## CONTENTS

1 Command line and environment ........................................... 3
   1.1 Command line ....................................................... 3
   1.2 Environment variables .......................................... 7

2 Using Python on Unix platforms ........................................ 11
   2.1 Getting and installing the latest version of Python .......... 11
   2.2 Building Python .................................................. 12
   2.3 Python-related paths and files .................................. 12
   2.4 Miscellaneous .................................................... 12
   2.5 Editors ............................................................ 13

3 Using Python on Windows ............................................... 15
   3.1 Installing Python .................................................. 15
   3.2 Alternative bundles .............................................. 15
   3.3 Configuring Python .............................................. 16
   3.4 Additional modules ............................................... 17
   3.5 Compiling Python on Windows .................................. 18
   3.6 Other resources .................................................. 18

4 Using Python on a Macintosh ............................................ 21
   4.1 Getting and Installing MacPython ............................. 21
   4.2 The IDE ............................................................. 22
   4.3 Installing Additional Python Packages ....................... 22
   4.4 GUI Programming on the Mac ................................... 23
   4.5 Distributing Python Applications on the Mac ................ 23
   4.6 Application Scripting ............................................ 23
   4.7 Other Resources .................................................. 23

A Glossary ............................................................................ 25

B About these documents ............................................... 31
   B.1 Contributors to the Python Documentation ................... 31

C History and License ..................................................... 33
   C.1 History of the software ............................................ 33
   C.2 Terms and conditions for accessing or otherwise using Python ...... 34
   C.3 Licenses and Acknowledgements for Incorporated Software ....... 36

D Copyright ........................................................................... 45
This part of the documentation is devoted to general information on the setup of the Python environment on different platform, the invocation of the interpreter and things that make working with Python easier.
The CPython interpreter scans the command line and the environment for various settings.

**CPython implementation detail:** Other implementations’ command line schemes may differ. See *Alternate Implementations* (in *The Python Language Reference*) for further resources.

### 1.1 Command line

When invoking Python, you may specify any of these options:

```
python [-BdEiOQsTuVvWwXx?] [-c command | -m module-name | script | - ] [args]
```

The most common use case is, of course, a simple invocation of a script:

```
python myscript.py
```

#### 1.1.1 Interface options

The interpreter interface resembles that of the UNIX shell, but provides some additional methods of invocation:

- When called with standard input connected to a tty device, it prompts for commands and executes them until an EOF (an end-of-file character, you can produce that with `Ctrl-D` on UNIX or `Ctrl-Z, Enter` on Windows) is read.
- When called with a file name argument or with a file as standard input, it reads and executes a script from that file.
- When called with a directory name argument, it reads and executes an appropriately named script from that directory.
- When called with `-c command`, it executes the Python statement(s) given as `command`. Here `command` may contain multiple statements separated by newlines. Leading whitespace is significant in Python statements!
- When called with `-m module-name`, the given module is located on the Python module path and executed as a script.

In non-interactive mode, the entire input is parsed before it is executed.

An interface option terminates the list of options consumed by the interpreter, all consecutive arguments will end up in `sys.argv`—note that the first element, subscript zero (`sys.argv[0]`), is a string reflecting the program’s source.

**-c <command>**

Execute the Python code in `command`. `command` can be one ore more statements separated by newlines, with significant leading whitespace as in normal module code.
If this option is given, the first element of `sys.argv` will be "-c" and the current directory will be added to the start of `sys.path` (allowing modules in that directory to be imported as top level modules).

```
-m <module-name>
```

Search `sys.path` for the named module and execute its contents as the `__main__` module.

Since the argument is a module name, you must not give a file extension (.py). The `module-name` should be a valid Python module name, but the implementation may not always enforce this (e.g. it may allow you to use a name that includes a hyphen).

**Note:** This option cannot be used with built-in modules and extension modules written in C, since they do not have Python module files. However, it can still be used for precompiled modules, even if the original source file is not available.

If this option is given, the first element of `sys.argv` will be the full path to the module file. As with the `-c` option, the current directory will be added to the start of `sys.path`.

Many standard library modules contain code that is invoked on their execution as a script. An example is the `timeit` module:

```
python -mtimeit -s 'setup here' 'benchmarked code here'
python -mtimeit -h # for details
```

**See Also:**

`runpy.run_module()` The actual implementation of this feature.

**PEP 338 – Executing modules as scripts**

New in version 2.4. Changed in version 2.5: The named module can now be located inside a package.

```
-
```

Read commands from standard input (`sys.stdin`). If standard input is a terminal, `-i` is implied.

If this option is given, the first element of `sys.argv` will be "-" and the current directory will be added to the start of `sys.path`.

```
<script>
```

Execute the Python code contained in `script`, which must be a filesystem path (absolute or relative) referring to either a Python file, a directory containing a `__main__.py` file, or a zipfile containing a `__main__.py` file.

If this option is given, the first element of `sys.argv` will be the script name as given on the command line.

If the script name refers directly to a Python file, the directory containing that file is added to the start of `sys.path`, and the file is executed as the `__main__` module.

If the script name refers to a directory or zipfile, the script name is added to the start of `sys.path` and the `__main__.py` file in that location is executed as the `__main__` module. Changed in version 2.5: Directories and zipfiles containing a `__main__.py` file at the top level are now considered valid Python scripts.

If no interface option is given, `-i` is implied. `sys.argv[0]` is an empty string ("") and the current directory will be added to the start of `sys.path`.

**See Also:**

*Invoking the Interpreter* (in *Python Tutorial*)

**1.1.2 Generic options**

```
-?
-h
```
Using Python, Release 2.6.4

- **help**
  Print a short description of all command line options. Changed in version 2.5: The --help variant.

- **v**
- **version**
  Print the Python version number and exit. Example output could be:

  Python 2.5.1

  Changed in version 2.5: The --version variant.

### 1.1.3 Miscellaneous options

- **-B**
  If given, Python won’t try to write `.pyc` or `.pyo` files on the import of source modules. See also PYTHON-DONTWRITEBYTECODE. New in version 2.6.

- **-d**
  Turn on parser debugging output (for wizards only, depending on compilation options). See also PYTHONDE-BUG.

- **-E**
  Ignore all PYTHON* environment variables, e.g. PYTHONPATH and PYTHONHOME, that might be set. New in version 2.2.

- **-i**
  When a script is passed as first argument or the -c option is used, enter interactive mode after executing the script or the command, even when sys.stdin does not appear to be a terminal. The PYTHONSTARTUP file is not read.

  This can be useful to inspect global variables or a stack trace when a script raises an exception. See also PYTHONINSPECT.

