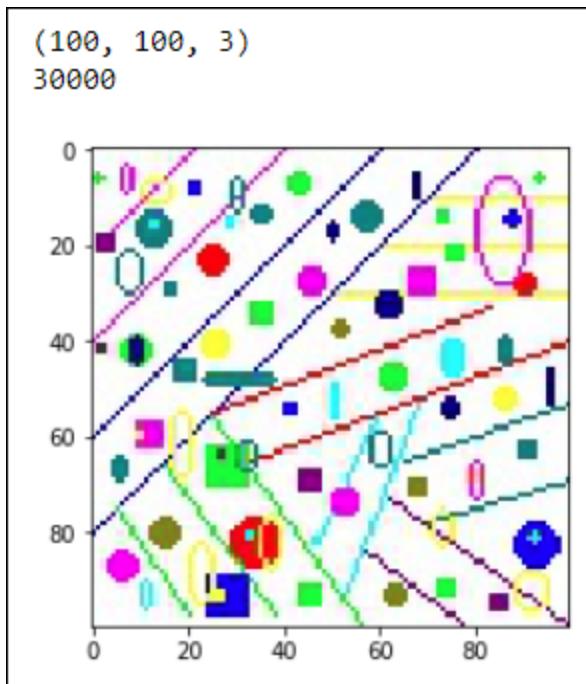
Sometimes you need to import and analyze image data. The source and type of the image does make a difference. A number of examples of working with images appear throughout the book, but a good starting point is to simply read a local image in, obtain statistics about that image, and display the image onscreen, as shown in the following code:

```
import matplotlib.image as img  
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt  
%matplotlib inline  
  
image = img.imread("Colorblk.jpg")  
print(image.shape)  
print(image.size)
```

```
plt.imshow(image)
plt.show()
```

The example begins by importing two `matplotlib` libraries, `image` and `pyplot`. The `image` library reads the image into memory, and the `pyplot` library displays it onscreen.

After the code reads the file, it begins by displaying the image shape property — the number of horizontal pixels, vertical pixels, and pixel depth (the number of bits used to represent colors). [Figure 6-1](#) shows that the image is 100 x 100 x 3 channels (one for each color component: red, green, and blue). The image size property is the combination of these three elements, or 30,000 bytes.



[FIGURE 6-1:](#) The test image is 100 pixels high and 100 pixels long.

The next step is to load the image for plotting by using `imshow()`. The final call, `plt.show()`, displays the image onscreen, as shown in [Figure 6-1](#). This technique represents just one of a number of methods for interacting with images using Python so that you can analyze them in some manner.

## ***Sampling data in different ways***

Data streaming obtains all the records from a data source. You may find that you don't need all the records. In that case, you can save time and resources by simply sampling the data (retrieving records a set number of records apart, such as every fifth record) or by making random samples. The following code shows how to retrieve every other record in the colors.txt file:

```
n = 2
with open("Colors.txt", 'r') as open_file:
    for j, observation in enumerate(open_file):
        if j % n==0:
            print('Reading Line: ' + str(j) +
                  ' Content: ' + observation , end="")
```

The basic idea of sampling is the same as streaming. However, in this case, the application uses `enumerate()` to retrieve a row number. When `j % n == 0`, the row is one that you want to keep and the application outputs the information. In this case, you see the following output:

```
Reading Line: 0 Content: Color      Value
Reading Line: 2 Content: Orange     2
Reading Line: 4 Content: Green     4
Reading Line: 6 Content: Purple    6
Reading Line: 8 Content: White    8
```

The value of `n` is important in determining which records appear as part of the dataset. Try changing `n` to 3. The output will change to sample just the header (Line: 0) and rows 3 and 6.



**TIP** You can perform random sampling as well. All you need to do is randomize the selector, like this:

```
from random import random
sample_size = 0.25
with open("Colors.txt", 'r') as open_file:
    for j, observation in enumerate(open_file):
        if random()<=sample_size:
            print('Reading Line: ' + str(j) +
                  ' Content: ' + observation, end="")
```

To make this form of selection work, you must import the `random` class. The `random()` method outputs a value between 0 and 1. However, Python randomizes the output so that you don't know what value you receive (assuming you receive any at all). The `sample_size` variable contains a number between 0 and 1 to determine the sample size. For example, `0.25` selects 25 percent of the items in the file.

The output will still appear in numeric order. For example, you won't see Green come before Orange. However, the items selected are random, and you won't always get precisely the same number of return values. Here is an example of what you may see as output (although your output will likely vary):

```
Reading Line: 1 Content: Red      1
Reading Line: 4 Content: Green    4
Reading Line: 8 Content: White   8
```

## ***Accessing Data in Structured Flat-File Form***

In many cases, the data you need to work with won't appear within a library, such as the toy datasets in the Scikit-learn library. Real-world data usually appears in a file of some type, and a flat file presents the easiest kind of file to work with. In a flat file, the data appears as a simple list of entries that you can read one at a time, if desired, into memory. Depending on the requirements for your project, you can read all or part of the file.

A problem with using native Python techniques is that the input isn't intelligent. For example, when a file contains a header, Python simply reads it as yet more data to process, rather than as a header. You can't easily select a particular column of data. The pandas library used in the sections that follow makes it much easier to read and understand flat-file data. Classes and methods in the pandas library interpret (parse) the flat-file data to make it easier to manipulate.



**REMEMBER** The least formatted and therefore easiest-to-read flat-file format is the text file. However, a text file also treats all data as strings, so you often have to convert numeric data into other forms. A comma-separated value (CSV) file provides more formatting and more information, but it requires a little more effort to read. At the high end of flat-file formatting are custom data formats, such as an Excel file, which contains extensive formatting and could include multiple datasets in a single file.

The following sections describe these three levels of flat-file dataset and show how to use them. These sections assume that the file structures the data in some way. For example, the CSV file uses commas to separate data fields. A text file might rely on tabs to separate data fields. An Excel file uses a complex method to separate data fields and to provide a wealth of information about each field. You can work with unstructured data as well, but working with structured data is much easier because you know where each field begins and ends.

## ***Reading from a text file***

Text files can use a variety of storage formats. However, a common format is to have a header line that documents the purpose of each field, followed by another line for each record in the file. The file separates the fields using tabs. Refer to the “[Streaming large amounts of data into memory](#)” section, earlier in this chapter, for an example of the colors.txt file used for the example in this section.

Native Python provides a wide variety of methods you can use to read such a file. However, it’s far easier to let someone else do the work. In this case, you can use the pandas library to perform the task. Within the pandas library, you find a set of *parsers*, or code used to read individual bits of data and determine the purpose of each bit according to the format of the entire file. Using the correct parser is essential if you want to make sense of file content. In this case, you use the `read_table()` method to accomplish the task, as shown in the following code:



```
import pandas as pd
color_table = pd.io.parsers.read_table("Colors.txt")
print(color_table)
```

The code imports the pandas library, uses the `read_table()` method to read `Colors.txt` into a variable named `color_table`, and then displays the resulting memory data onscreen using the `print` function. Here's the output you can expect to see from this example.

	Color	Value
0	Red	1
1	Orange	2
2	Yellow	3
3	Green	4
4	Blue	5
5	Purple	6
6	Black	7
7	White	8

Notice that the parser correctly interprets the first row as consisting of field names. It numbers the records from 0 through 7. Using `read_table()` method arguments, you can adjust how the parser interprets the input file, but the default settings usually work best. You can read more about the `read_table()` arguments at

[https://pandas.pydata.org/docs/reference/api/pandas.read\\_table.html](https://pandas.pydata.org/docs/reference/api/pandas.read_table.html).

## ***Reading CSV delimited format***

A CSV file provides more formatting than a simple text file. In fact, CSV files can become quite complicated. There is a standard that defines the format of CSV files, and you can see it at <https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc4180>. The CSV file used for this example is quite simple:

- » A header defines each of the fields
- » Fields are separated by commas
- » Records are separated by linefeeds
- » Strings are enclosed in double quotes

» Integers and real numbers appear without double quotes

[Figure 6-2](#) shows the raw format for the Titanic.csv file used for this example. You can see the raw format using any text editor.

The screenshot shows a Windows Notepad window titled "titanic.csv - Notepad". The window contains the raw CSV data for the Titanic dataset. The data consists of 15 rows, each representing a passenger with their class, survival status, sex, age, siblings/spouses, and parents/children. The columns are separated by commas. The first row is a header, and the subsequent rows are data points. The Notepad window has a standard Windows title bar and scroll bars.

	pclass	survived	sex	age	sibsp	parch
1	1st	survived	female	29.0	0	0
2	1st	survived	male	0.916700006	1	2
3	1st	died	female	2	1	2
4	1st	died	male	30	1	2
5	1st	died	female	25	1	2
6	1st	survived	male	48	0	0
7	1st	survived	female	63	1	0
8	1st	died	male	39	0	0
9	1st	survived	female	53	2	0
10	1st	died	male	71	0	0
11	1st	died	male	47	1	0
12	1st	survived	female	18	1	0
13	1st	survived	female	24	0	0
14	1st	survived	female	26	0	0
15	1st	survived	male	80	0	0

[FIGURE 6-2:](#) The raw format of a CSV file is still text and quite readable.

Applications such as Excel can import and format CSV files so that they become easier to read. [Figure 6-3](#) shows the same file in Excel.

Excel actually recognizes the header as a header. If you were to use features such as data sorting, you could select header columns to obtain the desired result. Fortunately, pandas also makes it possible to work with the CSV file as formatted data, as shown in the following example:

```
import pandas as pd
titanic = pd.io.parsers.read_csv("Titanic.csv")
X = titanic[['age']]
print(X)
```

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	pclass	survived	sex	age	sibsp	parch		
2	1 1st	survived	female	29	0	0		
3	2 1st	survived	male	0.9167	1	2		
4	3 1st	died	female	2	1	2		
5	4 1st	died	male	30	1	2		
6	5 1st	died	female	25	1	2		
7	6 1st	survived	male	48	0	0		

**FIGURE 6-3:** Use an application such as Excel to create a formatted CSV presentation.

Notice that the parser of choice this time is `read_csv()`, which understands CSV files and provides you with new options for working with it. (You can read more about this parser at [https://pandas.pydata.org/docs/reference/api/pandas.read\\_csv.html](https://pandas.pydata.org/docs/reference/api/pandas.read_csv.html).) Selecting a specific field is quite easy — you just supply the field name as shown. The output from this example looks like this (some values omitted for the sake of space):

```
      age
0    29.0000
1    0.9167
2    2.0000
3    30.0000
4    25.0000
...
1304  14.5000
1305  9999.0000
1306  26.5000
1307  27.0000
1308  29.0000
[1309 rows x 1 columns]
```

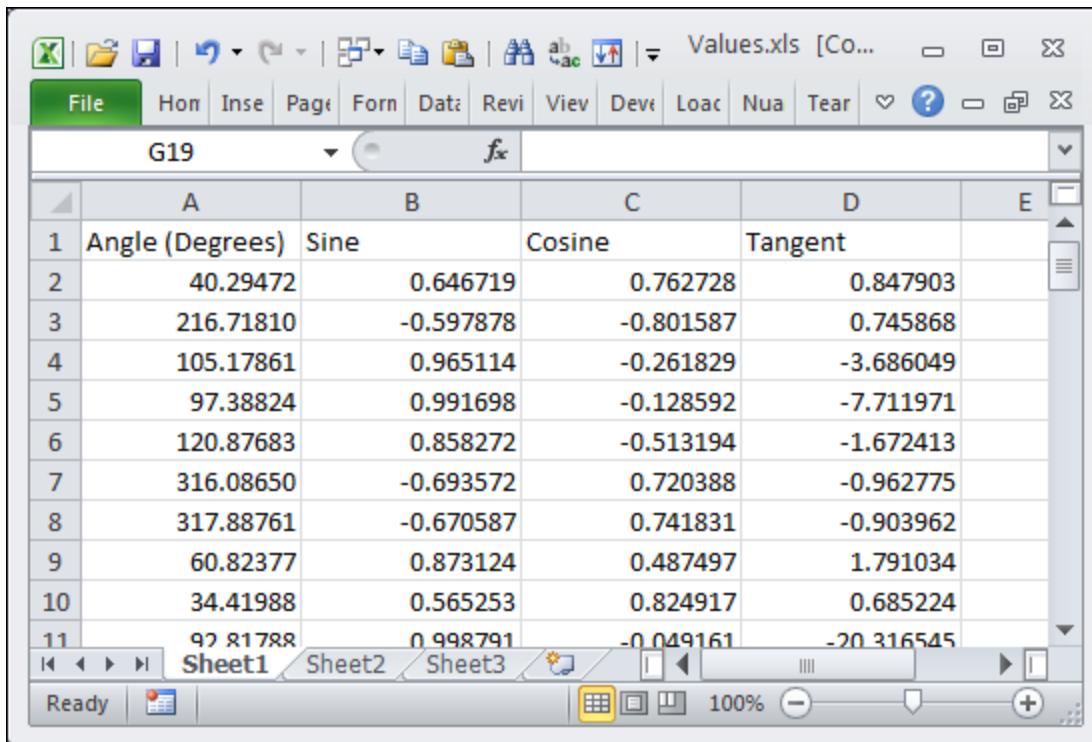


**TIP** Of course, a human-readable output like this one is nice when working through an example, but you may also need the output as a list. To create the output as a list, you simply change the third line of code to read `x = titanic[['age']].values`. Notice the addition of the `values` property. The output changes to something like this (some values omitted for the sake of space):

```
[[29.      ]
 [ 0.91670001]
 [ 2.      ]
 ...
[26.5      ]
[27.      ]
[29.      ]]
```

## ***Reading Excel and other Microsoft Office files***

Excel and other Microsoft Office applications provide highly formatted content. You can specify every aspect of the information these files contain. The `values.xls` file used for this example provides a listing of sine, cosine, and tangent values for a random list of angles. You can see this file in [Figure 6-4](#).



**FIGURE 6-4:** An Excel file is highly formatted and might contain information of various types.

When you work with Excel or other Microsoft Office products, you begin to experience some complexity. For example, an Excel file can contain more than one worksheet, so you need to tell pandas which worksheet to process. In fact, you can choose to process multiple worksheets, if desired. When working with other Office products, you have to be specific about what to process. Just telling pandas to process something isn't good enough. Here's an example of working with the `Values.xls` file.

```
import pandas as pd  
xls = pd.ExcelFile("Values.xls")  
trig_values = xls.parse('Sheet1', index_col=None,  
                           na_values=['NA'])  
print(trig_values)
```

**TECHNICAL STUFF**

Note that you may have to install the `xlrd` library to read the `.xls` file. The downloadable source contains a special line, `!pip install xlrd`, to perform this task.

The code begins by importing the `pandas` library as normal. It then creates a pointer to the Excel file using the `ExcelFile()` constructor. This pointer, `xls`, lets you access a worksheet, define an index column, and specify how to present empty values. The index column is the one that the worksheet uses to index the records. Using a value of `None` means that `pandas` should generate an index for you. The `parse()` method obtains the values you request. You can read more about the Excel parser options at

<https://pandas.pydata.org/docs/reference/api/pandas.ExcelFile.parse.html>.

**TIP**

You don't absolutely have to use the two-step process of obtaining a file pointer and then parsing the content. You can also perform the task using a single step like this: `trig_values = pd.read_excel("Values.xls", 'Sheet1', index_col=None, na_values=['NA'])`. Because Excel files are more complex, using the two-step process is often more convenient and efficient because you don't have to reopen the file for each read of the data.

## ***Sending Data in Unstructured File Form***

Unstructured data files consist of a series of bits. The file doesn't separate the bits from each other in any way. You can't simply look into the file and see any structure because there isn't any to see. Unstructured file formats rely on the file user to know how to interpret the data. For example, each pixel of a picture file could consist of three 32-bit fields. Knowing that each field is 32-bits is up to you. A header at the

beginning of the file may provide clues about interpreting the file, but even so, it's up to you to know how to interact with the file.

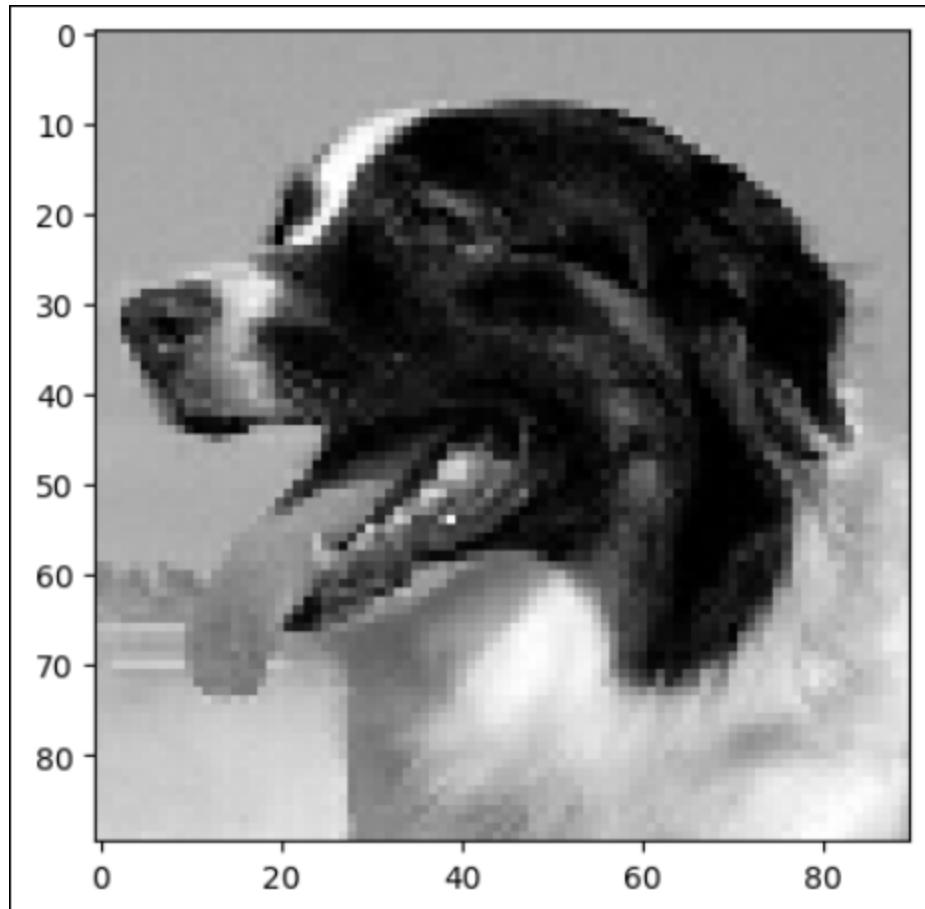
The example in this section shows how to work with a picture as an unstructured file. The example image is a public domain offering from [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main\\_Page](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page). To work with images, you need to access the Scikit-image library (<https://scikit-image.org/>), which is a free-of-charge collection of algorithms used for image processing. You can find a tutorial for this library at <http://scipy-lectures.org/packages/scikit-image/>. The first task is to be able to display the image onscreen using the following code. (This code can require a little time to run. The image is ready when the busy indicator disappears from the Notebook tab.)

```
from skimage.io import imread
from skimage.transform import resize
from matplotlib import pyplot as plt
import matplotlib.cm as cm

example_file = ("https://upload.wikimedia.org/" +
    "wikipedia/commons/7/7d/Dog_face.png")
image = imread(example_file, as_gray=True)
plt.imshow(image, cmap=cm.gray)
plt.show()
```

The code begins by importing a number of libraries. It then creates a string that points to the example file online and places it in `example_file`. This string is part of the `imread()` method call, along with `as_gray`, which is set to `True`. The `as_gray` argument tells Python to turn any color images into gray scale. Any images that are already in gray scale remain that way.

Now that you have an image loaded, it's time to render it (make it ready to display onscreen). The `imshow()` function performs the rendering and uses a grayscale color map. The `show()` function actually displays `image` for you, as shown in [Figure 6-5](#).



**FIGURE 6-5:** The image appears onscreen after you render and show it.

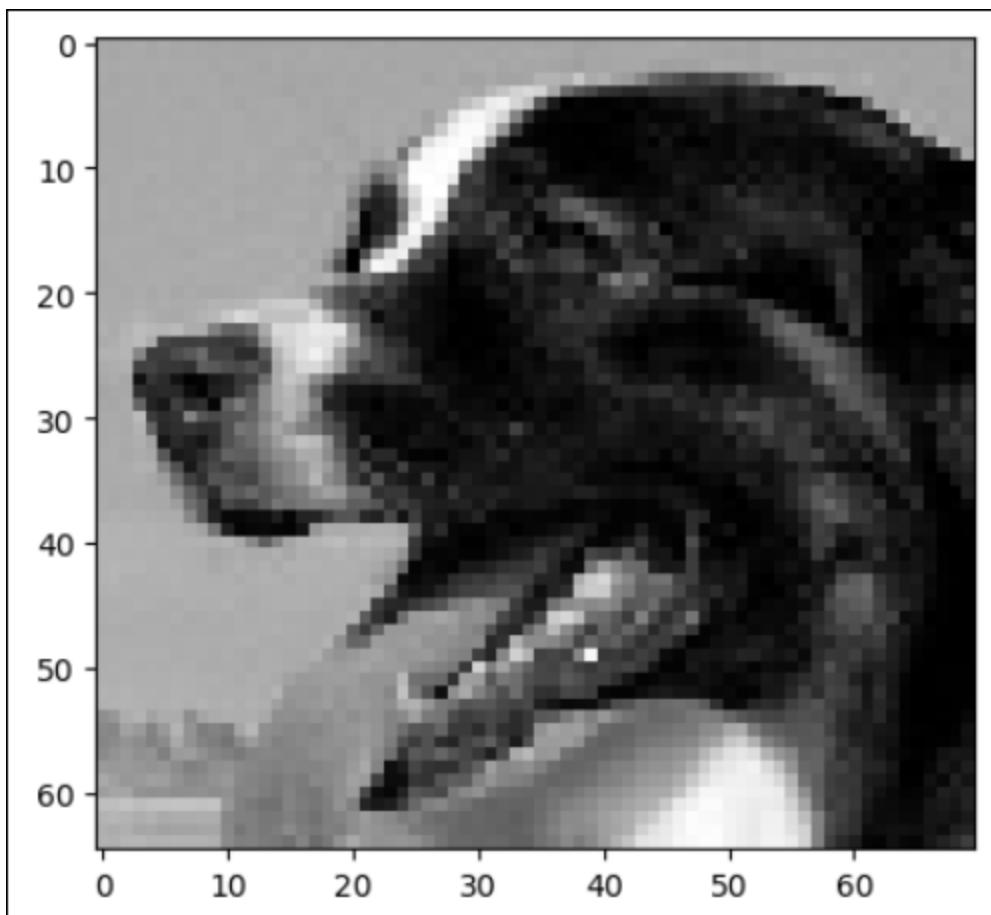
You now have an image in memory, and you may want to find out more about it. When you run the following code, you discover the image type and size:

```
print("data type: %s, shape: %s" %
      (type(image), image.shape))
```

The output from this call tells you that the image type is a `numpy.ndarray` and that the image size is 90 pixels by 90 pixels. The image is actually an array of pixels that you can manipulate in various ways. For example, if you want to crop the image, you can use the following code to manipulate the image array:

```
image2 = image[5:70, 0:70]
plt.imshow(image2, cmap=cm.gray)
plt.show()
```

The `numpy.ndarray` in `image2` is smaller than the one in `image`. However, you may find that Notebook compensates by making the output appear larger (even though it's actually smaller, as shown by the markings). [Figure 6-6](#) shows typical results. The purpose of cropping the image is to make it a specific size. Both images must be the same size for you to analyze them. Cropping is one way to ensure that the images are the correct size for analysis.



[FIGURE 6-6:](#) Cropping the image makes it smaller.

Another method that you can use to change the image size is to resize it. The following code resizes the image to a specific size for analysis:

```
image3 = resize(image2, (30, 30), mode='symmetric')
plt.imshow(image3, cmap=cm.gray)
print("data type: %s, shape: %s" %
      (type(image3), image3.shape))
```

The output from the `print()` function tells you that the image is now 30 pixels by 30 pixels in size. You can compare it to any image with the same dimensions.

After you have all the images the right size, you need to flatten them. A dataset row is always a single dimension, not two dimensions. The image is currently an array of 30 pixels by 30 pixels, so you can't make it part of a dataset. The following code flattens `image3` so that it becomes an array of 900 elements that is stored in `image_row`.

```
image_row = image3.flatten()
print("data type: %s, shape: %s" %
      (type(image_row), image_row.shape))
```

Notice that the type is still a `numpy.ndarray`. You can add this array to a dataset and then use the dataset for analysis purposes. The size is 900 elements, as anticipated.

## ***Managing Data from Relational Databases***

Databases come in all sorts of forms. For example, AskSam (<http://asksam.en.softonic.com/>) is a kind of free-form textual database. However, the vast majority of data used by organizations rely on relational databases because these databases provide the means for structuring massive amounts of complex data in an organized manner that makes the data easy to manipulate. The goal of a database manager is to make data easy to manipulate. The focus of most data storage is to make data easy to retrieve.



**REMEMBER** Relational databases accomplish both the manipulation and data retrieval objectives with relative ease. However, because data storage needs come in all shapes and sizes for a wide range of computing platforms, there are many different relational database products. In fact, for the data scientist, the proliferation of different Database Management Systems (DBMSs) using various data layouts is one of the main problems you encounter with creating a comprehensive dataset for analysis.

The one common denominator between many relational databases is that they all rely on a form of the same language to perform data manipulation, which makes the data scientist's job easier. The Structured Query Language (SQL) (pronounced "sequel") lets you perform all sorts of management tasks in a relational database, retrieve data as needed, and even shape it in a particular way so that performing additional shaping is unnecessary.

Creating a connection to a database can be a complex undertaking. For one thing, you need to know how to connect to that particular database. However, you can divide the process into smaller pieces. The first step is to gain access to the database engine. You use two lines of code similar to the following code (but the code presented here is not meant to execute and perform a task):

```
from sqlalchemy import create_engine
engine = create_engine('sqlite:///memory:')
```

After you have access to an engine, you can use the engine to perform tasks specific to that DBMS. The output of a read method is always a `DataFrame` object that contains the requested data. To write data, you must create a `DataFrame` object or use an existing `DataFrame` object. You normally use these methods to perform most tasks:

- » `read_sql_table()`: Reads data from a SQL table to a `DataFrame` object

- » `read_sql_query()`: Reads data from a database using a SQL query to a `DataFrame` object
- » `read_sql()`: Reads data from either a SQL table or query to a `DataFrame` object
- » `DataFrame.to_sql()`: Writes the content of a `DataFrame` object to the specified tables in the database

The `sqlalchemy` library provides support for a broad range of SQL databases. The following list contains just a few of them:

- » SQLite
- » MySQL
- » PostgreSQL
- » SQL Server
- » Other relational databases, such as those you can connect to using Open Database Connectivity (ODBC)

You can discover more about working with databases at <https://docs.sqlalchemy.org/en/latest/core/engines.html>. The techniques that you discover in this book using the toy databases also work with relational databases.

## *Interacting with Data from NoSQL Databases*

In addition to standard relational databases that rely on SQL, you find a wealth of databases of all sorts that don't have to rely on SQL. These Not only SQL (NoSQL) databases are used in large data storage scenarios in which the relational model can become overly complex or can break down in other ways. The databases generally don't use the relational model. Of course, you find fewer of these DBMSes used in the corporate environment because they require special handling and training. Still, some common DBMSes are used because they provide special functionality or meet unique requirements. The process is essentially the same for using NoSQL databases as it is for relational databases:

1. Import required database engine functionality.
2. Create a database engine.
3. Make any required queries using the database engine and the functionality supported by the DBMS.

The details vary quite a bit, and you need to know which library to use with your particular database product. For example, when working with MongoDB (<https://www.mongodb.org/>), you must obtain a copy of the PyMongo library (<https://pypi.org/project/pymongo/>) and use the MongoClient class to create the required engine. The MongoDB engine relies heavily on the `find()` function to locate data. Following is a pseudo-code example of a MongoDB session. (You won't be able to execute this code in Notebook; it's shown only as an example.)

```
import pymongo
import pandas as pd
from pymongo import Connection
connection = Connection()
db = connection.database_name
input_data = db.collection_name
data = pd.DataFrame(list(input_data.find()))
```

## ***Accessing Data from the Web***

It would be incredibly difficult (perhaps impossible) to find an organization today that doesn't rely on some sort of web-based data. Most organizations use web services of some type. A *web service* is a kind of web application that provides a means to ask questions and receive answers. Web services usually host a number of input types. In fact, a particular web service may host entire groups of query inputs.

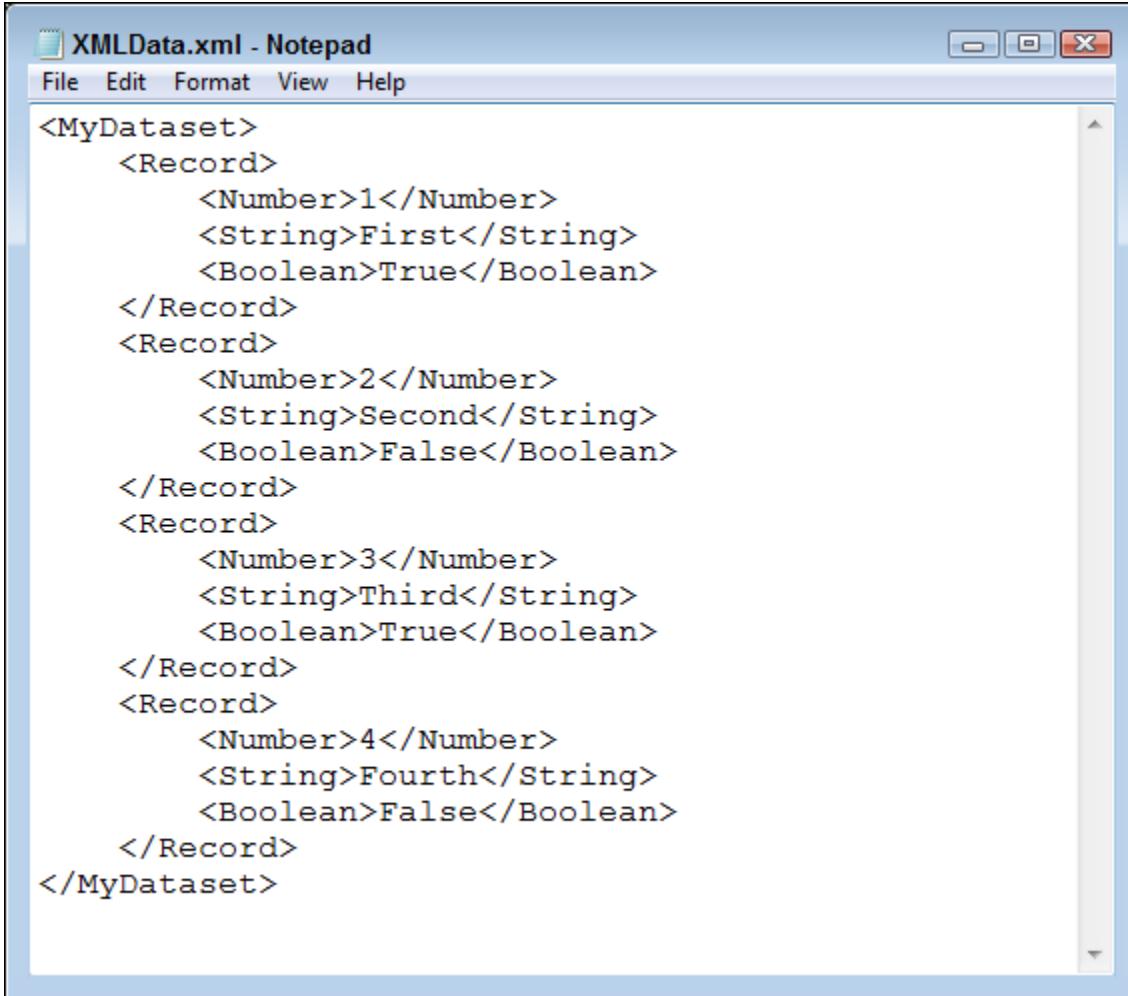
Another type of query system is the microservice. Unlike the web service, *microservices* have a specific focus and provide only one specific query input and output. Using microservices has specific benefits that are outside the scope of this book to address, but essentially they work like tiny web services, so that's how this book addresses them.

One of the most beneficial data access techniques to know when working with web data is accessing XML. All sorts of content types rely on XML, even some web pages. Working with web services and microservices means working with XML (in most cases). With this in mind, the example in this section works with XML data found in the `XMLData.xml` file, shown in [Figure 6-7](#). In this case, the file is simple and uses only a couple of levels. XML is hierarchical and can become quite a few levels deep.

## APIs AND OTHER WEB ENTITIES

A data scientist may have a reason to rely on various web Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) to access and manipulate data. In fact, the focus of an analysis might be the API itself. This book doesn't discuss APIs in any detail because each API is unique, and APIs operate outside the normal scope of what a data scientist might do. For example, you might use a product such as jQuery (<https://jquery.com/>) to access data and manipulate it in various ways when working with a web application. However, the techniques for doing so are more along the lines of writing an application than employing a data science technique.

It's important to realize that APIs can be data sources and that you may need to use one to achieve some data input or data-shaping goals. In fact, you find many data entities that resemble APIs but don't appear in this book. Windows developers can create Component Object Model (COM) applications that output data onto the web that you could possibly use for analysis purposes. In fact, the number of potential sources is nearly endless. This book focuses on the sources that you use most often and in the most conventional manner. Keeping your eyes open for other possibilities, though, is always a good idea.



The screenshot shows a Windows Notepad window titled "XMLData.xml - Notepad". The window contains the following XML code:

```
<MyDataset>
  <Record>
    <Number>1</Number>
    <String>First</String>
    <Boolean>True</Boolean>
  </Record>
  <Record>
    <Number>2</Number>
    <String>Second</String>
    <Boolean>False</Boolean>
  </Record>
  <Record>
    <Number>3</Number>
    <String>Third</String>
    <Boolean>True</Boolean>
  </Record>
  <Record>
    <Number>4</Number>
    <String>Fourth</String>
    <Boolean>False</Boolean>
  </Record>
</MyDataset>
```

**FIGURE 6-7:** XML is a hierarchical format that can become quite complex.

The technique for working with XML, even simple XML, can be a bit harder than anything else you've worked with so far. Here's the code for this example:

```
from lxml import objectify
import pandas as pd

xml = objectify.parse(open('XMLData.xml'))
root = xml.getroot()

df = pd.DataFrame(columns=('Number', 'String',
                           'Boolean'))

for i in range(0,4):
    obj = root.getchildren()[i].getchildren()
    row = dict(zip(['Number', 'String', 'Boolean'],
                  [obj[0].text, obj[1].text, obj[2].text]))
    df = df.append(row, ignore_index=True)
```

```
[obj[0].text, obj[1].text,  
     obj[2].text]))  
row_s = pd.Series(row)  
row_s.name = i  
row_s = row_s.to_frame().transpose()  
df = pd.concat([df, row_s])  
  
print(df)
```

The example begins by importing libraries and parsing the data file using the `objectify.parse()` method. Every XML document must contain a root node, which is `<MyDataset>`, as shown here:

```
<MyDataset>  
  <Record>  
    <Number>1</Number>  
    <String>First</String>  
    <Boolean>True</Boolean>  
  </Record>  
  <Record>  
    <Number>2</Number>  
    <String>Second</String>  
    <Boolean>False</Boolean>  
  </Record>  
  <Record>  
    <Number>3</Number>  
    <String>Third</String>  
    <Boolean>True</Boolean>  
  </Record>  
  <Record>  
    <Number>4</Number>  
    <String>Fourth</String>  
    <Boolean>False</Boolean>  
  </Record>  
</MyDataset>
```

The root node encapsulates the rest of the content, and every node under it is a child. To do anything practical with the document, you must obtain access to the root node using the `getroot()` method.

The next step is to create an empty `DataFrame` object that contains the correct column names for each record entry: `Number`, `String`, and `Boolean`. As with all other pandas data handling, XML data handling relies on a `DataFrame`. The `for` loop fills the `DataFrame` with the four records from the XML file (each in a `<Record>` node).

The process looks complex but follows a logical order. The `obj` variable contains all the children for one `<Record>` node. These children are loaded into a dictionary object in which the keys are `Number`, `String`, and `Boolean` to match the `DataFrame` columns.

At this point, `row` is converted to a `Series`, `row_s`. A numeric name value is added to `row_s`, which is then converted to a `DataFrame` using the `to_frame()` function. If you looked at `row_s` at this point, you'd see that it has the wrong orientation, so a call to `transpose()` aligns it with `DataFrame df`.

