Principled Programming

Introduction to Coding in Any Imperative Language

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Introduction

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Motivation



Motivation



Motivation



Can programming be mechanized?



Fully-automatic programming would need rules that are:

- Effective
- Produce good code
- Efficient
- Complete

Can programming be mechanized?



Fall back

- Rules for people
- Make programming
 - Easy
 - Accurate







Follow programming precepts.



A command or principle intended especially as a general rule of action



Ignore precepts, when appropriate.

A command or principle intended especially as a general rule of action



Code with deliberation. Be mindful.

Precepts

Sample precept

Sample precept

Sample precept, with an application:

amount = price * quantity

Same precept, with a different application:

piece = board[row + deltaRow[direction]][column + deltaColumn[direction]]

Same precept, with a different application:

piece = board[row + deltaRow[direction]][column + deltaColumn[direction]]

```
piece = B[r + deltaR[d]][c + deltaC[d]]
```

Alternative precept

piece = board[row + deltaRow[direction]][column + deltaColumn[direction]]

```
piece = B[r + deltaR[d]][c + deltaC[d]]
```

Use single-letter variable names when it makes code more understandable.



Resolve contradictory precepts with care.

Exercise judgement

Make tradeoffs

Don't make decisions casually

Indulge in personal preference

Resolve contradictory precepts with care.



Be humble. Programming is hard and error prone. Respect it.

Despite your humility, aim for perfection

- The quality of the code you write
- The quality of the process you use to write it

Be humble. Programming is hard and error prone. Respect it.

Process quality

Aspire to code it right the first time.

Process quality: Hippocratic Coding



Aspire to code it right the first time. Do no harm. Avoid writing code that must be redone. An approach to Hippocratic Coding: Patterns

Master stylized code patterns, and use them.

An approach to Hippocratic Coding: Patterns

A *pattern* is a *structure* containing *placeholders*.

The *structure* is an arrangement of *computational elements*.

The *placeholders* are named slots to be filled in:

They may be words or phrases in *italics*.

They may be comments, which are hash marks (#) followed by text.

Pattern: compute-use

|#.Compute. |#.Use.

Master stylized code patterns, and use them.



- The *structure* of the *compute-use pattern* is a sequence of two *statements* that command actions to be performed one after the other.
- The *placeholders* describe the actions: compute something, then use it.

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- The dot (.) at the end of a *placeholder* is just a period that doesn't signify anything.
- The dot (.) immediately after the hash mark (#.) is notation used in this book to signify that the placeholder has not yet been filled in.

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How does this pattern help?

Sample programming problem



#.Compute k.
#.Use k.

Apply the compute-use pattern #.Compute k.

#.Use k.

How does this *pattern* help?

- It divides the problem into two smaller parts.
- It describes those parts, and clarifies that the first step computes something named k, and the second step uses k.

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- It's Hippocratic: A baby step that does no harm.

k = thus-and-such
#.Use k.

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 - Replace the first *placeholder* with code.

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if k-has-some-desired-property:
#.Do-this-and-that.

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 - Replace the second *placeholder* with code. and we're making progress.
- The Compute and Use placeholders are gone, but the compute-use pattern is the skeleton that underlies the code.

• An alternative to *replacing* a *placeholders* is to ...

Apply the compute-use pattern

#.Compute k.~
#.Use k.

• An alternative to *replacing* a *placeholders* is to *amplify* it with specifics that say exactly what a step must do, effectively turning it into a *specification*.

#.Compute k, some specific aspect of the big-hairy-mess.
#.Use k, the specific aspect of the big-hairy-mess that has been computed.

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- The *specification* can then be *implemented*, either by code, or by an instance of another pattern, and remains to show the intent of its *refinement*.

Compute k, some specific aspect of the big-hairy-mess.
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Compute k, some specific aspect of the big-hairy-mess.
k = thus-and-such

Use k, the specific aspect of the big-hairy-mess that has been computed.
if k-has-some desired-property:

#.Do-this-and-that.

- When a *specification* is implemented:
 - The dot (.) gets removed.
 - A blank line is inserted, if necessary, to separate the steps from one another.
- Master stylized code patterns, and use them.