- **-O**
  Turn on basic optimizations. This changes the filename extension for compiled (bytecode) files from .pyc to .pyo. See also PYTHONOPTIMIZE.

- **-OO**
  Discard docstrings in addition to the -O optimizations.

- **-Q <arg>**
  Division control. The argument must be one of the following:

  - `old` division of int/int and long/long return an int or long (default)
  - `new` new division semantics, i.e. division of int/int and long/long returns a float
  - `warn` old division semantics with a warning for int/int and long/long
  - `warnall` old division semantics with a warning for all uses of the division operator

  See Also:

  Tools/scripts/fixdiv.py for a use of warnall

  PEP 238 – Changing the division operator

- **-s**
  Don’t add user site directory to sys.path New in version 2.6.

  See Also:
PEP 370 – Per user site-packages directory

-\texttt{S}
Disable the import of the module \texttt{site} and the site-dependent manipulations of \texttt{sys.path} that it entails.

-\texttt{t}
Issue a warning when a source file mixes tabs and spaces for indentation in a way that makes it depend on the worth of a tab expressed in spaces. Issue an error when the option is given twice (\texttt{-tt}).

-\texttt{u}
Force stdin, stdout and stderr to be totally unbuffered. On systems where it matters, also put stdin, stdout and stderr in binary mode.

Note that there is internal buffering in \texttt{file.readlines()} and \texttt{File Objects} (in The Python Library Reference) (for line in \texttt{sys.stdin}) which is not influenced by this option. To work around this, you will want to use \texttt{file.readline()} inside a \texttt{while 1:} loop.

See also \texttt{PYTHONUNBUFFERED}.

-\texttt{v}
Print a message each time a module is initialized, showing the place (filename or built-in module) from which it is loaded. When given twice (\texttt{-vv}), print a message for each file that is checked for when searching for a module. Also provides information on module cleanup at exit. See also \texttt{PYTHONVERBOSE}.

-\texttt{W} \texttt{arg}
Warning control. Python’s warning machinery by default prints warning messages to \texttt{sys.stderr}. A typical warning message has the following form:

\texttt{file:line: category: message}

By default, each warning is printed once for each source line where it occurs. This option controls how often warnings are printed.

Multiple \texttt{-W} options may be given; when a warning matches more than one option, the action for the last matching option is performed. Invalid \texttt{-W} options are ignored (though, a warning message is printed about invalid options when the first warning is issued).

Warnings can also be controlled from within a Python program using the \texttt{warnings} module.

The simplest form of argument is one of the following action strings (or a unique abbreviation) by themselves:

\texttt{ignore} Ignore all warnings.

\texttt{default} Explicitly request the default behavior (printing each warning once per source line).

\texttt{all} Print a warning each time it occurs (this may generate many messages if a warning is triggered repeatedly for the same source line, such as inside a loop).

\texttt{module} Print each warning only the first time it occurs in each module.

\texttt{once} Print each warning only the first time it occurs in the program.

\texttt{error} Raise an exception instead of printing a warning message.

The full form of argument is:

\texttt{action:message:category:module:line}

Here, \texttt{action} is as explained above but only applies to messages that match the remaining fields. Empty fields match all values; trailing empty fields may be omitted. The \texttt{message} field matches the start of the warning message printed; this match is case-insensitive. The \texttt{category} field matches the warning category. This must be a class name; the match test whether the actual warning category of the message is a subclass of the specified
warning category. The full class name must be given. The module field matches the (fully-qualified) module name; this match is case-sensitive. The line field matches the line number, where zero matches all line numbers and is thus equivalent to an omitted line number.

See Also:

warnings – the warnings module

PEP 230 – Warning framework

-x

Skip the first line of the source, allowing use of non-Unix forms of # ! cmd. This is intended for a DOS specific hack only.

Note: The line numbers in error messages will be off by one.

-3

Warn about Python 3.x incompatibilities which cannot be fixed trivially by 2to3 (in The Python Library Reference). Among these are:

• dict.has_key()
• apply()
• callable()
• coerce()
• execfile()
• reduce()
• reload()

Using these will emit a DeprecationWarning. New in version 2.6.

1.2 Environment variables

These environment variables influence Python’s behavior.

PYTHONHOME

Change the location of the standard Python libraries. By default, the libraries are searched in prefix/lib/pythonversion and exec_prefix/lib/pythonversion, where prefix and exec_prefix are installation-dependent directories, both defaulting to /usr/local.

When PYTHONHOME is set to a single directory, its value replaces both prefix and exec_prefix. To specify different values for these, set PYTHONHOME to prefix:exec_prefix.

PYTHONPATH

Augment the default search path for module files. The format is the same as the shell’s PATH: one or more directory pathnames separated by os.pathsep (e.g. colons on Unix or semicolons on Windows). Non-existent directories are silently ignored.

In addition to normal directories, individual PYTHONPATH entries may refer to zipfiles containing pure Python modules (in either source or compiled form). Extension modules cannot be imported from zipfiles.

The default search path is installation dependent, but generally begins with prefix/lib/pythonversion (see PYTHONHOME above). It is always appended to PYTHONPATH.

An additional directory will be inserted in the search path in front of PYTHONPATH as described above under Interface options. The search path can be manipulated from within a Python program as the variable sys.path.

1.2. Environment variables
**PYTHONSTARTUP**
If this is the name of a readable file, the Python commands in that file are executed before the first prompt is displayed in interactive mode. The file is executed in the same namespace where interactive commands are executed so that objects defined or imported in it can be used without qualification in the interactive session. You can also change the prompts `sys.ps1` and `sys.ps2` in this file.

**PYTHON2K**
Set this to a non-empty string to cause the `time` module to require dates specified as strings to include 4-digit years, otherwise 2-digit years are converted based on rules described in the `time` module documentation.

**PYTHONOPTIMIZE**
If this is set to a non-empty string it is equivalent to specifying the `-O` option. If set to an integer, it is equivalent to specifying `-O` multiple times.

**PYTHONDEBUG**
If this is set to a non-empty string it is equivalent to specifying the `-d` option. If set to an integer, it is equivalent to specifying `-d` multiple times.

**PYTHONINSPECT**
If this is set to a non-empty string it is equivalent to specifying the `-i` option.
This variable can also be modified by Python code using `os.environ` to force inspect mode on program termination.

**PYTHONUNBUFFERED**
If this is set to a non-empty string it is equivalent to specifying the `-u` option.

**PYTHONVERBOSE**
If this is set to a non-empty string it is equivalent to specifying the `-v` option. If set to an integer, it is equivalent to specifying `-v` multiple times.

