Python Lists

Chapter 8

Python for Informatics: Exploring Information
www.pythonlearn.com
A List is a kind of Collection

• A **collection** allows us to put many values in a single “variable”

• A **collection** is nice because we can carry all many values around in one convenient package.

```python
friends = [ 'Joseph', 'Glenn', 'Sally' ]
carryon = [ 'socks', 'shirt', 'perfume' ]
```
What is not a “Collection”

Most of our variables have one value in them - when we put a new value in the variable, the old value is overwritten.

```
$ python
Python 2.5.2 (r252:60911, Feb 22 2008, 07:57:53)
[GCC 4.0.1 (Apple Computer, Inc. build 5363)] on darwin
>>> x = 2
>>> x = 4
>>> print x
4
```
List Constants

- List constants are surrounded by square brackets and the elements in the list are separated by commas.

- A list element can be any Python object - even another list.

- A list can be empty.

```python
>>> print [1, 24, 76]
[1, 24, 76]
>>> print ['red', 'yellow', 'blue']
['red', 'yellow', 'blue']
>>> print ['red', 24, 98.6]
['red', 24, 98.599999999999994]
>>> print [ 1, [5, 6], 7]
[1, [5, 6], 7]
>>> print []
[]
```
We already use lists!

```python
for i in [5, 4, 3, 2, 1] :
    print i
print 'Blastoff!'`
Lists and definite loops - best pals

```python
friends = ['Joseph', 'Glenn', 'Sally']
for friend in friends:
    print 'Happy New Year:', friend
print 'Done!
```

Happy New Year: Joseph
Happy New Year: Glenn
Happy New Year: Sally
Done!
Looking Inside Lists

Just like strings, we can get at any single element in a list using an index specified in **square brackets**.

```python
friends = [ 'Joseph', 'Glenn', 'Sally' ]
print friends[1]
Glenn
```
Lists are Mutable

• Strings are “immutable” - we cannot change the contents of a string - we must make a new string to make any change.

• Lists are “mutable” - we can change an element of a list using the index operator.

```python
>>> fruit = 'Banana'
>>> fruit[0] = 'b'
Traceback
TypeError: 'str' object does not support item assignment

>>> x = fruit.lower()
>>> print x
banana

>>> lotto = [2, 14, 26, 41, 63]
>>> print lotto
[2, 14, 26, 41, 63]
>>> lotto[2] = 28
>>> print lotto
[2, 14, 28, 41, 63]
```
How Long is a List?

• The `len()` function takes a list as a parameter and returns the number of elements in the list.

• Actually `len()` tells us the number of elements of any set or sequence (such as a string...)

```python
>>> greet = 'Hello Bob'
>>> print len(greet)
9
>>> x = [1, 2, 'joe', 99]
>>> print len(x)
4
```
Using the `range` function

- The `range` function returns a list of numbers that range from zero to one less than the parameter.

- We can construct an index loop using `for` and an integer iterator.

```python
generate code snippet here
```
A tale of two loops...

```python
friends = ['Joseph', 'Glenn', 'Sally']

for friend in friends:
    print('Happy New Year:', friend)

for i in range(len(friends)):
    friend = friends[i]
    print('Happy New Year:', friend)

>>> friends = ['Joseph', 'Glenn', 'Sally']
>>> print(len(friends))
3
>>> print(range(len(friends)))
[0, 1, 2]

Happy New Year: Joseph
Happy New Year: Glenn
Happy New Year: Sally
```
We can create a new list by adding two existing lists together.

```python
>>> a = [1, 2, 3]
>>> b = [4, 5, 6]
>>> c = a + b
>>> print c
[1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6]
>>> print a
[1, 2, 3]
```
Lists can be sliced using:

```python
>>> t = [9, 41, 12, 3, 74, 15]
>>> t[1:3]
[41, 12]
>>> t[:4]
[9, 41, 12, 3]
>>> t[3:]
[3, 74, 15]
>>> t[:]
[9, 41, 12, 3, 74, 15]
```

Remember: *Just like in strings, the second number is “up to but not including”*
List Methods

```python
>>> x = list()
>>> type(x)
<type 'list'>
>>> dir(x)
['append', 'count', 'extend', 'index', 'insert', 'pop', 'remove', 'reverse', 'sort']
```
Building a List from Scratch

- We can create an empty list and then add elements using the `append` method.
- The list stays in order and new elements are added at the end of the list.