Another pattern: indeterminate iteration

```
# Enumerate from start.
k = start
while condition:
    k += 1
```

Another pattern: indeterminate iteration

```
# Enumerate from start.
k = start
while condition:
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```

Effect

Initialize k to *start* Repeatedly add 1 to k provided *condition* is **True**

Yet another pattern: general iterative computation

```
#.Initialize.
while not-finished:
    #.Compute.
    #.Go-on-to-next.
```

Yet another pattern: general iterative computation

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¦ #.Go-on-to-next.	I I

Effect

Get ready by initializing Repeatedly make progress by: computing something moving on to the next thing

¦#.Initialize.		k = start	
while not-finished:		while condition:	
¦ #.Compute.	I	¦ k += 1	
¦ #.Go-on-to-next.			



r		!
		i.
<pre>¦while not-finished:</pre>	while condition:	
¦ #.Compute.	¦ k += 1	1
¦ #.Go-on-to-next.	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	





for name in range(expression1, expression2):
 compute

```
for name in range(expression<sub>1</sub>, expression<sub>2</sub>):
    compute
    #.Initialize.
    while not-finished:
        #.Compute.
        #.Go-on-to-next.
```











Key Distinction: determinate iteration vs indeterminate iteration

Determinate: for when the number of iterations is known beforehand

for name **in** range(expression₁, expression₂): compute

Indeterminate: for when the number of iterations is not known beforehand

k = start w**hile** condition: k += 1

 "Known" in the sense that the number of iterations is determined by the values of *expression*₁ and *expression*₂.

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Another approach to Hippocratic Coding: Analysis

Aspire to code it right the first time. Do no harm. Avoid writing code that must be redone. Another approach to Hippocratic Coding: Analysis

☞ Analyze first.

Example: Running a Maze

Background. Define a maze to be a square two-dimensional grid of cells separated (or not) from adjacent cells by walls. One can move between adjacent cells if and only if no wall divides them. A solid wall surrounds the entire grid of cells, so there is no escape from the maze.

Problem Statement. Write a program that inputs a maze, and outputs a direct path from the upper-left cell to the lower-right cell if such a path exists, or outputs "Unreachable" otherwise. A path is direct if it never visits any cell more than once.





Analysis

- Problem
- Architecture
- Data
- Components

☞ Analyze first.
Problem

Make sure you understand the problem.

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Example: Running a Maze

- Do I understand each noun: *maze, grid, cell, wall, path, and direct path*?
- Do I understand the verbs: Specifically, how does one *move* between cells?
- How is a maze represented in the input?
- Is there any upper limit on the size of a maze? Is there a lower limit?
- What is the expected program behavior if the input is not well-formed?
- Is a *direct* path the same as a *shortest* path?
- What if there is more than one direct path?
- How is a path to be displayed in the output?

Make sure you understand the problem.





Architecture: What sort of computation will it be?

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- **Online**. Read a sequence of inputs, and process them on the fly.
- **Offline**. Read all inputs, perform a computation, then output the result.
- Other.

Architecture: Offline computation pattern

|#.Input. |#.Compute. |#.Output. Architecture: Restate the problem within the architectural structure.

#.Input a maze of arbitrary size, or output "malformed input" and stop if the # input is improper. Input format: TBD. #.Compute a direct path through the maze, if one exists. #.Output the direct path found, or "unreachable" if there is none. Output # format: TBD. **Programs:** Instructions for manipulating values

Instructions: code

Values: data

Patterns and Architecture: Code-centered perspective

Dovetail thinking about code and data.

Code

#.Input a maze of arbitrary size, or output "malformed input" and stop if the # input is improper. Input format: TBD. #.Compute a direct path through the maze, if one exists. #.Output the direct path found, or "unreachable" if there is none. Output format: TBD.

Dovetail thinking about code and data.

Data maze #.Input a maze of arbitrary size, or output "malformed input" and stop if the # input is improper. Input format: TBD. #.Compute a direct path through the maze, if one exists. #.Output the direct path found, or "unreachable" if there is none. Output format: TBD. path

Dovetail thinking about code and data.

External Data external data (maze) #.Input a maze of arbitrary size, or output "malformed input" and stop if the # input is improper. Input format: TBD. #.Compute a direct path through the maze, if one exists. #.Output the direct path found, or "unreachable" if there is none. Output format: TBD. external data (path)

Dovetail thinking about code and data.

Variables

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Specify how individual program steps will cooperate with one another.

Internal Data

☞ A program's internal data representation is central to the code; consider it early.

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Consider a program's external data representation late.

- A program can be organized into components.
- Distinguish between the maze-running algorithm (a client of data) and the data itself (housed in a server).
- What operations are needed by the client?
- What operations can be provided by the server?
- Resolve differences by negotiation.



- Some aspects of data are static, i.e., don't change (maze)
- The client learns of static data by queries.
- Other aspects of data are dynamic, i.e., change (path)
- The client is an actor that effects changes by actions:
 - extend path (if possible); retract path (if necessary)
 - The cumulative effect of actions is recorded in state.



- A client may have/want global perspective
 - algorithm is aware of the full maze





- A client may have/want global perspective
 - algorithm is aware of the full maze
- Other clients have/want only local perspective
 - rat is unaware of full maze







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Another programming problem

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Example: Ricocheting Bee-Bee

Background. A square tin box measuring one foot on each side has a slit of size d centered on one side. Insert a bee-bee gun at the center of the slit at angle Θ , and shoot. The bee-bee ricochets off sides, one after another. On each ricochet, the angle of reflection is equal to the angle of incidence.

Problem Statement. Write a program that inputs d and Θ , and outputs the total distance the bee-bee travels before it exits.



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#.Output the sum of 1 through n.