**PYTHONCASEOK**
If this is set, Python ignores case in `import` statements. This only works on Windows.

**PYTHONDONTWRITEBYTECODE**
If this is set, Python won’t try to write `.pyc` or `.pyo` files on the import of source modules. New in version 2.6.

**PYTHONIOENCODING**
Overrides the encoding used for stdin/stdout/stderr, in the syntax `encodingname: errorhandler`. The `errorhandler` part is optional and has the same meaning as in `str.encode()`. New in version 2.6.

**PYTHONNOUNSERSITE**
If this is set, Python won’t add the user site directory to `sys.path New in version 2.6.

See Also:
**PEP 370** – Per user site-packages directory

**PYTHONUSERBASE**
Sets the base directory for the user site directory New in version 2.6.

See Also:
**PEP 370** – Per user site-packages directory

**PYTHONEXECUTABLE**
If this environment variable is set, `sys.argv[0]` will be set to its value instead of the value got through the C runtime. Only works on Mac OS X.
1.2.1 Debug-mode variables

Setting these variables only has an effect in a debug build of Python, that is, if Python was configured with the `--with-pydebug` build option.

**PYTHONTHREADDEBUG**

If set, Python will print threading debug info. Changed in version 2.6: Previously, this variable was called `THREADDEBUG`.

**PYTHONDUMPREFS**

If set, Python will dump objects and reference counts still alive after shutting down the interpreter.

**PYTHONMALLOCSTATS**

If set, Python will print memory allocation statistics every time a new object arena is created, and on shutdown.
2.1 Getting and installing the latest version of Python

2.1.1 On Linux

Python comes preinstalled on most Linux distributions, and is available as a package on all others. However there are certain features you might want to use that are not available on your distro’s package. You can easily compile the latest version of Python from source.

In the event that Python doesn’t come preinstalled and isn’t in the repositories as well, you can easily make packages for your own distro. Have a look at the following links:

See Also:

http://www.linux.com/articles/60383 for Debian users
http://linuxmafia.com/pub/linux/suse-linux-internals/chapter35.html for OpenSuse users
http://docs.fedoraproject.org/drafts/rpm-guide-en/ch-creating-rpms.html for Fedora users

2.1.2 On FreeBSD and OpenBSD

• FreeBSD users, to add the package use:
  pkg_add -r python
• OpenBSD users use:
  For example i386 users get the 2.5.1 version of Python using:
  pkg_add ftp://ftp.openbsd.org/pub/OpenBSD/4.2/packages/i386/python-2.5.1p2.tgz

2.1.3 On OpenSolaris

To install the newest Python versions on OpenSolaris, install blastwave (http://www.blastwave.org/howto.html) and type “pkg_get -i python” at the prompt.
2.2 Building Python

If you want to compile CPython yourself, first thing you should do is get the source. You can download either the latest release’s source or just grab a fresh checkout.

The build process consists the usual

```
./configure
make
make install
```

invocations. Configuration options and caveats for specific Unix platforms are extensively documented in the README file in the root of the Python source tree.

**Warning:** `make install` can overwrite or masquerade the `python` binary. `make altinstall` is therefore recommended instead of `make install` since it only installs `exec_prefix/bin/pythonversion`.

2.3 Python-related paths and files

These are subject to difference depending on local installation conventions; `prefix` (${prefix}) and `exec_prefix` (${exec_prefix}) are installation-dependent and should be interpreted as for GNU software; they may be the same.

For example, on most Linux systems, the default for both is `/usr`.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>File/directory</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><code>exec_prefix/bin/python</code></td>
<td>Recommended location of the interpreter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>prefix/lib/pythonversion</code>, <code>exec_prefix/lib/pythonversion</code></td>
<td>Recommended locations of the directories containing the standard modules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>prefix/include/pythonversion</code>, <code>exec_prefix/include/pythonversion</code></td>
<td>Recommended locations of the directories containing the include files needed for developing Python extensions and embedding the interpreter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>~/.pythonrc.py</code></td>
<td>User-specific initialization file loaded by the user module; not used by default or by most applications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4 Miscellaneous

To easily use Python scripts on Unix, you need to make them executable, e.g. with

```
$ chmod +x script
```

and put an appropriate Shebang line at the top of the script. A good choice is usually

```
#!/usr/bin/env python
```

which searches for the Python interpreter in the whole `PATH`. However, some Unices may not have the `env` command, so you may need to hardcode `/usr/bin/python` as the interpreter path.

To use shell commands in your Python scripts, look at the `subprocess` module.
2.5 Editors

Vim and Emacs are excellent editors which support Python very well. For more information on how to code in Python in these editors, look at:

- http://sourceforge.net/projects/python-mode

Geany is an excellent IDE with support for a lot of languages. For more information, read: http://geany.uvena.de/

Komodo edit is another extremely good IDE. It also has support for a lot of languages. For more information, read: http://www.activestate.com/store/productdetail.aspx?prdGuid=20f4ed15-6684-4118-a78b-d37ff4058c5f
CHAPTER THREE

USING PYTHON ON WINDOWS

This document aims to give an overview of Windows-specific behaviour you should know about when using Python on Microsoft Windows.

3.1 Installing Python

Unlike most Unix systems and services, Windows does not require Python natively and thus does not pre-install a version of Python. However, the CPython team has compiled Windows installers (MSI packages) with every release for many years.

With ongoing development of Python, some platforms that used to be supported earlier are no longer supported (due to the lack of users or developers). Check PEP 11 for details on all unsupported platforms.

- DOS and Windows 3.x are deprecated since Python 2.0 and code specific to these systems was removed in Python 2.1.
- Up to 2.5, Python was still compatible with Windows 95, 98 and ME (but already raised a deprecation warning on installation). For Python 2.6 (and all following releases), this support was dropped and new releases are just expected to work on the Windows NT family.
- Windows CE is still supported.
- The Cygwin installer offers to install the Python interpreter as well; it is located under “Interpreters.” (cf. Cygwin package source, Maintainer releases)

See Python for Windows (and DOS) for detailed information about platforms with precompiled installers.

See Also:

Python on XP “7 Minutes to “Hello World!”” by Richard Dooling, 2006

3.2 Alternative bundles

Besides the standard CPython distribution, there are modified packages including additional functionality. The following is a list of popular versions and their key features:

ActivePython Installer with multi-platform compatibility, documentation, PyWin32
Enthought Python Distribution  Popular modules (such as PyWin32) with their respective documentation, tool suite
for building extensible Python applications

Notice that these packages are likely to install *older* versions of Python.

## 3.3 Configuring Python

In order to run Python flawlessly, you might have to change certain environment settings in Windows.