```python
>>> stuff = list()
>>> stuff.append('book')
>>> stuff.append(99)
>>> print stuff
['book', 99]
>>> stuff.append('cookie')
>>> print stuff
['book', 99, 'cookie']
```
Is Something in a List?

- Python provides two operators that let you check if an item is in a list.
- These are logical operators that return True or False.
- They do not modify the list.

```python
>>> some = [1, 9, 21, 10, 16]
>>> 9 in some
True
>>> 15 in some
False
>>> 20 not in some
True
>>> 
```
A List is an Ordered Sequence

• A list can hold many items and keeps those items in the order until we do something to change the order

• A list can be sorted (i.e., change its order)

• The sort method (unlike in strings) means “sort yourself”

>>> friends = ['Joseph', 'Glenn', 'Sally']
>>> friends.sort()
>>> print friends
['Glenn', 'Joseph', 'Sally']
>>> print friends[1]
Joseph
>>>
There are a number of functions built into Python that take lists as parameters.

Remember the loops we built? These are much simpler.

```python
>>> nums = [3, 41, 12, 9, 74, 15]
>>> print len(nums)
6
>>> print max(nums)
74
>>> print min(nums)
3
>>> print sum(nums)
154
>>> print sum(nums)/len(nums)
25
```
total = 0
count = 0
while True :
    inp = raw_input('Enter a number: ')
    if inp == 'done' : break
    value = float(inp)
    total = total + value
    count = count + 1

average = total / count
print 'Average:', average

total = 0
count = 0
while True :
    inp = raw_input('Enter a number: ')
    if inp == 'done' : break
    value = float(inp)
    total = total + value
    count = count + 1

average = total / count
print 'Average:', average
Best Friends: Strings and Lists

```python
>>> abc = 'With three words'
>>> stuff = abc.split()
>>> print stuff
['With', 'three', 'words']
>>> print len(stuff)
3
>>> print stuff[0]
With

>>> print stuff[1]
Three
>>> print stuff[2]
Words
```
● When you do not specify a delimiter, multiple spaces are treated like one delimiter.

● You can specify what delimiter character to use in the splitting.
```python
fhand = open('mbox-short.txt')
for line in fhand:
    line = line.rstrip()
    if not line.startswith('From '):
        continue
    words = line.split()
    print(words[2])
```

```ansi
Sat Fri Fri Fri ...
```

```python
>>> line = 'From stephen.marquard@uct.ac.za Sat Jan 5 09:14:16 2008'
>>> words = line.split()
>>> print(words)
['From', 'stephen.marquard@uct.ac.za', 'Sat', 'Jan', '5', '09:14:16', '2008']
```
The Double Split Pattern

• Sometimes we split a line one way, and then grab one of the pieces of the line and split that piece again

From stephen.marquard@uct.ac.za Sat Jan  5 09:14:16 2008

```python
words = line.split()
email = words[1]
```
The Double Split Pattern

• Sometimes we split a line one way, and then grab one of the pieces of the line and split that piece again

```
words = line.split()
email = words[1]
```

```
From stephen.marquard@uct.ac.za Sat Jan 5 09:14:16 2008
```

```
stephen.marquard@uct.ac.za
```
The Double Split Pattern

• Sometimes we split a line one way, and then grab one of the pieces of the line and split that piece again

```python
From stephen.marquard@uct.ac.za Sat Jan  5 09:14:16 2008

words = line.split()
email = words[1]
pieces = email.split('@')
```

```python
    stephen.marquard@uct.ac.za
    ['stephen.marquard', 'uct.ac.za']
```
The Double Split Pattern

- Sometimes we split a line one way, and then grab one of the pieces of the line and split that piece again
List Summary

- Concept of a collection
- Lists and definite loops
- Indexing and lookup
- List mutability
- Functions: len, min, max, sum
- Slicing lists
- List methods: append, remove
- Sorting lists
- Splitting strings into lists of words
- Using split to parse strings
Acknowledgements / Contributions

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