There is now a `DataFrame` object that contains the row data. It then concatenates the row to `df` using the `pd.concat()` function. To see that everything worked as expected, the code prints the result, which looks like this:

	Number	String	Boolean
0	1	First	True
1	2	Second	False
2	3	Third	True
3	4	Fourth	False

## USING THE JSON ALTERNATIVE

You shouldn't get the idea that all data you work with on the web is in XML format. You may need to consider other popular alternatives as part of your development plans. One of the most popular today is JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) (<https://www.json.org/json-en.html>). JSON proponents state that JSON takes less space, is faster to use, and is easier to work with than XML (see [https://www.w3schools.com/js/js\\_json\\_xml.asp](https://www.w3schools.com/js/js_json_xml.asp) for details). Consequently, you may find that your next project relies on JSON data, rather than XML, when dealing with certain web services and microservices.

If your data formatting choices consisted of just XML and JSON, you might feel that interacting with data is quite manageable. However, a lot of other people have ideas of how to format data so that you can parse it quickly and easily. In addition, developers now have a stronger emphasis on understanding the data stream, so some formatting techniques emphasize human readability. You can read about some of these other alternatives at

<https://slashdot.org/software/p/XML/alternatives>. One of the more important of these alternatives is Yet Another Markup Language or YAML Ain't Markup Language (YAML), depending on whom you talk to and which resources you use (<https://yaml.org/spec/1.2.2/>), but be prepared to do your homework when working through the particulars of any new projects.

## Chapter 7

# Processing Your Data

---

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Working with NumPy and pandas
  - » Working with symbolic variables
  - » Considering the effect of dates
  - » Fixing missing data
  - » Slicing, combining, and modifying data elements
- 

The characteristics, content, type, and other elements that define your data in its entirety forms the data *shape*. The shape of your data determines the kinds of tasks you can perform with it. In order to make your data amenable to certain types of analysis, you must shape it into a different form. Think of the data as clay and you as the potter, because that's the sort of relationship you have with it. Instead of using your hands to shape the data, you rely on functions and algorithms to perform the task. This chapter helps you understand the tools you have available to shape data and the ramifications of shaping it.



**TIP** Note that shaping data doesn't mean changing its value. Think more along the lines of rearranging the data so that you can work with it in an easier manner. It's akin to rearranging the contents of a shelf in your home so that you can see the shelf contents more easily.

Also in this chapter, you consider the problems associated with shaping. For example, you need to know what to do when data is missing from a dataset. It's important to shape the data correctly to avoid ending up with an analysis that simply doesn't make sense. Likewise, some data types,

such as dates, can present problems. Again, you need to tread carefully to ensure that you get the desired result so that the dataset becomes more useful and amenable to analysis of various sorts.



**REMEMBER** The goal of some types of data shaping is to create a larger dataset. In many cases, the data you need to perform an analysis doesn't appear in a single database or in a particular form. You need to shape the data and then combine it so that you have a single dataset in a known format before you can begin the analysis. Combining data successfully can be an art form because data often defies simple analysis or quick fixes.



**TIP** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter; using the downloadable source is a lot easier. The source code for this chapter appears in the `P4DS4D3_07_Getting_Your_Data_in_Shape.ipynb` file. See the Introduction for the location of this file.



**WARNING** Make sure that the `XMLData2.xml` file that comes with the downloadable source code appears in the same folder (directory) as your Notebook files. Otherwise, the examples in the following sections fail with an input/output (I/O) error. The file location varies according to the platform you're using. For example, on a Windows system, you find the notebooks stored in the `C:\Users\Username\P4DS4D3` folder, where *Username* is your login name. (The book assumes that you've used the prescribed folder location of P4DS4D3, as described in the “[Defining the code repository](#)” section of [Chapter 3](#).) To make the examples work, simply copy the file from the downloadable source folder into your

Notebook folder. See the Introduction for instructions on downloading the source code.

## Juggling between NumPy and pandas

There is no question that you need NumPy at all times. The pandas library is actually built on top of NumPy. However, you do need to make a choice between NumPy and pandas when performing tasks. You need the low-level functionality of NumPy to perform some tasks, but pandas makes things so much easier that you want to use it as often as possible. The following sections describe when to use each library in more detail.

### ***Knowing when to use NumPy***

Developers built pandas on top of NumPy. As a result, every task you perform using pandas also goes through NumPy. To obtain the benefits of pandas, you pay a performance penalty in most cases (see <https://towardsdatascience.com/speed-testing-pandas-vs-numpy-ffb80070ee7>). Given that computer hardware can make up for a lot of performance differences today, the speed issue may not be a concern at times, but when speed is essential, NumPy is always the better choice.

### ***Knowing when to use pandas***

You use pandas to make writing code easier and faster. Because pandas does a lot of the work for you, you could make a case for saying that using pandas also reduces the potential for coding errors. The essential consideration, though, is that the pandas library provides rich time-series functionality, data alignment, NA-friendly statistics, and `groupby()`, `merge()`, and `join()` methods. Normally, you need to code these features when using NumPy, which means you keep reinventing the wheel.

As the book progresses, you discover just how useful pandas can be performing such tasks as *binning* (a data preprocessing technique designed to reduce the effect of observational errors) and working with a *dataframe* (a two-dimensional labeled data structure with columns that can potentially contain different data types) so that you can calculate statistics on it. For example, in [Chapter 9](#), you discover how to perform



both discretization and binning. [Chapter 13](#) shows actual binning examples, such as obtaining a frequency for each categorical variable of a dataset. In fact, many of the examples in [Chapter 13](#) don't work without binning. In other words, don't worry too much right now about knowing precisely what binning is or why you need to use it — examples later in the book discuss the topic in detail. All you really need to know is that pandas does make your work considerably easier.

## IT'S ALL IN THE PREPARATION

This book may seem to spend a lot of time massaging data and little time in actually analyzing it. However, the majority of a data scientist's time is actually spent preparing data because the data is seldom in any order to actually perform analysis. To prepare data for use, a data scientist must

- Get the data
- Aggregate the data
- Create data subsets
- Clean the data
- Develop a single dataset by merging various datasets together

Fortunately, you don't need to die of boredom while wading your way through these various tasks. Using Python and the various libraries it provides makes the task a lot simpler, faster, and more efficient, which is the point of spending all of the time on seemingly mundane topics in these early chapters. The better you know how to use Python to speed your way through these repetitive tasks, the sooner you begin having fun performing various sorts of analysis on the data.

## *Validating Your Data*

When it comes to data, no one really knows what a large database contains. Yes, everyone has seen bits and pieces of it, but when you consider the size of some databases, viewing it all would be physically impossible. Because you don't know what's in there, you can't be sure that your analysis will actually work as desired and provide valid results.

In short, you must validate your data before you use it to ensure that the data is at least close to what you expect it to be. This means performing tasks such as removing duplicate records before you use the data for any sort of analysis (duplicates would unfairly weight the results).



**REMEMBER** However, you do need to consider what validation actually does for you. It doesn't tell you that the data is correct or that there won't be values outside the expected range. In fact, later chapters help you understand the techniques for handling these sorts of issues. What validation does is ensure that you can perform an analysis of the data and reasonably expect that analysis to succeed. Later, you need to perform additional massaging of the data to obtain the sort of results that you need in order to perform the task you set out to perform in the first place.

## ***Figuring out what's in your data***

Figuring out what your data contains is important because checking data by hand is sometimes simply impossible due to the number of observations and variables. In addition, hand verifying the content is time consuming, error prone, and, most important, really boring. Finding duplicates is important because you end up

- » Spending more computational time to process duplicates, which slows your algorithms down.
- » Obtaining false results because duplicates implicitly overweight the results. Because some entries appear more than once, the algorithm considers these entries more important.

As a data scientist, you want your data to enthrall you, so it's time to get it to talk to you — not literally, of course, but through the wonders of pandas, as shown in the following example:

```
from lxml import objectify
import pandas as pd
```

```
xml = objectify.parse(open('XMLData2.xml'))
root = xml.getroot()
df = pd.DataFrame(columns=['Number', 'String', 'Boolean'])

for i in range(0,4):
    obj = root.getchildren()[i].getchildren()
    row = dict(zip(['Number', 'String', 'Boolean'],
                  [obj[0].text, obj[1].text,
                   obj[2].text]))
    row_s = pd.Series(row)
    row_s.name = i
    row_s = row_s.to_frame().transpose()
    df = pd.concat([df, row_s])

search = pd.DataFrame.duplicated(df)
print(df)
print(f"\n{search[search == True]}")
```

This example shows how to find duplicate rows. It relies on a modified version of the `XMLData.xml` file, `XMLData2.xml`, which contains a simple repeated row in it. A real data file contains thousands (or more) of records and possibly hundreds of repeats, but this simple example does the job. The example begins by reading the data file into memory using the same technique you explored in [Chapter 6](#). It then places the data into a `DataFrame`.

At this point, your data is corrupted because it contains a duplicate row. However, you can get rid of the duplicated row by searching for it. The first task is to create a search object containing a list of duplicated rows by calling `pd.DataFrame.duplicated()`. The duplicated rows contain a `True` next to their row number.

Of course, now you have an unordered list of rows that are and aren't duplicated. The easiest way to determine which rows are duplicated is to create an index in which you use `search == True` as the expression.

Following is the output you see from this example. Notice that row 3 is duplicated in the `DataFrame` output and that row 3 is also called out in the search results:

	Number	String	Boolean
0	1	First	True
1	2	Second	False

```

2      3   Third    True
3      3   Third    True

3    True
dtype: bool

```

## Removing duplicates

To get a clean dataset, you want to remove the duplicates from it. Fortunately, you don't have to write any weird code to get the job done — pandas does it for you, as shown in the following example:

```

from lxml import objectify
import pandas as pd

xml = objectify.parse(open('XMLData2.xml'))
root = xml.getroot()
df = pd.DataFrame(columns=['Number', 'String', 'Boolean'])
for i in range(0,4):
    obj = root.getchildren()[i].getchildren()
    row = dict(zip(['Number', 'String', 'Boolean'],
                  [obj[0].text, obj[1].text,
                   obj[2].text]))
    row_s = pd.Series(row)
    row_s.name = i
    row_s = row_s.to_frame().transpose()
    df = pd.concat([df, row_s])

print(df.drop_duplicates())

```

As with the previous example, you begin by creating a DataFrame that contains the duplicate record. To remove the errant record, all you need to do is call `drop_duplicates()`. Here's the result you get.

	Number	String	Boolean
0	1	First	True
1	2	Second	False
2	3	Third	True

## Creating a data map and data plan

You need to know about your dataset — that is, how it looks statistically. A *data map* is an overview of the dataset. You use it to spot potential problems in your data, such as

- » Redundant variables

- » Possible errors
- » Missing values
- » Variable transformations

Checking for these problems goes into a *data plan*, which is a list of tasks you have to perform to ensure the integrity of your data. The following example shows a data map, A, with two datasets, B and C:

```
import pandas as pd
pd.set_option('display.width', 55)

df = pd.DataFrame({'A': [0,0,0,0,0,1,1],
                   'B': [1,2,3,5,4,2,5],
                   'C': [5,3,4,1,1,2,3]})

a_group_desc = df.groupby('A').describe()
print(a_group_desc)
```

In this case, the data map uses 0s for the first series and 1s for the second series. The `groupby()` function places the datasets, B and C, into groups. To determine whether the data map is viable, you obtain statistics using `describe()`. What you end up with is a dataset B with two series 0 and 1 and a dataset C also with two series 0 and 1, as shown in the following output.

```
B
   count  mean       std    min    25%    50%    75%  max
A
0    5.0   3.0  1.581139   1.0   2.00   3.0   4.00   5.0
1    2.0   3.5  2.121320   2.0   2.75   3.5   4.25   5.0

C
   count  mean       std    min    25%    50%    75%  max
A
0    5.0   2.8  1.788854   1.0   1.00   3.0   4.00   5.0
1    2.0   2.5  0.707107   2.0   2.25   2.5   2.75   3.0
```

These statistics tell you about the two dataset series. The breakup of the two datasets using specific cases is the *data plan*. As you can see, the statistics tell you that this data plan may not be viable because some statistics are relatively far apart.



**TIP** The default output from `describe()` shows the data unstacked (printed horizontally). Unfortunately, the unstacked data can print out with an unfortunate break, making it very hard to read. To keep this from happening, you set the width you want to use for the data by calling `pd.set_option('display.width', 55)`. You can set a number of pandas options this way by using the information found at [https://pandas.pydata.org/pandas-docs/stable/reference/api/pandas.set\\_option.html](https://pandas.pydata.org/pandas-docs/stable/reference/api/pandas.set_option.html).

Although the unstacked data is relatively easy to read and compare, you may prefer a more compact presentation. In this case, you can stack the data using the following code:

```
stacked = a_group_desc.stack()  
print(stacked)
```

Using `stack()` creates a new presentation. Here's the output shown in a compact form:

	B	C
A		
0	count 5.000000 5.000000	
	mean 3.000000 2.800000	
	std 1.581139 1.788854	
	min 1.000000 1.000000	
	25% 2.000000 1.000000	
	50% 3.000000 3.000000	
	75% 4.000000 4.000000	
	max 5.000000 5.000000	
... Similar values for 1 ...		

Of course, you may not want all the data that `describe()` provides. Perhaps you really just want to see the number of items in each series and their mean. Here's how you reduce the size of the information output:

```
print(a_group_desc.loc[:,(slice(None),['count','mean'])],)
```

Using `loc` lets you obtain specific columns. Here's the final output from the example showing just the information you absolutely need to make a

decision:

	B		C	
	count	mean	count	mean
A				
0	5.0	3.0	5.0	2.8
1	2.0	3.5	2.0	2.5

## Manipulating Categorical Variables

In data science, a *categorical variable* is one that has a specific value from a limited selection of values. The number of values is usually fixed. Many developers will know categorical variables by the moniker *enumerations*. Each of the potential values that a categorical variable can assume is a *level*.

To understand how categorical variables work, say that you have a variable expressing the color of an object, such as a car, and that the user can select blue, red, or green. To express the car's color in a way that computers can represent and effectively compute, an application assigns each color a numeric value, so blue is 1, red is 2, and green is 3. Normally when you print each color, you see the value rather than the color.

If you use `pandas.DataFrame` (<https://pandas.pydata.org/pandas-docs/dev/reference/api/pandas.DataFrame.html>), you can still see the symbolic value (blue, red, and green), even though the computer stores it as a numeric value. Sometimes you need to rename and combine these named values to create new symbols. Symbolic variables are just a convenient way of representing and storing qualitative data.

### CHECKING YOUR VERSION OF PANDAS

The categorical variable examples in this section depend on your having a minimum version of pandas 1.5.0 installed on your system. However, your version of Anaconda may have a previous pandas version installed instead. Use the following code to check your version of pandas:

```
import pandas as pd
print(pd.__version__)
```

You see the version number of pandas you have installed. Another way to check the version is to open the Anaconda Prompt, type **pip show pandas**, and press Enter. If you have an older version, open the Anaconda Prompt, type **pip install pandas --upgrade**, and press Enter. The update process will occur automatically, along with a check of associated packages. When working with Windows, you may need to open the Anaconda Prompt using the Administrator option (right click the Anaconda Prompt entry in the Start menu and choose Run as Administrator from the context menu).

When using categorical variables for machine learning, it's important to consider the algorithm used to manipulate the variables. Some algorithms, such as trees and ensembles of three, can work directly with the numeric variables behind the symbols. Other algorithms, such as linear and logistic regression and SVM, require that you encode the categorical values into binary variables. For example, if you have three levels for a color variable (blue, red, and green), you have to create three binary variables:

- » One for blue (1 when the value is blue, 0 when it is not)
- » One for red (1 when the value is red, 0 when it is not)
- » One for green (1 when the value is green, 0 when it is not)

## ***Creating categorical variables***

Categorical variables have a specific number of values, which makes them incredibly valuable in performing a number of data science tasks. For example, imagine trying to find values that are out of range in a huge dataset. In this example, you see one method for creating a categorical variable and then using it to check whether some data falls within the specified limits:

```
import pandas as pd

car_colors = pd.Series(['Blue', 'Red', 'Green'],
                      dtype='category')

car_data = pd.Series(
    pd.Categorical(
```

```
['Yellow', 'Green', 'Red', 'Blue', 'Purple'],
categories=car_colors, ordered=False))

find_entries = pd.isnull(car_data)

print(car_colors)
print(f"\n{car_data}")
print(f"\n{find_entries[find_entries == True]}")
```

The example begins by creating a categorical variable, `car_colors`. The variable contains the values Blue, Red, and Green as colors that are acceptable for a car. Notice that you must specify a `dtype` property value of `category`.

The next step is to create another series. This one uses a list of actual car colors, named `car_data`, as input. Not all the car colors match the predefined acceptable values. When this problem occurs, pandas outputs Not a Number (`NaN`) instead of the car color.

Of course, you could search the list manually for the nonconforming cars, but the easiest method is to have pandas do the work for you. In this case, you ask pandas which entries are null using `isnull()` and place them in `find_entries`. You can then output just those entries that are actually null. Here's the output you see from the example:

```
0     Blue
1     Red
2    Green
dtype: category
Categories (3, object): ['Blue', 'Green', 'Red']

0      NaN
1    Green
2    Red
3   Blue
4      NaN
dtype: category
Categories (3, object): ['Blue', 'Green', 'Red']

0    True
4    True
dtype: bool
```

Looking at the list of `car_data` outputs, you can see that entries 0 and 4 equal `NaN`. The output from `find_entries` verifies this fact for you. If this were a large dataset, you could quickly locate and correct errant entries in the dataset before performing an analysis on it.

## ***Renaming levels***

There are times when the naming of the categories you use is inconvenient or otherwise wrong for a particular need. Fortunately, you can rename the categories as needed using the technique shown in the following example.

```
import pandas as pd

car_colors = pd.Series(['Blue', 'Red', 'Green'],
                      dtype='category')
car_data = pd.Series(
    pd.Categorical(
        ['Blue', 'Green', 'Red', 'Blue', 'Red'],
        categories=car_colors, ordered=False))

car_data = car_data.cat.rename_categories(
    ["Purple", "Yellow", "Mauve"])

print(car_data)
```

All you really need to do is set the `cat` property to a new value, as shown. Here is the output from this example:

```
0    Purple
1    Yellow
2    Mauve
3    Purple
4    Mauve
dtype: category
Categories (3, object): ['Purple', 'Yellow', 'Mauve']
```

## ***Combining levels***

A particular categorical level may be too small to offer significant data for analysis. Perhaps there are only a few of the values, which may not be enough to create a statistical difference. In this case, combining several small categories may offer better analysis results. The following example shows how to combine categories:

```
import pandas as pd

car_colors = pd.Series(['Blue', 'Red', 'Green'],
                      dtype='category')
car_data = pd.Series(
    pd.Categorical([
        'Blue', 'Green', 'Red', 'Green', 'Red', 'Green'],
        categories=car_colors, ordered=False))

car_data = car_data.cat.set_categories(
    ["Blue", "Red", "Green", "Blue_Red"])
print(car_data.loc[car_data.isin(['Red'])])
car_data.loc[car_data.isin(['Red'])] = 'Blue_Red'
car_data.loc[car_data.isin(['Blue'])] = 'Blue_Red'

car_data = car_data.cat.set_categories(
    ["Green", "Blue_Red"])
print(f"\n{car_data}")
```

What this example shows you is that there is only one Blue item and only two Red items, but there are three Green items, which places Green in the majority. Combining Blue and Red together is a two-step process. First, you add the Blue\_Red category to car\_data. Then you change the Red and Blue entries to Blue\_Red, which creates the combined category. As a final step, you can remove the unneeded categories.

However, before you can change the Red entries to Blue\_Red entries, you must find them. This is where a combination of calls to `isin()`, which locates the Red entries, and `loc[]`, which obtains their index, provides precisely what you need. The first `print()` statement shows the result of using this combination. Here's the output from this example.

```
2    Red
4    Red
dtype: category
Categories (4, object): ['Blue', 'Red', 'Green', 'Blue_Red']

0    Blue_Red
1      Green
2    Blue_Red
3      Green
4    Blue_Red
5      Green
```

```
dtype: category
Categories (2, object): ['Green', 'Blue_Red']
```

Notice that there are now three Blue\_Red entries and three Green entries. The Blue and Red categories are no longer in use. The result is that the levels are now combined as expected.

## ***Dealing with Dates in Your Data***

Dates can present problems in data. For one thing, dates are stored as numeric values. However, the precise value of the number depends on the representation for the particular platform and could even depend on the users' preferences. For example, Excel users can choose to start dates in 1900 or 1904 (<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/214330/differences-between-the-1900-and-the-1904-date-system-in-excel>). The numeric encoding for each is different, so the same date can have two numeric values depending on the starting date.

In addition to problems of representation, you also need to consider how to work with time values. Creating a time value format that represents a value the user can understand is hard. For example, you may need to use Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) in some situations but a local time zone in others. Transforming between various times is also problematic. With this in mind, the following sections provide you with details on dealing with time issues.

### ***Formatting date and time values***

Obtaining the correct date and time representation can make performing analysis a lot easier. For example, you often have to change the representation to obtain a correct sorting of values. Python provides two common methods of formatting date and time. The first technique is to call `str()`, which simply turns a `datetime` value into a string without any formatting. The `strftime()` function requires more work because you must define how you want the `datetime` value to appear after conversion. When using `strftime()`, you must provide a string

containing special directives that define the formatting. You can find a listing of these directives at <https://strftime.org/>.

Now that you have some idea of how time and date conversions work, it's time to see an example. The following example creates a `datetime` object and then converts it into a string using two different approaches:

```
import datetime as dt

now = dt.datetime.now()

print(str(now))
print(now.strftime('%a, %d %B %Y'))
```

In this case, you can see that using `str()` is the easiest approach. However, as shown by the following output, it may not provide the output you need. Using `strftime()` is infinitely more flexible, even though the output from `str()` is storable.

```
2023-05-20 10:29:47.290505
Sat, 20 May 2023
```

## ***Using the right time transformation***

Time zones and differences in local time can cause all sorts of problems when performing analysis. For that matter, some types of calculations simply require a time shift in order to get the right results. No matter what the reason, you may need to transform one time into another time at some point. The following examples show some techniques you can employ to perform the task:

```
import datetime as dt

now = dt.datetime.now()
timevalue = now + dt.timedelta(hours=2)

print(now.strftime('%H:%M:%S'))
print(timevalue.strftime('%H:%M:%S'))
print(timevalue - now)
```

The `timedelta()` function makes the time transformation straightforward. You can use any of these parameter names with

`timedelta()` to change a time and date value: days, seconds, microseconds, milliseconds, minutes, hours, and weeks.

You can also manipulate time by performing addition or subtraction on time values. You can even subtract two time values to determine the difference between them. Here's the output from this example (note that the output shows the effect of Daylight Saving Time, or DST):

```
10:34:40
12:34:40
2:00:00
```

Note that now is the local time, `timevalue` is two time zones different from this one, and there is a two-hour difference between the two times. You can perform all sorts of transformations using these techniques to ensure that your analysis always shows precisely the time-oriented values you need.

## ***Dealing with Missing Data***

Sometimes the data you receive is missing information in specific fields. For example, a customer record may be missing an age. If enough records are missing entries, any analysis you perform will be skewed and the results of the analysis weighted in an unpredictable manner. Having a strategy for dealing with missing data is important. The following sections give you some ideas on how to work through these issues and produce better results.

### ***Finding the missing data***

Finding missing data in your dataset is essential to avoid getting incorrect results from your analysis. The following code shows how you can obtain a listing of missing values without too much effort:

```
import pandas as pd
import numpy as np

s = pd.Series([1, 2, 3, np.NaN, 5, 6, None])

print(s.isnull())
print(f"\n{s[s.isnull()]}")
```

A dataset can represent missing data in several ways. In this example, you see missing data represented as `np.NaN` (NumPy Not a Number) and the Python `None` value.

Use the `isnull()` method to detect the missing values. The output shows `True` when the value is missing. By adding an index into the dataset, you obtain just the entries that are missing. The example shows the following output:

```
0    False
1    False
2    False
3     True
4    False
5    False
6     True
dtype: bool

3    NaN
6    NaN
dtype: float64
```

## Encoding missingness

After you figure out that your dataset is missing information, you need to consider what to do about it. The three possibilities are to ignore the issue, fill in the missing items, or remove (drop) the missing entries from the dataset. Ignoring the problem could lead to all sorts of problems for your analysis, so it's the option you use least often. The following example shows one technique for filling in missing data or dropping the errant entries from the dataset:

```
import pandas as pd
import numpy as np

s = pd.Series([1, 2, 3, np.NaN, 5, 6, None])

print(s.fillna(int(s.mean())))
print(f"\n{s.dropna()}")
```

The two methods of interest are `fillna()`, which fills in the missing entries, and `dropna()`, which drops the missing entries. When using `fillna()`, you must provide a value to use for the missing data. This

example uses the mean of all the values, but you could choose a number of other approaches. Here's the output from this example:

```
0    1.0
1    2.0
2    3.0
3    3.0
4    5.0
5    6.0
6    3.0
dtype: float64

0    1.0
1    2.0
2    3.0
4    5.0
5    6.0
dtype: float64
```



TECHNICAL STUFF

Working with a series is straightforward because the dataset is so simple. When working with a DataFrame, however, the problem becomes significantly more complicated. You still have the option of dropping the entire row. When a column is sparsely populated, you may drop the column instead. Filling in the data also becomes more complex because you must consider the dataset as a whole, in addition to the needs of the individual feature.

## Imputing missing data

The previous section hints at the process of imputing missing data (ascribing characteristics based on how the data is used). The technique you use depends on the sort of data you're working with. For example, when working with a tree ensemble (you can find discussions of trees in the “[Performing Hierarchical Clustering](#)” section of [Chapter 15](#) and the “[Starting with a Plain Decision Tree](#)” section of [Chapter 20](#)), you may simply replace missing values with a  $-1$  and rely on the imputer (a transformer algorithm used to complete missing values) to define the best possible value for the missing data. The following example shows a technique you can use to impute missing data values:

```
import pandas as pd
import numpy as np
from sklearn.impute import SimpleImputer

s = pd.DataFrame([1, 2, 3, np.nan, 5, 6, np.nan])

imp = SimpleImputer(missing_values=np.nan,
                     add_indicator=True,
                     strategy='mean')

imp.fit(s)
x = imp.transform(s)
print(x)
```

In this example, `s` is missing some values. The code creates an `Imputer` to replace these missing values. The `missing_values` parameter defines what to look for, which is `np.nan`. The `add_indicator` parameter creates a new binary feature that will mark the imputed values, which is incredibly useful for many machine learning models to show both the original values and the manipulated ones. Finally, the `strategy` parameter defines how to replace the missing values. (You can discover more about the `Imputer` parameters at <https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.impute.SimpleImputer.html>.)

- » `mean`: Replaces the values by using the mean
- » `median`: Replaces the values by using the median
- » `most_frequent`: Replaces the values by using the most frequent value

Before you can impute anything, you must provide statistics for the `Imputer` to use by calling `fit()`. The code then calls `transform()` on `s` to fill in the missing values. Here's the result of the process with the missing values filled in and the additional binary indicator:

```
[[1.  0. ]
 [2.  0. ]
 [3.  0. ]
 [3.4 1. ]
 [5.  0. ]]
```

```
[6.  0. ]  
[3.4 1. ]]
```

## Slicing and Dicing: Filtering and Selecting Data

You may not need to work with all the data in a dataset. In fact, looking at just one particular column may be beneficial, such as age, or a set of rows with a significant amount of information. You perform two steps to obtain just the data you need to perform a particular task:

1. Filter rows to create a subset of the data that meets the criterion you select (such as all the people between the ages of 5 and 10).
2. Select data columns that contain the data you need to analyze. For example, you probably don't need the individuals' names unless you want to perform some analysis based on name.

The act of slicing and dicing data, gives you a subset of the data suitable for analysis. The following sections describe various ways to obtain specific pieces of data to meet particular needs.

### Slicing rows

Slicing can occur in multiple ways when working with data, but the technique of interest in this section is to slice data from a row of 2-D or 3-D data. A 2-D array may contain temperatures (x axis) over a specific time frame (y axis). Slicing a row would mean seeing the temperatures at a specific time. In some cases, you may associate rows with cases in a dataset.

A 3-D array may include an axis for place (x axis), product (y axis), and time (z axis) so that you can see sales for items over time. Perhaps you want to track whether sales of an item are increasing, and specifically where they are increasing. Slicing a row would mean seeing all the sales for one specific product for all locations at any time. The following example demonstrates how to perform this task:

```
x = np.array([[[1, 2, 3], [4, 5, 6], [7, 8, 9], ],  
              [[11,12,13], [14,15,16], [17,18,19], ],  
              [[21,22,23], [24,25,26], [27,28,29]]])  
x[1]
```

---

In this case, the example builds a 3-D array. It then slices row 1 of that array to produce the following output:

```
array([[11, 12, 13],  
       [14, 15, 16],  
       [17, 18, 19]])
```

## Slicing columns

Using the examples from the previous section, slicing columns would obtain data at a 90-degree angle from rows. In other words, when working with the 2-D array, you would want to see the times at which specific temperatures occurred. Likewise, you may want to see the sales of all products for a specific location at any time when working with the 3-D array. In some cases, you may associate columns with features in a dataset. The following example demonstrates how to perform this task using the same array as in the previous section:

```
x = np.array([[[1, 2, 3], [4, 5, 6], [7, 8, 9],],  
             [[11,12,13], [14,15,16], [17,18,19],],  
             [[21,22,23], [24,25,26], [27,28,29]]])  
x[:,1]
```

Note that the indexing now occurs at two levels. The first index refers to the row. Using the colon (:) for the row means to use all the rows. The second index refers to a column. In this case, the output will contain column 1. Here's the output you see:

```
array([[ 4,  5,  6],  
       [14, 15, 16],  
       [24, 25, 26]])
```



**REMEMBER** This is a 3-D array. Therefore, each of the columns contains all the z axis elements. What you see is every row — 0 through 2 for column 1 with every z axis element 0 through 2 for that column.

## Dicing

The act of dicing a dataset means to perform both row and column slicing such that you end up with a data wedge. For example, when

working with the 3-D array, you may want to see the sales of a specific product in a specific location at any time. The following example demonstrates how to perform this task using the same array as in the previous two sections:

```
x = np.array([[[1, 2, 3], [4, 5, 6], [7, 8, 9],],
              [[11,12,13], [14,15,16], [17,18,19],],
              [[21,22,23], [24,25,26], [27,28,29]]])
print(x[1,1])
print(x[:,1,1])
print(x[1,:,:1])
print(f"\n{x[1:2, 1:2]}")
```

This example dices the array in four different ways. First, you get row 1, column 1. Of course, what you may actually want is column 1, z axis 1. If that's not quite right, you could always request row 1, z axis 1 instead. Then again, you may want rows 1 and 2 of columns 1 and 2. Here's the output of all four requests:

```
[14 15 16]
[ 5 15 25]
[12 15 18]

[[[14 15 16]]]
```

## Concatenating and Transforming

Data used for data science purposes seldom comes in a neat package. You may need to work with multiple databases in various locations — each of which has its own data format. It's impossible to perform analysis on such disparate sources of information with any accuracy. To make the data useful, you must create a single dataset (by *concatenating*, or combining, the data from various sources).

Part of the process is to ensure that each field you create for the combined dataset has the same characteristics. For example, an age field in one database may appear as a string, but another database could use an integer for the same field. For the fields to work together, they must appear as the same type of information.

The following sections help you understand the process involved in concatenating and transforming data from various sources to create a single dataset. After you have a single dataset from these sources, you can begin to perform tasks such as analysis on the data. Of course, the trick is to create a single dataset that truly represents the data in all those disparate datasets.

## ***Adding new cases and variables***

You often find a need to combine datasets in various ways or even to add new information for the sake of analysis purposes. The result is a combined dataset that includes either new cases or variables. The following example shows techniques for performing both tasks:

```
import pandas as pd

df = pd.DataFrame({'A': [2,3,1],
                   'B': [1,2,3],
                   'C': [5,3,4]})

df1 = pd.DataFrame({'A': [4],
                     'B': [4],
                     'C': [4]})

df = pd.concat([df, df1])
df = df.reset_index(drop=True)
print(df)

df.loc[df.last_valid_index() + 1] = [5, 5, 5]
print(f"\n{df}")

df2 = pd.DataFrame({'D': [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]})

df = pd.DataFrame.join(df, df2)
print(f"\n{df}")
```

The easiest way to add more data to an existing `DataFrame` is to rely on the `concat()` method. In this case, the three cases found in `df` are added to the single case found in `df1`. To ensure that the data is appended as anticipated, the columns in `df` and `df1` must match. When you append two `DataFrame` objects in this manner, the new `DataFrame` contains the old index values. Use the `reset_index()` method to create a new index to make accessing cases easier.

You can also add another case to an existing DataFrame by creating the new case directly. Any time you add a new entry at a position that is one greater than the `last_valid_index()`, you get a new case as a result.

Sometimes you need to add a new variable (column) to the DataFrame. In this case, you rely on `join()` to perform the task. The resulting DataFrame will match cases with the same index value, so indexing is important. In addition, unless you want blank values, the number of cases in both DataFrame objects must match. Here's the output from this example:

```
A   B   C
0   2   1   5
1   3   2   3
2   1   3   4
3   4   4   4

A   B   C
0   2   1   5
1   3   2   3
2   1   3   4
3   4   4   4
4   5   5   5

A   B   C   D
0   2   1   5   1
1   3   2   3   2
2   1   3   4   3
3   4   4   4   4
4   5   5   5   5
```

## Removing data

At some point, you may need to remove cases or variables from a dataset because they aren't required for your analysis. In both cases, you rely on the `drop()` method to perform the task. The difference in removing cases or variables is in how you describe what to remove, as shown in the following example:

```
import pandas as pd

df = pd.DataFrame({'A': [2,3,1],
                   'B': [1,2,3],
```



```
'C': [5,3,4]})\n\ndf = df.drop(df.index[[1]])\nprint(df)\n\ndf = df.drop(columns=['B'])\nprint(f"\n{df}")
```

The example begins by removing a case from `df`. Notice how the code relies on an index to describe what to remove. You can remove just one case (as shown), ranges of cases, or individual cases separated by commas. The main concern is to ensure that you have the correct index numbers for the cases you want to remove.

Removing a column is different. This example shows how to remove a column using a column name. Here's the output from this example:

```
A  B  C\n0  2  1  5\n2  1  3  4\n\nA  C\n0  2  5\n2  1  4
```

## Sorting and shuffling

Sorting and shuffling are two ends of the same goal — to manage data order. In the first case, you put the data into order, while in the second, you remove any systematic patterning from the order. In general, you don't sort datasets for the purpose of analysis because doing so can cause you to get incorrect results. However, you may want to sort data for presentation purposes. The following example shows both sorting and shuffling:

```
import pandas as pd\nimport numpy as np\n\ndf = pd.DataFrame({'A': [2,1,2,3,3,5,4],\n                   'B': [1,2,3,5,4,2,5],\n                   'C': [5,3,4,1,1,2,3]})\n\ndf = df.sort_values(by=['A', 'B'], ascending=[True, True])\n\ndf = df.reset_index(drop=True)\nprint(df)
```

```
index = df.index.tolist()
np.random.shuffle(index)
df = df.loc[df.index[index]]
df = df.reset_index(drop=True)
print(f"\n{df}")
```

It turns out that sorting the data is a bit easier than shuffling it. To sort the data, you use the `sort_values()` method and define which columns to use for indexing purposes. You can also determine whether the sort order is in ascending or descending order. Make sure to always call `reset_index()` when you're done so that the index appears in order for analysis or other purposes.

To shuffle the data, you first acquire the current index using `df.index.tolist()` and place it in `index`. A call to `random.shuffle()` creates a new order for the index. You then apply the new order to `df` using `loc[]`. As always, you call `reset_index()` to finalize the new order. Here's the output from this example (but note that the second output may not match your output because it has been shuffled):

```
A   B   C
0   1   2   3
1   2   1   5
2   2   3   4
3   3   4   1
4   3   5   1
5   4   5   3
6   5   2   2
```

```
A   B   C
0   4   5   3
1   1   2   3
2   3   5   1
3   2   3   4
4   5   2   2
5   3   4   1
6   2   1   5
```

## *Aggregating Data at Any Level*

*Aggregation* is the process of combining or grouping data together into a set, bag, or list. The data may or may not be alike. However, in most

cases, an aggregation function combines several rows together statistically using algorithms such as average, count, maximum, median, minimum, mode, or sum. There are several reasons to aggregate data:

- » Make it easier to analyze
- » Reduce the ability of anyone to deduce the data of an individual from the dataset for privacy or other reasons
- » Create a combined data element from one data source that matches a combined data element in another source

The most important use of data aggregation is to promote anonymity in order to meet legal or other concerns. Sometimes even data that should be anonymous turns out to provide identification of an individual using the proper analysis techniques. Here's an example that shows how to perform aggregation tasks:

```
import pandas as pd

df = pd.DataFrame({'Map': [0,0,0,1,1,2,2],
                   'Values': [1,2,3,5,4,2,5]})

df['S'] = df.groupby('Map')['Values'].transform(np.sum)
df['M'] = df.groupby('Map')['Values'].transform(np.mean)
df['V'] = df.groupby('Map')['Values'].transform(np.var)

print(df)
```

In this case, you have two initial features for this DataFrame. The values in Map define which elements in Values belong together. For example, when calculating a sum for Map index 0, you use the values 1, 2, and 3.