### 3.3.1 Excursus: Setting environment variables

Windows has a built-in dialog for changing environment variables (following guide applies to XP classical view):
Right-click the icon for your machine (usually located on your Desktop and called “My Computer”) and choose Properties there. Then, open the Advanced tab and click the Environment Variables button.

In short, your path is:

```
My Computer → Properties → Advanced → Environment Variables
```

In this dialog, you can add or modify User and System variables. To change System variables, you need non-restricted access to your machine (i.e. Administrator rights).

Another way of adding variables to your environment is using the `set` command:

```
set PYTHONPATH=%PYTHONPATH%;C:\My_python_lib
```

To make this setting permanent, you could add the corresponding command line to your `autoexec.bat`. `msconfig` is a graphical interface to this file.

Viewing environment variables can also be done more straight-forward: The command prompt will expand strings wrapped into percent signs automatically:

```
echo %PATH%
```

Consult `set /?` for details on this behaviour.

See Also:

- [http://support.microsoft.com/kb/100843](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/100843)  Environment variables in Windows NT
- [http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310519](http://support.microsoft.com/kb/310519)  How To Manage Environment Variables in Windows XP
- [http://www.chem.gla.ac.uk/~louis/software/faq/q1.html](http://www.chem.gla.ac.uk/~louis/software/faq/q1.html)  Setting Environment variables, Louis J. Farrugia

### 3.3.2 Finding the Python executable

Besides using the automatically created start menu entry for the Python interpreter, you might want to start Python in the DOS prompt. To make this work, you need to set your `%PATH%` environment variable to include the directory of your Python distribution, delimited by a semicolon from other entries. An example variable could look like this (assuming the first two entries are Windows’ default):

```
C:\WINDOWS\system32;C:\WINDOWS;C:\Python25
```

Typing `python` on your command prompt will now fire up the Python interpreter. Thus, you can also execute your scripts with command line options, see *Command line* documentation.
3.3.3 Finding modules

Python usually stores its library (and thereby your site-packages folder) in the installation directory. So, if you had installed Python to C:\Python\, the default library would reside in C:\Python\Lib\ and third-party modules should be stored in C:\Python\Lib\site-packages\.

You can add folders to your search path to make Python’s import mechanism search in these directories as well. Use PYTHONPATH, as described in Environment variables, to modify sys.path. On Windows, paths are separated by semicolons, though, to distinguish them from drive identifiers (C:\ etc.).

Modifying the module search path can also be done through the Windows registry: Edit HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINE\SOFTWARE\Python\PythonCore\version\PythonPath\, as described above for the environment variable %PYTHONPATH%. A convenient registry editor is regedit (start it by typing “regedit” into Start → Run).

3.3.4 Executing scripts

Python scripts (files with the extension .py) will be executed by python.exe by default. This executable opens a terminal, which stays open even if the program uses a GUI. If you do not want this to happen, use the extension .pyw which will cause the script to be executed by pythonw.exe by default (both executables are located in the top-level of your Python installation directory). This suppresses the terminal window on startup.

You can also make all .py scripts execute with pythonw.exe, setting this through the usual facilities, for example (might require administrative rights):

1. Launch a command prompt.
2. Associate the correct file group with .py scripts:
   ```cmd
   assoc .py=Python.File
   ```
3. Redirect all Python files to the new executable:
   ```cmd
   ftype Python.File=C:\Path\to\pythonw.exe "%1" %*
   ```

3.4 Additional modules

Even though Python aims to be portable among all platforms, there are features that are unique to Windows. A couple of modules, both in the standard library and external, and snippets exist to use these features.

The Windows-specific standard modules are documented in MS Windows Specific Services (in The Python Library Reference).

3.4.1 PyWin32

The PyWin32 module by Mark Hammond is a collection of modules for advanced Windows-specific support. This includes utilities for:

- Component Object Model (COM)
- Win32 API calls
- Registry
- Event log
- Microsoft Foundation Classes (MFC) user interfaces
PythonWin is a sample MFC application shipped with PyWin32. It is an embeddable IDE with a built-in debugger.

See Also:

Win32 How Do I...? by Tim Golden
Python and COM by David and Paul Boddie

3.4.2 Py2exe

Py2exe is a distutils extension (see Extending Distutils (in Distributing Python Modules)) which wraps Python scripts into executable Windows programs (*.exe files). When you have done this, you can distribute your application without requiring your users to install Python.

3.4.3 WConio

Since Python’s advanced terminal handling layer, curses, is restricted to Unix-like systems, there is a library exclusive to Windows as well: Windows Console I/O for Python.

WConio is a wrapper for Turbo-C’s CONIO.H, used to create text user interfaces.

3.5 Compiling Python on Windows

If you want to compile CPython yourself, first thing you should do is get the source. You can download either the latest release’s source or just grab a fresh checkout.

For Microsoft Visual C++, which is the compiler with which official Python releases are built, the source tree contains solutions/project files. View the readme.txt in their respective directories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directory</th>
<th>MSVC version</th>
<th>Visual Studio version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PC/VC6/</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC/VS7.1/</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC/VS8.0/</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCbuild/</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that not all of these build directories are fully supported. Read the release notes to see which compiler version the official releases for your version are built with.

Check PC/readme.txt for general information on the build process.

For extension modules, consult Building C and C++ Extensions on Windows (in Extending and Embedding Python).

See Also:

Python + Windows + distutils + SWIG + gcc MinGW or “Creating Python extensions in C/C++ with SWIG and compiling them with MinGW gcc under Windows” or “Installing Python extension with distutils and without Microsoft Visual C++” by Sébastien Sauvage, 2003

MingW – Python extensions by Trent Apted et al, 2007

3.6 Other resources

See Also:

A Python for Windows Tutorial by Amanda Birmingham, 2004
CHAPTER
FOUR

USING PYTHON ON A MACINTOSH

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Python on a Macintosh running Mac OS X is in principle very similar to Python on any other Unix platform, but there are a number of additional features such as the IDE and the Package Manager that are worth pointing out.

The Mac-specific modules are documented in Mac OS X specific services (in The Python Library Reference).

Python on Mac OS 9 or earlier can be quite different from Python on Unix or Windows, but is beyond the scope of this manual, as that platform is no longer supported, starting with Python 2.4. See http://www.cwi.nl/~jack/macpython for installers for the latest 2.3 release for Mac OS 9 and related documentation.

4.1 Getting and Installing MacPython

Mac OS X 10.5 comes with Python 2.5.1 pre-installed by Apple. If you wish, you are invited to install the most recent version of Python from the Python website (http://www.python.org). A current “universal binary” build of Python, which runs natively on the Mac’s new Intel and legacy PPC CPU’s, is available there.

