# BAD DATA SCIENCE CODING PRACTICES

Vi Ly 7 Jun 2023

## AGENDA

- Why Are Data Scientists Bad Coders?
- Technical Debt
- Bad Coding Practices
- Resources
- Self-Documenting Code
- Python Tricks



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Data Scientist (n.): Person who is better at statistics than any software engineer and better at software engineering than any statistician.









9:55 AM - 3 May 12



- All examples were egregiously committed by a Lead Data Scientist in a single project
- If it can happen to a Lead DS, it can happen to you!



#### WHY ARE DATA SCIENTISTS BAD CODERS?

- Clean code not "sexy"
- Most DS curriculum do not focus on clean code
  - Too much emphasis on what is the newest, most advanced algorithm
  - Too much emphasis on pandas, numpy, sklearn, etc.
    - Not enough emphasis on basic Python data structures (list, tuple, dict, set)
  - Do not cover Space / Time Complexity (Big O Notation)
  - No concept of Technical Debt
  - No coverage of PEP8
  - Too much emphasis on Notebooks
    - Not enough emphasis on using Integrated Development Environment (IDE)
- What changes between school DS vs. real world DS?
  - Individual sport → Team sport

#### TECHNICAL DEBT

- Tech Debt: implied cost of future reworking required when choosing an easy but limited solution instead of a better approach that could take more time (<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technical\_debt">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Technical\_debt</a>)
- Bad code incurs higher tech debt and higher cognitive load
- When do you pay Tech Debt?
  - Someone else on your team takes over your code
    - More time (higher chance for error) is required to understand bad code than good code
  - Someone on another team has to productionize your model
  - You look back at your own code X months later and forgot what it does
  - Data migration
  - Package changes
  - Lots more examples

#### BAD CODING PRACTICES

- DRY Violations
- Version Control by Naming
- Confounding / Similar names
- Inconsistent Naming Convention
- Commenting Out Unused / Dead Code
- Useless Comments
- Using Magic Numbers
- Verbose Conditionals
- Long Functions
- Crowded Code
- Wildcard Imports
- Mid Code Violations
- Out-of-Order Notebook Cells

#### DRY VIOLATIONS

- Don't Repeat Yourself (DRY)
- How does it happen?
  - Copy & Paste code blocks
  - Hard-coding values
- Why is it bad?
  - When change is required
    - Spend time finding all the different instances
    - Update code in multiple places higher chance of missing
- Fix
  - Use functions / classes (Vi's Rule of Thumb 2 Probably, 3 Definitely)
  - Use loops
  - Separate files for functions / classes
  - Use better naming / variables

## DRY VIOLATION (BAD)

```
array1 = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]
numeric_array = array1
n = len(numeric_array)
mean = sum(numeric_array) / n
stdev_numerator = []
for x in numeric_array:
    stdev_numerator.append(
stdev = math.sqrt(
    sum(stdev_numerator) / (n - 1)
z_scores = []
for x in numeric_array:
    z_scores.append(
        (x - mean) / stdev
array1_zscores = z_scores
```

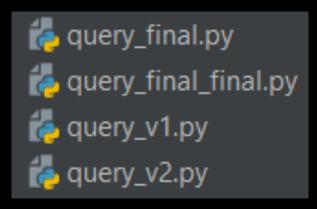
```
array2 = [7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12]
numeric_array = array2
n = len(numeric_array)
mean = sum(numeric_array) / n
stdev_numerator = []
for x in numeric_array:
    stdev_numerator.append(
        (x + mean) ** 2
stdev = math.sqrt(
    sum(stdev_numerator) / (n - 1)
z_scores = []
for x in numeric_array:
    z_scores.append(
        (x - mean) / stdev
array2_zscores = z_scores
```

```
array3 = [13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18]
numeric_array = array2
n = len(numeric_array)
mean = sum(numeric_array) / n
stdev_numerator = []
for x in numeric_array:
    stdev_numerator.append(
        (x + mean) ** 2
stdev = math.sqrt(
    sum(stdev_numerator) / (n - 1)
z_scores = []
for x in numeric_array:
    z_scores.append(
        (x - mean) / stdev
array3_zscores = z_scores
```