To perform the aggregation, you must first call groupby() to group the Map values. You then index into Values and rely on transform() to create the aggregated data using one of several algorithms found in NumPy, such as np.sum. Here are the results of this calculation:

	Map	Values	S	M	V
0	0	1 2 3	6	2.0	1.0
1	0	4 5	6	2.0	1.0
2	1	2 5	6	2.0	1.0



3	1	5	9	4.5	0.5
4	1	4	9	4.5	0.5
5	2	2	7	3.5	4.5
6	2	5	7	3.5	4.5

## Chapter 8

# Reshaping Data

---

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Understanding the bag of words model
  - » Working with n-grams for sequencing your data items
  - » Implementing Term Frequency times Inverse Document Frequency (TF-IDF) transformations
  - » Manipulating graph data
- 

The previous chapter, [Chapter 7](#), demonstrates techniques for working with data as an entity — as something you work with in Python. But data doesn't exist in a vacuum. It doesn't just suddenly appear within Python for absolutely no reason at all. As demonstrated in [Chapter 6](#), you load the data; however, loading may not be enough — you may have to reshape the data as part of loading it. That's the purpose of this chapter. You discover how to work with a variety of container types in a way that enables you to load data from a number of complex container types.



**REMEMBER** As you progress through the book, you discover that data takes all kinds of forms and shapes. As far as the computer is concerned, data consists of 0s and 1s. Humans give the data meaning by formatting, storing, and interpreting it in a certain way. The same group of 0s and 1s could be a number, date, or text, depending on the interpretation. The data container provides clues as to how to interpret the data, which is why this chapter is so important to you as a data scientist using Python to discover data patterns. You find that you can discover patterns in places where you may have thought patterns couldn't exist.



**REMEMBER** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter manually; using the downloadable source is a lot easier (see the Introduction for download instructions). The source code for this chapter appears in the P4DS4D3\_08\_Shaping\_Data.ipynb file.

## Using the Bag of Words Model to Tokenize Data

The goal of most data imports is to perform some type of analysis. Before you can perform analysis on textual data, you must tokenize (break into linguistic pieces) every word within the dataset. The act of tokenizing the words creates a *bag of words*. You can then use the bag of words to train *classifiers*, a special kind of algorithm used to break words down into categories. The following sections provide additional insights into the bag of words model and show you how to work with it. You also discover how to perform various kinds of data-shaping tasks after you have a bag of words to use.

### **Understanding the bag of words model**

As mentioned in the introduction, in order to perform textual analysis of various sorts, you need to first tokenize the words and create a bag of words from them. The bag of words uses numbers to represent words, word frequencies, and word locations that you can manipulate mathematically to see patterns in the way that the words are structured and used. The bag of words model ignores grammar and even word order, instead focusing on simplifying the text so that you can easily analyze it.

### **GETTING THE 20 NEWSGROUPS DATASET**

The examples in the sections that follow rely on the 20 Newsgroups dataset (<http://qwone.com/~jason/20Newsgroups/>) that's part of the Scikit-learn installation. The host site provides some additional information about the dataset, but essentially it's a good dataset to use to demonstrate various kinds of text analysis.



You don't have to do anything special to work with the dataset because Scikit-learn already knows about it. However, when you run the first example, you see the message

"WARNING:sklearn.datasets.twenty\_newsgroups: Downloading dataset from <http://people.csail.mit.edu/jrennie/20Newsgroups/20news-bydate.tar.gz> (14MB)." All this message tells you is that you need to wait for the data download to complete. There is nothing wrong with your system. Look at the left side of the code cell in IPython Notebook and you see the familiar In [\*]: entry. When this entry changes to show a number, the download is complete. The message doesn't go away until the next time you run the cell.

The creation of a bag of words revolves around Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Information Retrieval (IR). Before you perform this sort of processing, you normally remove any special characters (such as HTML formatting from a web source), remove the *stop words* (nonmeaningful words, such as "to"), and possibly perform *stemming* (reduce words to their root form) as well. For the purpose of this example, you use the 20 Newsgroups dataset directly. Here's an example of how you can obtain textual input and create a bag of words from it:

```
from sklearn.datasets import fetch_20newsgroups
from sklearn.feature_extraction.text import *

categories = ['comp.graphics', 'misc.forsale',
              'rec.autos', 'sci.space']
twenty_train = fetch_20newsgroups(subset='train',
                                   categories=categories,
                                   shuffle=True,
                                   random_state=42)

count_vect = CountVectorizer()
X_train_counts = count_vect.fit_transform(
    twenty_train.data)

print("BOW shape:", X_train_counts.shape)
caltech_idx = count_vect.vocabulary_['caltech']
print('"Caltech": %i' % X_train_counts[0, caltech_idx])
```



**REMEMBER** A number of the examples you see online are unclear as to where the list of categories they use come from. Helpfully, the host site at <http://qwone.com/~jason/20Newsgroups/> lists the categories you can use. The category list doesn't come from a magic hat somewhere, but many examples online simply don't bother to document some information sources. Always refer to the host site when you have questions about issues such as dataset categories.

The call to `fetch_20newsgroups()` loads the dataset into memory. You see the resulting training object, `twenty_train`, described as a *bunch*. At this point, you have an object that contains a listing of categories and associated data, but the application hasn't tokenized the data, and the algorithm used to work with the data isn't trained.

Now that you have a bunch of data to use, you can begin creating a bag of words with it. The first step is to create a matrix of token counts using the `CountVectorizer()` object, `count_vect`. The bag of words process begins by assigning an integer value (an index of a sort) to each unique word in the training set. In addition, each document receives an integer value. The next step is to count every occurrence of these words in each document and create a list of document and count pairs so that you know which words appear and how often in each document.

Naturally, some words from the master list aren't used in some documents, thereby creating a *high-dimensional sparse dataset*. The `scipy.sparse` matrix is a data structure that lets you store only the nonzero elements of the list in order to save memory. When the code makes the call to `count_vect.fit_transform()`, it places the resulting bag of words into `x_train_counts`. You can see the resulting number of entries by accessing the `shape` property and the counts for the word "Caltech" in the first document:

```
BOW shape: (2356, 34750)
"Caltech": 3
```

## Sequencing text items with n-grams

An *n-gram* is a continuous sequence of items in the text you want to analyze. The items are phonemes, syllables, letters, words, or base pairs. The *n* in n-gram refers to a size. An n-gram that has a size of one, for example, is a unigram. The example in this section uses a size of three, making a trigram. You use n-grams in a probabilistic manner to perform tasks such as predicting the next sequence in a series, which wouldn't seem very useful until you start thinking about applications such as search engines that try to predict the word you want to type based on the previous letters you've supplied. However, the technique has all sorts of applications, such as in DNA sequencing and data compression. The following example shows how to create n-grams from the 20 Newsgroups dataset:

```
from sklearn.datasets import fetch_20newsgroups
from sklearn.feature_extraction.text import *

categories = ['sci.space']

twenty_train = fetch_20newsgroups(subset='train',
                                  categories=categories,
                                  remove=('headers',
                                          'footers',
                                          'quotes'),
                                  shuffle=True,
                                  random_state=42)

count_chars = CountVectorizer(analyzer='char_wb',
                             ngram_range=(3,3),
                             max_features=10)

count_chars.fit(twenty_train['data'])

count_words = CountVectorizer(analyzer='word',
                             ngram_range=(2,2),
                             max_features=10,
                             stop_words='english')

count_words.fit(twenty_train['data'])

X = count_chars.transform(twenty_train.data)

print(count_chars.get_feature_names_out())
```

```
print(X[1].todense())
print(count_words.get_feature_names_out())
```

The beginning code is the same as in the previous section, “[Understanding the bag of words model](#).” You still begin by fetching the dataset and placing it into a bunch. However, in this case, the vectorization process takes on new meaning. The arguments process the data in a special way.

In this case, the first parameter, `analyzer`, determines how the application creates the n-grams. You can choose words (`word`), characters (`char`), or characters within word boundaries (`char_wb`). The second parameter, `ngram_range`, requires two inputs in the form of a tuple (the storing of multiple data items in a single variable): The first argument determines the minimum n-gram size, and the second determines the maximum n-gram size. The third parameter, `max_features`, determines how many features the vectorizer returns. In the second vectorizer call, the `stop_words` argument removes the terms contained in the English `pickle`, which is a method of serializing an object in Python so that you can store it on disk, as explained at <https://docs.python.org/3/library/pickle.html>). At this point, the application fits the data to the transformation algorithm.

The example provides three outputs. The first shows the top ten trigrams for characters from the document. The second is the n-gram for the first document. It shows the frequency of the top ten trigrams. The third is the top ten trigrams for words. Here's the output from this example:

```
[' an', ' in', ' of', ' th', ' to', ' he ', ' ing', ' ion',
 'nd ', 'the']
[[0 0 2 5 1 4 2 2 0 5]]
['anonymous ftp', 'commercial space', 'gamma ray',
 'nasa gov', 'national space', 'remote sensing',
 'sci space', 'space shuttle', 'space station',
 'washington dc']
```

## **Implementing TF-IDF transformations**

The *Term Frequency times Inverse Document Frequency (TF-IDF)* transformation is a technique used to help compensate for words found relatively often in different documents, which makes it hard to

distinguish between the documents because the words are too common (stop words are a good example). What this transformation is really telling you is the importance of a particular word to the uniqueness of a document. The greater the frequency of a word in a document, the more important it is to that document. However, the measurement is offset by the document size — the total number of words the document contains — and by how often the word appears in other documents.

Even if a word appears many times inside a document, that frequency doesn't imply that the word is important for understanding the document itself; in many documents, you find stop words with the same frequency as the words that relate to the document's general topics. For example, if you analyze documents with science fiction-related discussions (such as in the 20 Newsgroups dataset), you may find that many of them deal with UFOs; therefore, the acronym *UFO* can't represent a distinction between different documents. Moreover, longer documents contain more words than shorter ones, and repeated words are easily found when the text is abundant.



**REMEMBER** In fact, a word found a few times in a single document (or possibly a few others) could prove quite distinctive and helpful in determining the document type. If you're working with documents discussing sci fi and automobile sales, the acronym *UFO* can be distinctive because it easily separates the two topic types in your documents.

Search engines often need to weight words in a document in a way that helps determine when the word is important in the text. You use words with the higher weight to index the document so that when you search for those words, the search engine will retrieve that document. This is the reason that the TD-IDF transformation is used quite often in search engine applications.

Getting into more details, the TF part of the TF-IDF equation determines how frequently the term appears in the document, and the IDF part of the

equation determines the term's importance because it represents the inverse of the frequency of that word among all the documents. A large IDF implies a seldom-found word and that the TF-IDF weight will also be larger. A small IDF means that the word is common, and that will result in a small TF-IDF weight. You can see some actual calculations of this particular measure at <https://tfidf.com/>. Here's an example of how to calculate TF-IDF using Python:

```
from sklearn.datasets import fetch_20newsgroups
from sklearn.feature_extraction.text import *

categories = ['comp.graphics', 'misc.forsale',
              'rec.autos', 'sci.space']
twenty_train = fetch_20newsgroups(subset='train',
                                  categories=categories,
                                  shuffle=True,
                                  random_state=42)

count_vect = CountVectorizer()
X_train_counts = count_vect.fit_transform(
    twenty_train.data)

tfidf = TfidfTransformer().fit(X_train_counts)
X_train_tfidf = tfidf.transform(X_train_counts)

caltech_idx = count_vect.vocabulary_['caltech']
print('Caltech' scored in a BOW:')
print('count: %0.3f' % X_train_counts[0, caltech_idx])
print('TF-IDF: %0.3f' % X_train_tfidf[0, caltech_idx])
```

This example begins much the same as the other examples in this section have, by fetching the 20 Newsgroups dataset. It then creates a word bag, much like the example in the “[Understanding the bag of words model](#)” section, earlier in this chapter. However, now you see something you can do with the word bag.

In this case, the code calls upon `TfidfTransformer()` to convert the raw newsgroup documents into a matrix of TF-IDF features. The `use_idf` controls the use of inverse-document-frequency reweighting, which it turned on in this case. The vectorized data is fitted to the transformation algorithm. The next step, calling `tfidf.transform()`, performs the

actual transformation process. Here's the result you get from this example:

```
"Caltech" scored in a BOW:  
count: 3.000  
TF-IDF: 0.123
```

Notice how the word *Caltech* now has a lower value in the first document compared to the example in the previous paragraph, where the counting of occurrences for the same word in the same document scored a value of 3. To understand how counting occurrences relates to TF-IDF, compute the average word count and average TF-IDF:

```
import numpy as np  
count = np.mean(X_train_counts[X_train_counts>0])  
tfif = np.mean(X_train_tfidf[X_train_tfidf>0])  
print('mean count: %0.3f' % np.mean(count))  
print('mean TF-IDF: %0.3f' % np.mean(tfif))
```

The results demonstrate that no matter how you count occurrences of *Caltech* in the first document or use its TF-IDF, the value is always double the average word, revealing that it is a keyword for modeling the text:

```
mean count: 1.698  
mean TF-IDF: 0.064
```



**REMEMBER** TF-IDF helps you to locate the most important word or n-grams and exclude the least important one or ones. It is also very helpful as an input for linear models, because they work better with TF-IDF scores than word counts. At this point, you normally train a classifier and perform various sorts of analysis. Don't worry about this next part of the process just yet. Starting with [Chapters 12](#) and [15](#), you get introduced to classifiers. In [Chapter 17](#), you begin working with classifiers in earnest.

## Working with Graph Data

Imagine data points that are connected to other data points, such as how one web page is connected to another web page through hyperlinks. Each of these data points is a *node*. The nodes connect to each other using *links* (also called *edges*). Not every node links to every other node, so the node connections become important. By analyzing the nodes and their links, you can perform all sorts of interesting tasks in data science, such as defining the best way to get from work to your home using streets and highways. The following sections describe how graphs work and how to perform basic tasks with them.

## ***Understanding the adjacency matrix***

An *adjacency matrix* represents the connections between nodes of a graph. When a connection exists between one node and another, the matrix indicates it as a value greater than 0. The precise representation of connections in the matrix depends on whether the graph is directed (where the direction of the connection matters) or undirected.

A problem with many online examples is that the authors keep them simple for explanation purposes. However, real-world graphs are often immense and defy easy analysis simply through visualization. Just think about the number of nodes that even a small city would have when considering street intersections (with the links being the streets themselves). Many other graphs are far larger, and simply looking at them will never reveal any interesting patterns. Data scientists call the problem in presenting any complex graph using an adjacency matrix a *hairball*.

One key to analyzing adjacency matrices is to sort them in specific ways. For example, you may choose to sort the data according to properties other than the actual connections. A graph of street connections may include the date the street was last paved with the data, enabling you to look for patterns that direct someone based on the streets that are in the best repair. In short, making the graph data useful becomes a matter of manipulating the organization of that data in specific ways.

## ***Using NetworkX basics***

Working with graphs could become difficult if you had to write all the code from scratch. Fortunately, the NetworkX package for Python makes it easy to create, manipulate, and study the structure, dynamics, and functions of complex networks (or graphs). Even though this book covers only graphs, you can use the package to work with digraphs and multigraphs as well.

The main emphasis of NetworkX is to avoid the whole issue of hairballs (explained in the previous section, “[Understanding the adjacency matrix](#)”). The use of simple calls hides much of the complexity of working with graphs and adjacency matrices from view. The following example shows how to create a basic adjacency matrix from one of the NetworkX-supplied graphs:

```
import networkx as nx
G = nx.cycle_graph(10)
A = nx.adjacency_matrix(G)
print(A.todense())
```

Note that you may see a FutureWarning when running this code (see the blog post at

<https://blog.johnmuellerbooks.com/2023/05/08/warning-messages-in-jupyter-notebook-example-code/> for details). The example begins by importing the required package. It then creates a graph using the `cycle_graph()` template. The graph contains ten nodes. Calling `adjacency_matrix()` creates the adjacency matrix from the graph. The final step is to print the output as a matrix, as shown here:

```
[[0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1]
 [1 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0]
 [0 1 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0]
 [0 0 1 0 1 0 0 0 0 0]
 [0 0 0 1 0 1 0 0 0 0]
 [0 0 0 0 1 0 1 0 0 0]
 [0 0 0 0 0 1 0 1 0 0]
 [0 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 1 0]
 [0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 1]
 [1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 0]]
```

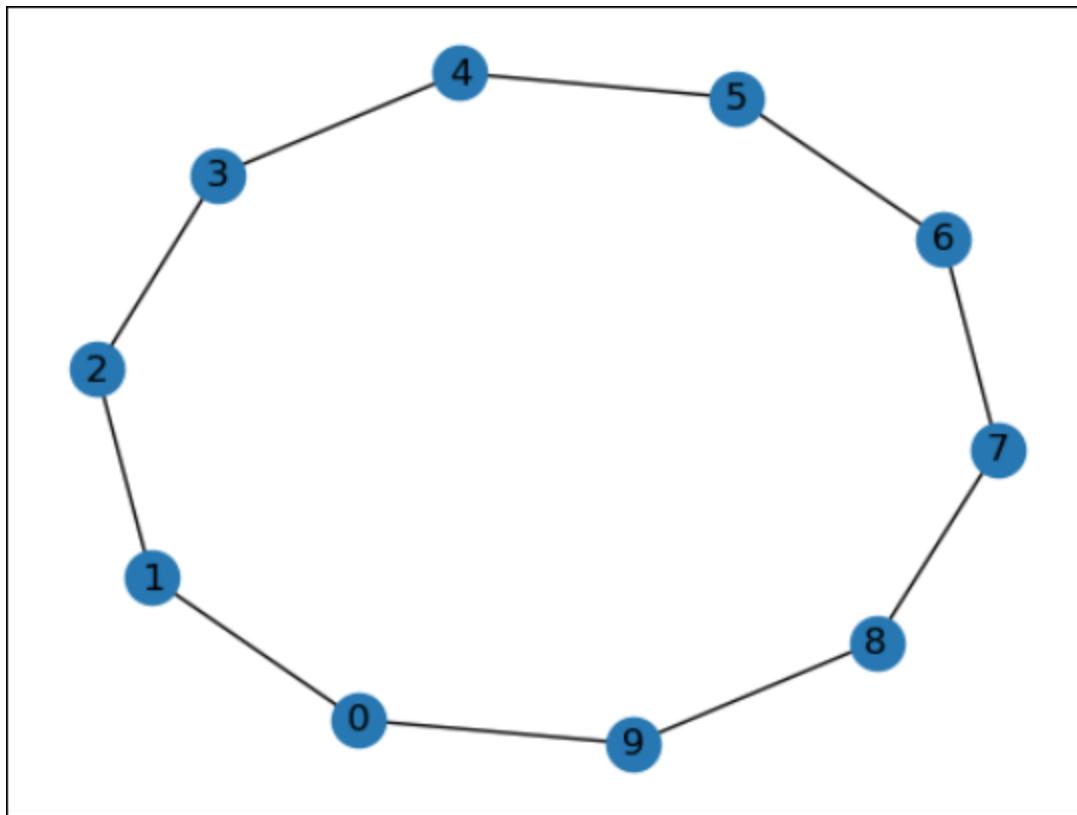


**TIP** You don't have to build your own graph from scratch for testing purposes. The NetworkX site documents a number of standard graph types that you can use, all of which are available within IPython. The list appears at

<https://networkx.github.io/documentation/latest/reference/generators.html>.

It's interesting to see how the graph looks after you generate it. The following code displays the graph for you. [Figure 8-1](#) shows the result of the plot.

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline
nx.draw_networkx(G)
plt.show()
```

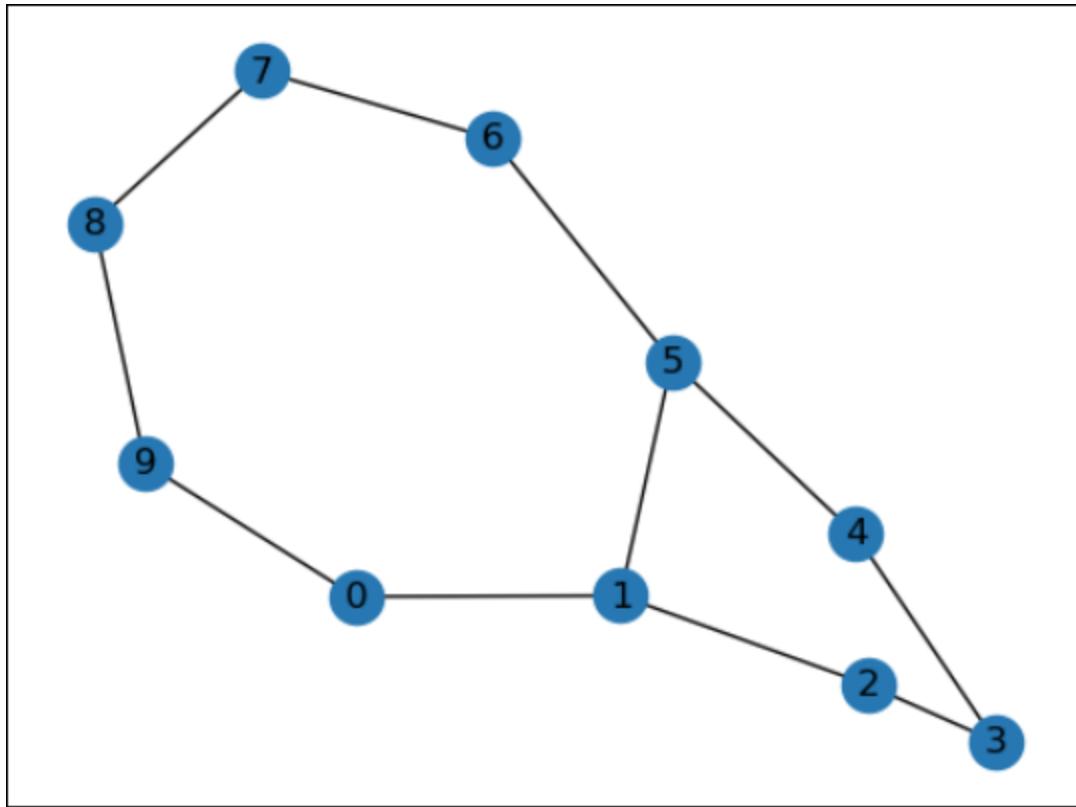


[FIGURE 8-1](#): Plotting the original graph.

The plot shows that you can add an edge between nodes 1 and 5. Here's the code needed to perform this task using the `add_edge()` function.

[Figure 8-2](#) shows the result. (The plot you see will likely vary in appearance from the one in [Figure 8-2](#), but the connections and nodes will be the same.)

```
G.add_edge(1,5)
nx.draw_networkx(G)
plt.show()
```



[FIGURE 8-2:](#) Plotting the graph addition.

## Chapter 9

# Putting What You Know into Action

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### IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Putting data science problems and data into perspective
  - » Defining and using feature creation to your benefit
  - » Working with arrays
- 

Previous chapters have all been preparatory in nature. You have discovered how to perform essential data science tasks using Python. In addition, you spent time working with the various tools that Python provides to make data science tasks easier. All this information is essential, but it doesn't help you see the big picture — where all the pieces go. This chapter shows you how to employ the techniques you discovered in previous chapters to solve real data science problems.



**REMEMBER** This chapter isn't the end of the journey — it's the beginning.

Think of previous chapters in the same way as you think about packing your bags, making reservations, and creating an itinerary before you go on a trip. This chapter is the trip to the airport, during which you start to see everything come together.

The chapter begins by looking at the aspects you normally have to consider when trying to solve a data science problem. You can't just jump in and start performing an analysis; you must understand the problem first, as well as consider the resources (in the form of data, algorithms, computational resources) to solve it. Putting the problem into a context, a setting of a sort, helps you understand the problem and define how the data relates to that problem. The context is essential because, like language, context alters the meaning of both the problem and its associated data. For example, when you say, "I have a red rose"

to your significant other, the meaning behind the sentence has one connotation. If you say the same sentence to a fellow gardener, the connotation is different. The red rose is a sort of data, and the person you're speaking to is the context. There is no meaning to saying, "I have a red rose" unless you know the context in which the statement is made. Likewise, data has no meaning; it doesn't answer any question until you know the context in which the data is used. Saying "I have data" expresses the question, "What does the data mean?"

In the end, you'll need one or more datasets. Two-dimensional datatables (datasets) consist of *cases* (the rows) and *features* (the columns). You can also refer to features as *variables* when using a statistical terminology. The features you decide to use for any given dataset determine the kinds of analysis you can perform, the ways in which you can manipulate the data, and ultimately the sorts of results you obtain. Determining what sorts of features you can create from source data and how you must transform the data to ensure that it works for the analysis you want to perform is an essential part of developing a data science solution.

After you get a picture of what your problem is, the resources you have to solve it, and the inputs you need to work with to solve it, you're ready to perform some actual work. The last section of this chapter shows you how to perform simple tasks efficiently. You can usually perform tasks using more than one methodology, but when working with big data, the fastest routes are better. By working with arrays and matrices to perform specific tasks, you'll notice that certain operations can take a long time unless you leverage some computational tricks. Using computational tricks is one of the most basic forms of manipulation you perform, but knowing about them from the beginning is essential. Applying these techniques paves the road to later chapters when you start to look at the magic that data science can truly accomplish in helping you see more in the data you have than is nominally apparent.



**REMEMBER** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter manually; using the downloadable source is a lot easier (see the Introduction for download instructions). The source code for this chapter appears in the `P4DS4D3_09_Operations_On_Arrays_and_Matrices.ipynb` file.

## ***Contextualizing Problems and Data***

Putting your problem in the correct context is an essential part of developing a data science solution for any given problem and associated data. Data science is definitively applied science, and abstract manual approaches may not work all that well on your specific situation.

Running a Hadoop cluster or building a deep neural network may sound cool in front of fellow colleagues, and make you feel as though you're doing great data science projects, but they may not provide what you need to solve your problem. Putting the problem in the correct context isn't just a matter of deliberating on whether to use a certain algorithm or transform the data in a certain way — it's the art of critically examining the problem and available resources and creating an environment in which to solve the problem and obtain a desired solution.



**REMEMBER** The key point here is the *desired* solution, in that you could come up with solutions that aren't desirable because they don't tell you what you need to know — or, when they do tell you what you need to know, they waste too much time and resources. The following sections provide an overview of the process you follow to contextualize both problems and data.

## ***Evaluating a data science problem***

When working through a data science problem, you need to start by considering your goal and the resources you have available for achieving that goal. The resources are data, computational resources such as

available memory, CPUs, and disk space. In the real world, no one will hand you ready-made data and tell you to perform a particular analysis on it. Most of the time, you have to face completely new problems, and you have to build your solution from scratch. During your first evaluation of a data science problem, you need to consider the following:

» **The data available in terms of accessibility, quantity, and quality.**

You must also consider the data in terms of possible biases that could influence or even distort its characteristics and content. Data never contains absolute truths, only relative truths that offer you a more or less useful view of a problem (see the “[Considering the five mistruths in data](#)” sidebar for details). Always be aware of the truthfulness of data and apply critical reasoning as part of your analysis of it.

» **The methods you can feasibly use to analyze the dataset.**

Consider whether the methods are simple or complex. You must also decide how well you know a particular methodology. Start by using simple approaches, and never fall in love with any particular technique. There are neither free lunches nor Holy Grails in data science.

» **The questions you want to answer by performing your analysis and how you can quantitatively measure whether you achieved a satisfactory answer to them.** “If you can't measure it, you can not improve it,” as Lord Kelvin stated (see

<https://zapatopi.net/kelvin/quotes/>). If you can measure performance, you can determine the impact of your work and even make a monetary estimation. Stakeholders will be delighted to know that you've figured out what to do and what benefits your data science project will bring about.

## CONSIDERING THE FIVE MISTRUTHS IN DATA

Humans are used to seeing data for what it is in many cases: an opinion. In fact, in some cases, people skew data to the point where it becomes

useless, a *mistruth*. A computer can't tell the difference between truthful and untruthful data; all it sees is data. Consequently, as you perform analysis with data, you must consider the truth value of that data as part of your analysis. The best you can hope to achieve is to see the errant data as outliers and then filter it out, but that technique doesn't necessarily solve the problem because a human would still use the data and attempt to determine a truth based on the mistruths it contains. Here are the five mistruths you commonly find in data (using a car accident reporting process as an illustration):

- **Commission:** Mistruths of commission are those that reflect an outright attempt to substitute truthful information for untruthful information. For example, when filling out an accident report, someone could state that the sun momentarily blinded them, making it impossible to see someone they hit. In reality, perhaps the person was distracted by something else or wasn't actually thinking about driving (possibly considering a nice dinner). If no one can disprove this theory, the person might get by with a lesser charge. However, the point is that the data would also be contaminated.
- **Omission:** Mistruths of omission occur when a person tells the truth in every stated fact but leaves out an important fact that would change the perception of an incident as a whole. Thinking again about the accident report, say that someone strikes a deer, causing significant damage to their car. The driver truthfully says that the road was wet; it was near twilight so the light wasn't as good as it could be; was a little late in pressing on the brake; and the deer simply ran out from a thicket at the side of the road. The conclusion would be that the incident is simply an accident. However, the person has left out an important fact. The driver was texting at the time. If law enforcement knew about the texting, it would change the reason for the accident to inattentive driving. The driver might be fined and the insurance adjuster would use a different reason when entering the incident into the database.
- **Perspective:** Mistruths of perspective occur when multiple parties view an incident from multiple vantage points. For example, in considering an accident involving a struck pedestrian, the person driving the car, the person getting hit by the car, and a bystander who witnessed the event would all have different perspectives. An officer taking reports from each person would understandably get different facts from each one, even assuming that each person tells

the truth as each knows it. In fact, experience shows that this is almost always the case, and what the officer submits as a report is the middle ground of what each of those involved state, augmented by personal experience. In other words, the report will be close to the truth, but not completely true. When dealing with perspective, it's important to consider vantage point. The driver of the car can see the dashboard and knows the car's condition at the time of the accident. This is information that the other two parties lack.

Likewise, the person getting hit by the car has the best vantage point for seeing the driver's facial expression (intent). The bystander might be in the best position to see whether the driver made an attempt to stop, and assess issues such as whether the driver tried to swerve. Each party will have to make a report based on seen data without the benefit of hidden data.

- **Bias:** Mistruths of bias occur when someone is able to see the truth, but personal concerns or beliefs distort or obscure that vision. For example, when thinking about an accident, a driver might focus attention so completely on the middle of the road that the deer at the edge of the road becomes virtually invisible. Consequently, the driver has no time to react when the deer suddenly decides to bolt out into the middle of the road in an effort to cross. A problem with bias is that it can be incredibly hard to categorize. For example, a driver who fails to see the deer can have a genuine accident, meaning that the deer was hidden from view by shrubbery. However, the driver might also be guilty of inattentive driving because of incorrect focus. The driver might also experience a momentary distraction. In short, the fact that the driver didn't see the deer isn't the question; instead, it's a matter of why the driver didn't see the deer. In many cases, confirming the source of bias becomes important when creating an algorithm designed to avoid a bias source.
- **Frame of reference:** Of the five mistruths, frame of reference need not actually be the result of any sort of error, but one of understanding. A frame-of-reference mistruth occurs when one party describes something, such as an event like an accident, and the second party's lack of experience with the event makes the details muddled or completely misunderstood. Comedy routines abound that rely on frame-of-reference errors. One famous example is from Abbott and Costello, *Who's On First?*, as shown at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kTcRRaXV-fg>. Getting one person

to understand what a second person is saying can be impossible when the first person lacks experiential knowledge — the frame of reference.

## ***Researching solutions***

Data science is a complex system of knowledge at the intersection of computer science, math, statistics, and business. Very few people can know everything about it, and, if someone has already faced the same problem or dilemmas as you face, reinventing the wheel makes little sense. Now that you have contextualized your project, you know what you're looking for and you can search for it in different ways.

- » **Check the Python documentation.** You might be able to find examples that suggest a possible solution. NumPy (<https://docs.scipy.org/doc/numpy/user/>), SciPy (<https://docs.scipy.org/doc/>), pandas (<http://pandas.pydata.org/pandas-docs/version/2.0.2/>), and especially Scikit-learn ([https://scikit-learn.org/stable/user\\_guide.html](https://scikit-learn.org/stable/user_guide.html)) have detailed in-line and online documentation with plenty of data science-related examples.
- » **Seek out online articles and blogs that hint at how other practitioners solved similar problems.** Q&A websites such as Quora (<https://www.quora.com/>), Stack Overflow (<https://stackoverflow.com/>), and Cross Validated (<https://stats.stackexchange.com/>) can provide you with plenty of answers to similar problems.
- » **Consult academic papers.** For example, you can query your problem on Google Scholar at <https://scholar.google.it/> or Microsoft Academic at <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/project/academic/>. You can find a series of scientific papers that can tell you about preparing the data, or they can detail the kind of algorithms that work better for a particular problem.



**REMEMBER** It may seem trivial, but the solutions you create have to reflect the problem you're trying to solve. As you research solutions, you may find that some of them seem promising at first, but then you can't successfully apply them to your case because something in their context is different. For instance, your dataset may be incomplete or may not provide enough input to solve the problem. In addition, the analysis model you select may not actually provide the answer you need or the answer might prove inaccurate. As you work through the problem, don't be afraid to perform your research multiple times as you discover, test, and evaluate possible solutions that you could apply given the resources available and your actual constraints.

## ***Formulating a hypothesis***

At some point, you have everything you think you need to solve the problem. Of course, it's a mistake to assume now that the solutions you create can actually solve the problem. You have a hypothesis, rather than a solution, because you have to demonstrate the efficacy of the potential solution in a scientific way. In order to form and test a hypothesis, you must train a model using a training dataset and then test it using an entirely different dataset. Later chapters in the book spend a great deal of time helping you through the process of training and testing the algorithms used to perform analysis, so don't worry too much if you don't understand this aspect of the process right now.

## ***Preparing your data***

After you have some idea of the problem and its solution, you know the inputs required to make the algorithm work. Unfortunately, your data probably appears in multiple forms, you get it from multiple sources, and some data is missing entirely. Moreover, the developers of the features that existing data sources provide may have devised them for different purposes (such as accounting or marketing) than yours and you have to transform them so that you can use your algorithm at its fullest power. To make the algorithm work, you must prepare the data. This

means checking for missing data, creating new features as needed, and possibly manipulating the dataset to get it into a form that your algorithm can actually use to make a prediction.

## ***Considering the Art of Feature Creation***

Features have to do with the columns in your dataset. Of course, you need to determine what those columns should contain. They might not end up looking precisely like the data in the original data source. The original data source may present the data in a form that leads to inaccurate analysis or even prevent you from getting a desired outcome because it's not completely suited to your algorithm or your objectives. For example, the data may contain too much information redundancy inside multiple variables, which is a problem called *multivariate correlation*. The task of making the columns work in the best manner for data analysis purposes is *feature creation* (also called feature engineering). The following sections help you understand feature creation and why it's important. (Future chapters provide all sorts of examples of how you actually employ feature creation to perform analysis.)

### ***Defining feature creation***

Feature creation may seem a bit like magic or weird science to some people, but it really does have a firm basis in math. The task is to take existing data and transform it into something that you can work with to perform an analysis. For example, numeric data could appear as strings in the original data source. To perform an analysis, you must convert the string data to numeric values in many cases. The immediate goal of feature creation is to achieve better performance from the algorithms used to accomplish the analysis than you can when using the original data.

In many cases, the transformation is less than straightforward. You may have to combine values in some way or perform math operations on them. The information you can access may appear in all sorts of forms, and the transformation process lets you work with the data in new ways so that you can see patterns in it. For example, consider this popular

Kaggle competition:

<https://www.kaggle.com/competitions/predict-student-performance-from-game-play>. The goal is to use all sorts of statistics to predict student performance during game-based learning in real-time. Imagine trying to derive disparate measures from various game sources that interact with students in different ways, and you can begin to grasp the need to create features in a dataset.



**REMEMBER** As you might imagine, feature creation truly is an art form, and everyone has an opinion on precisely how to perform it. This book provides you with some good basic information on feature creation as well as a number of examples, but it leaves advanced techniques to experimentation and trial. As Pedro Domingos, professor at the University of Washington, Seattle, stated in his data science paper, “A Few Useful Things to Know about Machine Learning” (see <https://homes.cs.washington.edu/~pedrod/papers/cacm12.pdf>), feature engineering is “easily the most important factor” in determining the success or failure of a machine-learning project, and nothing can really replace the “smarts you put into feature engineering.”

## ***Combining variables***

Data often comes in a form that doesn’t work at all for an algorithm. Consider a simple real-life situation in which you need to determine whether one person can lift a board at a lumber yard. You receive two datatables. The first contains the height, width, thickness, and wood types of boards. The second contains a list of wood types and the amount they weigh per board foot (a piece of wood 12" x 12" x 1"). Not every wood type comes in every size, and some shipments come unmarked, so you don’t actually know what type of wood you’re working with. The goal is to create a prediction so that the company knows how many people to send to work with the shipments.

In this case, you create a two-dimensional dataset by combining variables. The resulting dataset contains only two features. The first feature contains just the length of the boards. It's reasonable to expect a single person to carry a board that is up to ten feet long, but you want two people carrying a board ten feet or longer. The second feature is the weight of the board. A board that is 10 feet long, 12 inches wide, and 2 inches thick contains 20 board feet. If the board is made of ponderosa pine (with a board foot rating, BFR, of 2.67), the overall weight of the board is 53.4 pounds, and one person could probably lift it. However, when the board is made of hickory (with a BFR of 4.25), the overall weight is now 85 pounds. Unless you have the Hulk working for you, you really do need two people lifting that board, even though the board is short enough for one person to lift.

Getting the first feature for your dataset is easy. All you need is the lengths of each of the boards that you stock. However, the second feature requires that you combine variables from both tables:

Length (feet) \* Width (feet) \* Thickness (inches) \* BFR

The resulting dataset will contain the weight for each length of each kind of wood you stock. Having this information means that you can create a model that predicts whether a particular task will require one, two, or even three people to perform.

## ***Understanding binning and discretization***

To perform some types of analysis, you need to break numeric values into classes. For example, you might have a dataset that includes entries for people from ages 0 to 80. To derive statistics that work in this case (such as running the Naïve Bayes algorithm), you might want to view the variable as a series of levels in ten-year increments. The process of dividing the dataset into these ten-year increments is *binning*. Each bin is a numeric category that you can use.

Binning may improve the accuracy of predictive models by reducing noise or by helping model nonlinearity. In addition, it allows easy identification of *outliers* (values outside the expected range) and invalid or missing values of numerical variables.

Binning works exclusively with single numeric features. *Discretization* is a more complex process, in which you place combinations of values from different features in a bucket — limiting the number of states in any given bucket. In contrast to binning, discretization works with both numeric and string values. It's a more generalized method of creating categories. For example, you can obtain a discretization as a byproduct of cluster analysis.

## Using indicator variables

*Indicator variables* are features that can take on a value of 0 or 1. Another name for indicator variables is dummy variables. No matter what you call them, these variables serve an important purpose in making data easier to work with. For example, if you want to create a dataset in which individuals under 25 are treated one way and individuals 25 and over are treated another, you could replace the age feature with an indicator variable that contains a 0 when the individual is under 25 or a 1 when the individual is 25 and older.



**TIP** Using an indicator variable lets you perform analysis faster and categorize cases with greater accuracy than you can without this variable. The indicator variable removes shades of gray from the dataset. Someone is either under 25 or 25 and older — there is no middle ground. Because the data is simplified, the algorithm can perform its task faster, and you have less ambiguity to contend with.



**TECHNICAL STUFF** The practice of using indicator variables can also assist in meeting data-cleaning requirements now enforced by many countries. Saying that someone is 25 years old is personally identifiable; saying that they're in group 1 is less so. So, using indicator variables can help you meet legal requirements as well.

## Transforming distributions

A *distribution* is an arrangement of the values of a variable that shows the frequency at which various values occur. After you know how the values are distributed, you can begin to understand the data better. All sorts of distributions exist (see a gallery of distributions at <https://www.itl.nist.gov/div898/handbook/eda/section3/eda366.htm>), and most algorithms can easily deal with them. However, you must match the algorithm to the distribution.



**WARNING** Pay particular attention to uniform and skewed distributions.

They are quite difficult to deal with for different reasons. The bell-shaped curve, the normal distribution, is always your friend. When you see a distribution shaped differently from a bell distribution, you should think about performing a transformation.

When working with distributions, you might find that the distribution of values is skewed in some way and that, because of the skewed values, any algorithm applied to the set of values produces output that simply won't match your expectations. Transforming a distribution means to apply some sort of function to the values in order to achieve specific objectives, such as fixing the data skew, so that the output of your algorithm is closer to what you expected. In addition, transformation helps make the distribution friendlier, such as when you transform a dataset to appear as a normal distribution. Transformations that you should always try on your numeric features are

- » Logarithm `np.log(x)` and exponential `np.exp(x)`
- » Inverse  $1/x$ , square root `np.sqrt(x)`, and cube root `x**(1.0/3.0)`
- » Polynomial transformations such as `x**2`, `x**3`, and so on

## Performing Operations on Arrays

A basic form of data manipulation is to place the data in an array or matrix and then use standard math-based techniques to modify its form. Using this approach puts the data in a convenient form to perform other operations done at the level of every single observation, such as in iterations, because they can leverage your computer architecture and some highly optimized numerical linear algebra routines present in CPUs. These routines are callable from every operating system. The larger the data and the computations, the more time you can save. In addition, using these techniques also spares you from writing long and complex Python code. The following sections describe how to work with arrays for data science purposes.

## ***Using vectorization***

Your computer provides you with powerful routine calculations, and you can use them when your data is in the right format. NumPy's `ndarray` is a multidimensional data-storage structure that you can use as a dimensional datatable. In fact, you can use it as a cube or even a hypercube when there are more than three dimensions.

Using `ndarray` makes computations easy and fast. The following example creates a dataset of three observations with seven features for each observation. In this case, the example obtains the maximum value for each observation and subtracts it from the minimum value to obtain the range of values for each observation.