What you get after installing is a number of things:

• A MacPython 2.5 folder in your Applications folder. In here you find IDLE, the development environment that is a standard part of official Python distributions; PythonLauncher, which handles double-clicking Python scripts from the Finder; and the “Build Applet” tool, which allows you to package Python scripts as standalone applications on your system.

• A framework /Library/Frameworks/Python.framework, which includes the Python executable and libraries. The installer adds this location to your shell path. To uninstall MacPython, you can simply remove these three things. A symlink to the Python executable is placed in /usr/local/bin/.

The Apple-provided build of Python is installed in /System/Library/Frameworks/Python.framework and /usr/bin/python, respectively. You should never modify or delete these, as they are Apple-controlled and are used by Apple- or third-party software. Remember that if you choose to install a newer Python version from python.org, you will have two different but functional Python installations on your computer, so it will be important that your paths and usages are consistent with what you want to do.

IDLE includes a help menu that allows you to access Python documentation. If you are completely new to Python you should start reading the tutorial introduction in that document.

If you are familiar with Python on other Unix platforms you should read the section on running Python scripts from the Unix shell.
4.1.1 How to run a Python script

Your best way to get started with Python on Mac OS X is through the IDLE integrated development environment, see section *The IDE* and use the Help menu when the IDE is running.

If you want to run Python scripts from the Terminal window command line or from the Finder you first need an editor to create your script. Mac OS X comes with a number of standard Unix command line editors, *vim* and *emacs* among them. If you want a more Mac-like editor, *BBEdit* or *TextWrangler* from Bare Bones Software (see [http://www.barebones.com/products/bbedit/index.shtml](http://www.barebones.com/products/bbedit/index.shtml)) are good choices, as is *TextMate* (see [http://macromates.com/](http://macromates.com/)). Other editors include *Gvim* ([http://macvim.org](http://macvim.org)) and *Aquamacs* ([http://aquamacs.org](http://aquamacs.org)).

To run your script from the Terminal window you must make sure that `/usr/local/bin` is in your shell search path.

To run your script from the Finder you have two options:

- Drag it to **PythonLauncher**
- Select **PythonLauncher** as the default application to open your script (or any .py script) through the finder Info window and double-click it. **PythonLauncher** has various preferences to control how your script is launched. Option-dragging allows you to change these for one invocation, or use its Preferences menu to change things globally.

4.1.2 Running scripts with a GUI

With older versions of Python, there is one Mac OS X quirk that you need to be aware of: programs that talk to the Aqua window manager (in other words, anything that has a GUI) need to be run in a special way. Use **pythonw** instead of **python** to start such scripts.

With Python 2.5, you can use either **python** or **pythonw**.

4.1.3 Configuration

Python on OS X honors all standard Unix environment variables such as **PYTHONPATH**, but setting these variables for programs started from the Finder is non-standard as the Finder does not read your `.profile` or `.cshrc` at startup. You need to create a file `~/`.MacOSX/environment.plist. See Apple’s Technical Document QA1067 for details.

For more information on installation Python packages in MacPython, see section *Installing Additional Python Packages*.

4.2 The IDE

MacPython ships with the standard IDLE development environment. A good introduction to using IDLE can be found at [http://hkn.eecs.berkeley.edu/dyoo/python/idle_intro/index.html](http://hkn.eecs.berkeley.edu/dyoo/python/idle_intro/index.html).

4.3 Installing Additional Python Packages

There are several methods to install additional Python packages:

- [http://pythonmac.org/packages/](http://pythonmac.org/packages/) contains selected compiled packages for Python 2.5, 2.4, and 2.3.
- Packages can be installed via the standard Python distutils mode (`python setup.py install`).
• Many packages can also be installed via the `setuptools` extension.

### 4.4 GUI Programming on the Mac

There are several options for building GUI applications on the Mac with Python.

`PyObjC` is a Python binding to Apple’s Objective-C/Cocoa framework, which is the foundation of most modern Mac development. Information on PyObjC is available from [http://pyobjc.sourceforge.net](http://pyobjc.sourceforge.net).

The standard Python GUI toolkit is [Tkinter](http://www.tcl.tk), based on the cross-platform Tk toolkit. An Aqua-native version of Tk is bundled with OS X by Apple, and the latest version can be downloaded and installed from [http://www.activestate.com](http://www.activestate.com); it can also be built from source.

`wxPython` is another popular cross-platform GUI toolkit that runs natively on Mac OS X. Packages and documentation are available from [http://www.wxpython.org](http://www.wxpython.org).

`PyQt` is another popular cross-platform GUI toolkit that runs natively on Mac OS X. More information can be found at [http://www.riverbankcomputing.co.uk/software/pyqt/intro](http://www.riverbankcomputing.co.uk/software/pyqt/intro).

### 4.5 Distributing Python Applications on the Mac

The “Build Applet” tool that is placed in the MacPython 2.5 folder is fine for packaging small Python scripts on your own machine to run as a standard Mac application. This tool, however, is not robust enough to distribute Python applications to other users.

The standard tool for deploying standalone Python applications on the Mac is `py2app`. More information on installing and using py2app can be found at [http://undefined.org/python/#py2app](http://undefined.org/python/#py2app).

### 4.6 Application Scripting

Python can also be used to script other Mac applications via Apple’s Open Scripting Architecture (OSA); see [http://appscript.sourceforge.net](http://appscript.sourceforge.net). Appscript is a high-level, user-friendly Apple event bridge that allows you to control scriptable Mac OS X applications using ordinary Python scripts. Appscript makes Python a serious alternative to Apple’s own `AppleScript` language for automating your Mac. A related package, `PyOSA`, is an OSA language component for the Python scripting language, allowing Python code to be executed by any OSA-enabled application (Script Editor, Mail, iTunes, etc.). PyOSA makes Python a full peer to AppleScript.

### 4.7 Other Resources

The MacPython mailing list is an excellent support resource for Python users and developers on the Mac: [http://www.python.org/community/sigs/current/pythonmac-sig/](http://www.python.org/community/sigs/current/pythonmac-sig/)

Another useful resource is the MacPython wiki: [http://wiki.python.org/moin/MacPython](http://wiki.python.org/moin/MacPython)
>>> The default Python prompt of the interactive shell. Often seen for code examples which can be executed interactively in the interpreter.

... The default Python prompt of the interactive shell when entering code for an indented code block or within a pair of matching left and right delimiters (parentheses, square brackets or curly braces).

2to3 A tool that tries to convert Python 2.x code to Python 3.x code by handling most of the incompatibilities which can be detected by parsing the source and traversing the parse tree.