```
# Output the sum of 1 through n.
sum = 0
for k in range(1, n + 1):
    sum = sum + k
print(sum)
```

knee-jerk, brute force

```
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```
# Output the sum of 1 through n.
print(n * (n + 1) // 2)
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Sometimes iteration is unnecessary because a closed-form solution is available.

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Another analogy: A possible source of inspiration.

Another analogy: Computing the arc length s of a curve y=f(x), between a and b.



Another analogy: Computing the arc length s of a curve y=f(x), between a and b.



Another analogy: Where does the analogy faulter?



Another analogy: In the calculus problem, we seek s, the length of f.



Another analogy: In the bee-bee problem, we seek the sum of the piece lengths.



Output the sum of 1 through n.
print(n * (n + 1) // 2)

Another analogy: In general, they are only the same in the infinite limit.



Output the sum of 1 through n.
print(n * (n + 1) // 2)
Another analogy: How can we unify the two disparate points of view?



Analysis











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Solve a different problem, and use that solution to solve the original problem.

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Patterns:

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Process:

Mitigate errors.

Process: Don't make mistakes

- Hope for the best, but
- Plan for the worst.

Avoid debugging like the plague.

Process: Find mistakes as soon as possible

Test programs incrementally.

Process: Stay in control

- Define relevant subproblems that can be tested.
- Preserve end-to-end correctness

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jury rig a specific maze
#.Compute a direct path through the maze, if one exists.
 provide simple diagnostic output



Process: Undo if necessary

Don't be wedded to code. Revise and rewrite when you discover a better way.

Process: Stepwise refinement

Program top-down, outside-in.

Example: Print the integer part of the square root of an integer $n \ge 0$.

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Write comments as an integral part of the coding process, not as afterthoughts.

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Q. Where did n come from?

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- A2. It is assumed to already contain a value ≥ 0 .



Q. Where did n come from?

- A1. It is a program variable.
- A2. It is assumed to already contain a value ≥ 0 .
- A3. We are only asked to write a program segment.

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#.Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.

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Q. Can't we just do this using a few library routines?

Example

2

Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.
print(math.floor(math.sqrt(n)))

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- A. Yes.
- But that would deprive us of a good example.
- So, we amend our problem statement.

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Example: Print the integer part of the square root of an integer n≥0 without using built-in functions.

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1#.Compute	r.		I
1	• •		I
'#.Use r.			I
		 	!

Specify how individual program steps will cooperate with one another.

2

Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.

#.Let r be the integer part of the square root of n≥0. print(r)

		-1
! #	Compute r.	i
1		I
!#	Use r.	
<u> </u>		_'

Specify how individual program steps will cooperate with one another.



Xam ple

2

#.Let r be the integer part of the square root of $n \ge 0$. print(r) Recall the *compute-use pattern* underlying this • code, and notice how the dot (.) in: #.Let r be ... helps you to read the line as an as-yet unimplemented specification, not as the specification of the line that follows it. The line of dashes (-) separates the top-level • *specification* from the two subordinate steps that *implement* it.

Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.

#

Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.
#
#.Let r be the integer part of the square root of $n ≥ 0$.
print(r)

Master stylized code patterns, and use them.

Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.
<u>#</u>
#.Let r be the integer part of the square root of $n \ge 0$.
print(r)

If you "smell a loop", write it down.

Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.
he the integer part of the square root of n>0.
print(r)

Decide first whether an iteration is indeterminate (use while) or determinate (use for).

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Indeterminate iteration
k = start
while condition:
 k += 1
Determinate iteration
for k in range(expression₁, expression₂):
 compute

Beware of for-loop abuse; if in doubt, err in favor of while.

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Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n. #.Let r be the integer part of the square root of $n \ge 0$.

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#

print(r)

Beware of for-loop abuse; if in doubt, err in favor of while. œ

3

Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.

```
# Let r be the integer part of the square root of n≥0.
r = 0
while condition:
    r += 1
print(r)
```

```
# Indeterminate iteration
k = start
while condition:
    k += 1
```

Beware of for-loop abuse; if in doubt, err in favor of while.





3

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There is no shame in reasoning with concrete examples.

3

Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.
-----# Let r be the integer part of the square root of n≥0.
r = 0
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2	4	4, 5, 6, 7, 8

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3	9	9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15

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When r=2, for which n do we **stop**?