## DRY VIOLATION (GOOD)

```
import math
|def calculate_zscore(numeric_array):
    n = len(numeric_array)
    mean = sum(numeric_array) / n
    stdev_numerator = [(x - mean) ** 2 for x in numeric_array]
    stdev = math.sqrt(
        sum(stdev_numerator) / (n - 1)
    return [(x - mean) / stdev for x in numeric_array]
array1 = [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]
a_ray1_zscores = calculate_zscore(array1)
array2 = [7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12]
array2_zscores = calculate_zscore(array2)
array3 = [13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18]
array3_zscores = calculate_zscore(array3)
array1_zscores, array2_zscores, array3_zscores = [calculate_zscore(x) for x in (array1, array2, array3)]
```

#### VERSION CONTROL BY NAMING



- Why is it bad?
  - Increased cognitive load
  - For someone reading / inheriting your code, they will always think:
    - "Is this the latest version?"
    - "Am I using the right version?"
  - Spend more time searching through all files to ensure there are no other versions

- def train\_test\_split\_v1(\*args, \*\*kwargs):
   ...

  def train\_test\_split\_v2(\*args, \*\*kwargs):
   ...

  def train\_test\_split\_v3(\*args, \*\*kwargs):
   ...
- Fix
  - Use actual version control like Git to track changes
  - If no access to version control:
    - Raise Error / Warning (<a href="https://docs.python.org/3/library/exceptions.html">https://docs.python.org/3/library/exceptions.html</a>)
      - NotImplementedError
      - DeprecationWarning
    - As a last resort: add comment / doc string

#### CONFOUNDING SIMILAR NAMES

```
def split_train_test(data, test_size):
    ...

def train_test_splitting(data_indices, test_size, random_state):
    ...

def train_test(df_input, month_train, month_test, features):
    ...
```

- Actual Example
  - All 3 functions in the same file
  - Similar names
  - Similar functionality performs some type of train / test split
- Why is it bad?
  - Reader has more to remember
  - Duplication violates DRY principle
  - Harder to refactor
- Fix
  - Generalize function to handle multiple cases
  - Use better naming convention

## INCONSISTENT NAMING CONVENTION

```
def calculate_total_amount(amts: List[float], discount: float, tax: float) → float:
   total_amnt = sum(amts)
   if discount is not None:
        discounted_amt = (total_amnt * discount)
        total_amnt -= discounted_amt
   return total_amnt * (1 + tax)
```

- How many versions of amount are used?
  - 4 (amount, amts, amt, amnt)
- Other Examples
  - Using different verb tenses: calculate vs calculating
- Why is it bad?
  - Users expect consistent naming convention
  - More cognitive load having to remember multiple conventions
  - Ctrl + F (Find) & Ctrl + R (Replace) become ineffective
    - · Must manually find and replace
    - Higher chance something gets missed
- Fix
  - Use consistent naming convention (variables, function / method names, parameters)
  - When working with others, establish convention early on

## COMMENTING OUT DEAD / USELESS CODE

- What is it?
  - You are experimenting and making changes to your code.
  - You comment out old code (so that it may be retrieved in case something goes wrong) during the updates, but never remove the commented code.
- Why is it bad?
  - Comment Hoarder No one ever removes commented code. Comments just stay in perpetuity, or worse, keeps increasing.
    - New people will wonder if they ever need that code
  - More lines of code for people to read
- Fix
  - Delete unused / dead code instead of commenting out
  - Remember: This is why you have version control

#### USELESS COMMENTS

- What are useless comments?
  - Commenting every line of code with what the code does
- Why is it bad?
  - Waste time / no added value
  - Cry wolf someone reviewing your code will skip critical comments because they think all comments are useless
  - DRY Violation what happens if your code changes?
    - 2 changes instead of 1 (code and in the comment higher chance for error)
- Fix
  - Delete useless comments
  - Use self-documenting code
  - Comments should describe why (and sometimes how) but not what.