2to3 is available in the standard library as lib2to3; a standalone entry point is provided as Tools/scripts/2to3. See 2to3 - Automated Python 2 to 3 code translation (in The Python Library Reference).

abstract base class Abstract Base Classes (abbreviated ABCs) complement duck-typing by providing a way to define interfaces when other techniques like hasattr() would be clumsy. Python comes with many built-in ABCs for data structures (in the collections module), numbers (in the numbers module), and streams (in the io module). You can create your own ABC with the abc module.

argument A value passed to a function or method, assigned to a named local variable in the function body. A function or method may have both positional arguments and keyword arguments in its definition. Positional and keyword arguments may be variable-length: * accepts or passes (if in the function definition or call) several positional arguments in a list, while ** does the same for keyword arguments in a dictionary.

Any expression may be used within the argument list, and the evaluated value is passed to the local variable.

attribute A value associated with an object which is referenced by name using dotted expressions. For example, if an object o has an attribute a it would be referenced as o.a.

BDFL Benevolent Dictator For Life, a.k.a. Guido van Rossum, Python’s creator.

bytecode Python source code is compiled into bytecode, the internal representation of a Python program in the interpreter. The bytecode is also cached in .pyc and .pyo files so that executing the same file is faster the second time (recompilation from source to bytecode can be avoided). This “intermediate language” is said to run on a virtual machine that executes the machine code corresponding to each bytecode.

class A template for creating user-defined objects. Class definitions normally contain method definitions which operate on instances of the class.

classic class Any class which does not inherit from object. See new-style class. Classic classes will be removed in Python 3.0.

coercion The implicit conversion of an instance of one type to another during an operation which involves two arguments of the same type. For example, int(3.15) converts the floating point number to the integer 3, but in 3+4.5, each argument is of a different type (one int, one float), and both must be converted to the same type before they can be added or it will raise a TypeError. Coercion between two operands can be performed with the coerce built-in function; thus, 3+4.5 is equivalent to calling operator.add(*coerce(3,
4.5) and results in `operator.add(3.0, 4.5)`. Without coercion, all arguments of even compatible types would have to be normalized to the same value by the programmer, e.g., `float(3)+4.5` rather than just `3+4.5`.

**complex number** An extension of the familiar real number system in which all numbers are expressed as a sum of a real part and an imaginary part. Imaginary numbers are real multiples of the imaginary unit (the square root of \(-1\)), often written \(i\) in mathematics or \(j\) in engineering. Python has built-in support for complex numbers, which are written with this latter notation; the imaginary part is written with a \(j\) suffix, e.g., \(3+1j\). To get access to complex equivalents of the `math` module, use `cmath`. Use of complex numbers is a fairly advanced mathematical feature. If you’re not aware of a need for them, it’s almost certain you can safely ignore them.

**context manager** An object which controls the environment seen in a `with` statement by defining `__enter__()` and `__exit__()` methods. See PEP 343.

**CPython** The canonical implementation of the Python programming language. The term “CPython” is used in contexts when necessary to distinguish this implementation from others such as Jython or IronPython.

**decorator** A function returning another function, usually applied as a function transformation using the `@wrapper` syntax. Common examples for decorators are `classmethod()` and `staticmethod()`.

The decorator syntax is merely syntactic sugar, the following two function definitions are semantically equivalent:

```python
def f(...):
    ...

f = staticmethod(f)
```

```python
@staticmethod
def f(...):
    ...
```

See the documentation for function definition (in The Python Language Reference) for more about decorators.

**descriptor** Any `new-style` object which defines the methods `__get__()`, `__set__()`, or `__delete__()`. When a class attribute is a descriptor, its special binding behavior is triggered upon attribute lookup. Normally, using `a.b` to get, set or delete an attribute looks up the object named `b` in the class dictionary for `a`, but if `b` is a descriptor, the respective descriptor method gets called. Understanding descriptors is a key to a deep understanding of Python because they are the basis for many features including functions, methods, properties, class methods, static methods, and reference to super classes.

For more information about descriptors’ methods, see Implementing Descriptors (in The Python Language Reference).

**dictionary** An associative array, where arbitrary keys are mapped to values. The use of `dict` closely resembles that for `list`, but the keys can be any object with a `__hash__()` function, not just integers. Called a hash in Perl.

**docstring** A string literal which appears as the first expression in a class, function or module. While ignored when the suite is executed, it is recognized by the compiler and put into the `__doc__` attribute of the enclosing class, function or module. Since it is available via introspection, it is the canonical place for documentation of the object.

**duck-typing** A pythonic programming style which determines an object’s type by inspection of its method or attribute signature rather than by explicit relationship to some type object (“If it looks like a duck and quacks like a duck, it must be a duck.”) By emphasizing interfaces rather than specific types, well-designed code improves its flexibility by allowing polymorphic substitution. Duck-typing avoids tests using `type()` or `isinstance()`. (Note, however, that duck-typing can be complemented with abstract base classes.) Instead, it typically employs `hasattr()` tests or `EAFP` programming.

**EAFP** Easier to ask for forgiveness than permission. This common Python coding style assumes the existence of valid keys or attributes and catches exceptions if the assumption proves false. This clean and fast style is
characterized by the presence of many try and except statements. The technique contrasts with the LBYL style common to many other languages such as C.

**expression** A piece of syntax which can be evaluated to some value. In other words, an expression is an accumulation of expression elements like literals, names, attribute access, operators or function calls which all return a value. In contrast to many other languages, not all language constructs are expressions. There are also statements which cannot be used as expressions, such as print or if. Assignments are also statements, not expressions.

**extension module** A module written in C or C++, using Python’s C API to interact with the core and with user code.

**finder** An object that tries to find the loader for a module. It must implement a method named find_module(). See PEP 302 for details.

**function** A series of statements which returns some value to a caller. It can also be passed zero or more arguments which may be used in the execution of the body. See also argument and method.

**__future__** A pseudo module which programmers can use to enable new language features which are not compatible with the current interpreter. For example, the expression 11/4 currently evaluates to 2. If the module in which it is executed had enabled true division by executing:

```python
from __future__ import division
```

the expression 11/4 would evaluate to 2.75. By importing the __future__ module and evaluating its variables, you can see when a new feature was first added to the language and when it will become the default:

```python
>>> import __future__
>>> __future__.division
_Feature((2, 2, 0, ‘alpha’, 2), (3, 0, 0, ‘alpha’, 0), 8192)
```

**garbage collection** The process of freeing memory when it is not used anymore. Python performs garbage collection via reference counting and a cyclic garbage collector that is able to detect and break reference cycles.

