

DATA FLOW

An Introduction to Computer Science



Let's learn about Data Flow.

Scope and Values

Reminder of rules:

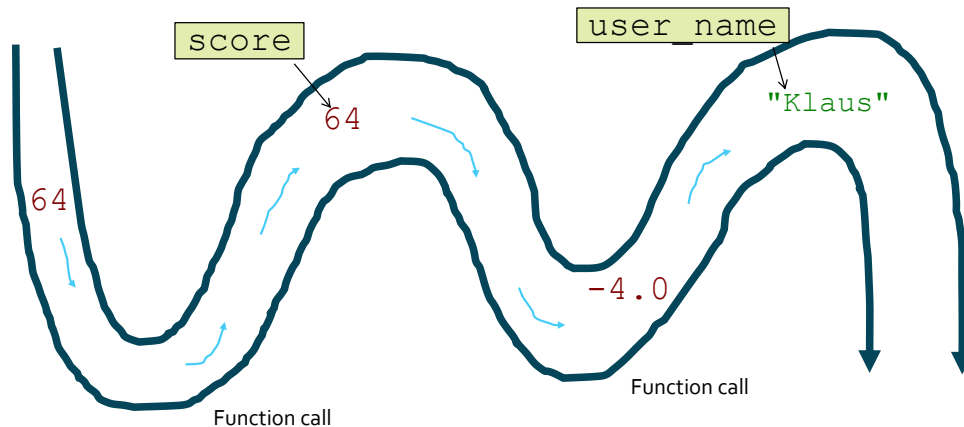
1. Variables inside a function cannot be used outside
2. Variables outside a function should not be used inside
3. Function return values, not variables

Previously, we learned about scope: the idea that variables inside a function cannot be used outside of the function, and variables outside a function should not be used inside the function.

Further, we learned that functions do not consume or return variables; instead they consume and return values.

These ideas are critical in understanding how data flows through a program.

Data Flow



You can think of a program as a flowing, twisting river.

Regular execution makes the river flow south, but functions disrupt this flow.

Along the way, values are carried by the current.

At times, we give these values names by using variables, but it is the values that flow through the program, not the variables.

Substitution

```
def add(left, right):  
    return left + right
```

```
5 + add(7, 4)
```

When you call a function, each parameter is assigned the value of a relevant argument. When you return from a function, the function call is substituted for the returned value. These are the only tools we should use in Python to move data around a program. This is just like what happens when you use an operator like plus or minus. Even though we do not see the substitution visually, it still happens.

Call Frame

```
def add_period(text: str) -> str:  
    result = text + "."  
    return result  
  
message = "Hello world"  
add_period(message)
```

Frame: add_period

text: str
result: str

Frame: Global

message: str

Each time we call a function, we say that its local variables are inside their own scope.

We will also call this scope the ****frame****, and it can be used to show

the current variables and their values.

Notice that the global frame is separate from the local frame.

Data between Functions

```
def calculate_grade(raw, weight):  
    grade = 10 * (weight+raw) ** .5  
    return grade  
  
def make_grade_message(grade):  
    return "Your grade was:" + str(grade)  
  
raw = 45  
weight = 5  
grade = calculate_grade(raw, weight)  
message = make_grade_message(grade)  
print(message)
```

These variables are distinct from the ones below with the same name!

These lines actually move values between functions!

To move data from one function to another, you cannot just look at the two functions. You must also look at where the functions were called. The returned value of one function should be fed into the next function.

Functions Calling Functions

```
def add5(number: int) -> int:
    result = number + 5
    return result

def double_and_add5(value: int) -> int:
    answer = 2 * add5(value)
    return answer

final = double_and_add5(7)
```

Frame: add5

number: int
result: int

Frame: double_add5

value: int
answer: int

Frame: Global

final: int

Things get even more complicated when functions call other functions, but

this happens all the time.

We are used to calling built-

in functions, but we can call our own functions too.

When we call a function inside another function, we ****stack**** the new function

call's frame on top of the current frame, with the top frame being the current scope.

When a function call ends, we remove that top stack and return to the one below it.

Each function call's frame is separate from all other frames, even if they

come from the same function.