12 Pandas 4: Time Series

Lab Objective: *Many real world data sets—stock market measurements, ocean tide levels, website traffic, seismograph data, audio signals, fluid simulations, quarterly dividends, and so on are time series, meaning they come with time-based labels. There is no universal format for such labels, and indexing by time is often difficult with raw data. Fortunately, pandas has tools for cleaning and analyzing time series. In this lab, we use pandas to clean and manipulate time-stamped data and introduce some basic tools for time series analysis.*

Note

This lab will be done using Colab Notebooks. These notebooks are similar to Jupyter Notebooks but run remotely on Google's servers. Open a Google Colab notebook by going to your Google Drive account and creating a new Colaboratory file. If making a Colaboratory file is not an option, download the application Colaboratory onto your Google Drive. Once opening a new Colab Notebook, upload the file `pandas4.ipynb`. To make the data files accessible, run the following at the top of the lab:

```
>>> from google.colab import files

>>> uploaded = files.upload()
```

This will prompt you upload files for this notebook. For this lab, upload `DJIA.csv`, `paychecks.csv`, `finances.csv`, and `website_traffic.csv`.

Once the lab is complete, delete BOTH lines of code used for uploading files (the import statement and the upload statement) and download as a `.py` file to your git repository. Push the newly made `pandas4.py` file.

Working with Dates and Times

The `datetime` module in the standard library provides a few tools for representing and operating on dates and times. The `datetime.datetime` object represents a *time stamp*: a specific time of day on a certain day. Its constructor accepts a four-digit year, a month (starting at 1 for January), a day, and, optionally, an hour, minute, second, and microsecond. Each of these arguments must be an integer, with the hour ranging from 0 to 23.

```
>>> from datetime import datetime

# Represent November 18th, 1991, at 2:01 PM.
>>> bday = datetime(1991, 11, 18, 14, 1)
>>> print(bday)
1991-11-18 14:01:00

# Find the number of days between 11/18/1991 and 11/9/2017.
>>> dt = datetime(2017, 11, 9) - bday
>>> dt.days
9487
```

The `datetime.datetime` object has a parser method, `strptime()`, that converts a string into a new `datetime.datetime` object. The parser is flexible so the user must specify the format that the dates are in. For example, if the dates are in the format `"Month/Day//Year::Hour"`, specify `format"=%m/%d//%Y::%H"` to parse the string appropriately. See Table 12.1 for formatting options.

Pattern	Description
`%Y`	4-digit year
`%y`	2-digit year
`%m`	1- or 2-digit month
`%d`	1- or 2-digit day
`%H`	Hour (24-hour)
`%I`	Hour (12-hour)
`%M`	2-digit minute
`%S`	2-digit second

Table 12.1: Formats recognized by `datetime.strptime()`

```
>>> print(datetime.strptime("1991-11-18 / 14:01", "%Y-%m-%d / %H:%M"),
...       datetime.strptime("1/22/1996", "%m/%d/%Y"),
...       datetime.strptime("19-8, 1998", "%d-%m, %Y"), sep='\n')
1991-11-18 14:01:00                 # The date formats are now standardized.
1996-01-22 00:00:00                 # If no hour/minute/seconds data is given,
1998-08-19 00:00:00                 # the default is midnight.
```

Converting Dates to an Index

The `TimeStamp` class is the pandas equivalent to a `datetime.datetime` object. A pandas index composed of `TimeStamp` objects is a `DatetimeIndex`, and a `Series` or `DataFrame` with a `DatetimeIndex` is called a *time series*. The function `pd.to_datetime()` converts a collection of dates in a parsable format to a `DatetimeIndex`. The format of the dates is inferred if possible, but it can be specified explicitly with the same syntax as `datetime.strptime()`.

```
>>> import pandas as pd

# Convert some dates (as strings) into a DatetimeIndex.
>>> dates = ["2010-1-1", "2010-2-1", "2012-1-1", "2012-1-2"]
>>> pd.to_datetime(dates)
DatetimeIndex(['2010-01-01', '2010-02-01', '2012-01-01', '2012-01-02'],
                dtype='datetime64[ns]', freq=None)

# Create a time series, specifying the format for the DatetimeIndex.
>>> dates = ["1/1, 2010", "1/2, 2010", "1/1, 2012", "1/2, 2012"]
>>> date_index = pd.to_datetime(dates, format="%m/%d, %Y")
>>> pd.Series([x**2 for x in range(4)], index=date_index)
2010-01-01    0
2010-01-02    1
2012-01-01    4
2012-01-02    9
dtype: int64
```

Problem 1. The file `DJIA.csv` contains daily closing values of the Dow Jones Industrial Average from 2006–2016. Read the data into a `Series` or `DataFrame` with a `DatetimeIndex` as the index. Drop rows with missing values, cast the `"VALUE"` column to floats, then return the updated DataFrame.