**generator** A function which returns an iterator. It looks like a normal function except that values are returned to the caller using a yield statement instead of a return statement. Generator functions often contain one or more for or while loops which yield elements back to the caller. The function execution is stopped at the yield keyword (returning the result) and is resumed there when the next element is requested by calling the next() method of the returned iterator.

**generator expression** An expression that returns a generator. It looks like a normal expression followed by a for expression defining a loop variable, range, and an optional if expression. The combined expression generates values for an enclosing function:

```python
>>> sum(i*i for i in range(10))  # sum of squares 0, 1, 4, ... 81
285
```

**GIL** See global interpreter lock.

**global interpreter lock** The lock used by Python threads to assure that only one thread executes in the CPython virtual machine at a time. This simplifies the CPython implementation by assuring that no two processes can access the same memory at the same time. Locking the entire interpreter makes it easier for the interpreter to be multi-threaded, at the expense of much of the parallelism afforded by multi-processor machines. Efforts have been made in the past to create a “free-threaded” interpreter (one which locks shared data at a much finer granularity), but so far none have been successful because performance suffered in the common single-processor case.

**hashable** An object is hashable if it has a hash value which never changes during its lifetime (it needs a __hash__() method), and can be compared to other objects (it needs an __eq__() or __cmp__() method). Hashable objects which compare equal must have the same hash value.

Hashability makes an object usable as a dictionary key and a set member, because these data structures use the hash value internally.
All of Python’s immutable built-in objects are hashable, while no mutable containers (such as lists or dictionaries) are. Objects which are instances of user-defined classes are hashable by default; they all compare unequal, and their hash value is their `id()`.

**IDLE**  An Integrated Development Environment for Python. IDLE is a basic editor and interpreter environment which ships with the standard distribution of Python. Good for beginners, it also serves as clear example code for those wanting to implement a moderately sophisticated, multi-platform GUI application.

**immutable**  An object with a fixed value. Immutable objects include numbers, strings and tuples. Such an object cannot be altered. A new object has to be created if a different value has to be stored. They play an important role in places where a constant hash value is needed, for example as a key in a dictionary.

**integer division**  Mathematical division discarding any remainder. For example, the expression `11/4` currently evaluates to 2 in contrast to the 2.75 returned by float division. Also called *floor division*. When dividing two integers the outcome will always be another integer (having the floor function applied to it). However, if one of the operands is another numeric type (such as a `float`), the result will be coerced (see *coercion*) to a common type. For example, an integer divided by a float will result in a float value, possibly with a decimal fraction. Integer division can be forced by using the `//` operator instead of the `/` operator. See also `__future__`.

**importer**  An object that both finds and loads a module; both a *finder* and *loader* object.

**interactive**  Python has an interactive interpreter which means you can enter statements and expressions at the interpreter prompt, immediately execute them and see their results. Just launch `python` with no arguments (possibly by selecting it from your computer’s main menu). It is a very powerful way to test out new ideas or inspect modules and packages (remember `help(x)`).

**interpreted**  Python is an interpreted language, as opposed to a compiled one, though the distinction can be blurry because of the presence of the bytecode compiler. This means that source files can be run directly without explicitly creating an executable which is then run. Interpreted languages typically have a shorter development/debug cycle than compiled ones, though their programs generally also run more slowly. See also `interactive`.

**iterable**  A container object capable of returning its members one at a time. Examples of iterables include all sequence types (such as `list`, `str`, and `tuple`) and some non-sequence types like `dict` and `file` and objects of any classes you define with an `__iter__()` or `__getitem__()` method. Iterables can be used in a `for` loop and in many other places where a sequence is needed (such as `zip()`, `map()`, ...). When an iterable object is passed as an argument to the built-in function `iter()`, it returns an iterator for the object. This iterator is good for one pass over the set of values. When using iterables, it is usually not necessary to call `iter()` or deal with iterator objects yourself. The `for` statement does that automatically for you, creating a temporary unnamed variable to hold the iterator for the duration of the loop. See also `iterator`, `sequence`, and `generator`.

**iterator**  An object representing a stream of data. Repeated calls to the iterator’s `next()` method return successive items in the stream. When no more data are available a `StopIteration` exception is raised instead. At this point, the iterator object is exhausted and any further calls to its `next()` method just raise `StopIteration` again. Iterators are required to have an `__iter__()` method that returns the iterator object itself so every iterator is also iterable and may be used in most places where other iterables are accepted. One notable exception is code which attempts multiple iteration passes. A container object (such as a `list`) produces a fresh new iterator each time you pass it to the `iter()` function or use it in a `for` loop. Attempting this with an iterator will just return the same exhausted iterator object used in the previous iteration pass, making it appear like an empty container.

More information can be found in *Iterator Types* (in The Python Library Reference).

**keyword argument**  Arguments which are preceded with a `variable_name=` in the call. The variable name designates the local name in the function to which the value is assigned. `*` is used to accept or pass a dictionary of keyword arguments. See `argument`.

**lambda**  An anonymous inline function consisting of a single `expression` which is evaluated when the function is called. The syntax to create a lambda function is `lambda [arguments]:  expression`
LBYL. Look before you leap. This coding style explicitly tests for pre-conditions before making calls or lookups. This style contrasts with the EAFP approach and is characterized by the presence of many if statements.

list A built-in Python sequence. Despite its name it is more akin to an array in other languages than to a linked list since access to elements are O(1).

list comprehension A compact way to process all or part of the elements in a sequence and return a list with the result. result = ["0x%02x" % x for x in range(256) if x % 2 == 0] generates a list of strings containing even hex numbers (0x..) in the range from 0 to 255. The if clause is optional. If omitted, all elements in range(256) are processed.

loader An object that loads a module. It must define a method named load_module(). A loader is typically returned by a finder. See PEP 302 for details.

mapping A container object (such as dict) which supports arbitrary key lookups using the special method __getitem__().

metaclass The class of a class. Class definitions create a class name, a class dictionary, and a list of base classes. The metaclass is responsible for taking those three arguments and creating the class. Most object oriented programming languages provide a default implementation. What makes Python special is that it is possible to create custom metaclasses. Most users never need this tool, but when the need arises, metaclasses can provide powerful, elegant solutions. They have been used for logging attribute access, adding thread-safety, tracking object creation, implementing singletons, and many other tasks.

More information can be found in Customizing class creation (in The Python Language Reference).

method A function which is defined inside a class body. If called as an attribute of an instance of that class, the method will get the instance object as its first argument (which is usually called self). See function and nested scope.

mutable Mutable objects can change their value but keep their id(). See also immutable.

named tuple Any tuple-like class whose indexable elements are also accessible using named attributes (for example, time.localtime() returns a tuple-like object where the year is accessible either with an index such as t[0] or with a named attribute like t.tm_year).