#### USING MAGIC NUMBERS

- What is a Magic Number?
  - A unique value with unexplained meaning or multiple occurrences which could (preferably) be replaced with a named constant
  - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magic\_number\_(programming)
- Why is it bad?
  - Does not provide context on significance of the number
  - Potential DRY Violation
    - What happens if you have that number hard-coded in multiple places and it changes?
- Fix
  - Use self-documenting code / variable (aka better naming convention)
  - Use comments

#### MAGIC NUMBER EXAMPLE

• In this example, 1944 is the Magic Number

```
def was_olympics_held_bad(year: int) → bool:
    return ((year % 4) = 0) and (year ≠ 1944)

def was_olympic_held_good(year: int) → bool:
    year_olympics_cancelled_worldwar2 = 1944
    return ((year % 4) = 0) and (year ≠ year_olympics_cancelled_worldwar2)
```

```
def was_olympics_held_verbose(year: int) → bool:
   if ((year % 4) = 0) and (year \neq 1944):
        return True
        return False
def was_olympics_held_notverbose(year: int) → bool:
   return ((year % 4) = 0) and (year \neq 1944)
def is_list_empty_verbose(some_list: List) → bool:
    if len(some\ list) = 0:
        return True
        return False
def is_list_empty_better(some_list: List) → bool:
   return len(some_list) = 0
def is_list_empty_bets(some_list: List) → bool:
   return bool(some_list)
```

#### VERBOSE CONDITIONALS

- Why is it bad?
  - More lines of code for reader
- Fix
  - Just use the condition
  - For native Python data structures, use their natural 'truthiness' value

#### LONG FUNCTIONS

- "Brevity is the soul of wit" William Shakespeare (Hamlet)
- "Simple is better than complex" Zen of Python
- Why is it bad?
  - Harder to debug
  - Harder to test
  - May need portions of code in other functions (DRY Violation)
  - Much higher cognitive load
    - Red flag: Do you have to put comments to remind you of what the code is doing?
- Fix
  - Break into smaller functions
  - Define large function from smaller functions

#### CROWDED CODE

```
bad = '''
    transaction_date ≤ '2022-08-31' AND transaction_type = 'Credit Card' GROUP BY
good = '''
```

- Why is it bad?
  - Harder to read
  - Higher cognitive load
- Fix
  - Use line breaks and indentations liberally (code permitting)

#### WILDCARD IMPORTS

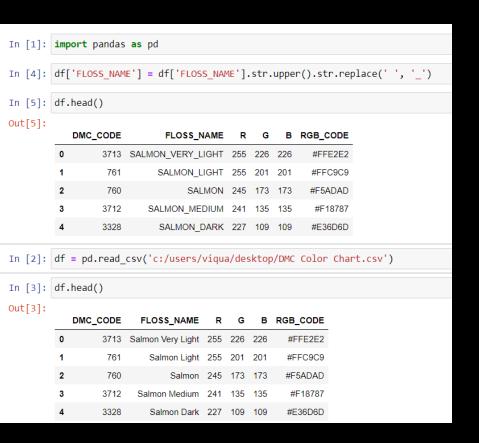
from sklearn import \*

- Why is it bad?
  - Violates PEP8
  - Naming collision
  - Spend more time tracing object / variable origin
    - Becomes bigger problem when version changes break compatibility
- Fix
  - Follow PEP8
  - Use namespaces

#### MID-CODE VIOLATIONS

- Mid-Code Violations
  - Imports & Function / Class Definitions placed in the middle of code instead of at the beginning
  - Violates PEP 8
- Why is it bad?
  - Tech debt More work to productionize code / notebook
    - Forces others to go through all of code looking for imports / definitions
    - Higher chance something gets missed
- Fix
  - Follow PEP8

#### OUT OF ORDER NOTEBOOK CELLS



- Why is it bad?
  - Not reproducible
  - Creates errors when run
  - Code expected to run top to bottom
  - More time to debug
  - More time to reorder
- Fix
  - Use IDE
  - Re-run notebook after completion
    - Should run error-free