Generating Time-based Indices

Some time series datasets come without explicit labels but have instructions for deriving timestamps. For example, a list of bank account balances might have records from the beginning of every month, or heart rate readings could be recorded by an app every 10 minutes. Use `pd.date_range()` to generate a `DatetimeIndex` where the timestamps are equally spaced. The function is analogous to `np.arange()` and has the following parameters.

Parameter	Description
`start`	Starting date
`end`	End date
`periods`	Number of dates to include
`freq`	Amount of time between consecutive dates
`normalize`	Normalizes the start and end times to midnight

Table 12.2: Parameters for `pd.date_range()`.

Exactly three of the parameters `start`, `end`, `periods`, and `freq` must be specified to generate a range of dates. The `freq` parameter accepts a variety of string representations, referred to as *offset aliases*. See Table 12.3 for a sampling of some of the options. For a complete list of the options, see `http://pandas.pydata.org/pandas-docs/stable/timeseries.html#offset-aliases`.

Parameter	Description
"D"	calendar daily (default)
"B"	business daily
"H"	hourly
"T"	minutely
"S"	secondly
"MS"	first day of the month
"BMS"	first weekday of the month
"W-MON"	every Monday
"WOM-3FRI"	every 3rd Friday of the month

Table 12.3: Options for the `freq` parameter to `pd.date_range()`.

```
# Create a DatetimeIndex for 5 consecutive days starting on September 28, 2016.
>>> pd.date_range(start='9/28/2016 16:00', periods=5)
DatetimeIndex(['2016-09-28 16:00:00', '2016-09-29 16:00:00',
               '2016-09-30 16:00:00', '2016-10-01 16:00:00',
               '2016-10-02 16:00:00'],
              dtype='datetime64[ns]', freq='D')

# Create a DatetimeIndex with the first weekday of every other month in 2016.
>>> pd.date_range(start='1/1/2016', end='1/1/2017', freq="2BMS" )
DatetimeIndex(['2016-01-01', '2016-03-01', '2016-05-02', '2016-07-01',
               '2016-09-01', '2016-11-01'],
              dtype='datetime64[ns]', freq='2BMS')


# Create a DatetimeIndex for 10 minute intervals between 4:00 PM and 4:30 PM on↩
     September 9, 2016.
>>> pd.date_range(start='9/28/2016 16:00',
            end='9/28/2016 16:30', freq="10T")
DatetimeIndex(['2016-09-28 16:00:00', '2016-09-28 16:10:00',
               '2016-09-28 16:20:00', '2016-09-28 16:30:00'],
              dtype='datetime64[ns]', freq='10T')

# Create a DatetimeIndex for 2 hour 30 minute intervals between 4:30 PM and ↩
    2:30 AM on September 29, 2016.
>>> pd.date_range(start='9/28/2016 16:30', periods=5, freq="2h30min")
DatetimeIndex(['2016-09-28 16:30:00', '2016-09-28 19:00:00',
               '2016-09-28 21:30:00', '2016-09-29 00:00:00',
               '2016-09-29 02:30:00'],
              dtype='datetime64[ns]', freq='150T')
```

Problem 2. The file `paychecks.csv` contains values of an hourly employee's last 93 paychecks. Paychecks are given on the first and third Fridays of each month, and the employee started working on March 13, 2008.

Read in the data, using `pd.date_range()` to generate the `DatetimeIndex`. Set this as the new index of the `DataFrame` and return the `DataFrame`.

Periods

A pandas `Timestamp` object represents a precise moment in time on a given day. Some data, however, is recorded over a time interval, and it wouldn't make sense to place an exact timestamp on any of the measurements. For example, a record of the number of steps walked in a day, box office earnings per week, quarterly earnings, and so on. This kind of data is better represented with the pandas `Period` object and the corresponding `PeriodIndex`.