```
import numpy as np
dataset = np.array([[2, 4, 6, 8, 3, 2, 5],
                   [7, 5, 3, 1, 6, 8, 0],
                   [1, 3, 2, 1, 0, 0, 8]])
print(np.max(dataset, axis=1) - np.min(dataset, axis=1))
```

The `print` statement obtains the maximum value from each observation using `np.max()` and then subtracts it from the minimum value using `np.min()`. The maximum values for the observations are `[8 8 8]`. The minimum values for the observations are `[2 0 0]`. As a result, you get the following output:

```
[6 8 8]
```

## Performing simple arithmetic on vectors and matrices

Most operations and functions from NumPy that you apply to arrays leverage vectorization, so they're fast and efficient — much more efficient than any other solution or handmade code. Even the simplest operations such as additions or divisions can take advantage of vectorization.

For instance, many times, the form of the data in your dataset won't quite match the form you need. A list of numbers could represent percentages as whole numbers when you really need them as fractional values. In this case, you can usually perform some type of simple math to solve the problem, as shown here:

```
import numpy as np
a = np.array([15.0, 20.0, 22.0, 75.0, 40.0, 35.0])
a = a*.01
print(a)
```

The example creates an array, fills it with whole number percentages, and then uses 0.01 as a multiplier to create fractional percentages. You can then multiply these fractional values against other numbers to determine how the percentage affects that number. The output from this example is

```
[0.15 0.2 0.22 0.75 0.4 0.35]
```

## Performing matrix vector multiplication

The most efficient vectorization operations are matrix manipulations in which you add and multiply multiple values against other multiple values. NumPy makes performing multiplication of a vector by a matrix easy, which is handy if you have to estimate a value for each observation as a weighted summation of the features. Here's an example of this technique:

```
import numpy as np
a = np.array([2, 4, 6, 8])
b = np.array([[1, 2, 3, 4],
              [2, 3, 4, 5],
              [3, 4, 5, 6],
              [4, 5, 6, 7]])
```

```
c = np.dot(a, b)
print(c)
```

Notice that the array formatted as a vector must appear before the array formatted as a matrix in the multiplication or you get an error. The example outputs these values:

```
[60 80 100 120]
```

To obtain the values shown, you multiply every value in the array against the matching column in the matrix; that is, you multiply the first value in the array against the first column, first row of the matrix. For example, the first value in the output is  $2 * 1 + 4 * 2 + 6 * 3 + 8 * 4$ , which equals 60.

## ***Performing matrix multiplication***

You can also multiply one matrix against another. In this case, the output is the result of multiplying rows in the first matrix against columns in the second matrix. Here is an example of how you multiply one NumPy matrix against another:

```
import numpy as np
a = np.array([[2, 4, 6, 8],
              [1, 3, 5, 7]])
b = np.array ([[1, 2],
              [2, 3],
              [3, 4],
              [4, 5]])
c = np.dot(a, b)
print(c)
```

In this case, you end up with a 2-x-2 matrix as output. Here are the values you should see when you run the application:

```
[[60 80]
 [50 66]]
```

Each row in the first matrix is multiplied by each column of the second matrix. For example, to get the value 50 shown in row 2, column 1 of the output, you match up the values in row two of matrix a with column 1 of matrix b, like this:  $1 * 1 + 3 * 2 + 5 * 3 + 7 * 4$ .

## Part 3

# Visualizing Information

## IN THIS PART ...

- Creating basic graphs and charts
- Choosing the right graph or chart for the task
- Putting time in a bottle with time series data
- Making the world you own with geographical plots

## Chapter 10

# Getting a Crash Course in Matplotlib

---

## IN THIS CHAPTER

- » **Creating a basic graph**
  - » **Adding measurement lines to your graph**
  - » **Dressing your graph up with styles and color**
  - » **Documenting your graph with labels, annotations, and legends**
- 

Most people visualize information better when they see it in graphic, versus textual, format. Graphics help people see relationships and make comparisons with greater ease. Even if you can deal with the abstraction of textual data with ease, performing data analysis is all about communication. Unless you can communicate your ideas to other people, the act of obtaining, shaping, and analyzing the data has little value beyond your own personal needs. Fortunately, Python makes the task of converting your textual data into graphics relatively easy using Matplotlib, which is actually a simulation of the MATLAB application. You can see a comparison of the two at [https://pyzo.org/python\\_vs\\_matlab.html](https://pyzo.org/python_vs_matlab.html). (If you don't know how to use MATLAB, see *MATLAB For Dummies*, by John Paul Mueller [Wiley]), if you'd like to learn.)



**TIP** If you already know how to use MATLAB, moving over to Matplotlib is relatively easy because they both use the same sort of state machine to perform tasks, and they have a similar method of defining graphic elements. A number of people feel that Matplotlib is superior to MATLAB because you can do things like perform tasks using less code when working with Matplotlib than when using MATLAB (see

[https://phillipmfeldman.org/Python/Advantages\\_of\\_Python\\_Over\\_Matlab.html](https://phillipmfeldman.org/Python/Advantages_of_Python_Over_Matlab.html)). Others have noted that the transition from MATLAB to Matplotlib is relatively straightforward (see <https://realpython.com/matlab-vs-python/>). However, what matters most is what you think. You may find that you like to experiment with data using MATLAB and then create applications based on your findings using Python with Matplotlib. It's a matter of personal taste rather than a question of which one is correct.

This chapter focuses on getting you up to speed quickly with Matplotlib. You do use Matplotlib quite a few times later in the book, so this short overview of how it works is important, even if you already know how to work with MATLAB. That said, the MATLAB experience will be incredibly helpful as you progress through the chapter, and you may find that you can simply skim through some sections. Make sure to keep this chapter in mind as you start working with Matplotlib in more detail later in the book.



**REMEMBER** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter manually; in fact, using the downloadable source code is a lot easier. The source code for this chapter appears in the `P4DS4D3_10_Getting_a_Crash_Course_in_MatPlotLib.ipynb` file (see the Introduction for where to find this code).

## *Starting with a Graph*

A graph or chart is simply a visual representation of numeric data. Matplotlib makes a large number of graph and chart types available to you. Of course, you can choose any of the common graph and graph types such as bar charts, line graphs, or pie charts. As with MATLAB, you can also access a huge number of statistical plot types, such as boxplots, error bar charts, and histograms. You can see a gallery of the various graph types that Matplotlib supports at <https://matplotlib.org/gallery.html>. Remember, though, that you

can combine graphic elements in an almost infinite number of ways to create your own presentation of data no matter how complex that data may be. The following sections describe how to create a basic graph, but you have access to a lot more functionality than these sections tell you about.

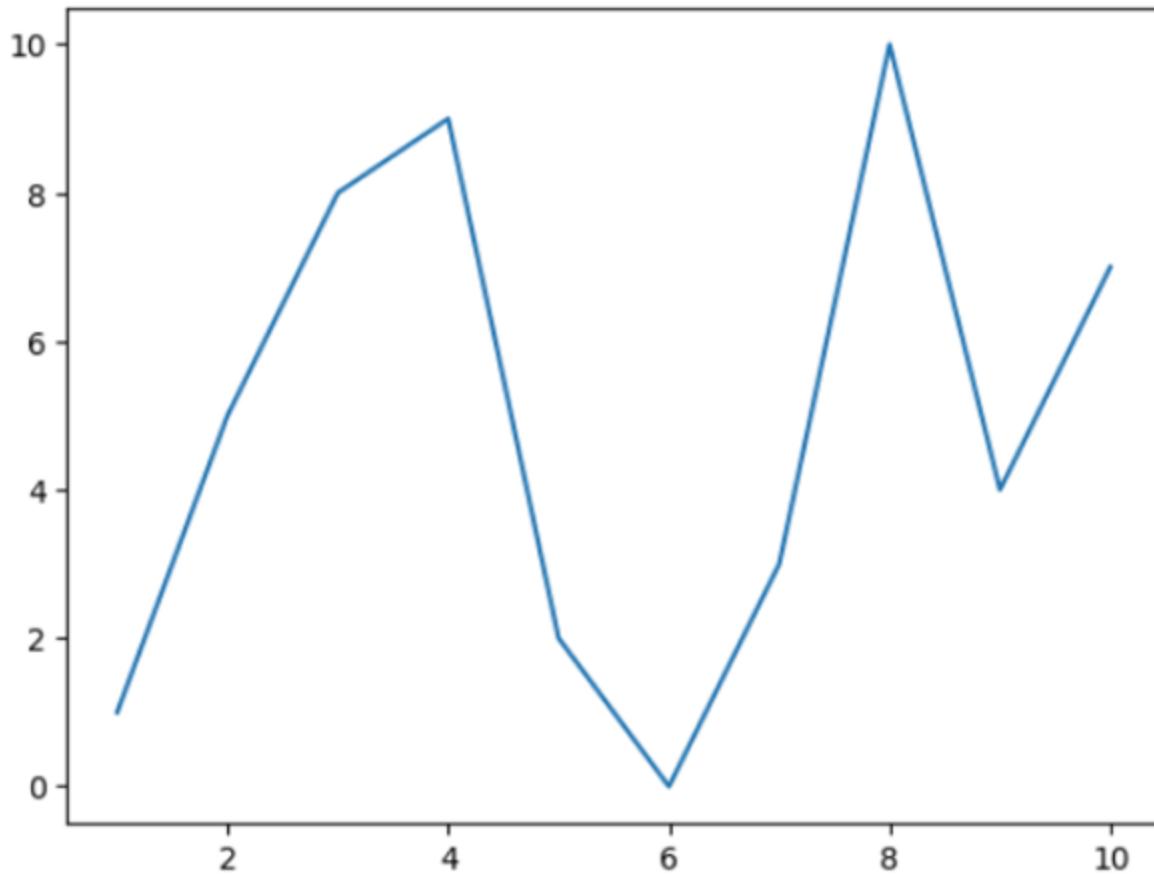
## ***Defining the plot***

Plots show graphically what you've defined numerically. To define a plot, you need some values, the `matplotlib.pyplot` module, and an idea of what you want to display, as shown in the following code:

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
plt.show()
```

In this case, the code tells the `plt.plot()` function to create a plot using x-axis values between 1 and 11 and y-axis values as they appear in the `values` variable. Calling `plot.show()` displays the plot in a separate dialog box, as shown in [Figure 10-1](#). Notice that the output is a line graph. [Chapter 11](#) shows you how to create other chart and graph types.



**FIGURE 10-1:** Creating a basic plot that shows just one line.



TECHNICAL STUFF

The `%matplotlib inline` magic function (see the “[Embedding plots and other images](#)” section of [Chapter 5](#)) has become optional in newer versions of Python. However, including it is still a good idea, especially if you share your code with other people.

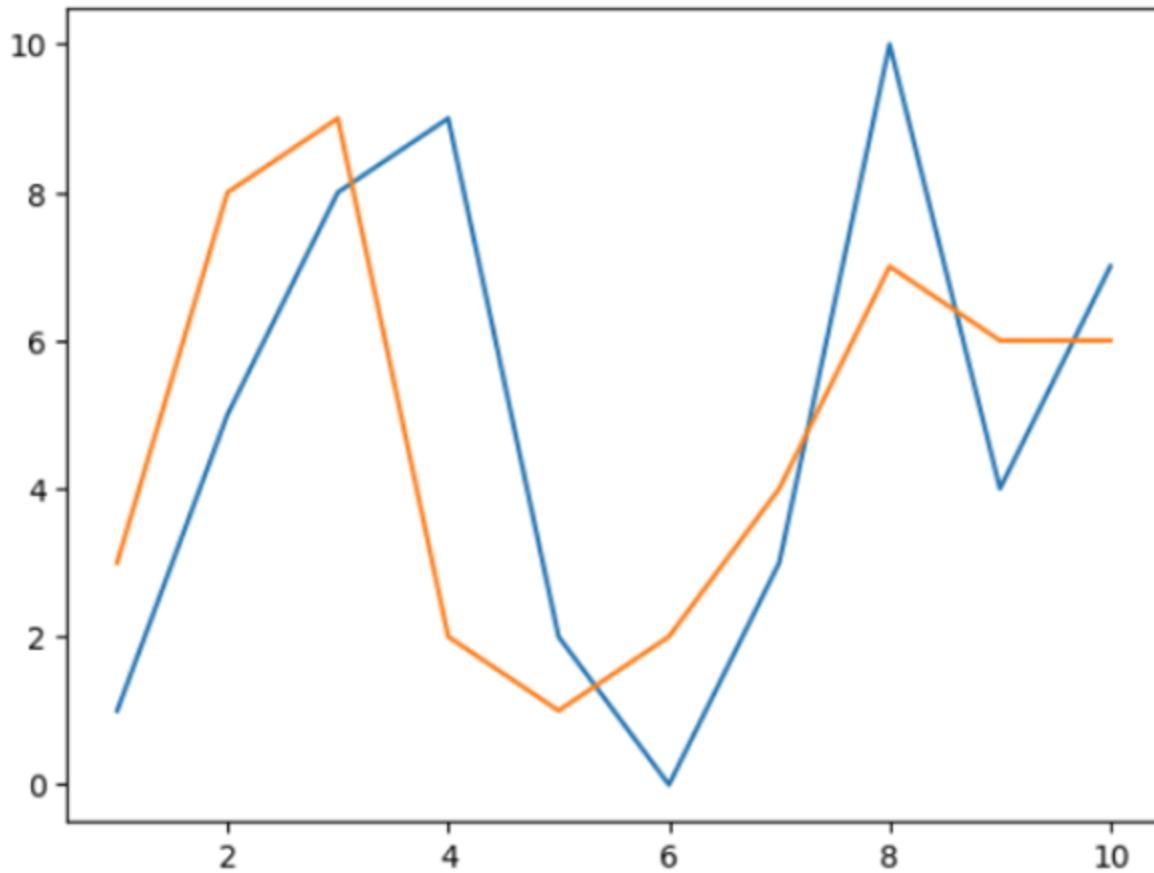
## Drawing multiple lines and plots

You encounter many situations in which you must use multiple plot lines, such as when comparing two sets of values. To create such plots using Matplotlib, you simply call `plt.plot()` multiple times — once for each plot line, as shown in the following example:

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline
```

```
values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
values2 = [3, 8, 9, 2, 1, 2, 4, 7, 6, 6]
plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
plt.plot(range(1,11), values2)
plt.show()
```

When you run this example, you see two plot lines, as shown in [Figure 10-2](#). Even though you can't see it in the printed book, the line graphs are different colors (chosen for you by the library) so that you can tell them apart.



**FIGURE 10-2:** Defining a plot that contains multiple lines.

## **Saving your work to disk**

Jupyter Notebook makes it easy to include your graphs within the notebooks you create, enabling you to define reports that everyone can easily understand. When you need to save a copy of your work to disk for later reference or to use it as part of a larger report, you save the

graphic programmatically using the `plt.savefig()` function, as shown in the following code:

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib auto

values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
plt.ioff()
plt.savefig('MySamplePlot.png', format='png')
```

In this case, you must provide a minimum of two inputs. The first input is the filename. You may optionally include a path for saving the file. The second input is the file format. In this case, the example saves the file in Portable Network Graphic (PNG) format, but you have other options: Portable Document Format (PDF), Postscript (PS), Encapsulated Postscript (EPS), and Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG).



**REMEMBER** Note the presence of the `%matplotlib auto` magic in this case.

Using this call removes the inline display of the graph. You do have options for other Matplotlib backends, depending on which version of Python and Matplotlib you use. For example, some developers prefer the notebook backend to the inline backend because it provides additional functionality. However, to use the notebook backend, you must also restart the kernel, and you may not always see what you expect. To see the backend list, use the `%matplotlib -l` magic. In addition, calling `plt.ioff()` turns plot interaction off.

## *Setting the Axis, Ticks, and Grids*

It's hard to know what the data actually means unless you provide a unit of measure or at least some means of performing comparisons. The use of axes, ticks, and grids makes it possible to illustrate graphically the relative size of data elements so that the viewer gains an appreciation of comparative measure. You won't use these features with every graphic, and you may employ the features differently based on viewer needs, but

it's important to know that these features exist and how you can use them to help document your data within the graphic environment.



TECHNICAL  
STUFF

The following examples use the `%matplotlib notebook` magic so that you can see the difference between it and the `%matplotlib inline` magic. The two inline displays rely on a different graphic engine. Consequently, you must choose Kernel ⇒ Restart to restart the kernel before you run any of the examples in the sections that follow.

## Getting the axes

The axes define the x and y plane of the graphic. The x axis runs horizontally, and the y axis runs vertically. In many cases, you can allow Matplotlib to perform any required formatting for you. However, sometimes you need to obtain access to the axes and format them manually. The following code shows how to obtain access to the axes for a plot:

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib notebook

values = [0, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
ax = plt.axes()
plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
plt.show()
```

The reason you place the axes in a variable, `ax`, instead of manipulating them directly is to make writing the code simpler and more efficient. In this case, you simply turn on the default axes by calling `plt.axes()`; then you place a handle to the axes in `ax`. A *handle* is a sort of pointer to the axes. Think of it as you would a frying pan. You wouldn't lift the frying pan directly but would instead use its handle when picking it up.

## Formatting the axes

Simply displaying the axes won't be enough in many cases. Instead, you may want to change the way Matplotlib displays them. For example, you

may not want the highest value to reach to the top of the graph. The following example shows just a small number of tasks you can perform after you have access to the axes:

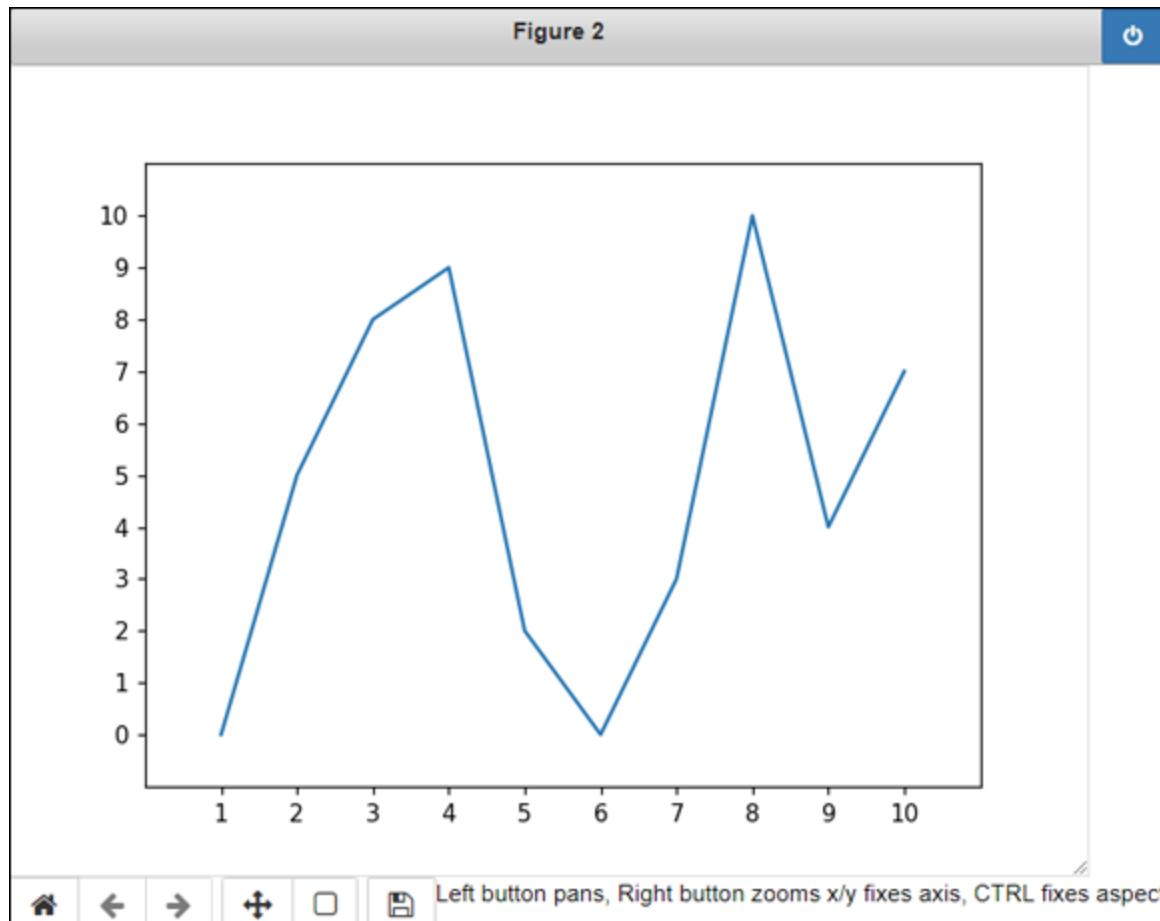
```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib notebook
plt.figure()

values = [0, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
ax = plt.axes()
ax.set_xlim([0, 11])
ax.set_ylim([-1, 11])
ax.set_xticks([1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10])
ax.set_yticks([0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10])
plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
plt.show()
```

In this case, the `set_xlim()` and `set_ylim()` calls change the axes limits — the minimum and maximum coordinate values of each axis. The `set_xticks()` and `set_yticks()` calls change the ticks used to display data. The ways in which you can change a graph using these calls can become quite detailed. For example, you can choose to change individual tick labels if you want.



**REMEMBER** Notice also the call to `plt.figure()`. If you don't make this call, the code will modify the first plot (figure) from the previous section ([Figure 10-2](#)), rather than create a new figure. In fact, what it will actually do is add to that previous figure, so what you end up with is a mess that no one can figure out! [Figure 10-3](#) shows the output from this example. Notice how the changes affect how the line graph displays.



**FIGURE 10-3:** Specifying how the axes should appear to the viewer.



TECHNICAL STUFF

As you can see by viewing the differences between [Figures 10-1](#), [10-2](#), and [10-3](#), the %matplotlib notebook magic produces a significantly different display. The controls at the bottom of the display let you pan and zoom the display, move between views you've created, and download the figure to disk when working with Jupyter Notebook (they may not work at all in Google Colab). The button to the right of the Figure 2 heading in [Figure 10-3](#) lets you stop interacting with the graph after you've finished working with it. Any changes you've made to the presentation of the graph remain afterward so that anyone looking at your notebook will see

the graph in the manner you intended for them to see it. The ability to interact with the graph ends when you display another graph.

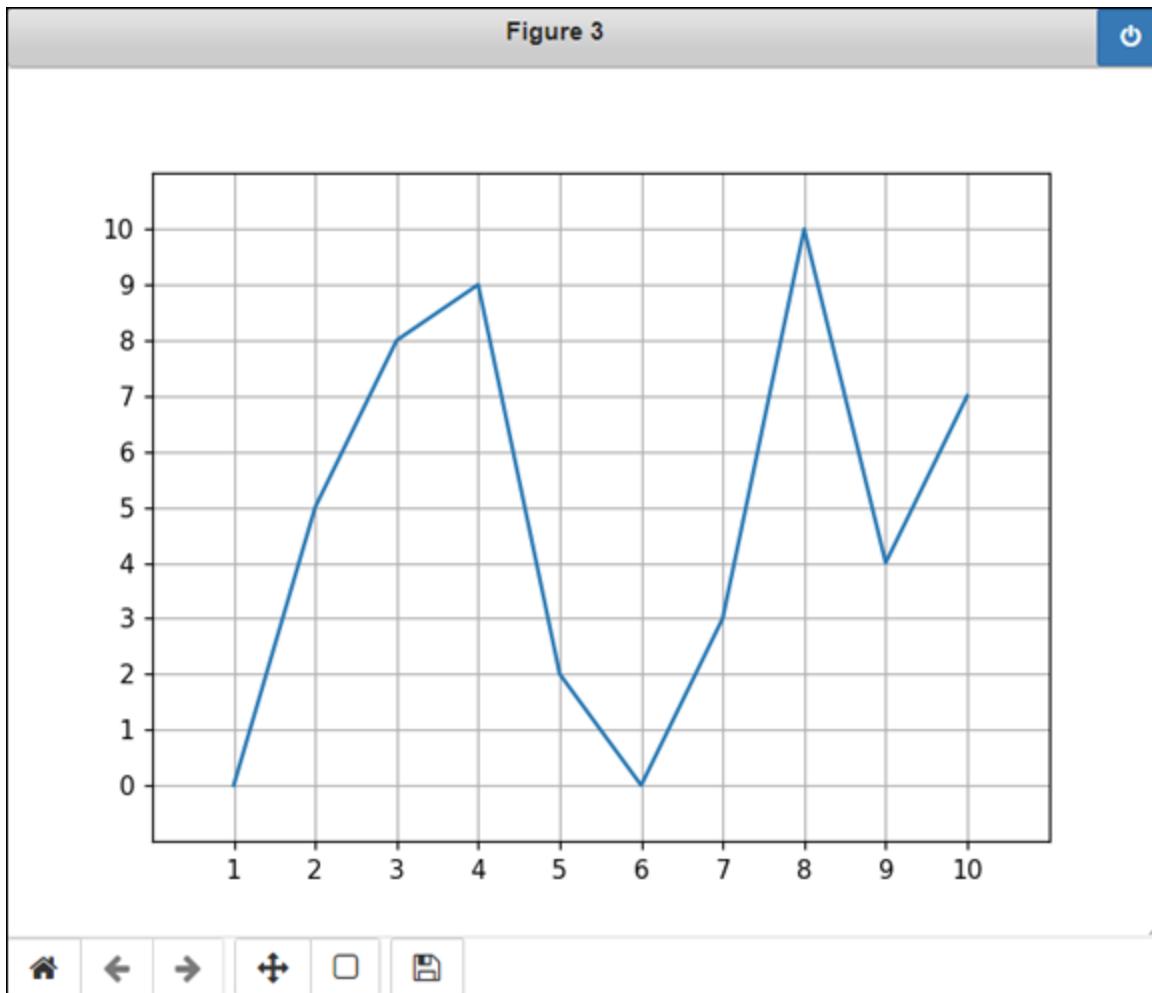
## **Adding grids**

Grid lines enable you to see the precise value of each element of a graph. You can more quickly determine both the x and y coordinates, which allow you to perform comparisons of individual points with greater ease. Of course, grids also add noise (added information) and make seeing the actual flow of data harder. The point is that you can use grids to good effect to create particular effects. The following code shows how to add a grid to the graph in the previous section:

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib notebook
plt.figure()

values = [0, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
ax = plt.axes()
ax.set_xlim([0, 11])
ax.set_ylim([-1, 11])
ax.set_xticks([1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10])
ax.set_yticks([0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10])
ax.grid()
plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
plt.show()
```

All you really need to do to add a grid to your plot is call the `grid()` function. As with many other Matplotlib functions, you can add parameters to create the grid precisely as you want to see it. For example, you can choose whether to add the x grid lines, y grid lines, or both. The output from this example appears in [Figure 10-4](#). In this case, the figure shows the notebook backend with interaction turned off.



**FIGURE 10-4:** Adding grids makes the values easier to read.

## Defining the Line Appearance

Just drawing lines on a page won't do much for you if you need to help the viewer understand the importance of your data. In most cases, you need to use different line styles to ensure that the viewer can tell one data grouping from another. However, to emphasize the importance or value of a particular data grouping, you need to employ color. The use of color communicates all sorts of ideas to the viewer. For example, green often denotes that something is safe, and red communicates danger. The following sections help you understand how to work with line style and color to communicate ideas and concepts to the viewer without using any text.

## Working with line styles

Line styles help differentiate graphs by drawing the lines in various ways. Using a unique presentation for each line helps you distinguish each line so that you can call it out (even when the printout is in shades of gray). You could also call out a particular line graph by using a different line style for it (and using the same style for the other lines).

[Table 10-1](#) shows the various Matplotlib line styles.

The line style appears as a third argument to the `plot()` function call. You simply provide the desired string for the line type, as shown in the following example.

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
values2 = [3, 8, 9, 2, 1, 2, 4, 7, 6, 6]
plt.plot(range(1,11), values, '--')
plt.plot(range(1,11), values2, ':')
plt.show()
```

## MAKING GRAPHICS ACCESSIBLE

Avoiding assumptions about someone's ability to see your graphic presentation is essential. For example, someone who is color blind may not be able to tell that one line is green and the other red. Likewise, someone with low vision may not be able to distinguish between a dashed line and one that combines dashes and dots. Using multiple methods to distinguish each line helps ensure that everyone can see your data in a manner that is comfortable to each person.

[TABLE 10-1](#) Matplotlib Line Styles

<i>Character Line Style</i>
'-' Solid line
'--' Dashed line
'-.-' Dash-dot line

---

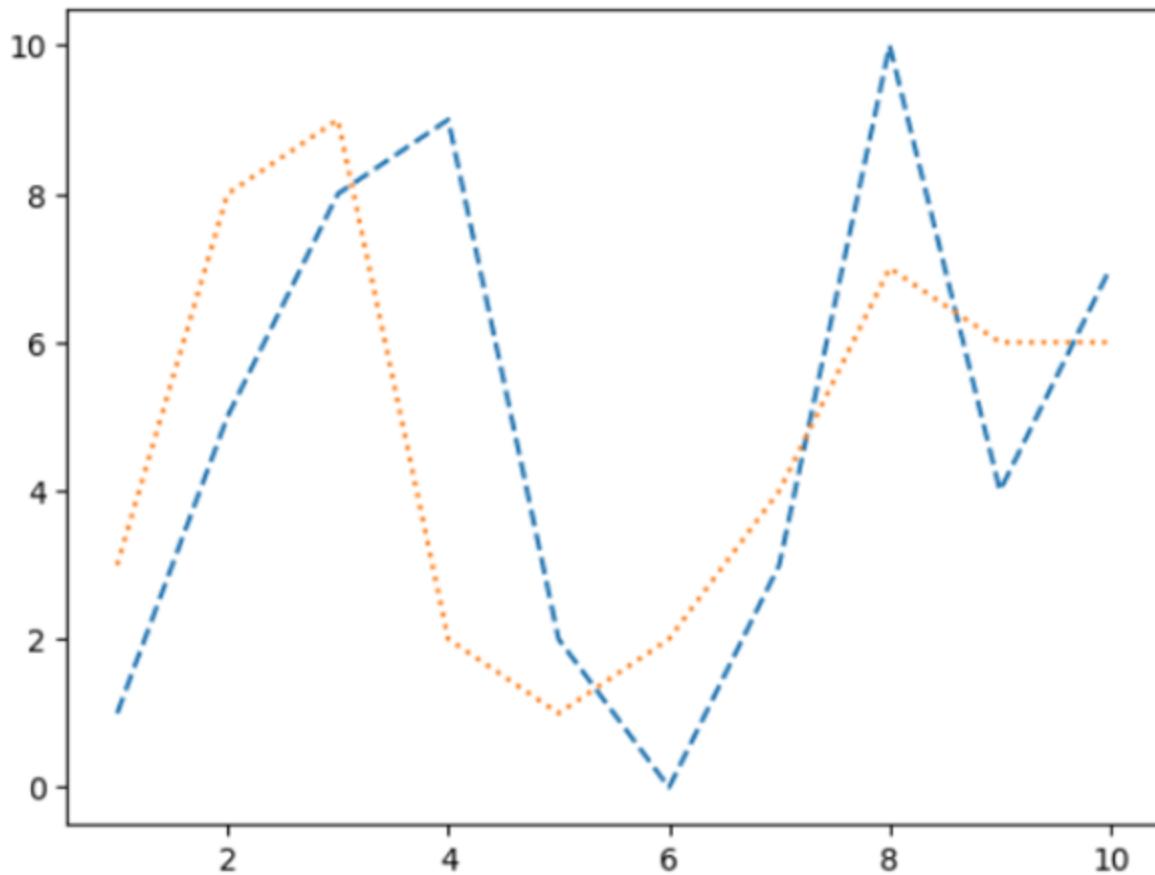
**Character Line Style**

---

 Dotted line

---

In this case, the first line graph uses a dashed line style, while the second line graph uses a dotted line style. (Note that you must restart the kernel again to switch from the `%matplotlib notebook` to the `%matplotlib inline` style.) You can see the results of the changes in [Figure 10-5](#).



[FIGURE 10-5:](#) Line styles help differentiate between plots.

## Using colors

Color is another way in which to differentiate line graphs. Of course, this method has certain problems. The most significant problem occurs when someone makes a black-and-white copy of your colored graph — hiding the color differences as shades of gray. Another problem is that someone with color blindness may not be able to tell one line from the other. All

this said, color does make for a brighter, eye-grabbing presentation. [Table 10-2](#) shows the colors that Matplotlib supports.

## [TABLE 10-2](#) Matplotlib Colors

Character	Color
'b'	Blue
'g'	Green
'r'	Red
'c'	Cyan
'm'	Magenta
'y'	Yellow
'k'	Black
'w'	White

As with line styles, the color appears in a string as the third argument to the `plot()` function call. In this case, the viewer sees two lines — one in red and the other in magenta. The data points are the same as those used for [Figure 10-2](#), just with different colors. If you're reading the printed version of the book, [Figure 10-2](#) appears in shades of gray instead of color, as does this new presentation.

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
values2 = [3, 8, 9, 2, 1, 2, 4, 7, 6, 6]
plt.plot(range(1,11), values, 'r')
plt.plot(range(1,11), values2, 'm')
plt.show()
```

## [Adding markers](#)

Markers add a special symbol to each data point in a line graph. Unlike line style and color, markers tend to be a little less susceptible to accessibility and printing issues. Even when the specific marker isn't clear, people can usually differentiate one marker from the other. [Table 10-3](#) shows the list of markers that Matplotlib provides.