#### • Python PEP 8

- https://peps.python.org/pep-0008/
- Zen of Python
  - https://peps.python.org/pep-0020/
- Ottinger's Rules for Variable and Class Naming
  - https://exelearning.org/wiki/OttingersNaming/
- The Mental Game of Python Raymond Hettinger
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UANN2Eu6ZnM
- Refactoring by Martin Fowler
  - https://martinfowler.com/books/refactoring.html
- Clean Code by Robert C. Martin
  - https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/clean-code-a/9780136083238/
- Fluent Python by Luciano Ramalho
  - <a href="https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/fluent-python-2nd/9781492056348/">https://learning.oreilly.com/library/view/fluent-python-2nd/9781492056348/</a>

#### RESOURCES

## SELF-DOCUMENTING CODE & BETTER CODING W/ CHATGPT

## SELF-DOCUMENTING CODE

#### BAD

```
def do_something(], c, y, h):
    z = y / l

if h or (c ≥ 780) or (z ≥ 10):
    return True

if c ≥ 650:
    return z ≥ 5

else:
    return z ≥ 10
```

## SELF-DOCUMENTING CODE

#### BAD

```
def do_something(l, c, y, h):
    z = y / l

if h or (c ≥ 780) or (z ≥ 10):
    return True 

if c ≥ 650:
    return z ≥ 5
else:
    return z ≥ 10
```

#### **BETTER**

```
Jdef approve_loan(loan_amount, credit_score, yearly_income, has_cosigner):
    excellent_credit_threshold = 780
    good_credit_threshold = 650
    excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 10
    good_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 5
    income_amount_ratio = yearly_income / loan_amount
    if any([
        has_cosigner,
        credit_score ≥ excellent_credit_threshold,
        income_amount_ratio ≥ excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold
    1):
        return True
        if credit_score ≥ good_credit_threshold:
            return income_amount_ratio ≥ good_income_amount_ratio_threshold
        else:
            return income_amount_ratio ≥ excellent_credit_threshold
```

#### SELF-DOCUMENTING CODE

#### BETTER

```
def approve_loan(loan_amount, credit_score, yearly_income, has_cosigner):
    excellent_credit_threshold = 780
    good_credit_threshold = 650
    excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 10
    good_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 5
    income_amount_ratio = yearly_income / loan_amount
    if any([
        has_cosigner,
        credit_score ≥ excellent_credit_threshold,
        income_amount_ratio ≥ excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold
        if credit_score ≥ good_credit_threshold:
            return income_amount_ratio ≥ good_income_amount_ratio_threshold
            return income_amount_ratio ≥ excellent_credit_threshold
```

#### EVEN BETTER (Even better with Doc Strings)

```
excellent_credit_threshold = 780
good_credit_threshold = 650
excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 10
good_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 5
\mathsf{Idef} approve_immediately(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float, has_cosigner: bool) 	o bool:
        has_cosigner,
        credit_score ≥ excellent_credit_threshold,
        income_amount_ratio ≥ excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold
\mathsf{Idef} approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float) 	o bool:
    if credit_score ≥ good_credit_threshold:
        return income_amount_ratio ≥ good_income_amount_ratio_threshold
        return income_amount_ratio ≥ excellent_credit_threshold
ldef approve_loan(loan_amount: int, credit_score: int, yearly_income: int, has_cosigner: bool) → bool:
    income_amount_ratio = yearly_income / loan_amount
        approve_immediately(credit_score, income_amount_ratio, has_cosigner)
        or approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score, income_amount_ratio)
```

```
VΙ
```

Refactor this code:

```
def do_something(I, c, y, h):

z = y / I

if h or (c >= 780) or (z >= 10):
    return True

if c >= 650:
    return z >= 5
    else:
    return z >= 10
```

Sure, here's a refactored version of the code:

#### Bad Code Example

```
python

def should_do_something(l, c, y, h):
    z = y / l
    if should_perform_action(h, c, z):
        return True
    return should_perform_alternative_action(c, z)

def should_perform_action(h, c, z):
    return h or c >= 780 or z >= 10

def should_perform_alternative_action(c, z):
    if c >= 650:
        return z >= 5
        return z >= 5
        return z >= 10
```