The `Period` class accepts a `value` and a `freq`. The `value` parameter indicates the label for a given `Period`. This label is tied to the **end** of the defined `Period`. The `freq` indicates the length of the `Period` and in some cases can also indicate the offset of the `Period`. The default value for `freq` is "M" for months. The `freq` parameter accepts the majority, but not all, of frequencies listed in Table 12.3.

```
# Creates a period for month of Oct, 2016.
>>> p1 = pd.Period("2016-10")
>>> p1.start_time                    # The start and end times of the period
Timestamp('2016-10-01 00:00:00')     # are recorded as Timestamps.
>>> p1.end_time
Timestamp('2016-10-31 23:59:59.999999999')

# Represent the annual period ending in December that includes 10/03/2016.
>>> p2 = pd.Period("2016-10-03", freq="A-DEC")
>>> p2.start_time
Timestamp('2007-01-01 00:00:00')
>>> p2.end_time
Timestamp('2007-12-31 23:59:59.999999999')

# Get the weekly period ending on a Saturday that includes 10/03/2016.
>>> print(pd.Period("2016-10-03", freq="W-SAT"))
2016-10-02/2016-10-08
```

Like the `pd.date_range()` method, the `pd.period_range()` method is useful for generating a `PeriodIndex` for unindexed data. The syntax is essentially identical to that of `pd.date_range()`. When using `pd.period_range()`, remember that the `freq` parameter marks the end of the period. After creating a `PeriodIndex`, the `freq` parameter can be changed via the `asfreq()` method.

```
# Represent quarters from 2008 to 2010, with Q4 ending in December.
>>> pd.period_range(start="2008", end="2010-12", freq="Q-DEC")
PeriodIndex(['2008Q1', '2008Q2', '2008Q3', '2008Q4', '2009Q1', '2009Q2',
             '2009Q3', '2009Q4', '2010Q1', '2010Q2', '2010Q3', '2010Q4'],
            dtype='period[Q-DEC]', freq='Q-DEC')

# Get every three months form March 2010 to the start of 2011.
>>> p = pd.period_range("2010-03", "2011", freq="3M")
>>> p
PeriodIndex(['2010-03', '2010-06', '2010-09', '2010-12'],
            dtype='period[3M]', freq='3M')

# Change frequency to be quarterly.
>>> p.asfreq("Q-DEC")
PeriodIndex(['2010Q2', '2010Q3', '2010Q4', '2011Q1'],
            dtype='period[Q-DEC]', freq='Q-DEC')
```

The bounds of a `PeriodIndex` object can be shifted by adding or subtracting an integer. `PeriodIndex` will be shifted by $n \times$ `freq`.

```
# Shift index by 1
>>> p _= 1
>>> p
PeriodIndex(['2010Q1', '2010Q2', '2010Q3', '2010Q4'],
            dtype='int64', freq='Q-DEC')
```

If for any reason you need to switch from periods to timestamps, pandas provides a very simple method to do so. The `how` parameter can be `start` or `end` and determines if the timestamp is the beginning or the end of the period. Similarly, you can switch from timestamps to periods.

```
# Convert to timestamp (last day of each quarter)
>>> p = p.to_timestamp(how='end')
>>> p
DatetimeIndex(['2010-03-31', '2010-06-30', '2010-09-30', '2010-12-31'],
                dtype='datetime64[ns]', freq='Q-DEC')

>>> p.to_period("Q-DEC")
PeriodIndex(['2010Q1', '2010Q2', '2010Q3', '2010Q4'],
            dtype='int64', freq='Q-DEC')
```

Problem 3. The file `finances.csv` contains a list of simulated quarterly earnings and expense totals from a fictional company. Load the data into a `Series` or `DataFrame` with a `PeriodIndex` with a quarterly frequency. Let `how=end`. Assume the fiscal year starts at the beginning of September and that the data begins in September 1978. Return the `DataFrame`.

Operations on Time Series

There are certain operations only available to Series and DataFrames that have a `DatetimeIndex`. A sampling of this functionality is described throughout the remainder of this lab.