• 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8.

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What is special about 9?

• It is the square of 3.

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Elaborate and eliminate choices for the relation

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Elaborate and eliminate choices for the relation

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<= Yes.

5

Elaborate and eliminate choices for the relation

- ==, != No. Given r, must be true for many n, and false for many n.
- >, >= No. Must keep going for little r and big n.
- < No. Must keep going for "equal n" case.

<= Yes.

Pragmatics

We developed a code fragment in isolation, and ignored several practical questions:

- A. Where will the integer n come from?
- B. In what packaging will we run the code fragment?
- C. What, if any, additional details must be addressed before the program can run?

We refer to these matters as "Pragmatics".

Pragmatics

We developed a code fragment in isolation, and ignored several practical questions:

A. Where will the integer n come from?Obtain the integer value of n interactively from the user.

```
#.Obtain an integer n≥0 from the user.
# Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.
# -------
# Let r be the integer part of the square root of n≥0.
r = 0
while (r + 1) * (r + 1) <= n:
r += 1
print(r)
```

Pragmatics

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Pragmatics

We developed a code fragment in isolation, and ignored several practical questions:

A. Where will the integer n come from?

Obtain the integer value of n interactively from the user in response to a prompt.

Pragmatics

We developed a code fragment in isolation, and ignored several practical questions:

B. In what context will we run the finished code? As the body of a method named main.



Pragmatics

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Pragmatics

We developed a code fragment in isolation, and ignored several practical questions:

B. In what context will we run the finished code?

As the body of a method named main.

The functionality of method main is documented in a "docstring". It's like a top-level specification.

Pragmatics

We developed a code fragment in isolation, and ignored several practical questions:

C. What, if any, additional details must be addressed before the program can run? None. The program is ready to run.

The functionality of method main is documented in a "docstring". It's like a top-level specification. There are a few optional thing we may choose to do:

- Type annotations
- Static type checking.

- Type annotations:
 - In Python, you don't need to explicitly declare variables like you do in some other languages (e.g., Java, C++). Instead, you create a variable simply by assigning a value to it.

- Type annotations:
 - In Python, you don't need to explicitly declare variables like you do in some other languages (e.g., Java, C++). Instead, you create a variable simply by assigning a value to it, as above.
 - An optional *type-annotation* associated with the lexically earliest assignment to a variable is recommended. Such an assignment can be considered the variable's *declaration*.
 - Optional type-annotations for method parameters and return types are also recommended.

```
def main() -> None:
    """Output the Integer Square Root of an integer input."""
    # Obtain an integer n≥0 from the user.
    n: int = input("Enter integer:")
    # Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n.
    # -------
    # Let r be the integer part of the square root of n≥0.
    r: int = 0
    while (r + 1) * (r + 1) <= n:
        r += 1
    print(r)</pre>
```

- Static type checking
 - Although some annotations seem superfluous, redundancy can be a boon, e.g., suppose in the assignment to n, we forgot the int(...) that turns an Str into an int.

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mypy Playground Run Gist mypy latest (1.13.0) V Python 3.12 V Options			About						
<pre>1 v def main() -> None: 2 ""Output the Integer Square Root of an integer input.""" 3 # Obtain an integer n≥0 from the user. X A n' int = input("Enter integer:")</pre>									
5 6 # Given $n \ge 0$, output the Integer Square Root of n. 7 #									
Failed (exit code: 1) (3290 ms) main.py:4: error: Incompatible types in assignment (expression has type "str", variable has type "int") [assignment] Found 1 error in 1 file (checked 1 source file)									

- Static type checking
 - Although some annotations seem superfluous, redundancy can be a boon, e.g., suppose in the assignment to n, we forgot the int(...) that turns a str into an int.
 - The tool **mypy** detects such errors *before* program execution, and can save you much grief.



Requirements



Given n \ge 0, output the Integer Square Root of n.





		_
ef	<pre>main() -> None: """Output the Integer Square Root of an integer input.""" # Obtain an integer n≥0 from the user. n: int = input("Enter integer:")</pre>	9
	# Given n≥0, output the Integer Square Root of n. #	
	# Let r be the integer part of the square root of $n \ge 0$.	
	while (r + 1) * (r + 1) <= n: r += 1	
	print(r)	









Code is typically edited and executed in an Integrated Development Environment (IDE), for example, PyCharm.

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Here, we had appended a line to the end of the code file that invokes method main.



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The prompt requesting an integer input appears in the terminal window.



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Pragmatics

The program responds with "2", and then completes its execution.

Goals

Elements of methodology

• Precepts, Patterns, Analysis, Process

Core programming-language constructs

• (almost all that we will need)

Illustrated the approach with a complete example