## My Refactored Code (Before Checking Out ChatGPT)

```
excellent_credit_threshold = 780
good_credit_threshold = 650
excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 10
good_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 5
def approve_immediately(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float, has_cosigner: bool) → bool:
       has_cosigner,
       credit_score ≥ excellent_credit_threshold,
       income_amount_ratio ≥ excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold
def approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float) 
ightarrow bool:
    if credit_score ≥ excellent_credit_threshold:
       raise ValueError(f'credit_score should be < {excellent_credit_threshold}')</pre>
   if credit_score ≥ good_credit_threshold:
       return income_amount_ratio ≥ good_income_amount_ratio_threshold
       return income_amount_ratio ≥ excellent_credit_threshold
def approve_loan(loan_amount: int, credit_score: int, yearly_income: int, has_cosigner: bool) \rightarrow bool:
    income_amount_ratio = yearly_income / loan_amount
       approve_immediately(credit_score, income_amount_ratio, has_cosigner)
       or approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score, income_amount_ratio)
```

VI

Refactor the code which is delimited by triple quotes.

```
Replace the original variables with new variable names using this mapping:

l: loan_amount
c: credit_score
y: yearly_income
h: has_cosigner

"""

def do_something(I, c, y, h):

    z = y / I

    if h or (c >= 780) or (z >= 10):
        return True

if c >= 650:
        return z >= 5
else:
        return z >= 10
```



Send a message.

Here's the refactored code using the new variable names:

```
arduino

def check_loan_eligibility(loan_amount, credit_score, yearly_income, has_cos
income_loan_ratio = yearly_income / loan_amount

if has_cosigner or (credit_score >= 780) or (income_loan_ratio >= 10):
    return True

if credit_score >= 650:
    return income_loan_ratio >= 5

else:
    Regenerate response
    return income_loan_ratio >= 10
```

- ChatGPT inferred 2 new variable names based on the context:
  - check\_loan\_eligibility
  - income\_loan\_ratio

```
return h or c >= 780 or z >= 10
Write the docstrings for each of the Python functions. Functions are delimited by triple
                                                                                                                                                           Copy code
backticks
                                                                                    def should_perform_alternative_action(c, z):
def should_do_something(l, c, y, h):
z = y / I
 if should_perform_action(h, c, z):
  return True
 return should_perform_alternative_action(c, z)
def should_perform_action(h, c, z):
                                                                                         bool: True if the alternative action should be performed, False otherw
 return h or c >= 780 or z >= 10
                                                                                           return z >= 5
defshould\_perform\_alternative\_action(c,z):
 if c >= 650:
   return z >= 5
 return z >= 10
                                                                                                                                                           Copy code
                                                                                   def should_do_something(1, c, y, h):
                                                                                       """Determine whether a certain action should be performed or an alternat
```

def should\_perform\_action(h, c, z):

if should\_perform\_action(h, c, z):

return should\_perform\_alternative\_action(c, z)

Copy code

```
def approve_immediately(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float, has_
    return any([
        has cosigner,
        credit_score >= excellent_credit_threshold,
         income_amount_ratio >= excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold
                                                                                                Write the docstrings for each of the Python functions. Functions are delimited by triple
                                                                         Copy code
                                                                                                def approve_immediately(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float, has_cosigner: bool) -
def approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float)
                                                                                                > bool:
                                                                                                  return any([
                                                                                                   has_cosigner,
                                                                                                   credit_score >= excellent_credit_threshold,
                                                                                                   income_amount_ratio >= excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold
                                                                                                def approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float) -> bool:
                                                                                                  if credit_score >= excellent_credit_threshold:
                                                                                                   raise ValueError(fcredit_score should be < {excellent_credit_threshold}')
                                                                                                  if credit_score >= good_credit_threshold:
                                                                                                   return income_amount_ratio >= good_income_amount_ratio_threshold
    if credit_score >= excellent_credit_threshold:
                                                                                                   return income_amount_ratio >= excellent_credit_threshold
        raise ValueError(f'credit_score should be < {excellent_credit_thres
    if credit_score >= good_credit_threshold:
         return income_amount_ratio >= good_income_amount_ratio_threshold
                                                                                                def approve_loan(loan_amount: int, credit_score: int, yearly_income: int, has_cosigner: bool)
                                                                                                  income_amount_ratio = yearly_income / loan_amount
         return income_amount_ratio >= excellent_credit_threshold
                                S Regenerate response
                                                                                                   approve_immediately(credit_score, income_amount_ratio, has_cosigner)
                                                                                                   or approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score, income_amount_ratio)
                                                                         Copy code
            e_loan(loan_amount: int, credit_score: int, yearly_income: int, ha
```

income\_amount\_ratio = yearly\_income / loan\_amount

approve\_immediately(credit\_score, income\_amount\_ratio, has\_cosigner)
or approve\_based\_on\_ratio(credit\_score, income\_amount\_ratio)