Slicing

Slicing is much more flexible in pandas for time series. We can slice by year, by month, or even use traditional slicing syntax to select a range of dates.

```
# Select all rows in a given year
>>> df["2010"]
                   0         1
2010-01-01  0.566694  1.093125
2010-02-01 -0.219856  0.852917
2010-03-01  1.511347 -1.324036

# Select all rows in a given month of a given year
>>> df["2012-01"]
                   0         1
2012-01-01  0.212141  0.859555
2012-01-02  1.483123 -0.520873
2012-01-03  1.436843  0.596143

# Select a range of dates using traditional slicing syntax
>>> df["2010-1-2":"2011-12-31"]
                   0         1
2010-02-01 -0.219856  0.852917
2010-03-01  1.511347 -1.324036
2011-01-01  0.300766  0.934895
```

Resampling

Some datasets do not have datapoints at a fixed frequency. For example, a dataset of website traffic has datapoints that occur at irregular intervals. In situations like these, *resampling* can help provide insight on the data.

The two main forms of resampling are *downsampling*, aggregating data into fewer intervals, and *upsampling*, adding more intervals.

To downsample, use the `resample()` method of the `Series` or `DataFrame`. This method is similar to `groupby()` in that it groups different entries together. Then aggregation produces a new data set. The first parameter to `resample()` is an offset string from Table 12.3: `"D"` for daily, `"H"` for hourly, and so on.

```
>>> import numpy as np

# Get random data for every day from 2000 to 2010.
>>> dates = pd.date_range(start="2000-1-1", end='2009-12-31', freq='D')
>>> df = pd.Series(np.random.random(len(days)), index=dates)
>>> df
2000-01-01    0.559
2000-01-02    0.874
2000-01-03    0.774
                ...
2009-12-29    0.837
2009-12-30    0.472
2009-12-31    0.211
Freq: D, Length: 3653, dtype: float64
```

```
# Group the data by year.
>>> years = df.resample("A")        # 'A' for 'annual'.
>>> years.agg(len)                  # Number of entries per year.
2000-12-31    366.0
2001-12-31    365.0
2002-12-31    365.0
                ...
2007-12-31    365.0
2008-12-31    366.0
2009-12-31    365.0
Freq: A-DEC, dtype: float64

>>> years.mean()                    # Average entry by year.
2000-12-31    0.491
2001-12-31    0.514
2002-12-31    0.484
                ...
2007-12-31    0.508
2008-12-31    0.521
2009-12-31    0.523
Freq: A-DEC, dtype: float64

# Group the data by month.
>>> months = df.resample("M")
>>> len(months.mean())              # 12 months x 10 years = 120 months.
120
```

Problem 4. The file `website_traffic.csv` contains records for different visits to a fictitious website. Read in the data, calculate the duration of each visit in seconds and convert the index to a `DatetimeIndex`. Use downsampling to calculate the number of visits each minute and the number of visits each hour. Return these DataFrames.

(Hint: `minute.agg(func)` returns a DataFrame).

Elementary Time Series Analysis

Shifting

`DataFrame` and `Series` objects have a `shift()` method that allows you to move data up or down relative to the index. When dealing with time series data, we can also shift the `DatetimeIndex` relative to a time offset.

```
>>> df = pd.DataFrame(dict(VALUE=np.random.rand(5)),
                index=pd.date_range("2016-10-7", periods=5, freq='D'))
>>> df
               VALUE
```

```
2016-10-07  0.127895
2016-10-08  0.811226
2016-10-09  0.656711
2016-10-10  0.351431
2016-10-11  0.608767

>>> df.shift(1)
               VALUE
2016-10-07       NaN
2016-10-08  0.127895
2016-10-09  0.811226
2016-10-10  0.656711
2016-10-11  0.351431

>>> df.shift(-2)
               VALUE
2016-10-07  0.656711
2016-10-08  0.351431
2016-10-09  0.608767
2016-10-10       NaN
2016-10-11       NaN

>>> df.shift(14, freq="D")
               VALUE
2016-10-21  0.127895
2016-10-22  0.811226
2016-10-23  0.656711
2016-10-24  0.351431
2016-10-25  0.608767
```

Shifting data makes it easy to gather statistics about changes from one timestamp or period to the next.

```
# Find the changes from one period/timestamp to the next
>>> df - df.shift(1)           # Equivalent to df.diff().
               VALUE
2016-10-07       NaN
2016-10-08  0.683331
2016-10-09 -0.154516
2016-10-10 -0.305279
2016-10-11  0.257336
```

Problem 5. Compute the following information about the DJIA dataset from Problem 1.