## TABLE 10-3 Matplotlib Markers

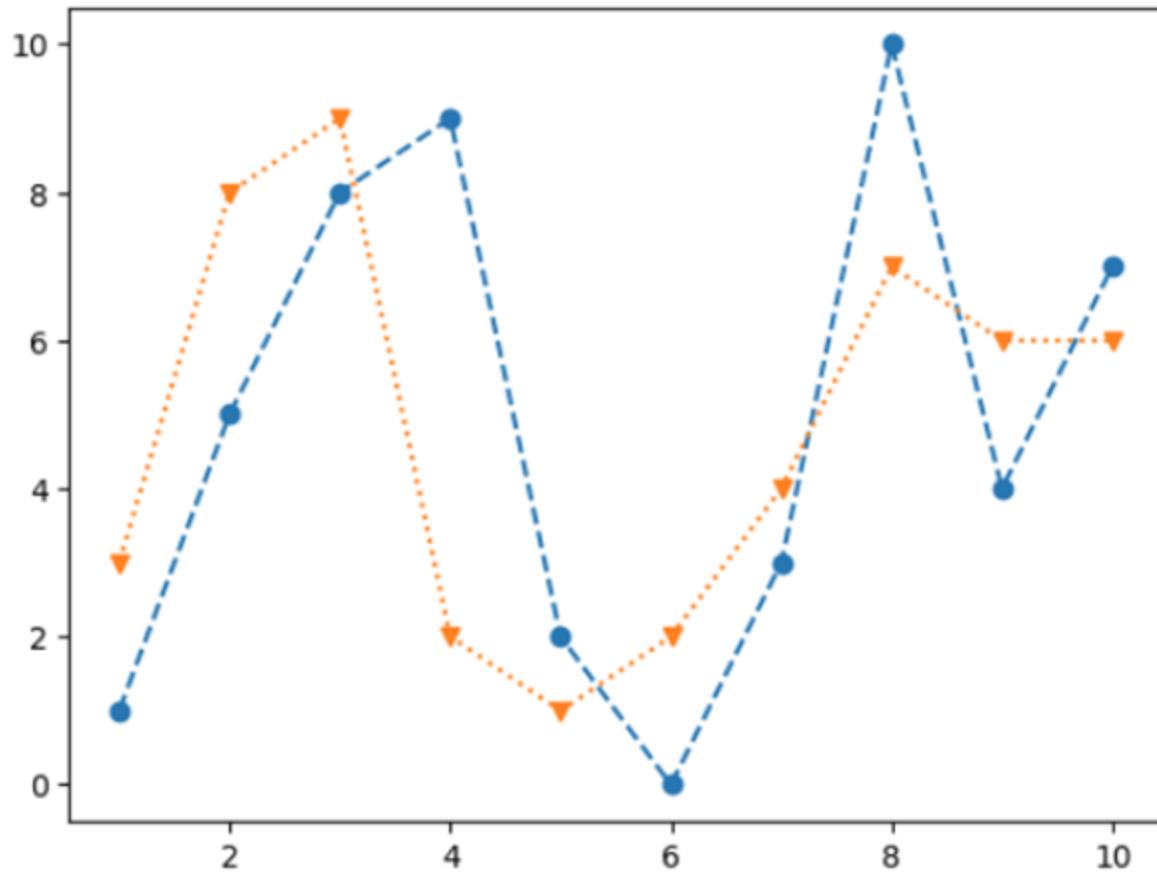
<i>Character</i>	<i>Marker Type</i>
'.'	Point
','	Pixel
'o'	Circle
'v'	Triangle 1 down
'^'	Triangle 1 up
Triangle 1 left	
'>'	Triangle 1 right
'1'	Triangle 2 down
'2'	Triangle 2 up
'3'	Triangle 2 left
'4'	Triangle 2 right
's'	Square
'p'	Pentagon
'*'	Star
'h'	Hexagon style 1
'H'	Hexagon style 2
'+'	Plus
'x'	X
'D'	Diamond
'd'	Thin diamond
' '	Vertical line
'_'	Horizontal line

As with line style and color, you add markers as the third argument to a `plot()` call. In the following example, you see the effects of combining line style with a marker to provide a unique line-graph presentation.

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline
```

```
values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
values2 = [3, 8, 9, 2, 1, 2, 4, 7, 6, 6]
plt.plot(range(1,11), values, 'o--')
plt.plot(range(1,11), values2, 'v:')
plt.show()
```

Notice how the combination of line style and marker makes each line stand out in [Figure 10-6](#). Even when printed in black and white, you can easily differentiate one line from the other, which is why you usually want to combine presentation techniques.



**FIGURE 10-6:** Markers help to emphasize individual values.

## Using Labels, Annotations, and Legends

To fully document your graph, you usually have to resort to labels, annotations, and legends. Each of these elements has a different purpose, as follows:

- » **Label:** Provides positive identification of a particular data element or grouping. The purpose is to make it easy for the viewer to know the name or kind of data illustrated.
- » **Annotation:** Augments the information the viewer can immediately see about the data with notes, sources, or other useful information. In contrast to a label, the purpose of annotation is to help extend the viewer's knowledge of the data rather than simply identify it.
- » **Legend:** Presents a listing of the data groups within the graph and often provides cues (such as line type or color) to make identification of the data group easier. For example, all the red points may belong to group A, and all the blue points may belong to group B.

The following sections help you understand the purpose and usage of various documentation aids provided with Matplotlib. These documentation aids help you create an environment in which the viewer is certain of the source, purpose, and usage of data elements. Some graphs work just fine without any documentation aids, but in other cases, you may find that you need to use all three in order to communicate with your viewer fully.

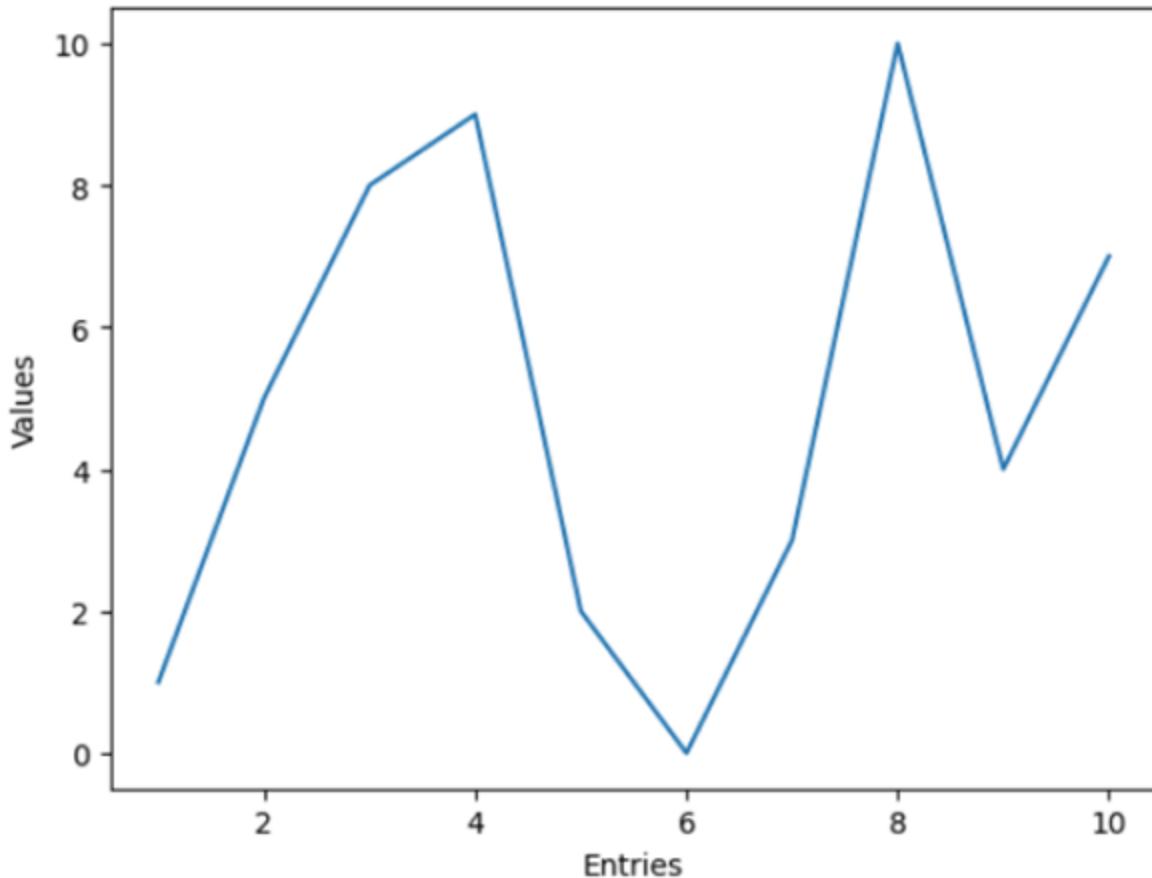
## ***Adding labels***

Labels help people understand the significance of each axis of any graph you create. Without labels, the values portrayed don't have any significance. In addition to a moniker, such as rainfall, you can also add units of measure, such as inches or centimeters, so that your audience knows how to interpret the data shown. The following example shows how to add labels to your graph:

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
plt.xlabel('Entries')
plt.ylabel('Values')
plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
plt.show()
```

The call to `xlabel()` documents the x axis of your graph, while the call to `ylabel()` documents the y axis of your graph. [Figure 10-7](#) shows the output of this example.



[FIGURE 10-7:](#) Use labels to identify the axes.

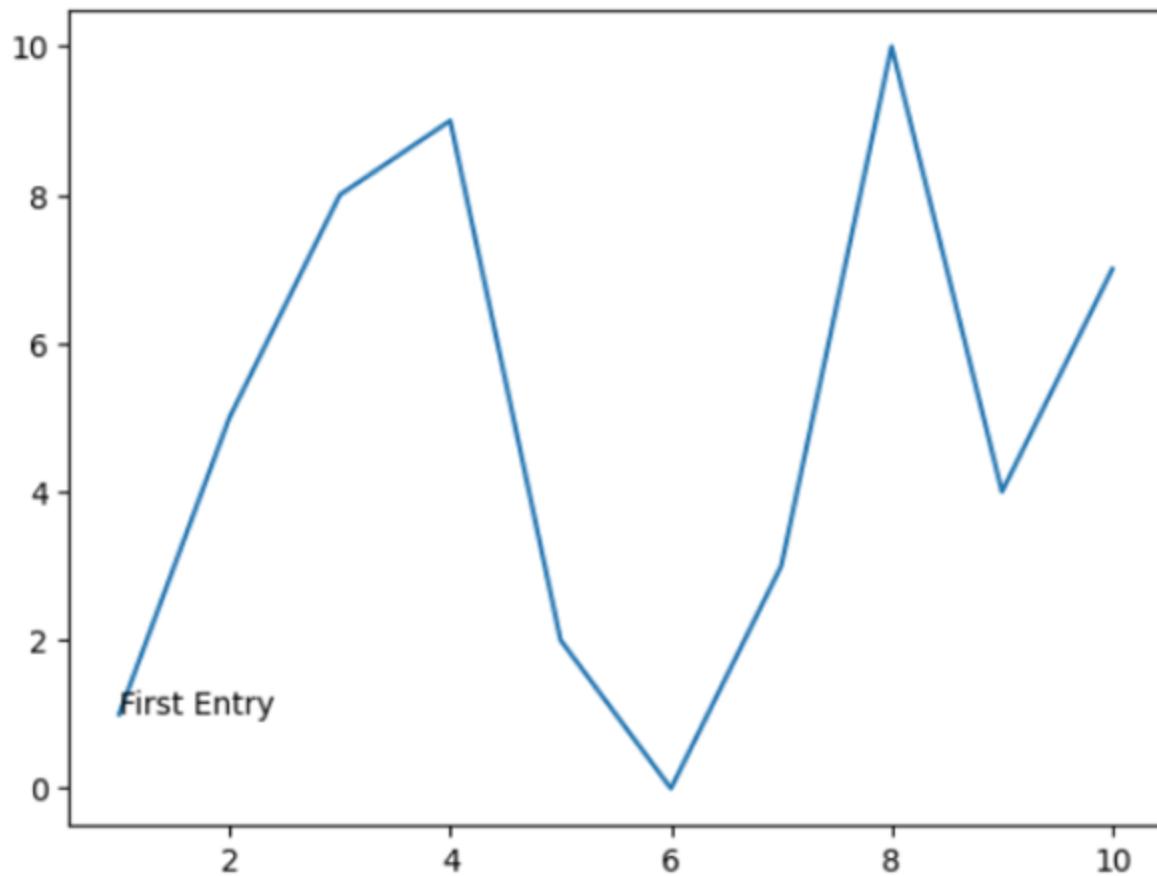
## Annotating the chart

You use annotation to draw special attention to points of interest on a graph. For example, you may want to point out that a specific data point is outside the usual range expected for a particular dataset. The following example shows how to add annotation to a graph:

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
plt.annotate(xy=[1,1], text='First Entry')
plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
plt.show()
```

The call to `annotate()` provides the labeling you need. You must provide a location for the annotation by using the `xy` parameter, as well as provide text to place at the location by using the `text` parameter. The `annotate()` function also provides other parameters that you can use to create special formatting or placement onscreen. [Figure 10-8](#) shows the output from this example.



[FIGURE 10-8:](#) Annotation can identify points of interest.

### ***Creating a legend***

A legend documents the individual elements of a plot. Each line is presented in a table that contains a label for it so that people can differentiate between each line. For example, one line may represent sales for one year and another line may represent sales during the next year, so you include an entry in the legend for each line that is labeled with the years. The following example shows how to add a legend to your plot.

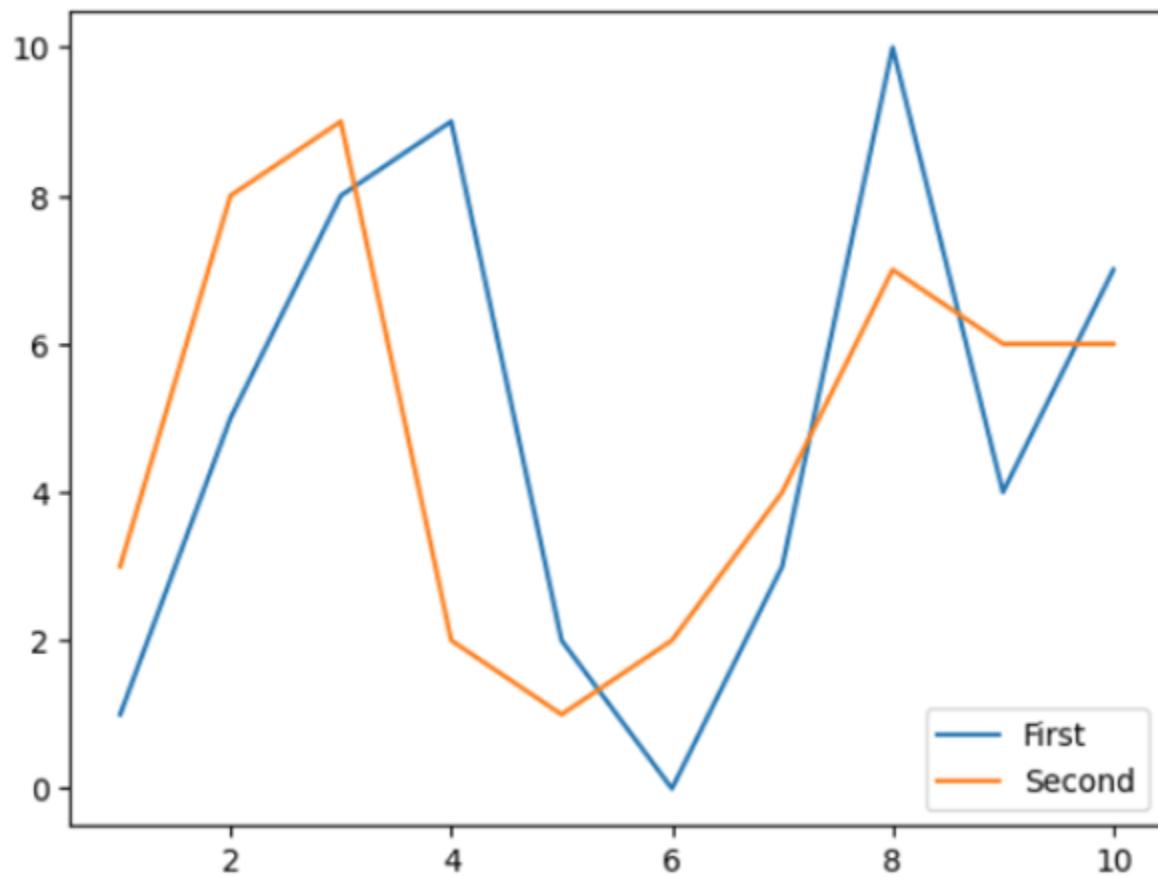
```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

values = [1, 5, 8, 9, 2, 0, 3, 10, 4, 7]
values2 = [3, 8, 9, 2, 1, 2, 4, 7, 6, 6]
line1 = plt.plot(range(1,11), values)
line2 = plt.plot(range(1,11), values2)
plt.legend(['First', 'Second'], loc=4)
plt.show()
```

The call to `legend()` occurs after you create the plots, not before, as with some of the other functions described in this chapter. The call contains a list of the labels you want to use in the order of the plots you generate. So, 'First' is associated with `line1`, and 'Second' is associated with `line2`.



**TIP** The default location for the legend is the upper-right corner of the plot, which proved inconvenient for this particular example. Adding the `loc` parameter lets you place the legend in a different location. See the `legend()` function documentation at [https://matplotlib.org/2.0.2/api/pyplot\\_api.html#matplotlib.pyplot.figlegend](https://matplotlib.org/2.0.2/api/pyplot_api.html#matplotlib.pyplot.figlegend) for additional legend locations. [Figure 10-9](#) shows the output from this example.



**FIGURE 10-9:** Use legends to identify individual lines.

## Chapter 11

# Visualizing the Data

---

### IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Selecting the right graph for the job
  - » Working with advanced scatterplots
  - » Exploring time-related and geographical data
  - » Creating graphs
- 

[Chapter 10](#) helps you understand the mechanics of working with Matplotlib, which is an important first step toward using it. This chapter takes the next step in helping you use Matplotlib to perform useful work. The main goal of this chapter is to help you visualize your data in various ways. Creating a graphic presentation of your data is essential if you want to help other people understand what you’re trying to say. Even though you can see what the numbers mean in your mind, other people will likely need graphics to see what point you’re trying to make by manipulating data in various ways.

The chapter starts by looking at some basic graph types that Matplotlib supports. You don’t find the full list of graphs and plots listed in this chapter — it could take an entire book to explore them all in detail. However, you do find the most common types.

In the remainder of the chapter, you begin exploring specific sorts of plotting as it relates to data science. Of course, no book on data science would be complete without exploring scatterplots, which are used to help people see patterns in seemingly unrelated data points. Because much of the data that you work with today is time related or geographic in nature, the chapter devotes two special sections to these topics. You also get to work with both directed and undirected graphs, which is fine for social media analysis.



**REMEMBER** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter; in fact, using the downloadable source is a lot easier. The source code for this chapter appears in the P4DS4D3\_11\_Visualizing\_the\_Data.ipynb (see the Introduction for details on how to find that source file).

## Choosing the Right Graph

The kind of graph you choose determines how people view the associated data, so choosing the right graph from the outset is important. For example, when you want people to form opinions on how data elements compare through the use of precise counts, you use a bar chart. The idea is to choose a graph that naturally leads people to draw the conclusion that you need them to draw about the data that you've carefully massaged from various data sources. (You also have the option of using line graphs — a technique demonstrated in [Chapter 10](#).) The following sections describe the various graph types and provide you with basic examples of how to use them.

### *Creating comparisons with bar charts*

Bar charts make comparing values easy. The wide bars and segregated measurements emphasize the differences between values, rather than the flow of one value to another as a line graph would do. Fortunately, you have all sorts of methods at your disposal for emphasizing specific values and performing other tricks. The following example shows just some of the things you can do with a vertical bar chart:

```
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

values = [5, 8, 9, 10, 4, 7]
widths = [0.7, 0.8, 0.7, 0.7, 0.7, 0.7]
colors = ['b', 'r', 'b', 'b', 'b', 'b']
plt.bar(range(0, 6), values, width=widths,
        color=colors, align='center')

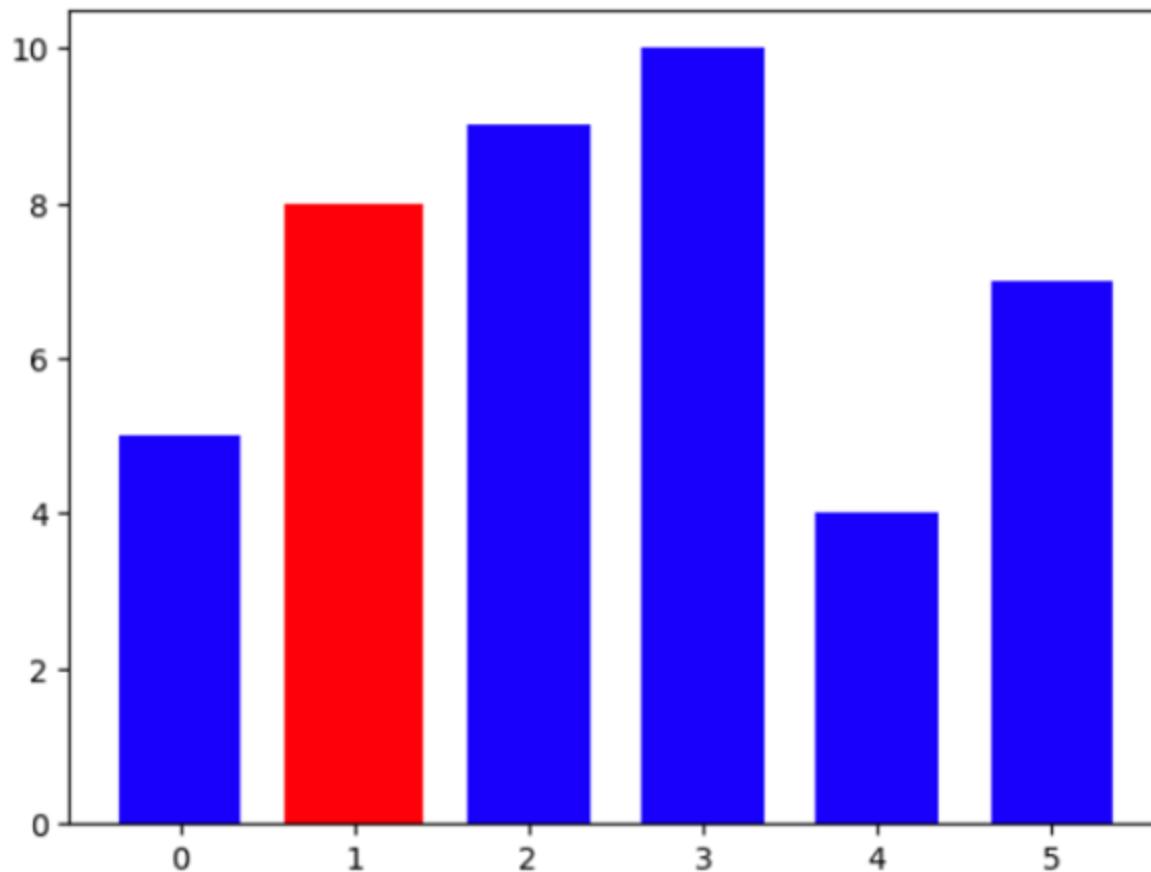
plt.show()
```

---

To create even a basic bar chart, you must provide a series of x coordinates and the heights of the bars. The example uses the `range()` function to create the x coordinates, and `values` contains the heights.

Of course, you may want more than a basic bar chart, and Matplotlib provides a number of ways to get the job done. In this case, the example uses the `width` parameter to control the width of each bar, emphasizing the second bar by making it slightly larger. The larger width would show up even in a black-and-white printout. It also uses the `color` parameter to change the color of the target bar to red (the rest are blue).

As with other chart types, the bar chart provides some special features that you can use to make your presentation stand out. The example uses the `align` parameter to center the data on the x coordinate (the standard position is to the left). You can also use other parameters, such as `hatch`, to enhance the visual appearance of your bar chart. [Figure 11-1](#) shows the output of this example.



**FIGURE 11-1:** Bar charts make it easier to perform comparisons.



**TIP** This chapter helps you get started using Matplotlib to create a variety of chart and graph types. Of course, more examples are better, so you can also find some more advanced examples on the Matplotlib site at

<https://matplotlib.org/stable/gallery/index.html>. Some of the examples, such as those that demonstrate animation techniques, become quite advanced, but with practice you can use any of them to improve your own charts and graphs.

## ***Showing distributions using histograms***

Histograms categorize data by breaking it into *bins*, where each bin contains a subset of the data range. A histogram then displays the number of items in each bin so that you can see the distribution of data and the progression of data from bin to bin. In most cases, you see a curve of some type, such as a bell curve. The following example shows how to create a histogram with randomized data:

```
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

x = 20 * np.random.randn(10000)

plt.hist(x, 25, range=(-50, 50), histtype='stepfilled',
         align='mid', color='g', label='Test Data')
plt.legend()
plt.title('Step Filled Histogram')
plt.show()
```

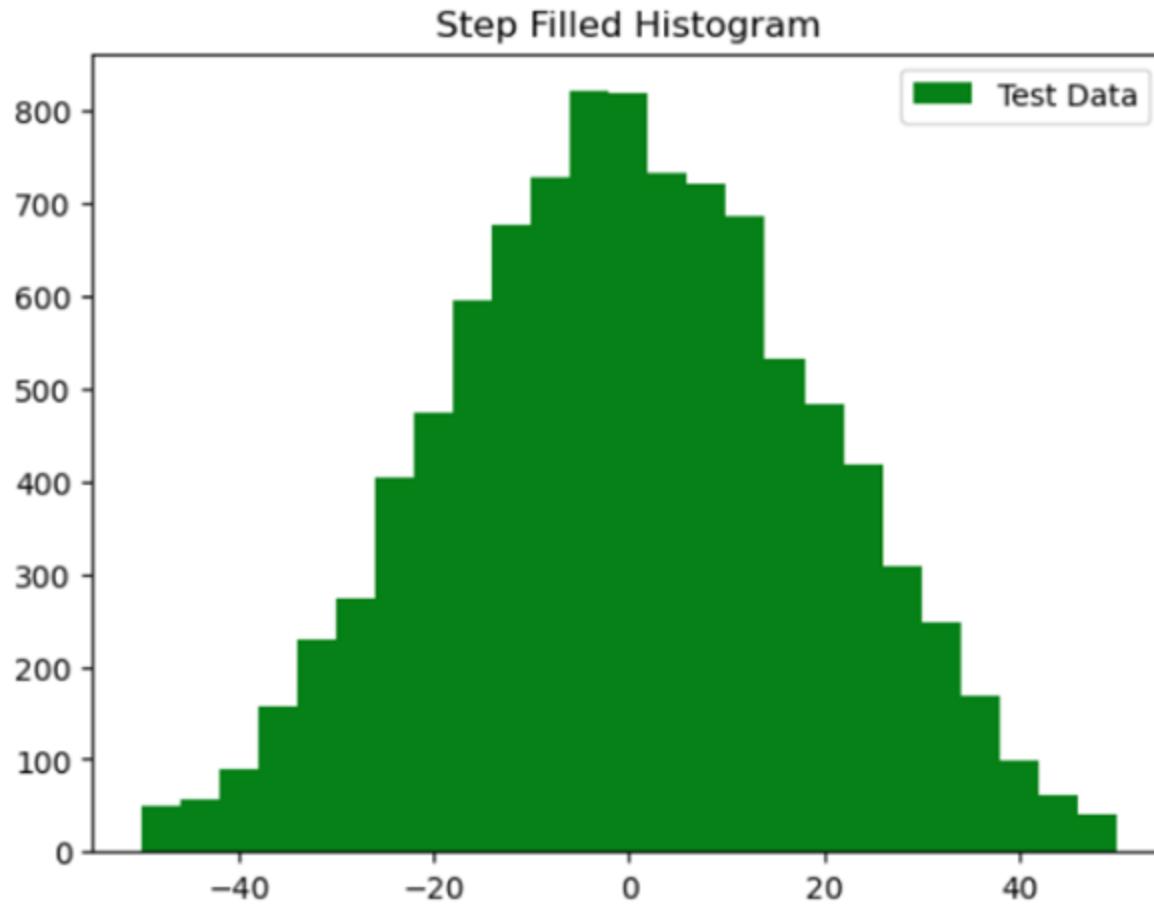
In this case, the input values are a series of random numbers. The distribution of these numbers should show a type of bell curve. As a minimum, you must provide a series of values, x in this case, to plot. The second argument contains the number of bins to use when creating the data intervals. The default value is 10. Using the range parameter

helps you focus the histogram on the relevant data and exclude any outliers.

You can create multiple histogram types. The default setting creates a bar chart. You can also create a stacked bar chart, stepped graph, or filled stepped graph (the type shown in the example). In addition, it's possible to control the orientation of the output, with vertical as the default.

As with most other charts and graphs in this chapter, you can add special features to the output. For example, the `align` parameter determines the alignment of each bar along the baseline. Use the `color` parameter to control the colors of the bars. The `label` parameter doesn't actually appear unless you also create a legend (as shown in this example).

[Figure 11-2](#) shows typical output from this example.



[FIGURE 11-2:](#) Histograms let you see distributions of numbers.



**REMEMBER** Random data varies call by call. Every time you run the example, you see slightly different results because the random-generation process differs.

## Depicting groups using boxplots

Boxplots provide a means of depicting groups of numbers through their *quartiles* (three points dividing a group into four equal parts). A boxplot may also have lines, called *whiskers*, indicating data outside the upper and lower quartiles. The spacing shown within a boxplot helps indicate the skew and dispersion of the data. The following example shows how to create a boxplot with randomized data:

```
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

spread = 100 * np.random.rand(100)
center = np.ones(50) * 50
flier_high = 100 * np.random.rand(10) + 100
flier_low = -100 * np.random.rand(10)
data = np.concatenate((spread, center,
                      flier_high, flier_low))

plt.boxplot(data, sym='gx', widths=.75, notch=True)
plt.show()
```

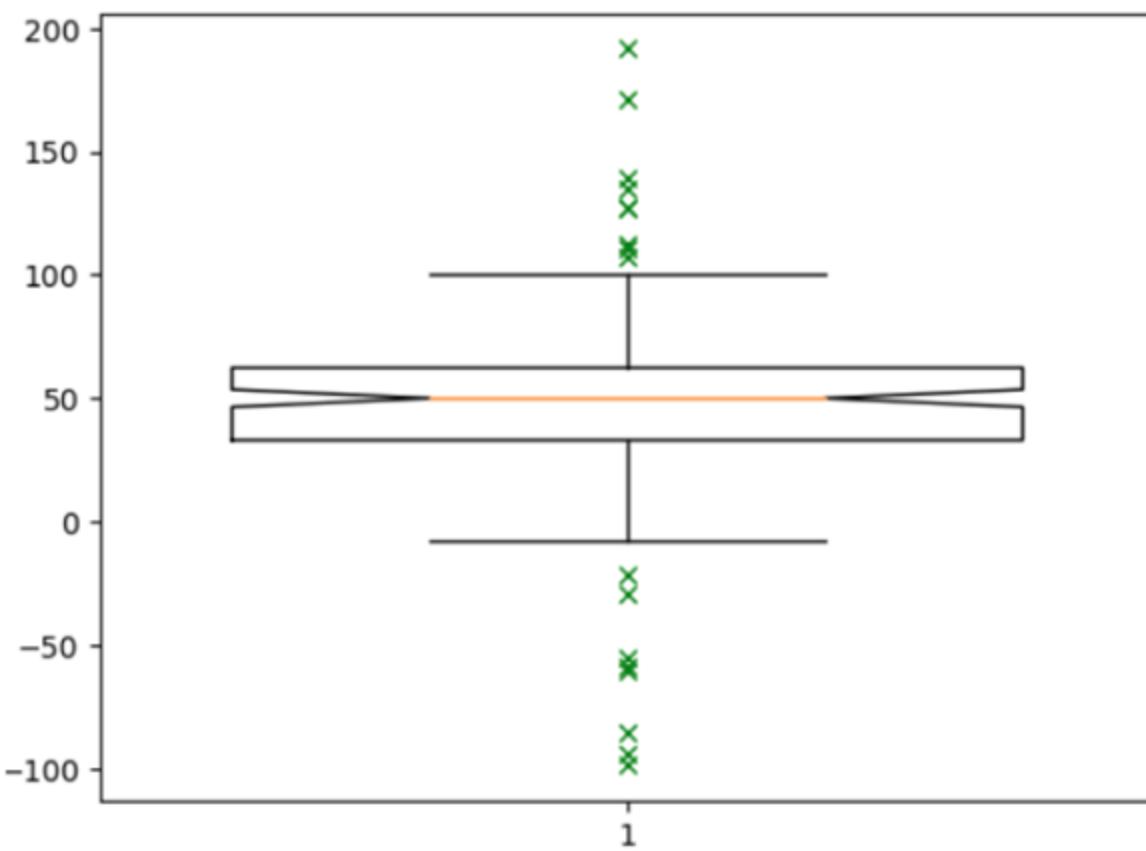
To create a usable dataset, you need to combine several different number-generation techniques, as shown at the beginning of the example. Here's how these techniques work:

- » **spread**: Contains a set of random numbers between 0 and 100
- » **center**: Provides 50 values directly in the center of the range of 50
- » **flier\_high**: Simulates outliers between 100 and 200
- » **flier\_low**: Simulates outliers between 0 and –100

The code combines all these values into a single dataset using `concatenate()`. Being randomly generated with specific characteristics

(such as a large number of points in the middle), the output will show specific characteristics but will work fine for the example.

The call to `boxplot()` requires only data as input. All other parameters have default settings. In this case, the code sets the presentation of outliers to green Xs by setting the `sym` parameter. You use `widths` to modify the size of the box (made extra-large in this case to make the box easier to see). Finally, you can create a square box or a box with a notch using the `notch` parameter (which normally defaults to `False`). [Figure 11-3](#) shows typical output from this example.



[FIGURE 11-3:](#) Use boxplots to present groups of numbers.

The box shows the three data points as the box, with the red line in the middle being the median. The two black horizontal lines connected to the box by whiskers show the upper and lower limits (for four quartiles). The outliers appear above and below the upper and lower limit lines as green Xs.

## Seeing data patterns using scatterplots

Scatterplots show clusters of data rather than trends (as with line graphs) or discrete values (as with bar charts). The purpose of a scatterplot is to help you see multidimensional data patterns. The following example shows how to create a scatterplot using randomized data:

```
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

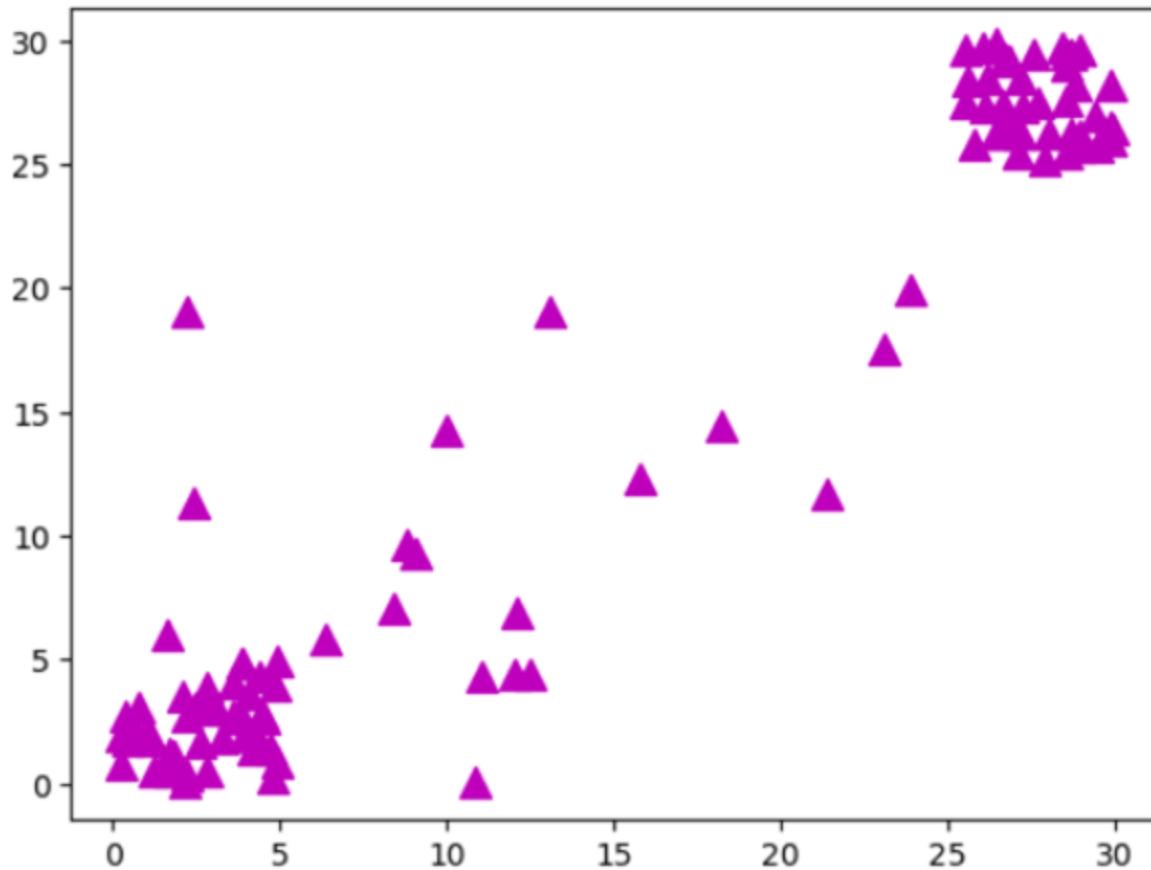
x1 = 5 * np.random.rand(40)
x2 = 5 * np.random.rand(40) + 25
x3 = 25 * np.random.rand(20)
x = np.concatenate((x1, x2, x3))

y1 = 5 * np.random.rand(40)
y2 = 5 * np.random.rand(40) + 25
y3 = 25 * np.random.rand(20)
y = np.concatenate((y1, y2, y3))

plt.scatter(x, y, s=[100], marker='^', c='m')
plt.show()
```

The example begins by generating random x and y coordinates. For each x coordinate, you must have a corresponding y coordinate. It's possible to create a scatterplot using just the x and y coordinates.

You can dress up a scatterplot in a number of ways. In this case, the `s` parameter determines the size of each data point. The `marker` parameter determines the data point shape. You use the `c` parameter to define the colors for all the data points, or you can define a separate color for individual data points. [Figure 11-4](#) shows the output from this example.



following example shows how you can use color to show groups within a scatterplot:

```
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

x1 = 5 * np.random.rand(50)
x2 = 5 * np.random.rand(50) + 25
x3 = 30 * np.random.rand(25)
x = np.concatenate((x1, x2, x3))

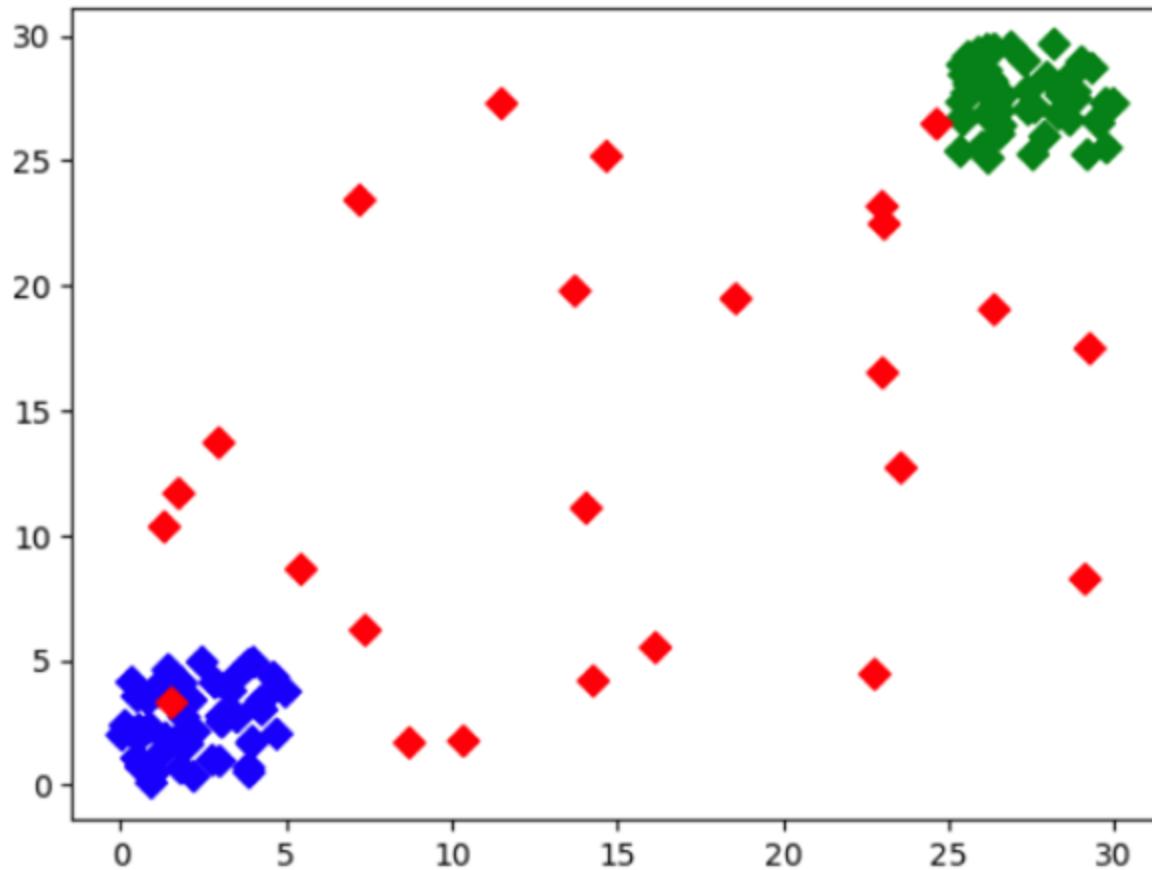
y1 = 5 * np.random.rand(50)
y2 = 5 * np.random.rand(50) + 25
y3 = 30 * np.random.rand(25)
y = np.concatenate((y1, y2, y3))

color_array = ['b'] * 50 + ['g'] * 50 + ['r'] * 25
plt.scatter(x, y, s=[50], marker='D', c=color_array)
plt.show()
```

The example works essentially the same as the scatterplot example in the previous section, except that this example uses an array for the colors. Unfortunately, if you're seeing this in the printed book, the differences between the shades of gray in [Figure 11-5](#) will be hard to see. However, the first group is blue, followed by green for the second group. Any outliers appear in red.

## ***Showing correlations***

In some cases, you need to know the general direction that your data is taking when looking at a scatterplot. Even if you create a clear depiction of the groups, the actual direction that the data is taking as a whole may not be clear. In this case, you add a trendline to the output. Here's an example of adding a trendline to a scatterplot that includes groups whose data points aren't as clearly separated as in the scatterplot shown previously in [Figure 11-5](#):



**FIGURE 11-5:** Color arrays can make the scatterplot groups stand out better.

```
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import matplotlib.pylab as plb
%matplotlib inline

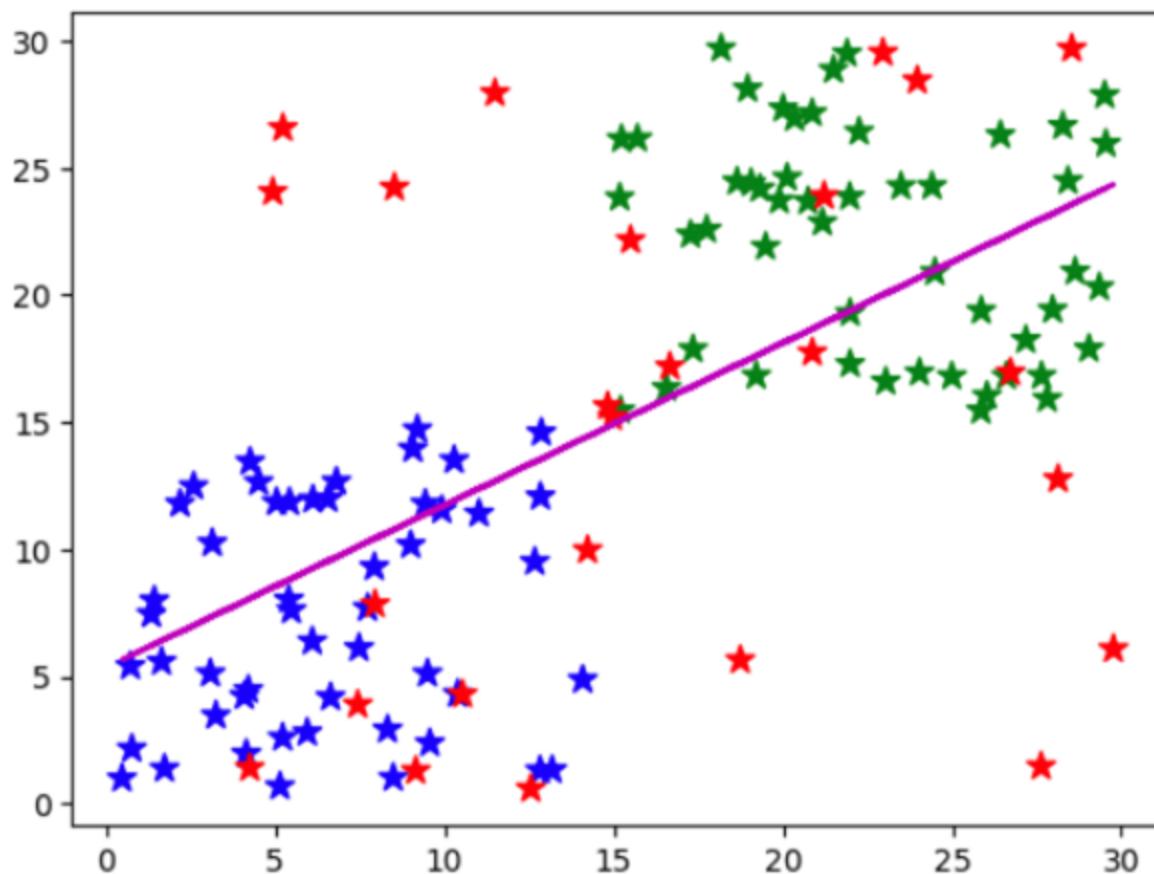
x1 = 15 * np.random.rand(50)
x2 = 15 * np.random.rand(50) + 15
x3 = 30 * np.random.rand(25)
x = np.concatenate((x1, x2, x3))

y1 = 15 * np.random.rand(50)
y2 = 15 * np.random.rand(50) + 15
y3 = 30 * np.random.rand(25)
y = np.concatenate((y1, y2, y3))

color_array = ['b'] * 50 + ['g'] * 50 + ['r'] * 25
plt.scatter(x, y, s=[90], marker='*', c=color_array)
z = np.polyfit(x, y, 1)
p = np.poly1d(z)
plb.plot(x, p(x), 'm-')
plt.show()
```

The code for creating the scatterplot is essentially the same as in the example in the “[Depicting groups](#)” section, earlier in the chapter, but the plot doesn’t define the groups as clearly. Adding a trendline means calling the NumPy `polyfit()` function with the data, which returns a vector of coefficients, `p`, that minimizes the least-squares error. (Least-square regression is a method for finding a line that summarizes the relationship between two variables, `x` and `y` in this case, at least within the domain of the explanatory variable `x`. The third `polyfit()` parameter expresses the degree of the polynomial fit.)

The vector output of `polyfit()` is used as input to `poly1d()`, which calculates the actual `y` axis data points. The call to `plot()` creates the trendline on the scatterplot. You can see a typical result of this example in [Figure 11-6](#).



**FIGURE 11-6:** Scatterplot trendlines can show you the general data direction.

# Plotting Time Series

Nothing is truly static. When you view most data, you see an instant of time — a snapshot of how the data appeared at one particular moment. Of course, such views are both common and useful. However, sometimes you need to view data as it moves through time — to see it as it changes. Only by viewing the data as it changes can you expect to understand the underlying forces that shape it. The following sections describe how to work with data on a time-related basis.

## Representing time on axes

Many times, you need to present data over time. The data could come in many forms, but generally you have some type of time tick (one unit of time), followed by one or more features that describe what happens during that particular tick. The following example shows a simple set of days and sales on those days for a particular item in whole (integer) amounts.

```
import pandas as pd
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import datetime as dt
%matplotlib inline

start_date = dt.datetime(2023, 7, 29)
end_date = dt.datetime(2023, 8, 7)
daterange = pd.date_range(start_date, end_date)
sales = (np.random.rand(
    len(daterange)) * 50).astype(int)
df = pd.DataFrame(sales, index=daterange,
                  columns=['Sales'])
print(df)
```

The example begins by specifying the `start_date` and `end_date`, then using them to create `daterange`, the range of dates used for the output. It then creates a series of random values to use as data points and places them in `sales`. The number of values must match the length for `daterange` and normally you'd rely on actual data. The next step is to create a `DataFrame` to hold the information using `daterange` as an `index` and the values in `sales` as the data. So, what you end up with is a table

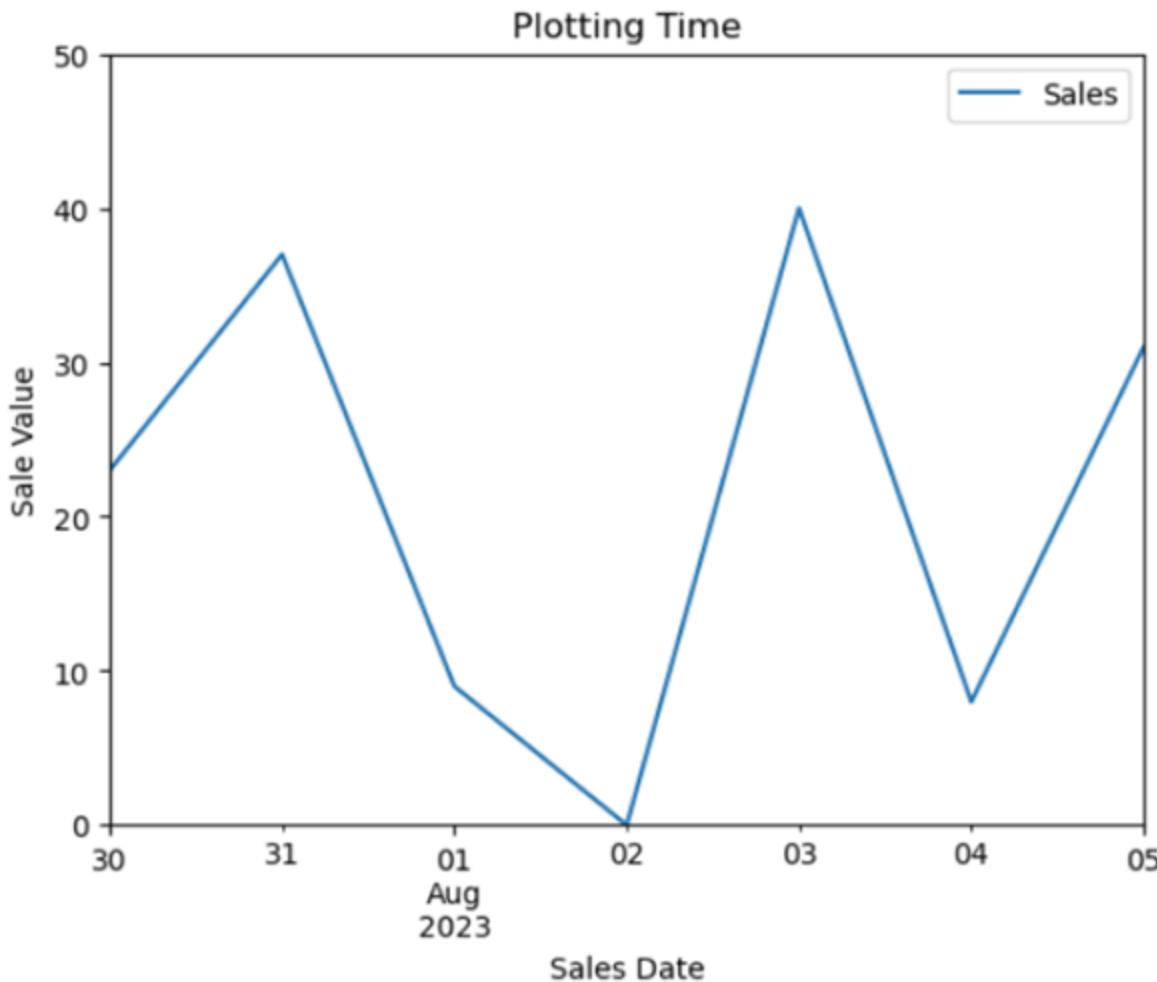
of dates and associated values similar to this (the data values you see will vary):

Sales	
2023-07-29	14
2023-07-30	47
2023-07-31	17
2023-08-01	4
2023-08-02	38
2023-08-03	18
2023-08-04	0
2023-08-05	25
2023-08-06	9
2023-08-07	2

Now that you have some properly formatted data to use, it's time to create a plot. The following code shows a typical method of plotting data in the `DataFrame` format shown previously:

```
df.loc['Jul 30 2023':'Aug 05 2023'].plot()  
plt.ylim(0, 50)  
plt.xlabel('Sales Date')  
plt.ylabel('Sale Value')  
plt.title('Plotting Time')  
plt.show()
```

Using `df.loc` accesses rows and columns in a `DataFrame` using labels, which are dates in string format in this case. So, the resulting plot won't show all of the data in `df`, it will instead show just the data from 'Jul 30 2023' to 'Aug 05 2023'. The call to `plot()` creates a line graph containing the requested data. The rest of the code provides various formatting and labeling features for the plot, which is then displayed using `plt.show()`. [Figure 11-7](#) shows the result.



**FIGURE 11-7:** Use line graphs to show the flow of data over time.

## Plotting trends over time

As with any other data presentation, sometimes you really can't see what direction the data is headed in without help. The following example starts with the plot from the previous section and adds a trendline to it:

```
import numpy as np
import pandas as pd
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import datetime as dt
%matplotlib inline

start_date = dt.datetime(2023, 7, 29)
end_date = dt.datetime(2023, 8, 7)
daterange = pd.date_range(start_date, end_date)
sales = (np.random.rand(
len(daterange)) * 50).astype(int)
```

```
df = pd.DataFrame(sales, index=daterange,
                   columns=['Sales'])

lr_coef = np.polyfit(range(0, len(df)), df['Sales'], 1)
lr_func = np.poly1d(lr_coef)
trend = lr_func(range(0, len(df)))
df['trend'] = trend
df.loc['Jul 30 2023':'Aug 05 2023'].plot()

plt.xlabel('Sales Date')
plt.ylabel('Sale Value')
plt.title('Plotting Time')
plt.legend(['Sales', 'Trend'])
plt.show()
```

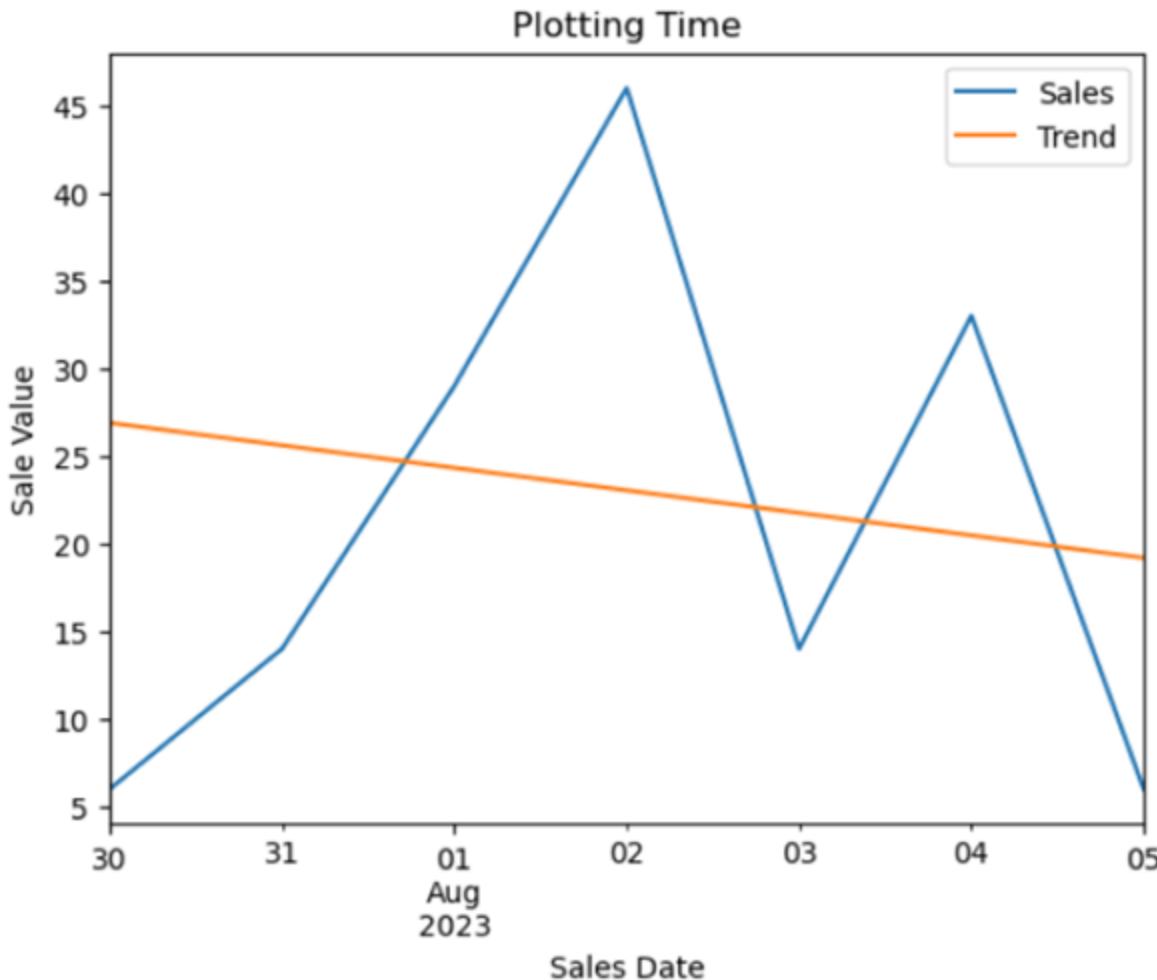


**REMEMBER** The “[Showing correlations](#)” section, earlier in this chapter, shows how most people add a trendline to their graph. In fact, this is the approach that you often see used online. You'll also notice that a lot of people have trouble using this approach in some situations. This example takes a slightly different approach by adding the trendline directly to the `DataFrame`. If you print `df` after the call to `df['trend'] = trend`, you see trendline data similar to the values shown here:

	Sales	trend
2023-07-29	41	28.181818
2023-07-30	6	26.896970
2023-07-31	14	25.612121
2023-08-01	29	24.327273
2023-08-02	46	23.042424
2023-08-03	14	21.757576
2023-08-04	33	20.472727
2023-08-05	6	19.187879
2023-08-06	28	17.903030
2023-08-07	7	16.618182

Using this approach makes it ultimately easier to plot the data. You call `plot()` only once and avoid relying on the `matplotlib.pyplot` function shown in the example in the “[Showing correlations](#)” section.

When you plot the initial data, the call to `plot()` automatically generates a legend for you. Matplotlib doesn't automatically add the trendline, so you must also create a new legend for the plot. [Figure 11-8](#) shows typical output from this example using randomly generated data.



[FIGURE 11-8:](#) Add a trendline to show the average direction of change in a chart or graph.

## Plotting Geographical Data

Knowing where data comes from or how it applies to a specific place can be important. For example, if you want to know where food shortages have occurred and plan how to deal with them, you need to match the data you have to geographical locations. The same holds true for predicting where future sales will occur. You may find that you need to use existing data to determine where to put new stores. Otherwise,

you could put a store in a location that won't receive much in the way of sales, and the effort will lose money rather than make it. The following sections describe how to work with Cartopy (<https://pypi.org/project/cartopy/>) to interact with geographical data.



**WARNING** You must shut the Notebook environment down before you make any changes to it or else conda will complain that some files are in use. To shut the Notebook environment down, close and halt the kernel for any Notebook files you have open and then click Quit in the Jupyter page or press Ctrl+C in the Notebook terminal window. Wait a few seconds to give the files time to close properly before you attempt to do anything.



**TECHNICAL STUFF** If you're working with Google Colab, you can skip the process of creating an environment described in the "[Using an environment in Notebook](#)" section that follows. All you need to do is add a cell at the beginning of the downloadable source that contains a single line: !pip install cartopy and run it every time you want to use Cartopy. Although this means having to reinstall Cartopy before every use, it does simplify the initial setup somewhat.

## ***Using an environment in Notebook***

Some of the packages you install have a tendency to also change your Notebook environment by installing other packages that may not work well with your baseline setup. Consequently, you see problems with code that functioned earlier. Normally, these problems consist mostly of warning messages, such as deprecation warnings as discussed in the "[Avoiding outdated libraries: The Basemap Toolkit](#)" section, later in this chapter. The "Warning Messages in Jupyter Notebook Example Code" blog post at

<http://blog.johnmuellerbooks.com/2023/05/08/warning-messages-in-jupyter-notebook-example-code/> also provides helpful information about the potential for warning messages in Jupyter Notebooks.

In some cases, however, the changed packages can also tweak the output you obtain from code. Perhaps a newer package uses an updated algorithm or interacts with the code differently. When you have a package, such as Cartopy, that makes changes to the overall baseline configuration and you want to maintain your current configuration, you need to set up an environment for it. An environment keeps your baseline configuration intact but also allows the new package to create the environment it needs to execute properly. The following steps help you create the Cartopy environment used for this chapter:

### 1. Open an Anaconda Prompt.

Notice that the prompt shows the location of your folder on your system, but that it's preceded by (base). The (base) indicator tells you that you're in your baseline environment — the one you want to preserve.

### 2. Type `conda create -n Cartopy python=3.10 anaconda=2023.03` and press Enter.

This action creates a new Cartopy environment. This new environment will use Python 3.10 and Anaconda 2023.03-1. You get precisely the same baseline as you've been using so far.

### 3. Type `y` and press Enter when asked if you want to proceed.

The installation process begins. This process can take a while to complete, especially when the software needs to download packages from online, so you need to be patient.

### 4. Type `conda activate Cartopy` and press Enter.

You have now changed over to the Cartopy environment. Notice that the prompt no longer says (base); it says (Cartopy) instead.

### 5. Type `conda install -c conda-forge cartopy` and press Enter to install your copy of Cartopy.

## 6. Type **y** and press **Enter** when asked if you want to proceed.

The installation process begins.

## 7. (Optional) After the installation, make sure you're in your Notebooks directory using a command such as cd \\Users\\John\\Anaconda Projects (for Windows developers).

## 8. Type Jupyter Notebook and press Enter.

You see Notebook start, but it uses the Cartopy environment, rather than the (base) environment. This copy of Notebook works precisely the same as any other copy of Notebook that you've used. The only difference is the environment in which it operates.



**REMEMBER** This same technique works for any special package that you want to install. You should reserve it for packages that you don't intend to use every day. For example, this book uses Cartopy for just one example, so creating an environment for it is appropriate.

After you have finished using the Cartopy environment, press Ctrl+C to stop the server, type **conda deactivate** at the prompt, and press Enter. You see the prompt change back to (base).

## *Using Cartopy to plot geographic data*

Now that you have a good installation of Cartopy, you can do something with it. To start with, you need to import all the required packages:

```
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import matplotlib.ticker as mticker
import cartopy.crs as ccrs
import cartopy
from cartopy.mpl.gridliner import \
    LONGITUDE_FORMATTER, LATITUDE_FORMATTER
%matplotlib inline
```

These various packages let you download the map, format it, and add points of interest to it. The following example shows how to draw a map and place pointers to specific locations on it:

```
austin = (-97.75, 30.25)
hawaii = (-157.8, 21.3)
washington = (-77.01, 38.90)
chicago = (-87.68, 41.83)
losangeles = (-118.25, 34.05)

ax = plt.axes(projection=ccrs.Mercator(
    central_longitude=-110))
ax.coastlines()
ax.set_extent([-60, -160, 50, 10],
    crs=ccrs.PlateCarree())

ax.add_feature(cartopy.feature.OCEAN, zorder=0,
    facecolor='aqua')
ax.add_feature(cartopy.feature.LAND, zorder=0,
    edgecolor='black', facecolor='lightgray')
ax.add_feature(cartopy.feature.LAKES, zorder=0,
    edgecolor='black', facecolor='lightblue')
ax.add_feature(cartopy.feature.BORDERS, zorder=0,
    edgecolor='gray')

x, y = list(zip(*[austin, hawaii, washington,
    chicago, losangeles]))

gl = ax.gridlines(
    crs=ccrs.PlateCarree(), draw_labels=True,
    linewidth=2, color='gray', alpha=0.5,
    linestyle='--')
gl.xlabel_top = False
gl.left_labels = False
gl.xlocator = mticker.FixedLocator(list(x))
gl.ylocator = mticker.FixedLocator(list(y))
gl.xformatter = LONGITUDE_FORMATTER
gl.yformatter = LATITUDE_FORMATTER

ax.plot(x, y, 'ro', markersize=6,
    transform=ccrs.Geodetic())

plt.title("Mercator Projection")
plt.show().
```

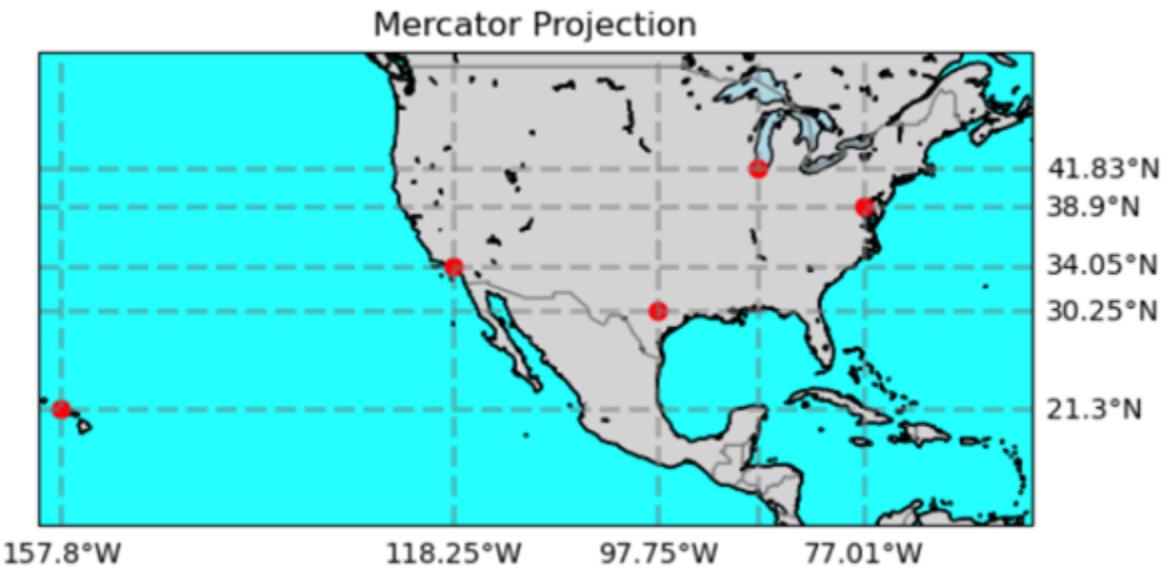
The example begins by defining the longitude and latitude for various cities. It then creates the basic map. The `projection` parameter defines the basic map appearance. You can find a listing of projection types at <https://scitools.org.uk/cartopy/docs/v0.15/crs/projections.html>. The `central_longitude` parameter defines where the map is

centered. To see the coastlines of the various countries, you use the `coastlines()` method. This example doesn't look at the whole world, so it uses the `set_extent()` method to crop the map to size.

The example uses the `add_feature()` to add features to the basic map. You can color the features in various ways to provide a distinctive look for your map. The features are documented more fully at [https://scitools.org.uk/cartopy/docs/v0.14/matplotlib/feature\\_interface.html](https://scitools.org.uk/cartopy/docs/v0.14/matplotlib/feature_interface.html).

In this case, the example creates x and y coordinates using the previously stored longitude and latitude values. As part of displaying the coordinates, the map also creates gridlines to show their longitude and latitude with the `gridlines()` method. The resulting object, `gl`, allows you to modify the grid characteristics. The documentation at <https://scitools.org.uk/cartopy/docs/v0.13/matplotlib/gridliner.html> tells you more about working with gridlines.

The code then plots these locations on the map in a contrasting color so that you can easily see them. The final step is to display the map, as shown in [Figure 11-9](#).



[FIGURE 11-9:](#) Maps can illustrate data in ways other graphics can't.

## ***Avoiding outdated libraries: The Basemap Toolkit***

The previous edition of this book used Basemap to provide geographic presentation support because it was one of the better products available at the time. However, in reading the message thread at

<https://github.com/matplotlib/basemap/issues/267>, you find that Basemap isn't going to be maintained for a number of reasons, so this edition of the book has moved to Cartopy, a decision based partly on the suggestion of the Basemap creator. Unfortunately, this situation happens way too often with Python developers, and it can present problems if you're working in a production environment under significant deadlines. It isn't that Basemap or any of these other packages are ill-conceived or that the code owners simply don't care; it's the fact that maintaining any package is a lot of work. With these realities in mind, here are some useful tips for avoiding outdated libraries:

- » Wait until the package has been around for a while before you use it in a production environment.
- » Ensure that the package has broad community support.
- » Look for packages that are created by groups rather than just a few individuals.
- » Try to verify that the package creator will stay around to support the package in the long run.
- » Monitor new releases and updates to determine the sorts of features and bug fixes that the code owner is providing.
- » Check to see whether the code owner is responsive to user queries about upgrades, product features, bugs, and usage requirements.

## Visualizing Graphs

A *graph* (in the network sense of the word) is a depiction of data showing the connections between data points (called *nodes*) using lines (called *edges*). The purpose is to show that some data points relate to other data points, but not all the data points that appear on the graph. Think about a map of a subway system. Each of the stations connects to other stations, but no single station connects to all the stations in the

subway system. Graphs are a popular data science topic because of their use in social media analysis. When performing social media analysis, you depict and analyze networks of relationships, such as friends or business connections, from social hubs such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter, or LinkedIn.



**REMEMBER** The two common depictions of graphs are *undirected*, where the graph simply shows lines between data elements, and *directed*, where arrows added to the line show that data flows in a particular direction. For example, consider a depiction of a water system. The water would flow in just one direction in most cases, so you could use a directed graph to depict not only the connections between sources and targets for the water but also to show water direction by using arrows. The following sections help you understand the two types of graphs better and show you how to create them.

## ***Developing undirected graphs***

As previously stated, an undirected graph simply shows connections between nodes. The output doesn't provide a direction from one node to the next. For example, when establishing connectivity between web pages, no direction is implied. The following example shows how to create an undirected graph:

```
import networkx as nx
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

G = nx.Graph()
H = nx.Graph()
G.add_node(1)
G.add_nodes_from([2, 3])
G.add_nodes_from(range(4, 7))
H.add_node(7)
G.add_nodes_from(H)

G.add_edge(1, 2)
G.add_edge(1, 1)
G.add_edges_from([(2,3), (3,6), (4,6), (5,6)])
```

```
H.add_edges_from([(4,7), (5,7), (6,7)])
G.add_edges_from(H.edges())

nx.draw_networkx(G, node_color='yellow')
plt.show()
```

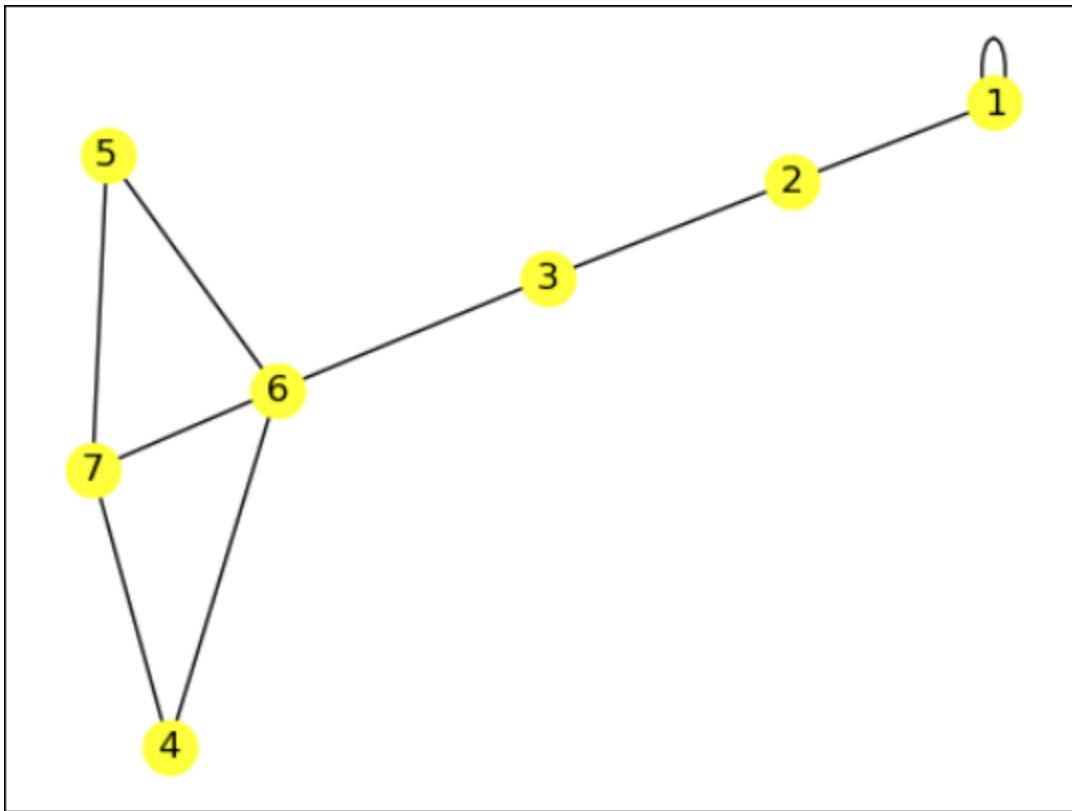
In contrast to the canned example found in the “[Using NetworkX basics](#)” section of [Chapter 8](#), this example builds the graph using a number of different techniques. It begins by importing the Networkx package you use in [Chapter 8](#). To create a new undirected graph, the code calls the Graph() constructor, which can take a number of input arguments to use as attributes. However, you can build a perfectly usable graph without using attributes, which is what this example does.

The easiest way to add a node is to call add\_node() with a node number. You can also add a list, dictionary, or range() of nodes using add\_nodes\_from(). In fact, you can import nodes from other graphs if you want.



**REMEMBER** Even though the nodes used in the example rely on numbers, you don't have to use numbers for your nodes. A node can use a single letter, a string, or even a date. Nodes do have some restrictions. For example, you can't create a node using a Boolean value.

Nodes don't have any connectivity at the outset. You must define connections (edges) between them. To add a single edge, you call add\_edge() with the numbers of the nodes that you want to add. As with nodes, you can use add\_edges\_from() to create more than one edge using a list, dictionary, or another graph as input. [Figure 11-10](#) shows the output from this example. (Your output may differ slightly but should have the same connections.)



**FIGURE 11-10:** Undirected graphs connect nodes to form patterns.

### *Developing directed graphs*

You use directed graphs when you need to show a direction, say from a start point to an end point. When you get a map that shows you how to get from one specific point to another, the starting node and ending node are marked as such, and the lines between these nodes (and all the intermediate nodes) show direction.



**TIP** Your graphs need not be boring. You can dress them up in all sorts of ways so that the viewer gains additional information in different ways. For example, you can create custom labels, use specific colors for certain nodes, or rely on color to help people see the meaning behind your graphs. You can also change edge line weight and use other techniques to mark a specific path between nodes as the better one to choose. The following example shows many (but not nearly all) the ways in which you can dress up a directed graph and make it more interesting:

```
import networkx as nx
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
%matplotlib inline

G = nx.DiGraph()

G.add_node(1)
G.add_nodes_from([2, 3])
G.add_nodes_from(range(4, 9))

G.add_edge(1, 2)
G.add_edges_from([(1,4), (4,5), (2,3), (3,6),
                  (5,6), (6,7), (7,8)])

colors = ['r', 'g', 'g', 'g', 'g', 'm', 'm', 'r']
labels = {1:'Start', 2:'2', 3:'3', 4:'4',
          5:'5', 6:'6', 7:'7', 8:'End'}
sizes = [800, 300, 300, 300, 300, 600, 300, 800]

nx.draw_networkx(
    G, node_color=colors, node_shape='D',
    labels=labels, node_size=sizes, font_color='w')
plt.show()
```

The example begins by creating a directional graph using the `DiGraph()` constructor. You should note that the NetworkX package also supports `MultiGraph()` and `MultiDiGraph()` graph types. You can see a listing of all the graph types at

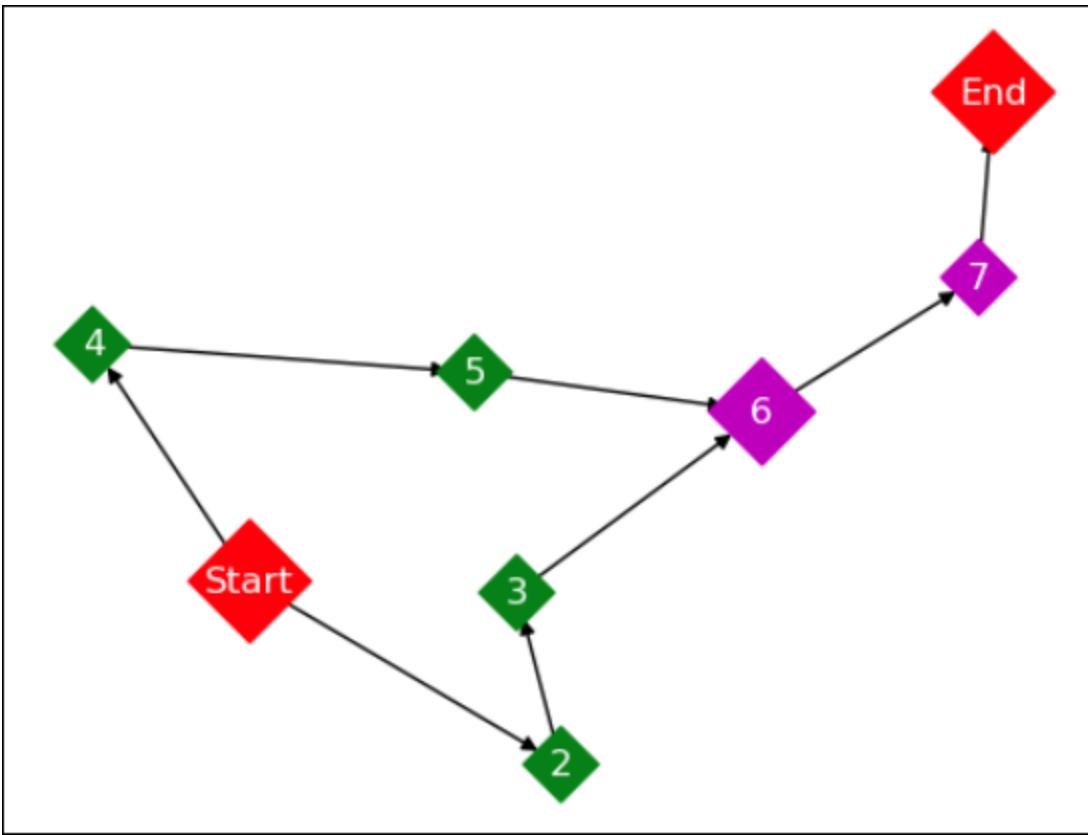
<https://networkx.org/documentation/stable/reference/classes/index.html>.

Adding nodes is much like working with an undirected graph. You can add single nodes using `add_node()` and multiple nodes using `add_nodes_from()`. The order of nodes in the call is important. The flow from one node to another is from left to right in the list supplied to the call.



**REMEMBER** Adding edges is much the same as working with an undirected graph, too. You can use `add_edge()` to add a single edge or `add_edges_from()` to add multiple edges at one time. However, the order of the node numbers is important. The flow goes from the left node to the right node in each pair.

This example adds special node colors, labels, shape (only one shape is used), and sizes to the output. You still call on `draw_networkx()` to perform the task. However, adding the parameters shown changes the appearance of the graph. [Figure 11-11](#) shows the output from this example.



**FIGURE 11-11:** Use directed graphs to show direction between nodes.



## Part 4

# Wrangling Data

## IN THIS PART ...

- Making Python do more for data science
- Analyzing your data
- Compressing data to make it more efficient
- Looking for data organization
- Determining when data doesn't belong



## Chapter 12

# Stretching Python's Capabilities

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### IN THIS CHAPTER

- » Understanding how Scikit-learn works with classes
  - » Using Scikit-learn's transformative functions
  - » Testing performance and memory consumption
  - » Saving time using multicore computations
- 

If you've gone through the previous chapters, by this point you've dealt with all the basic data loading and manipulation methods offered by Python. Now it's time to begin utilizing some more advanced instruments for data transformation and pipelining in machine learning. The final step of most data science projects is to build a data tool able to automatically transform, predict, and recommend directly from your data.

Before taking that final step, you still have to process your data by enforcing transformations that are even more radical. That's the *data wrangling* or *data munging* part, where sophisticated transformations are followed by visual and statistical explorations, and then, eventually, by further transformations, if your explorations have pointed out something interesting to pursue.

From here onward, you use the Scikit-learn package more (which means knowing more about it — the full documentation appears at <https://scikit-learn.org/stable/documentation.html>). The

Scikit-learn package offers a single repository containing almost all the tools that you need to be a data scientist and for your data science project to be successful. In this chapter, you discover important characteristics of Scikit-learn, how it is structured in modules, classes, and functions, and some advanced Python time savers for improving performance with highly time-consuming data and computational operations.



**REMEMBER** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter in by hand; in fact, using the downloadable source is a lot easier (see the Introduction for download instructions). The source code for this chapter appears in the `P4DS4D3_12_Stretching_Pythons_Capabilities.ipynb` file.

## ***Playing with Scikit-learn***

Sometimes the best way to discover how to use something is to spend time playing with it. The more complex a tool, the more important play becomes. Given the complex math tasks you perform using Scikit-learn, playing becomes especially important. The following sections use the idea of playing with Scikit-learn to help you discover important concepts in using Scikit-learn to perform amazing feats of data science work.

### ***Understanding classes in Scikit-learn***

Understanding how classes work is an important prerequisite for being able to use the Scikit-learn package appropriately. Scikit-learn is the package for machine learning and data science experimentation favored by most data scientists. It contains a wide range of well-established learning algorithms, error functions, and testing procedures.

At its core, Scikit-learn features some base classes on which all the algorithms are built. Apart from `BaseEstimator`, the class from which all other classes inherit, there are four class types covering all the basic machine-learning functionalities:

- » Classifying (`ClassifierMixin`)
- » Regressing (`RegressorMixin`)
- » Grouping by clusters (`ClusterMixin`)
- » Transforming data (`TransformerMixin`)

Even though each base class has specific methods and attributes, the core functionalities for data processing and machine learning are guaranteed by one or more series of methods and attributes called interfaces. The interfaces provide a uniform Application Programming Interface (API) to enforce similarity of methods and attributes between all the different algorithms present in the package. There are four Scikit-learn object-based interfaces:

- » **estimator**: For fitting parameters by learning them from data according to the algorithm
- » **predictor**: For generating predictions from the fitted parameters
- » **transformer**: For transforming data, implementing the fitted parameters
- » **model**: For reporting goodness of fit or other score measures

The package groups the algorithms built on base classes and one or more object interfaces into modules, each module displaying a specialization in a particular type of machine-learning solution. For example, the `linear_model` module is for linear modeling, and `metrics` is for score and loss measure.

To find a specific algorithm in Scikit-learn, you must first find the module containing the same kind of algorithm that interests you, and then select it from the list of contents of the module. The algorithm is typically a class whose methods and attributes are already known because they're common to other algorithms in Scikit-learn.



**TIP** Getting accustomed to the Scikit-learn class approach may take some time. However, the API is the same for all the tools available in the package, so learning one class necessarily tells you about all the other classes. The best approach is to learn one class completely and then apply what you know to other classes.

## ***Defining applications for data science***

Figuring out ways to use data science to obtain constructive results is important. For example, you can apply the estimator interface to a

- » **Classification problem:** Guessing that a new observation is from a certain group
- » **Regression problem:** Guessing the value of a new observation

It works with the method `fit(x, y)` where `x` is the bidimensional array of predictors (the set of observations to learn) and `y` is the target outcome (another array, unidimensional).

When you apply `fit()` to the data, the information in `x` is related to `y`, so that when you have some new information with the same characteristics of `x`, it's possible to guess `y` correctly. In the process, some parameters are estimated internally by the `fit()` method. These are the model weights, which the model learned from data. In addition, hyperparameters are other parameters that affect how the model learns its weights. They aren't directly derived from data but are decided by you, using trial and error, when you instantiate the learner.

Instantiation involves assigning a Scikit-learn class to a Python variable. In addition to hyperparameters, you can also fix other working parameters, such as requiring normalization or setting a seed (which is normally a random value) to reproduce the same results for each call, given the same input data.

Here is an example with linear regression, a very basic and common machine learning algorithm. You upload some data to use this example from the examples that Scikit-learn provides. The California dataset, for instance, contains predictor variables that the example code can match against house prices, which helps build a predictor that can calculate the value of a house in an area, given its characteristics and location in the state of California:

```
import numpy as np
import pandas as pd
from sklearn.datasets import fetch_california_housing
```

```
def load_california_housing_data():
    dataset = fetch_california_housing()
    X = pd.DataFrame(data=dataset.data,
                      columns=dataset.feature_names)
    y = pd.Series(data=dataset.target, name="target")
    return X, y

X, y = load_california_housing_data()
print(f"X:{X.shape} y:{y.shape}")
```

The returned dimensions for the `x` and `y` variables are

```
x:(20640, 8) y:(20640, )
```

The output specifies that both arrays have the same number of rows and that `x` has 8 features. The `shape()` method performs array analysis and reports the arrays' dimensions.



**TIP** The number of `x` rows must equal those in `y`. You also ensure that `x` and `y` correspond, because learning from data happens when the algorithm matches the rows of `x` with the corresponding element of `y`. If you randomize the two arrays, no learning is possible.



**REMEMBER** The characteristics of `x`, expressed as `x`'s columns, are called *variables* (a more statistical term) or *features* (a term more related to machine learning).

The transform class in Scikit-learn applies transformations derived from the fitting phase to other data arrays. All preprocessing algorithms do have a transformation method. For example, `StandardScaler()`, from the Scikit-learn preprocessing module, can transform values using the statistical normalization, that is, subtracting the mean and dividing by the standard deviation, after learning the transformation parameters from an example array using the `fit()` method:

```
from sklearn.preprocessing import StandardScaler  
  
scaler = StandardScaler()  
scaler.fit(X)  
scaled_X = scaler.transform(X)
```

After importing the `LinearRegression` class, you can instantiate a variable called `linear_regression` and fit it to the scaled `X` array and to the `y` target. After fitting, you inspect the internal weights, known as coefficients, to ensure that the model has learned from the data:

```
from sklearn.linear_model import LinearRegression  
  
linear_regression = LinearRegression()  
linear_regression.fit(scaled_X, y)  
print(linear_regression.coef_.round(5))
```

After executing `fit()`, the code prints the coefficients of the linear regression model:

```
[ 0.82962  0.11875 -0.26553  0.3057  -0.0045  -0.03933  
 -0.89989 -0.87054]
```

After fitting, the `linear_regression` model holds the learned parameters, and you visualize them using the `coef_()` method, which is typical of all the linear models (where the model output is a summation of variables weighted by coefficients). You can also call this fitting activity training (as in, *training a machine learning algorithm*).



**REMEMBER** A *hypothesis* is a way to describe a learning algorithm trained with data. The hypothesis defines a possible representation of `y` given `x` that you test for validity. Therefore, it's a hypothesis in both scientific and machine learning language.

Apart from the estimator class, the predictor and the model object classes are also important. The predictor class, which predicts the probability of a certain result, obtains the result of new observations using the `predict()` and `predict_proba()` methods, as in this script:

```
values = [[1.21315, 32., 3.31767135, 1.07731985, 898.,
           2.1424809, 37.82, -122.27]]
obs = pd.DataFrame(values, columns=X.columns)

scaled_obs = scaler.transform(obs)

pred = linear_regression.predict(scaled_obs)
value = pred[0] * 100_000
print(f"Estimated median house value: {value:.2f} USD")
```

The single observation is thus converted into a prediction:

```
Estimated median house value: 141088.56 USD
```



**TIP** Make sure that new observations have the same feature number and in the same order as in the training  $x$ ; otherwise, the prediction will be incorrect.

Each class from Scikit-learn has some specific methods and some common ones, such as `fit()`, `transform()`, and `predict()`. Even if the method is a common one, however, it may have extra parameters. In order to know what methods are available and the parameters they require, please consult the online documentation of each algorithm or ask for help on the Python console:

```
help(LinearRegression)
```

For instance, `LinearRegression` has the `score()` method that provides information about the quality of the regression, as shown here:

```
linear_regression.score(scaled_X, y)
```

The quality is expressed as a float number:

```
0.606232685199805
```

In this case, `score()` returns the coefficient of determination  $R^2$  of the prediction.  $R^2$  is a measure ranging from 0 to 1, comparing our predictor to a simple mean. Higher values show that the predictor is working well. Different learning algorithms may use different scoring functions.

## Using Transformative Functions

In Scikit-learn, transformative functions are a kind of data processing step that you use to manipulate and transform data. You typically use these functions as part of a machine learning pipeline to apply specific operations on the data before feeding it into a machine learning model for training or prediction. All these functions are mentioned in the reference page <https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/preprocessing.html>. Here are some of the most important transformers or types of transformers to remember:

- » `StandardScaler()` (<https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.preprocessing.StandardScaler.html>): Used for standardizing numerical features by scaling them to have zero mean and unit variance, which can be important for many machine learning algorithms.
- » `MinMaxScaler()` (<https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.preprocessing.MinMaxScaler.html>): Scales numerical features to a specific range (usually between 0 and 1), making them suitable for algorithms that are sensitive to the scale of the input features.
- » `OneHotEncoder()` (<https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.preprocessing.OneHotEncoder.html>): Used for encoding categorical features into a binary vector representation, making them suitable for algorithms that cannot handle categorical data directly.
- » `OrdinalEncoder()` (<https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.preprocessing.OrdinalEncoder.html>): Used for encoding categorical features with integer labels, which can be useful for algorithms that can handle integer-encoded categorical data.
- » `SimpleImputer()` (<https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.impute.SimpleI>

[`puter.html`](#)): Used for handling missing values in the data by filling them with appropriate values, such as mean, median, or most frequent values.

- » `PolynomialFeatures()` (<https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.preprocessing.PolynomialFeatures.html>): Used for generating polynomial features from the original features, which can be helpful for capturing nonlinear relationships in the data.
- » **Feature selection:** Scikit-learn provides various techniques for feature selection, explained in detail in [Chapter 18](#), which can be used to select the most important features from the original feature set.
- » **Text processing tools:** Scikit-learn provides various tools for text processing, such as `CountVectorizer()` and `TfidfVectorizer()`, which can be used for converting text data into numerical representations suitable for machine learning.

Because all data problems present differences in features and data characteristics, you need a customized approach when you process them — that is, particular combinations of the Scikit-learn transformative functions applied to different portions of your data. The following sections explore additional Scikit-learn classes that can help you effectively combine and apply these transformative functions for optimal outcomes.

## ***Chaining estimators***

You can use transformative functions as stand-alone functions, but they necessarily function in sequence and in association with machine learning algorithms. For this reason, it's extremely useful to chain together different transformative functions and predictive models into a `Pipeline()`. A *pipeline* is a useful tool in Scikit-learn for chaining multiple data processing steps together, such as feature selection, normalization, and classification, into one sequence. A pipeline offers several benefits:

- » **Fitting and predicting on your data with just one call**, making it easy to apply a series of processing steps in a single line of code.
- » **Performing optimizations of all the estimators in the pipeline simultaneously**, simplifying the hyperparameter tuning process.
- » **Preventing statistics leaking from your test data into your trained model** during cross-validation. This leaking is prevented because the same samples are used to train both the transformers and predictors, ensuring consistency in data processing.

It's important to note that all estimators in a pipeline, except the last one, must be transformers, meaning they must have a transform method. The last estimator can be of any type, such as a transformer, classifier, or other model.

Creating a Scikit-learn pipeline requires first defining the steps and then plugging them into the pipeline. Defining each single step requires you to create a tuple or a list containing the step's name and the Scikit-learn class you want executed. Providing the step's name is important because it helps you later when you want to access each single step and its parameters. After you have plugged all the steps into the pipeline, you use the pipeline as you would any other Scikit-learn class:

- » Fit it on training data and then use it to perform a transformation if there is no predictor inside.
- » Perform a prediction if it closes with a machine learning model.

You can find all the details of the command at <https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.pipeline.Pipeline.html>.

## **Transforming targets**

Transformation sometimes includes the target in addition to the features. Because the distribution of target values can present multiple modes or become skewed to the right or to the left, you may find that first transforming the target, and then fitting the model, and finally inverse-transforming its predictions bring better predictive results. The purpose

of transformations is to increase the symmetry and normality of the target distribution, which is not a requirement or recommendation for machine learning models, but rather a factual observation because those models have been known to perform better with transformations.

In Scikit-learn, a *transformative function* is a kind of data processing step that you use to manipulate and transform data. Transformative functions are usually logarithmic. A transformative function relies on the exponential function as its inverse, particularly for skewed targets. It uses the square root transformation (and its inverse, squaring) when the target variable is moderately skewed, has a positive skewness, and you want to reduce the influence of outliers.

Before fitting a regression model, the `TransformedTargetRegressor()` method modifies the targets (`y`). Afterward, the predictions are restored to their original space using an inverse transform. To perform this transformation, the function that wraps Scikit-learn's regressor models into a single entity requires two arguments: the regressor utilized for prediction, and the transformer that is applied to the target variable.

## ***Composing features***

A Scikit-learn pipeline operates on all the data, piping it into sequential transformations, but not all transformations are suitable for all the features of your dataset. For this reason, you use `ColumnTransformer()`, which is a pipeline that operates only on a selection of the features, and `FeatureUnion()`, which combines the work of multiple `ColumnTransformer` objects into a single dataset.

The `ColumnTransformer()` has three main input parameters:

- » **Transformers:** Accepts a list of tuples, where each tuple consists of a name for the transformer, the corresponding preprocessing transformer (such as `StandardScaler` or `SimpleImputer`), and the list of columns to which the transformer should be applied.
- » **Remainder:** Specifies how to handle the columns that were not selected for transformation. The default value is "drop", which means that these columns will be ignored.

» **FeatureUnion:** Takes a list of transformers as input and concatenates the output of each transformer horizontally. Each transformer extracts a set of features from the input data and returns them as a NumPy array. The output of all the transformers is concatenated horizontally to form a single NumPy array that represents the full set of features for each input sample.

## **Handling heterogeneous data**

The section on transformative functions in Scikit-learn concludes with an example showing you how to approach heterogeneous data, which is typical of real-world data, using the previously illustrated tools. The example starts by loading the California Housing dataset, which contains features such as median house value, median income, housing age, and various other factors that can be used to predict housing prices in different regions of California.

```
from sklearn.compose \
    import ColumnTransformer, make_column_selector
from sklearn.pipeline import FeatureUnion, Pipeline
from sklearn.preprocessing \
    import StandardScaler, KBinsDiscretizer
from sklearn.linear_model import LinearRegression

X, y = load_california_housing_data()
```

By distinguishing the different types of features present in the dataset, the code can proceed to process them separately. In particular, it distinguishes between numeric features, which are standardized, and latitude and longitude geographical coordinates, which are discretized from continuous values into discrete bins. By discretizing the geographical coordinates, it's possible to enable a series of analyses to identify regions with similar geographic characteristics, such as areas with similar climate, terrain, or land-use patterns.



**REMEMBER** *Discretization* refers to the process of converting continuous data into discrete or categorical data. In the context of data analysis,

discretization involves dividing a continuous variable, which has a range of possible values, into a set of discrete intervals or bins.

You can achieve distinct transformations on the numeric features and the geographical coordinates by means of two different `ColumnTransformer()` operations:

```
num_cols = ['MedInc', 'HouseAge', 'AveRooms',
            'AveBedrms', 'Population', 'AveOccup']
cords = ['Latitude', 'Longitude']

num_transformer = ColumnTransformer([
    ("scaler", StandardScaler(), num_cols)],
    remainder="drop")

cords_transformer = ColumnTransformer([
    ("discretizer",
     KBinsDiscretizer(n_bins=20, encode="onehot-dense"),
     cords)])
```

At this point, you combine the two feature transformation steps into a single transformer:

```
preprocessor = FeatureUnion(
    transformer_list=[("num_transformer",
                      num_transformer),
                      ("cords_transformer",
                       cords_transformer)])
```

You can test how it works by fitting and transforming the data and checking its resulting shape:

```
preprocessor.fit_transform(X).shape
```

You should see an output of:

```
(20640, 46)
```

After checking that everything works properly as expected, you enclose the data transformer in a predictive pipeline using a linear regression model in this case:

```
predictive_pipeline = Pipeline([
    ("preprocessor", preprocessor),
    ("model", LinearRegression())])
```

You're finally ready to use the set-up predictive pipeline to train on data and check how it fitted the data in terms of score:

```
predictive_pipeline.fit(X, y)
predictive_pipeline.score(X, y)
```

You get the score of the  $R^2$  measure after training. The obtained  $R^2$  score indicates how much better the model is in predictive performance when compared to a baseline such as the statistical mean, on a scale from 0 to 1. This score allows you to assess the effectiveness of your model and provides valuable insights for further analysis and optimization:

```
0.6667462444130221
```

You can apply the same approach to handle various data types in your datasets. Begin by categorizing the data into different types, such as numerical, categorical, and text data. Next, create a `ColumnTransformer` object for each type, which allows you to apply specific transformations to each type of data separately. Finally, bring all the transformed data together using a `FeatureUnion` class, which merges the outputs from multiple transformers into a single feature space.

By following this methodology, you can easily handle diverse data types in your datasets. This approach provides flexibility and scalability, allowing you to apply different preprocessing techniques to different types of data. For instance, you can apply scaling or normalization to numerical data, one-hot encoding or label encoding to categorical data, and conversion of text data into a bag of words. You can also include additional transformers or custom functions as needed to suit your specific data preprocessing requirements.

## ***Considering Timing and Performance***

As the book introduces more and more complex themes, you may start to wonder how all this processing influences application speed. The increased processing requirements affect both running time and available memory.

Managing the best use of machine resources is indeed an art, the art of optimization, and it requires time to master. However, you can start immediately becoming proficient in it by doing some accurate speed measurement and realizing what your problems really are if your code seems to run too slowly. Profiling the time that performing a data transformation on your data requires, or measuring how much memory adding more data takes, can help you to spot the bottlenecks in your code and start looking for alternative solutions.

As described in [Chapter 5](#), Jupyter Notebook or Google Colab are the perfect environments for experimenting, tweaking, and improving your code. Working on blocks of code, recording the results and outputs, and writing additional notes and comments will help your data science solutions take shape in a controlled and reproducible way.

## **Benchmarking with `timeit`**

In [Chapter 8](#), you find out to work with `CountVectorizer()` to convert text into a bag of words that can be used as input to various machine learning algorithms for text classification, clustering, or other natural language processing tasks. This text processing class transforms text into a matrix of token counts. It performs the following operations under the hood:

- » **Tokenization:** Breaks the text into individual tokens (words, characters, or n-grams)
- » **Lowercase and accent stripping:** Converts all the tokens into lowercase and removes accents for text standardization
- » **Stopwords removal:** Filters out common words, such as “the,” “and,” “a,” and “an,” which don't add much value to the analysis
- » **Count Vectorization:** Converts the text into a matrix of token counts, where each row represents a document and each column represents a token, with the values being the number of times the token appears in that document

Each of these operations takes time and memory to run and you may be concerned with application performance when the number of texts to

process is large. It's important to measure performance before creating a machine learning solution. Jupyter offers an easy, out-of-the-box solution, to measure speed using these line magics:

- » `%timeit`: Calculates the best performance time for an instruction
- » `%%timeit`: Calculates the best time performance for all the instructions in a cell, apart from the one placed on the same cell line as the cell magic (which could therefore be an initialization instruction)

Both magic commands report the best performance in `r` trials repeated for `n` loops. When you add the `-r` and `-n` parameters, the notebook chooses the number automatically in order to provide a fast answer. Here is an example of determining the time required to assign a list  $10^{**6}$  ordinal values by using list comprehension:

```
%timeit l = [k for k in range(10**6)]
```

The reported timing will look like this (the actual times will vary according to your system's capabilities):

```
76 ms ± 798 µ per loop
(mean ± std. dev. of 7 runs, 10 loops each)
```

The result for the list comprehension can be tested by incrementing both the sample performance and repetitions of the test:

```
%timeit -n 20 -r 5 l = [k for k in range(10**6)]
```

After a while, the timing similar to this one is reported:

```
76 ms ± 1.06 ms per loop
(mean ± std. dev. of 5 runs, 20 loops each)
```

As a comparison, you can check the time required to assign the values in a `for` loop. Because the `for` loop requires an entire cell, the example uses the cell magic, `%%timeit`, call. Notice that the first line that assigns the value of  $10^{**6}$  to a variable is not considered in the performance.

```
%%timeit
l = list()
```

```
for k in range(10**6):
    l.append(k)
```

The resulting timing will look like this:

```
123 ms ± 279 µs per loop
(mean ± std. dev. of 7 runs, 10 loops each)
```

The results show that list comprehension is about 40 percent faster than using a `for` loop. You can then perform a similar test using the text encoding `CountVectorizer()`:

```
import sklearn.feature_extraction.text as txt
count_vectorizer = txt.CountVectorizer(
    binary=True, max_features=20)

texts = ["Python for data science",
         "Python for machine learning",
         "Artificial intelligence in Python"]

count_vectorizer.fit(texts)
vectorized = count_vectorizer.transform(texts)
```

After performing initial loading of the class and instantiating it, you can test the solution:

```
%timeit count_vectorizer.fit(texts)
```

Here is the timing for fitting the word encoder based on the `CountVectorizer()`:

```
314 µs ± 9.15 µs per loop
(mean ± std. dev. of 7 runs, 1000 loops each)
```

You now run the test on the transformation phase:

```
%timeit vectorized = count_vectorizer.transform(texts)
```

You obtain the following much better timing (`µs` [microseconds] are smaller than `ms` [milliseconds]):

```
93 µs ± 1.05 µs per loop
(mean ± std. dev. of 7 runs, 10000 loops each)
```

The transformation operation is faster than the fit operation because, in the fit phase, the function has to scan through the text, recording and counting the word occurrences in the internal data structures. In the

transformation phase, the operations to be done are simpler because the text is just split, and each word is recognized and transformed into a binary feature.

Jupyter Notebook is always the best environment to benchmark the speed of your data science solution code. However, if you'd like to track performance on the command line or in a script running from an IDE, you can import the `timeit` class and use the `timeit()` function for tracking performance of the command by providing the input parameter as a string. The `timeit()` function returns a `float` number that represents the total number of seconds it took to execute an operation. If you are running multiple operations, divide the returned total seconds by the number of operations to obtain the time it took for a single operation.

The input that `timeit()` expects is a string that contains the command to be executed. If your command needs variables, classes, or functions that aren't available in the base Python (such as the Scikit-learn classes), you can provide them as a second input parameter by using the `setup` parameter. You formulate a string in which Python imports all the necessary objects from the main environment, as shown in the following example:

```
import timeit

cumulative_time = timeit.timeit(
    "vectorized = count_vectorizer.transform(texts)",
    setup="from __main__ import count_vectorizer, texts",
    number=10000)
print(cumulative_time / 10000.0)
```

The output from this example will look like this and tell you the time for each loop:

```
0.00010361055000003035
```

## USING THE PREFERRED INSTALLER PROGRAM (PIP)

Python provides a huge number of packages that you can install. Many of these packages come as separate, downloadable modules. Some of them

have an executable suitable for a platform such as Windows, which means you can easily install the package. However, many other packages rely on **pip**, the preferred installer program, which is a feature that you can access directly from the command line.

To use pip, you open the command line prompt. If you need to install a package from scratch, such as NumPy, you type **pip install numpy**, and the software will download the package as well as all the related packages that it needs to work, and will install everything. You can even install a specific version by typing, for example, **pip install -U numpy==1.24.2**, or simply update the package to its most recent version if it is already installed: **pip install -U numpy**.

If you installed Anaconda, you can use conda instead of pip, which is even more efficient when installing because it sets all the other packages to the right version for your newly installed Python package (which implies that it can install, upgrade or even downgrade existing packages on your system). Using conda for installing a new package is achieved from the Anaconda Prompt, as well, by entering **conda install numpy**. The software analyzes your system, reports the changes, and then asks whether it should proceed. Press **y** if you want to proceed with the installation. You also use conda to update existing packages (enter **conda update numpy**) or the entire system (enter **conda update --all**).

This book uses Jupyter Notebook and Google Colab, actually based on the Jupyter Notebook open source, as its environment. Installing and upgrading while using Jupyter Notebook is a bit more complicated. Jake VanderPlas from the University of Washington wrote a very informative post about this issue, which you can find at

<https://jakevdp.github.io/blog/2017/12/05/installing-python-packages-from-jupyter/>. The article proposes a few ways to handle package installation and upgrading while using the Jupyter Notebook interface. At the beginning, until you gain confidence and experience, the best option is to install and update your system first and then run Jupyter Notebook, making the installation much easier and smoother.

## **Working with the memory profiler**

As you've seen when testing your application code for performance (speed) characteristics, you can obtain analogous information about memory usage. Keeping track of memory consumption could tell you

about possible problems in the way data is processed or transmitted to the learning algorithms. The `memory_profiler` package implements the required functionality. This package is not provided as a default Python package and it requires installation. Use the following command to install the package directly from a cell within Jupyter Notebook, as explained by Jake VanderPlas's post described in the "[Using the preferred installer program \(pip\)](#)" sidebar:

```
import sys
!{sys.executable} -m pip install memory_profiler
```

Use the following command for each Jupyter Notebook session you want to monitor:

```
%load_ext memory_profiler
```

After performing these tasks, you can easily track how much memory a command consumes:

```
vectorized = count_vectorizer.transform(texts)
%memit dense_hashing = vectorized.toarray()
```

The output is in mebibyte (MiB), a International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) unit of measure specifically for memory (see <https://digilent.com/blog/mib-vs-mb-whats-the-difference/> for details). The reported peak memory and increment tell you about memory usage (the numbers you see may vary due to system differences):

```
peak memory: 268.60 MiB, increment: 0.01 MiB
```

Obtaining a complete overview of memory consumption is possible by saving a notebook cell to disk and then profiling it using the line magic `%mprun` on an externally imported function. (The line magic works only by operating with external Python scripts.) Profiling produces a detailed report, command by command, as shown in the following example:

```
%%writefile example_code.py

import sklearn.feature_extraction.text as txt

def comparison_test(text):
    count_vectorizer = txt.CountVectorizer()
```



```
        binary=True, max_features=20)
count_vectorizer.fit(text)
vectorized = count_vectorizer.transform(text)
return vectorized.toarray()
```

The previous code writes a python script on your work directory where your test is wrapped into a Python function. As a next step, you import the function from the script and evaluate its memory usage using the %mprun line magic:

```
from example_code import comparison_test

texts = ["Python for data science",
         "Python for machine learning",
         "Artificial intelligence in Python"]

%mprun -f comparison_test comparison_test(texts)
```

You will get an output similar to that shown in [Figure 12-1](#) (the output appears in a separate window at the bottom of the notebook display by default):

Filename: C:\Users\John\Anaconda Projects\P4DS4D3\example_code.py				
Line #	Mem usage	Increment	Occurrences	Line Contents
4	157.3 MiB	157.3 MiB	1	def comparison_test(text):
5	157.3 MiB	0.0 MiB	2	count_vectorizer = txt.CountVectorizer(
6	157.3 MiB	0.0 MiB	1	binary=True, max_features=20)
7	157.3 MiB	0.0 MiB	1	count_vectorizer.fit(text)
8	157.3 MiB	0.0 MiB	1	vectorized = count_vectorizer.transform(text)
9	157.3 MiB	0.0 MiB	1	return vectorized.toarray()

**FIGURE 12-1:** The output from the memory test shows memory usage for each line of code.

The resulting report details the memory usage from every line in the function, pointing out the major increments in memory usage.

## REDUCING MEMORY USAGE AND COMPUTING FAST

You use NumPy arrays or pandas DataFrames when working with data. However, even if they appear as different data structures: one focuses on storing data as a matrix and the other on handling complex datasets stored in different ways — DataFrames rely on NumPy arrays. Understanding how

arrays work and are used by pandas allows you to reduce memory usage and achieve faster computations.

NumPy arrays are a tool for handling data by using contiguous memory blocks to store the values. Because the data appears in the same area of computer memory, Python can retrieve the data faster and slice it more easily. It's the same principle as disk fragmentation: If your data is scattered on disk, it occupies more space and requires more handling time.

Depending on your needs, you can order array data by rows (the default choice of both NumPy and the C/C++ programming language) or columns. Computer memory stores cells one after the other in a line. Consequently, you can record your array row after row, allowing fast processing by rows, or column by column, allowing faster processing by columns. All these details, though hidden from your eyes, are crucial because they render working with NumPy arrays fast and efficient for data science (which uses numeric matrices and often computes information by rows). This is why all Scikit-learn algorithms expect a NumPy array as an input, and why NumPy arrays have a fixed data type (they can be only of the same type as the data sequence; they can't vary).

pandas `DataFrames` are just well-arranged collections of NumPy arrays. Your variables in `DataFrame`, depending on the type, are compacted in an array. For instance, all your integer variables are together in an *IntBlock*, all your float data in a *FloatBlock*, and the rest in an *ObjectBlock*. This means that when you want to operate on a single variable, you are actually operating on all the variables. Consequently, if you have an operation to apply, it's better to apply it to all variables of the same type simultaneously. In addition, this also means that working with string variables is incredibly expensive in terms of memory and computations. Even if you store something as simple as a short series of color names in a variable, it will require the use of a complete string (at least 50 bytes) and handling it will be quite cumbersome using the NumPy engine. As suggested in [Chapter 7](#), you can transform your string data in categorical variables; by doing so, behind the scenes, strings are transformed into numbers. In this way, you greatly reduce the memory usage and increase the speed you experience when manipulating the data.

## ***Running in Parallel on Multiple Cores***

Most computers today are multicore (bearing two or more processors in a single package), with some having multiple physical CPUs. One of the most important limitations of Python is that it uses a single core by default (it was created in a time when single cores were the norm).

Data science projects require quite a lot of computations. In particular, a part of the scientific aspect of data science relies on repeated tests and experiments on different data matrices. Don't forget that working with huge data quantities means that most time-consuming transformations repeat observation after observation (for example, identical and not related operations on different parts of a matrix).

Using more CPU cores accelerates a computation by a factor that almost matches the number of cores. For example, having four cores would mean working at best four times faster. You don't receive a full fourfold increase because there is overhead when starting a parallel process — new running Python instances have to be set up with the right in-memory information and launched; consequently, the improvement will be less than potentially achievable but still significant. Knowing how to use more than one CPU is therefore an advanced but incredibly useful skill for increasing the number of analyses completed and for speeding up your operations both when setting up and when using your data products.



**REMEMBER** Multiprocessing works by replicating the same code and memory content in various new Python instances (the workers), calculating the result for each of them, and returning the pooled results to the main original console. If your original instance already occupies much of the available RAM memory, it won't be possible to create new instances, and your machine may run out of memory.

## ***Performing multicore parallelism***

To perform multicore parallelism with Python, you integrate the Scikit-learn package with the joblib package for time-consuming operations,

such as replicating models for validating results or for looking for the best hyperparameters. In particular, Scikit-learn allows multiprocessing when

- » **Cross-validating:** Testing the results of a machine-learning hypothesis using different training and testing data (discussed in [Chapter 18](#))
- » **Grid-searching:** Systematically changing the hyperparameters of a machine-learning hypothesis and testing the consequent results (also discussed in [Chapter 18](#))
- » **Multilabel prediction:** Running an algorithm multiple times against multiple targets when there are many different target outcomes to predict at the same time (discussed in [Chapter 17](#) in various sections, including “Considering the case when there are more classes”)
- » **Ensemble machine-learning methods:** Modeling a large host of classifiers, each one independent from the other, such as when using RandomForest-based modeling (discussed in [Chapter 20](#))

You don't have to do anything special to take advantage of parallel computations — you can activate parallelism by setting the `n_jobs` parameter to a number of cores more than 1 or by setting the value to `-1`, which means you want to use all the available CPU instances.



**WARNING** If you aren't running your code from the console or from a notebook in Jupyter Notebook, it is extremely important that you separate code that will execute in parallel from any package import or global variable assignment in your script by using the `if __name__ == '__main__'` command at the beginning of any code that executes multicore parallelism. The `if` statement checks whether the program is directly run or is called by an already-running Python console, avoiding any confusion or error by the multiparallel process (such as recursively calling the parallelism).

## Demonstrating multiprocessing

It's a good idea to use a notebook when you run a demonstration of how multiprocessing can really save you time during data science projects. Using Jupyter Notebook offers the advantage of using the `%timeit` magic command for timing execution. You start by loading a multiclass dataset, a complex machine learning algorithm (the Support Vector Classifier, or SVC, a topic explained in all the details in [Chapter 19](#)), and a cross-validation procedure for estimating reliable resulting scores from all the procedures. You find details about all these tools later in the book. The most important thing to know is that the procedures become quite large because the SVC is required to produce 7 models, which it repeats 20 times each using cross-validation, for a total of 140 generated models.

```
from sklearn.datasets import load_digits
digits = load_digits()

X, y = digits.data, digits.target
from sklearn.svm import SVC
from sklearn.model_selection import cross_val_score
```

After loading the digits data, representing images of handwritten digits from 0 to 9, test the timing of a cross-validation on 20 folds using a single core. Here is the code (even though the command may appear on several lines in the book, you use a single line in your code):

```
%timeit single_core = cross_val_score( \
    SVC(), X, y, cv=20, n_jobs=1)
```

As a result, you get the recorded average running time for a single core similar to this:

```
1.56 s ± 11.7 ms per loop
(mean ± std. dev. of 7 runs, 1 loop each)
```

After this test, you need to activate the multicore parallelism and time the results using the following command (even though the command may appear on several lines in the book, you use a single line in your code):

```
%timeit multi_core = cross_val_score( \
    SVC(), X, y, cv=20, n_jobs=-1)
```

Running on multiple cores allows for a much better average time:

```
692 ms ± 28.5 ms per loop
(mean ± std. dev. of 7 runs, 1 loop each)
```

Running on all the available cores may render your computer unusable for any other task. In Scikit-learn, setting `n_jobs` to `-2` refers to using all available CPUs except one to parallelize the execution of a particular task. Leaving one CPU reserved for system processes avoids overloading the CPU, leading to slower processing times and preventing you from using your computer for other, non-intensive tasks.

```
%timeit multi_core = cross_val_score( \
    SVC(), X, y, cv=20, n_jobs=-2)
```

As expected, because you are leaving one CPU out of the game, the average time worsens a little bit, but in exchange you have a usable computer, especially if the training or testing takes a long time:

```
744 ms ± 8.4 ms per loop
(mean ± std. dev. of 7 runs, 1 loop each)
```

The example machine demonstrates a positive advantage using multicore processing, despite using a small dataset where Python spends most of the time starting consoles and running a part of the code in each one. This overhead, a few seconds, is still significant given that the total execution extends for a handful of seconds. Just imagine what would happen if you worked with larger sets of data — your execution time could be easily cut by two or three times.

## Chapter 13

# Exploring Data Analysis

---

### IN THIS CHAPTER

- » **Understanding the Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) philosophy**
  - » **Describing numeric and categorical distributions**
  - » **Estimating correlation and association**
  - » **Testing mean differences in groups**
  - » **Visualizing distributions, relationships, and groups**
- 

Data science relies on complex algorithms for building predictions and spotting important signals in data, and each algorithm presents different strong and weak points. In short, you select a range of algorithms, you have them run on the data, you optimize their parameters as much as you can, and finally you decide which one will best help you build your data product or generate insight into your problem. However, even if some of these tools seem like black or even magic boxes, no matter how powerful the machine learning algorithms you use are, you won't obtain good results if your data has something wrong in it. It is all a matter of GIGO. GIGO stands for "Garbage In/Garbage Out." It has been a well-known adage in statistics (and computer science) for a long time.

In this chapter, you discover the philosophy of Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA), which means finding out how to

- » Describe your variables
- » Estimate correlations and associations
- » Visualize value distributions, relationships between variables, and groups

The goal of EDA is to clean and transform data for optimal learning by machine learning algorithms. EDA is a general approach to exploring datasets by means of simple summary statistics and graphic visualizations to gain a deeper understanding of data. EDA helps you become more effective in the subsequent data analysis and modeling. In this chapter, you discover all the necessary and indispensable basic descriptions of the data and see how those descriptions can help you decide how to proceed using the most appropriate data transformation and solutions.



**REMEMBER** You don't have to type the source code for this chapter manually; using the downloadable source is a lot easier. The source code for this chapter appears in the `P4DS4D3_13_Exploring_Data_Analysis.ipynb` file. (See the Introduction for details on where to locate this file.)

## *The EDA Approach*

EDA was developed at Bell Labs by John Tukey, a mathematician and statistician who wanted to promote more questions and actions on data based on the data itself (the exploratory motif) in contrast to the dominant confirmatory approach of the time. A *confirmatory approach* relies on the use of a theory or procedure — the data is just there for testing and application. EDA emerged at the end of the 70s, long before the big data flood appeared. Tukey could already see that certain activities, such as testing and modeling, were easy to make automatic. In one of his famous writings, Tukey said:

*“The only way humans can do BETTER than computers is to take a chance of doing WORSE than them.”*

The statement emphasizes that there are areas where human intuition, creativity, and contextual understanding can provide an edge over computers, a statement truly ahead of its time that remains relevant in

today's era of AI. The statement also explains why, as a data scientist, your role and tools aren't limited to automatic learning algorithms but also to manual and creative exploratory tasks. Computers are unbeatable at optimizing, but humans are strong at discovery by taking unexpected routes and trying unlikely but in the end very effective solutions.

If you've been through the examples in the previous chapters, you have already worked on quite a bit of data, but using EDA is a bit different because it checks beyond the basic assumptions about data workability, which actually comprises the Initial Data Analysis (IDA). Up to now, the book has shown how to

- » Complete observations or mark missing cases by appropriate features
- » Transform text or categorical variables
- » Create new features based on domain knowledge of the data problem
- » Have at hand a numeric dataset where rows are observations and columns are variables

EDA goes further than IDA. It's moved by a different attitude: going beyond basic assumptions. With EDA, you

- » Describe of your data
- » Closely explore data distributions
- » Understand the relations between variables
- » Notice unusual or unexpected situations
- » Place the data into groups
- » Notice unexpected patterns within groups
- » Take note of group differences



**REMEMBER** You will read a lot in the following pages about how EDA can help you learn about variable distribution in your dataset. *Variable*

*distribution* is the list of values you find in that variable compared to their *frequency*, that is, how often they occur. Being able to determine variable distribution tells you a lot about how a variable could behave when fed into a machine learning algorithm and, thus, help you take appropriate steps to have it perform well in your project.

## Defining Descriptive Statistics for Numeric Data

The first actions that you can take with the data are to produce some synthetic measures to determine what is going on with it. You acquire knowledge of measures such as maximum and minimum values, and you define which intervals are the best places to start.

During your exploration, you use a simple but useful dataset, the Palmer Penguins dataset. This dataset was collected in the Palmer Archipelago, Antarctica, by Dr. Kristen Gorman and the Palmer Station Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) program. It contains detailed information about three different species of penguins: Adélie, Gentoo, and Chinstrap. It includes various measurements such as the penguins' bill length, bill depth, body mass, flipper length, and several other attributes. You can load it by using the following code, which will select a few variables:

```
import numpy as np
import pandas as pd

def load_palmer_penguins(no_missing=True):
    url = "https://raw.githubusercontent.com/"
    url += "allisonhorst/palmerpenguins/main/"
    url += "inst/extdata/penguins.csv"
    numeric_features = [
        "bill_length_mm", "bill_depth_mm",
        "flipper_length_mm", "body_mass_g"]
    target = ["species"]
    data = pd.read_csv(url)
    if no_missing:
        data = data.dropna()
    return data[numeric_features + target]

penguins = load_palmer_penguins(no_missing=True)
```

Having loaded the Palmer Penguins dataset into a pandas DataFrame, as a last preparatory activity before starting data exploration, you can check your pandas and NumPy versions:

```
print(f"Your pandas version is: {pd.__version__}")
print(f"Your NumPy version is {np.__version__}")
```



**REMEMBER** NumPy, Scikit-learn, and especially pandas are packages under constant development, so before you start working with EDA, it's a good idea to check the product version numbers. Using an older or newer version could cause your output to differ from that shown in the book, or cause some commands to fail. For this edition of the book, use pandas version 1.3.5 and NumPy version 1.21.6 (see [Chapter 3](#) for an explanation of how to set up your desktop system for use with Anaconda).



**TIP** This chapter presents a series of pandas and NumPy commands that help you explore the structure of data. Even though applying single explorative commands grants you more freedom in your analysis, it's nice to know that you can obtain most of these statistics using the `describe()` method applied to your pandas DataFrame: such as, `print(penguins.describe())`, when you're in a hurry in your data science project.

## ***Measuring central tendency***

Mean and median are the first measures to calculate for numeric variables when starting EDA. They can provide you with an estimate when the variables are centered and somehow symmetric.

Using pandas, you can quickly compute both means and medians. Here is the command for getting the mean from the penguins DataFrame:

```
print(penguins.mean(numeric_only=True))
```

```
Here is the resulting output for the mean statistic:  
bill_length_mm      43.992793  
bill_depth_mm       17.164865  
flipper_length_mm   200.966967  
body_mass_g         4207.057057  
dtype: float64
```

Similarly, here is the command that will output the median:

```
print(penguins.median(numeric_only=True))
```

You then obtain the median estimates for all the variables:

```
bill_length_mm      44.5  
bill_depth_mm       17.3  
flipper_length_mm   197.0  
body_mass_g         4050.0  
dtype: float64
```

The median provides the central position in the series of values. When creating a variable, it is a measure less influenced by anomalous cases or by an asymmetric distribution of values around the mean. What you should notice here is that the means are not centered (no variable is zero mean) and that the median of body mass is different from the mean, requiring further inspection.

When checking for central tendency measures, you should:

- » Verify whether means are zero
- » Check whether they are different from each other
- » Notice whether the median is different from the mean

## ***Measuring variance and range***

As a next step, you should check the variance by using its square root, the standard deviation. The standard deviation is as informative as the variance, but comparing to the mean is easier because it's expressed in the same unit of measure. The standard deviation is a good indicator of whether a mean is a suitable indicator of the variable distribution because it tells you how the values of a variable distribute around the mean. The higher the standard deviation, the farther you can expect some values to appear from the mean.

```
print(penguins.std(numeric_only=True))
```

The printed output for each variable:

```
bill_length_mm      5.468668
bill_depth_mm       1.969235
flipper_length_mm   14.015765
body_mass_g         805.215802
dtype: float64
```

In addition, you also check the range, which is the difference between the maximum and minimum value for each quantitative variable, and it is quite informative about the difference in scale among variables:

```
print(penguins.max(numeric_only=True)
      - penguins.min(numeric_only=True))
```

Here you can find the output of the preceding command:

```
bill_length_mm      27.5
bill_depth_mm        8.4
flipper_length_mm    59.0
body_mass_g          3600.0
dtype: float64
```

Note the standard deviation and the range in relation to the mean and median. A standard deviation or range that's too high with respect to the measures of centrality (mean and median) may point to a possible problem, with extremely unusual values affecting the calculation or an unexpected distribution of values around the mean.

## Working with percentiles

Because the median is the value in the central position of your distribution of values, you may need to consider other notable positions. Apart from the minimum and maximum, the position at 25 percent of your values (the lower quartile) and the position at 75 percent (the upper quartile) are useful for determining the data distribution, and they are the basis of an illustrative graph called a *boxplot*, which is one of the topics discussed in this chapter.

```
print(penguins.select_dtypes(np.number).
      quantile([0,.25,.50,.75,1]))
```

You can see the output as a matrix — a comparison that uses quartiles for rows and the different dataset variables as columns. So, the 25-percent quartile for `bill_length_mm` is 32.1, which means that 25 percent of the dataset values for this measure are less than 32.1.

	bill_length_mm	bill_depth_mm	flipper_length_mm...
0.00	32.1	13.1	172.0...
0.25	39.5	15.6	190.0...
0.50	44.5	17.3	197.0...
0.75	48.6	18.7	213.0...
1.00	59.6	21.5	231.0...



**REMEMBER** The difference between the first quartile (25th percentile) and the third quartile (75th percentile) constitutes the interquartile range (IQR), which is a measure of the spread in the central portion of the variable. You don't need to calculate it, but you will find it in the boxplot because it helps to determine the plausible limits of the core of your distribution. What lies after the “whiskers” of the boxplot, which are typically located at 1.5 times the IQR beyond the first and third quartiles, are considered cases that can potentially affect the results of your analysis in a negative way. Such cases are called outliers — and they're the topic of [Chapter 16](#).

## ***Defining measures of normality***

The last indicative measures of how the numeric variables used for these examples are structured are skewness and kurtosis:

- » *Skewness* defines the asymmetry of data with respect to the mean. If the skew is negative, the left tail is too long and the mass of the observations are on the right side of the distribution. If it is positive, it is exactly the opposite.
- » *Kurtosis* shows whether the data distribution, especially the peak and the tails, are of the right shape. If the kurtosis is above zero, the distribution has a marked peak. If it is below zero, the distribution is too flat instead.

Although reading the numbers can help you determine the shape of the data, taking notice of such measures presents a formal test to select the variables that may need some adjustment or transformation in order to become more similar to the Gaussian distribution. Remember that you also visualize the data later, so this is a first step in a longer process.



**REMEMBER** The normal, or Gaussian, distribution is the most useful distribution in statistics thanks to its frequent recurrence and particular mathematical properties. It's essentially the foundation of many statistical tests and models, with some of them, such as the linear regression, widely used in data science. In a Gaussian distribution, mean and median have the same values, the values are symmetrically distributed around the mean (it has the shape of a bell), and its standard deviation points out the distance from the mean where the distribution curve changes from being concave to convex (it is called the inflection point). All these characteristics make the Gaussian distribution a special distribution, and they can be leveraged for statistical computations.



**TIP** You seldom encounter a Gaussian distribution in your data. Even if the Gaussian distribution is important for its statistical properties, in reality you'll have to handle completely different distributions, hence the need for EDA and measures such as skewness and kurtosis.

As an example, a previous example in this chapter shows that the `bill_length_mm` feature presents differences between the mean and the median (see "[Measuring variance and range](#)," earlier in this chapter). In this section, you test the same example for skewness and kurtosis to determine whether the variable requires intervention.

When performing the skewness and kurtosis tests, you determine whether the p-value is less than or equal 0.05. If so, you have to reject

normality (your variable distributed as a Gaussian distribution), which implies that you could obtain better results if you try to transform the variable into a normal one. The following code shows how to perform the required test:

```
from scipy.stats import skew, skewtest
variable = penguins["body_mass_g"]
s = skew(variable)
zscore, pvalue = skewtest(variable)
print(f"Skewness {s:.3f} z-score " \
      f"{zscore:.3f} p-value {pvalue:.3f}")
```

Here are the skewness scores you get:

```
Skewness 0.470 z-score 3.414 p-value 0.001
```

You can perform another test for kurtosis, as shown in the following code:

```
from scipy.stats import kurtosis, kurtosistest
variable = penguins["body_mass_g"]
k = kurtosis(variable)
zscore, pvalue = kurtosistest(variable)
print(f"Kurtosis {k:.3f} z-score {zscore:.3f} " \
      f"p-value {pvalue:.3f}")
```

Here are the kurtosis scores you obtain:

```
Kurtosis -0.740 z-score -4.337 p-value 0.000
```

The test results tell you that the data is kind of flat and that it has a longer tail to the right, but not enough to make it unusable (see “The Complete Guide to Skewness and Kurtosis” at

<https://www.simplilearn.com/tutorials/statistics-tutorial/skewness-and-kurtosis> if you aren’t familiar with how this all works). The real problem is that the curve is not bell shaped, so you should investigate the matter further.



**TIP** It's a good practice to test all variables for skewness and kurtosis automatically. You should then proceed to inspect those whose values are the highest visually. Non-normality of a distribution may also conceal different issues, such as outliers to groups that you can perceive only by a graphical visualization.

## *Counting for Categorical Data*

The Palmer Penguin dataset is made of four metric variables and a qualitative target outcome. Just as you use means and variance as descriptive measures for metric variables, so do frequencies strictly relate to qualitative ones.

Because the dataset is made up of metric measurements (depth and lengths in millimeters; mass in grams), you must render it qualitative by dividing it into bins according to specific intervals. The pandas package features two useful functions, `cut()` and `qcut()`, that can transform a metric variable into a qualitative one:

- » `cut()` expects a series of edge values used to cut the measurements or an integer number of groups used to cut the variables into equal-width bins
- » `qcut()` expects a series of percentiles used to cut the variable

You can obtain a new categorical DataFrame using the following command, which concatenates a binning (see the “[Understanding binning and discretization](#)” section of [Chapter 9](#) for details) for each variable:

```
pcts = [0, .25, .5, .75, 1]
penguins_binned = pd.concat(
    [pd.qcut(penguins.iloc[:,0], pcts, precision=1),
     pd.qcut(penguins.iloc[:,1], pcts, precision=1),
     pd.qcut(penguins.iloc[:,2], pcts, precision=1),
     pd.qcut(penguins.iloc[:,3], pcts, precision=1)],
    join='outer', axis = 1)
```



**TIP** This example relies on binning (as explained in the “[Understanding binning and discretization](#)” section of [Chapter 9](#)). However, it could also help to explore when the variable is above or below a singular hurdle value, usually the mean or the median. In this case, you set `pd.qcut` to the 0.5 percentile or `pd.cut` to the mean value of the variable.



**REMEMBER** Binning transforms numerical variables into categorical ones. This transformation can improve your understanding of data and the machine learning phase that follows by reducing the noise (outliers) or nonlinearity of the transformed variable.

## ***Understanding frequencies***

You can obtain a frequency for each categorical variable of the dataset, both for the predictive variable and for the outcome, by using the following code:

```
print(penguins["species"].value_counts())
```

The resulting frequencies show that each group is of a similar size:

Adelie	146
Gentoo	119
Chinstrap	68

You can try also computing frequencies for the binned `body_mass_g` that you obtained from the previous paragraph:

```
print(penguins_binned['body_mass_g'].value_counts())
```

In this case, binning produces different groups:

(2699.9, 3550.0]	86
(3550.0, 4050.0]	86
(4050.0, 4775.0]	78
(4775.0, 6300.0]	83

The `value_counts()` provide the range of each bin for 'body\_mass\_g' in this case and the frequencies, such as 86 for the top range of (2699.9, 3550.0], for each bin. The following example provides you with some basic frequency information, such as the number of unique values in each variable and the mode of the frequency (top and freq rows in the output). The next section of the chapter gives you additional details about where these value come from using a crosstab presentation.

```
print(penguins_binned.describe())
```

Here is the binning description:

	bill_length_mm	bill_depth_mm	flipper_length_mm...
count	333	333	333...
unique	4	4	4...
top	(32.0, 39.5]	(13.0, 15.6]	(171.9, 190.0]...
freq	86	85	95...

Frequencies can signal a number of interesting characteristics of qualitative features:

- » The mode of the frequency distribution that is the most frequent category
- » The other most frequent categories, especially when they are comparable with the mode (bimodal distribution) or if there is a large difference between them
- » The distribution of frequencies among categories, if rapidly decreasing or equally distributed
- » Rare categories

## *Creating contingency tables*

By matching different categorical frequency distributions, you can display the relationship between qualitative variables. The `pandas.crosstab()` function can match variables or groups of variables, helping to locate possible data structures or relationships.

In the following example, you check how the outcome variable is related to body mass and observe how certain species and body classes seldom

appear together. [Figure 13-1](#) shows the various penguin types along the left side of the output, followed by the output as related to body mass.

```
print(pd.crosstab(penguins["species"],  
                    penguins_binned['body_mass_g']))
```

species	body_mass_g (2699.9, 3550.0]	(3550.0, 4050.0]	(4050.0, 4775.0]	(4775.0, 6300.0]
Adelie	64	50	32	0
Chinstrap	22	35	10	1
Gentoo	0	1	36	82

[FIGURE 13-1:](#) A contingency table based on groups and binning.

## *Creating Applied Visualization for EDA*

Up to now, the chapter has explored variables by looking at each one separately. Technically, if you've followed along with the examples, you have created a *univariate* (that is, you've paid attention to stand-alone variations of the data only) description of the data. The data is rich in information because it offers a perspective that goes beyond the single variable, presenting more variables with their reciprocal variations. The way to use more of the data is to create a *bivariate* (seeing how couples of variables relate to each other) exploration. This is also the basis for complex data analysis based on a *multivariate* (simultaneously considering all the existent relations between variables) approach.

If the univariate approach inspected a limited number of descriptive statistics, then matching different variables or groups of variables increases the number of possibilities. Such exploration overloads the data scientist with different tests and bivariate analysis. Using visualization is a rapid way to limit test and analysis to only interesting traces and hints. Visualizations, using a few informative graphics, can convey the variety of statistical characteristics of the variables and their reciprocal relationships with greater ease.

### *Inspecting boxplots*

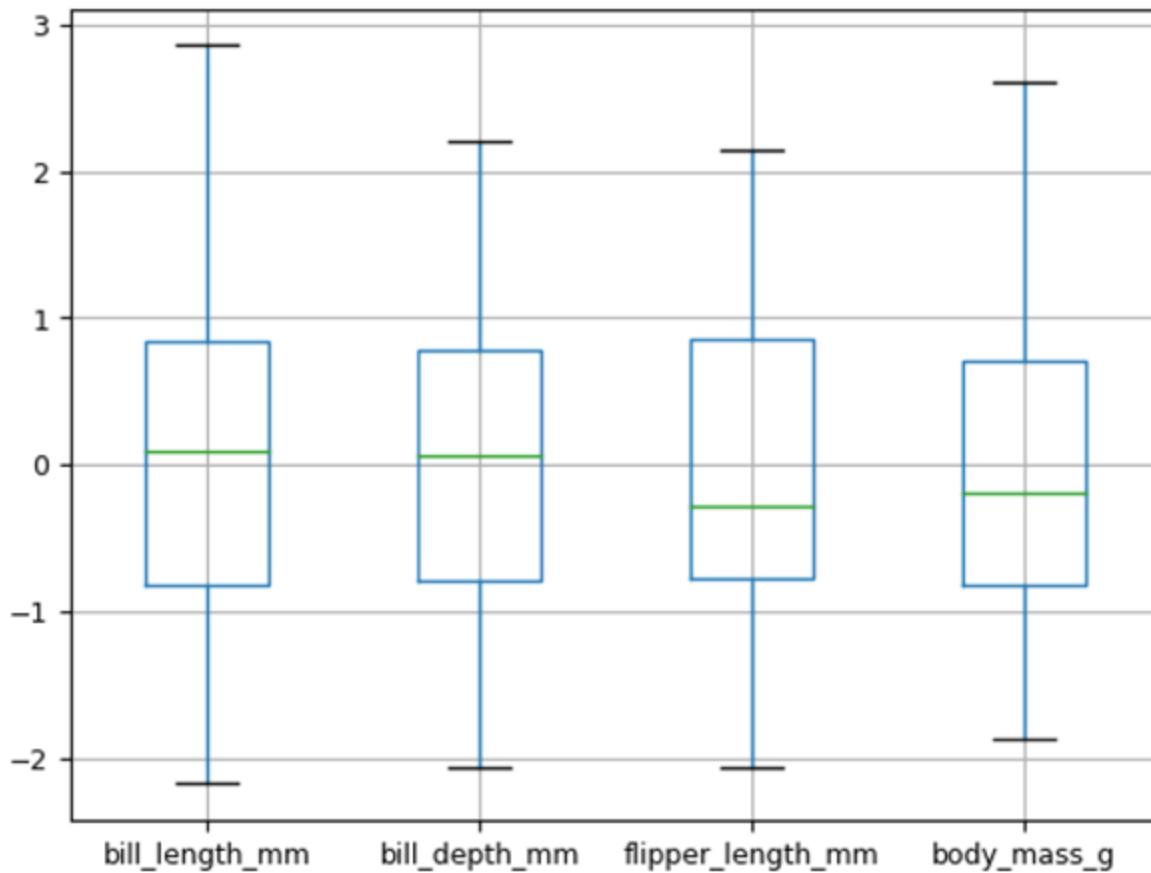
Boxplots provide a way to represent distributions and their extreme ranges, signaling whether some observations are too far from the core of the data — a problematic situation for some learning algorithms. The following code shows how to create a basic boxplot using the Palmer Penguins dataset after having selected only the numeric variables, thanks to the `select_dtypes()` method, and having standardized them with the `StandardScaler` from Scikit-learn (<https://scikit-learn.org/stable/modules/generated/sklearn.preprocessing.StandardScaler.html>) in order to have comparable units between variables:

```
from sklearn.preprocessing import StandardScaler

scaler = StandardScaler()
numeric_features = penguins.select_dtypes(
    include=['number'])
penguins_std = pd.DataFrame(
    scaler.fit_transform(numeric_features),
    columns=numeric_features.columns)

boxplots = penguins_std.boxplot(fontsize=9)
```

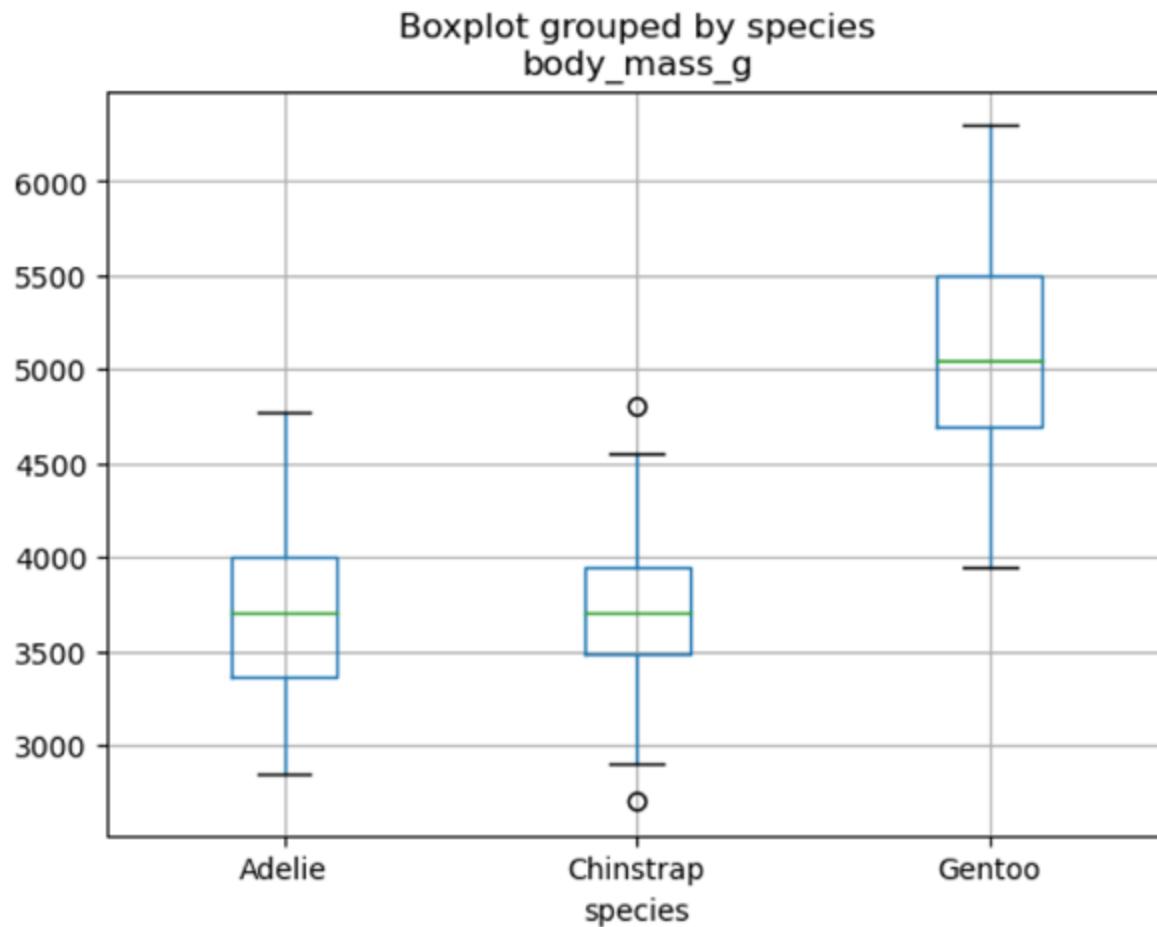
In [Figure 13-2](#), you see the structure of each variable's distribution at its core, represented by the 25° and 75° percentile (the sides of the box) and the median (at the center of the box). The lines, the so-called whiskers, represent 1.5 times the IQR from the box sides (or by the distance to the most extreme value, if within 1.5 times the IQR). The boxplot marks every observation outside the whisker (deemed an unusual value) by a sign.



**FIGURE 13-2:** A boxplot comparing all the standardized variables.

Boxplots are also extremely useful for visually checking group differences. Note in [Figure 13-3](#) how a boxplot can hint that the Gentoo penguin group have on average different body mass, with only partially overlapping values at the fringes of the other two penguin groups.

```
%matplotlib inline  
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt  
boxplots = penguins.boxplot(column='body_mass_g',  
                             by="species", fontsize=10)  
plt.show()
```



**FIGURE 13-3:** A boxplot of body mass arranged by penguin groups.

## Performing t-tests after boxplots

After you have spotted a possible group difference relative to a variable, a t-test (you use a t-test in situations in which the sampled population has an exact normal distribution) or a one-way Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA) can provide you with a statistical verification of the significance of the difference between the groups' means.

The t-test compares two groups at a time, and it requires that you check whether the groups have similar variance.

```
from scipy.stats import ttest_ind

group0 = penguins['species'] == 'Adelie'
group1 = penguins['species'] == 'Chinstrap'
group2 = penguins['species'] == 'Gentoo'
variable = penguins['body_mass_g']
```

```
print(f"var1 {variable[group0].var():.3f} " \
      f"var2 {variable[group1].var():.3f}")
```

If you compare the variances in body mass of the Adélie group to the Chinstrap group, they appear quite different:

```
var1 210332.428 var2 147713.454785
```

In this case, you set the `equal_var` parameter to `False` because their variances are not the same:

```
variable = penguins['body_mass_g']
t, pvalue = ttest_ind(variable[group0], variable[group1],
                      axis=0, equal_var=False)
print(f"t statistic {t:.3f} p-value {pvalue:.3f}")
```

The resulting `t` statistic and its `p`-values are

```
t statistic -0.448 p-value 0.655
```

You interpret the `pvalue` as the probability that the calculated `t` statistic difference is just due to chance. Usually, when it is below 0.05, you can confirm that the groups' means are significantly different. In our example, with a `pvalue` of 0.655, which is greater than the typical significance level of 0.05, we do not have sufficient evidence to conclude that the observed difference is statistically significant.

You can simultaneously check more than two groups using the one-way ANOVA test. In this case, the `pvalue` has an interpretation similar to the `t`-test:

```
from scipy.stats import f_oneway

variable = penguins['body_mass_g']
f, pvalue = f_oneway(variable[group0],
                      variable[group1],
                      variable[group2])
print(f"One-way ANOVA F-value {f:.3f} p-value "
      f"{pvalue:.3f}")
```

The result from the ANOVA test implies that at least one group is different from the others:

```
One-way ANOVA F-value 341.895 p-value 0.000
```