Copy code

```
Write the unit tests for each of the Python functions, using the pytest package. Functions
                               are delimited by triple backticks. The functions need to be imported from the module
                               named "best".
                               excellent_credit_threshold = 780
                               good_credit_threshold = 650
                               excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 10
                               good_income_amount_ratio_threshold = 5
                               def approve_immediately(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float, has_cosigner: bool) -
                               > bool:
                                 return any([
                                  has_cosigner,
                                  credit_score >= excellent_credit_threshold,
                                  income_amount_ratio >= excellent_income_amount_ratio_threshold
                                 1)
                               def approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score: int, income_amount_ratio: float) -> bool:
                                 if credit_score >= excellent_credit_threshold:
                                  raise ValueError(f'credit_score should be < {excellent_credit_threshold}')
                                 if credit_score >= good_credit_threshold:
                                  return income_amount_ratio >= good_income_amount_ratio_threshold
                                 else:
                                  return income_amount_ratio >= excellent_credit_threshold
                               def approve_loan(loan_amount: int, credit_score: int, yearly_income: int, has_cosigner: bool)
                               -> bool:
                                 income_amount_ratio = yearly_income / loan_amount
                                 return (
                                  approve_immediately(credit_score, income_amount_ratio, has_cosigner)
                                  or approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score, income_amount_ratio)
platform darwin -- Python 3.10.9, pytest-7.1.2, pluggy-1.0.0 -- /opt/homebrew/anaconda3/bin/python
rootdir: /Users/vily/Desktop/git/bad_coding_practices
```

cachedir: .pytest\_cache

plugins: anyio-3.5.0 collected 3 items

bad\_practices/self\_documenting\_code/test\_chatgpt.py::test\_approve\_immediately PASSED bad\_practices/self\_documenting\_code/test\_chatgpt.py::test\_approve\_based\_on\_ratio PASSED

bad\_practices/self\_documenting\_code/test\_chatgpt.py::test\_approve\_loan PASSED

```
import pytest
from best import *
# test for approve_immediately function
def test_approve_immediately():
    assert approve_immediately(credit_score=600, income_amount_ratio=20, has_cosigner=True) = True
    # Test if credit score is excellent
    assert approve_immediately(credit_score=800, income_amount_ratio=9, has_cosigner=False) = True
    # Test if income amount ratio is excellent
    assert approve_immediately(credit_score=600, income_amount_ratio=11, has_cosigner=False) = True
    assert approve_immediately(credit_score=600, income_amount_ratio=4, has_cosigner=False) == False
def test_approve_based_on_ratio():
   # Test if credit score is excellent
    with pytest.raises(ValueError):
        approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score=800, income_amount_ratio=20)
    assert approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score=700, income_amount_ratio=6) = True
    # Test if income amount ratio is excellent and credit score is good
    assert approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score=700, income_amount_ratio=11) == True
    assert approve_based_on_ratio(credit_score=600, income_amount_ratio=4) == False
# test for approve_loan function
def test_approve_loan():
    assert approve_loan(loan_amount=10000, credit_score=800, yearly_income=100000, has_cosigner=True) == True
    # Test if approve based on ratio returns True
    assert approve_loan(loan_amount=10000, credit_score=700, yearly_income=70000, has_cosigner=False) == True
    assert approve_loan(loan_amount=10000, credit_score=600, yearly_income=50000, has_cosigner=False) = False
```

## PYTHON TRICKS

## PYTHON TRICKS

- Number Underscore
- Tuple Unpacking
- Collections
- Set
- Mapping
- Itertools
- Functools
- Type Hints
- Jinja2
- Black