- The single day with the largest gain.
- The single day with the largest loss.

Return the index of the day with the largest gain and the day with the largest loss.

(Hint: Call `prob1()` to get the DataFrame already cleaned and with DatetimeIndex).

Rolling Functions and Exponentially-Weighted Moving Functions

Many time series are inherently noisy. To analyze general trends in data, we use *rolling functions* and *exponentially-weighted moving (EWM)* functions. Rolling functions, or *moving window functions*, perform a calculation on a window of data. There are a few rolling functions that come standard with pandas.

Rolling Functions (Moving Window Functions)

One of the most commonly used rolling functions is the *rolling average*, which takes the average value over a window of data.

```python
# Generate a time series using random walk from a uniform distribution.
N = 10000
bias = 0.01
s = np.zeros(N)
s[1:] = np.random.uniform(low=-1, high=1, size=N-1) + bias
s = pd.Series(s.cumsum(),
              index=pd.date_range("2015-10-20", freq='H', periods=N))

# Plot the original data together with a rolling average.
ax1 = plt.subplot(121)
s.plot(color="gray", lw=.3, ax=ax1)
s.rolling(window=200).mean().plot(color='r', lw=1, ax=ax1)
ax1.legend(["Actual", "Rolling"], loc="lower right")
ax1.set_title("Rolling Average")
```

The function call `s.rolling(window=200)` creates a `pd.core.rolling.Window` object that can be aggregated with a function like `mean()`, `std()`, `var()`, `min()`, `max()`, and so on.

Exponentially-Weighted Moving (EWM) Functions

Whereas a moving window function gives equal weight to the whole window, an *exponentially-weighted moving* function gives more weight to the most recent data points.

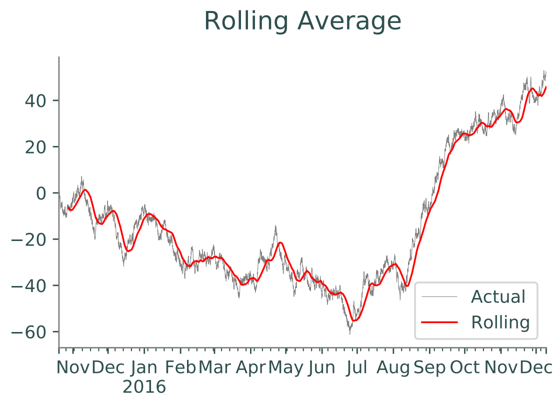
In the case of a *exponentially-weighted moving average* (EWMA), each data point is calculated as follows.

$$z_i = \alpha \bar{x}_i + (1-\alpha) z_{i-1},$$

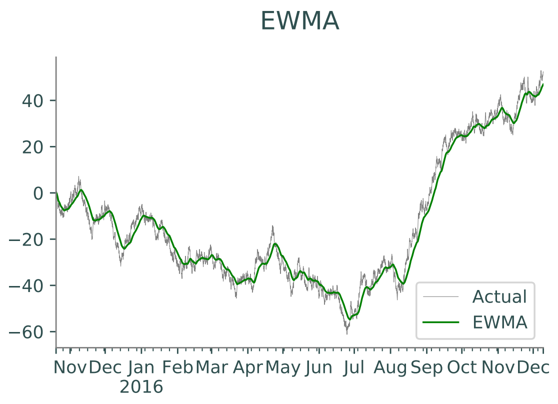
where z_i is the value of the EWMA at time i, $\bar{x}_i$ is the average for the i-th window, and α is the decay factor that controls the importance of previous data points. Notice that $\alpha = 1$ reduces to the rolling average.

More commonly, the decay is expressed as a function of the window size. In fact, the `span` for an EWMA is nearly analogous to `window` size for a rolling average.

Notice the syntax for EWM functions is very similar to that of rolling functions.



(a)



(b)

Figure 12.1: Rolling average and EWMA.

```
ax2 = plt.subplot(122)
s.plot(color="gray", lw=.3, ax=ax2)
s.ewm(span=200).mean().plot(color='g', lw=1, ax=ax2)
ax2.legend(["Actual", "EWMA"], loc="lower right")
ax2.set_title("EWMA")
```

Problem 6. Plot the following from the DJIA dataset with a window or span of 30, 120, and 365.

- The original data points.
- Rolling average.
- Exponential average.

Your plots should look like Figure 12.2. Return a list of the minimum rolling average value for each window size and a list of the minimum exponential average value for each span size.

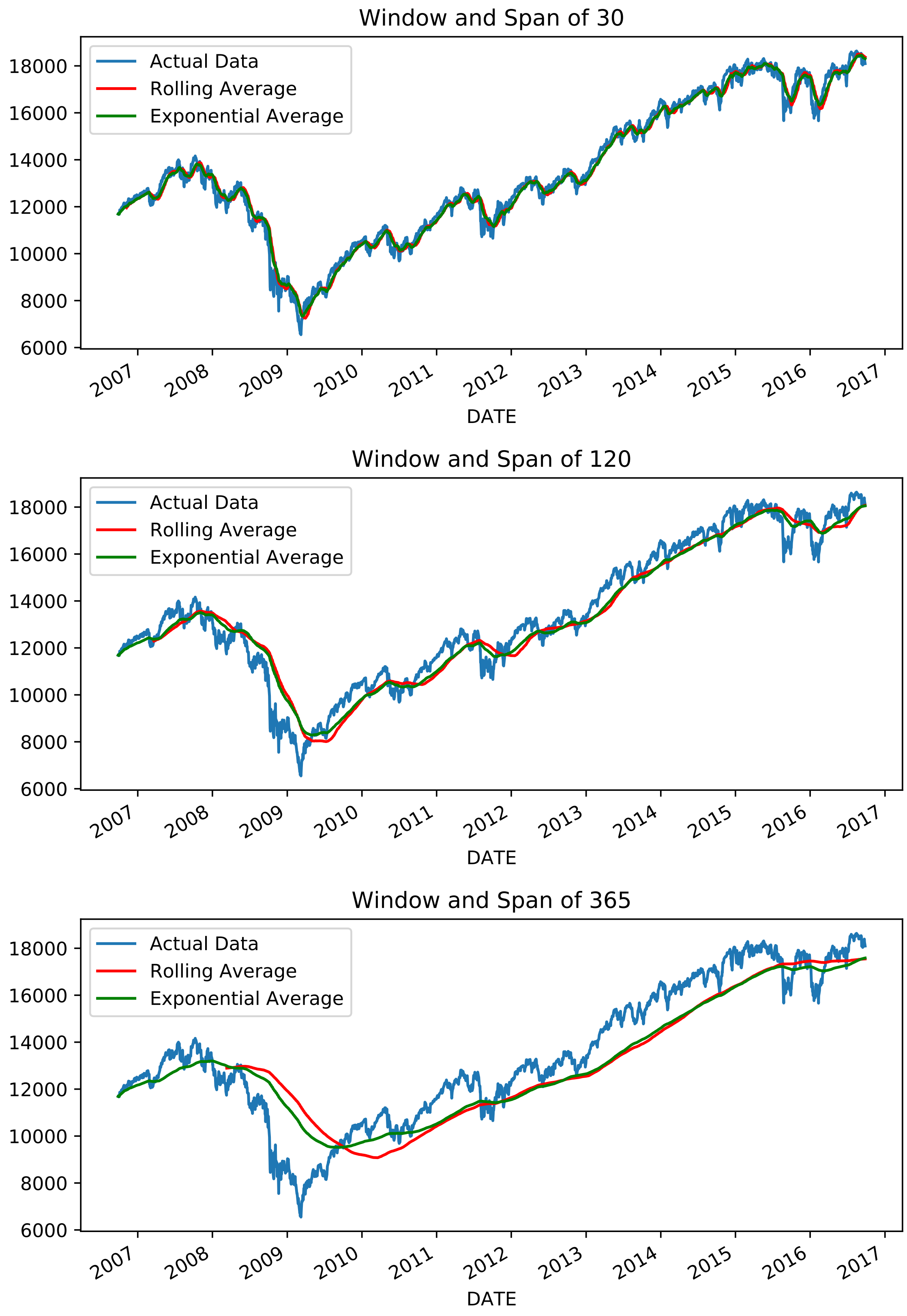


Figure 12.2: Plots for Problem 6.