A named tuple can be a built-in type such as time.struct_time, or it can be created with a regular class definition. A full featured named tuple can also be created with the factory function collections.namedtuple(). The latter approach automatically provides extra features such as a self-documenting representation like Employee(name='jones', title='programmer').

namespace The place where a variable is stored. Namespaces are implemented as dictionaries. There are the local, global and built-in namespaces as well as nested namespaces in objects (in methods). Namespaces support modularity by preventing naming conflicts. For instance, the functions __builtin__.open() and os.open() are distinguished by their namespaces. Namespaces also aid readability and maintainability by making it clear which module implements a function. For instance, writing random.seed() or itertools.izip() makes it clear that those functions are implemented by the random and itertools modules, respectively.

nested scope The ability to refer to a variable in an enclosing definition. For instance, a function defined inside another function can refer to variables in the outer function. Note that nested scopes work only for reference and not for assignment which will always write to the innermost scope. In contrast, local variables both read and write in the innermost scope. Likewise, global variables read and write to the global namespace.

new-style class Any class which inherits from object. This includes all built-in types like list and dict. Only new-style classes can use Python’s newer, versatile features like __slots__, descriptors, properties, and __getattribute__().

More information can be found in New-style and classic classes (in The Python Language Reference).

object Any data with state (attributes or value) and defined behavior (methods). Also the ultimate base class of any new-style class.
**positional argument**  The arguments assigned to local names inside a function or method, determined by the order in which they were given in the call. * is used to either accept multiple positional arguments (when in the definition), or pass several arguments as a list to a function. See argument.

**Python 3000**  Nickname for the next major Python version, 3.0 (coined long ago when the release of version 3 was something in the distant future.) This is also abbreviated “Py3k”.

**Pythonic**  An idea or piece of code which closely follows the most common idioms of the Python language, rather than implementing code using concepts common to other languages. For example, a common idiom in Python is to loop over all elements of an iterable using a for statement. Many other languages don’t have this type of construct, so people unfamiliar with Python sometimes use a numerical counter instead:

```python
for i in range(len(food)):
    print food[i]
```

As opposed to the cleaner, Pythonic method:

```python
for piece in food:
    print piece
```

**reference count**  The number of references to an object. When the reference count of an object drops to zero, it is deallocated. Reference counting is generally not visible to Python code, but it is a key element of the CPython implementation. The sys module defines a getrefcount() function that programmers can call to return the reference count for a particular object.

**__slots__**  A declaration inside a new-style class that saves memory by pre-declaring space for instance attributes and eliminating instance dictionaries. Though popular, the technique is somewhat tricky to get right and is best reserved for rare cases where there are large numbers of instances in a memory-critical application.

**sequence**  An iterable which supports efficient element access using integer indices via the __getitem__() special method and defines a len() method that returns the length of the sequence. Some built-in sequence types are list, str, tuple, and unicode. Note that dict also supports __getitem__() and __len__(), but is considered a mapping rather than a sequence because the lookups use arbitrary immutable keys rather than integers.

**slice**  An object usually containing a portion of a sequence. A slice is created using the subscript notation, [ ] with colons between numbers when several are given, such as in variable_name[1:3:5]. The bracket (subscript) notation uses slice objects internally (or in older versions, __getslice__() and __setslice__()).

**special method**  A method that is called implicitly by Python to execute a certain operation on a type, such as addition. Such methods have names starting and ending with double underscores. Special methods are documented in Special method names (in The Python Language Reference).

**statement**  A statement is part of a suite (a “block” of code). A statement is either an expression or a one of several constructs with a keyword, such as if, while or print.

**triple-quoted string**  A string which is bound by three instances of either a quotation mark (”) or an apostrophe (‘). While they don’t provide any functionality not available with single-quoted strings, they are useful for a number of reasons. They allow you to include unescaped single and double quotes within a string and they can span multiple lines without the use of the continuation character, making them especially useful when writing docstrings.

**type**  The type of a Python object determines what kind of object it is; every object has a type. An object’s type is accessible as its __class__ attribute or can be retrieved with type(obj).

**virtual machine**  A computer defined entirely in software. Python’s virtual machine executes the bytecode emitted by the bytecode compiler.

**Zen of Python**  Listing of Python design principles and philosophies that are helpful in understanding and using the language. The listing can be found by typing “import this” at the interactive prompt.
ABOUT THESE DOCUMENTS

These documents are generated from reStructuredText sources by Sphinx, a document processor specifically written for the Python documentation.

Development of the documentation and its toolchain takes place on the docs@python.org mailing list. We’re always looking for volunteers wanting to help with the docs, so feel free to send a mail there!

Many thanks go to:

- Fred L. Drake, Jr., the creator of the original Python documentation toolset and writer of much of the content;
- the Docutils project for creating reStructuredText and the Docutils suite;
- Fredrik Lundh for his Alternative Python Reference project from which Sphinx got many good ideas.

See Reporting Bugs in Python for information how to report bugs in this documentation, or Python itself.

B.1 Contributors to the Python Documentation

This section lists people who have contributed in some way to the Python documentation. It is probably not complete – if you feel that you or anyone else should be on this list, please let us know (send email to docs@python.org), and we’ll be glad to correct the problem.

It is only with the input and contributions of the Python community that Python has such wonderful documentation – Thank You!
HISTORY AND LICENSE

C.1 History of the software

Python was created in the early 1990s by Guido van Rossum at Stichting Mathematisch Centrum (CWI, see http://www.cwi.nl/) in the Netherlands as a successor of a language called ABC. Guido remains Python’s principal author, although it includes many contributions from others.

In 1995, Guido continued his work on Python at the Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI, see http://www.cnri.reston.va.us/) in Reston, Virginia where he released several versions of the software.

In May 2000, Guido and the Python core development team moved to BeOpen.com to form the BeOpen PythonLabs team. In October of the same year, the PythonLabs team moved to Digital Creations (now Zope Corporation; see http://www.zope.com/). In 2001, the Python Software Foundation (PSF, see http://www.python.org/psf/) was formed, a non-profit organization created specifically to own Python-related Intellectual Property. Zope Corporation is a sponsoring member of the PSF.

All Python releases are Open Source (see http://www.opensource.org/ for the Open Source Definition). Historically, most, but not all, Python releases have also been GPL-compatible; the table below summarizes the various releases.

<table>
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C.3.1 Mersenne Twister

The _random module includes code based on a download from http://www.math.keio.ac.jp/~matumoto/MT2002/emt19937ar.html. The following are the verbatim comments from the original code:
A C-program for MT19937, with initialization improved 2002/1/26.
Coded by Takuji Nishimura and Makoto Matsumoto.

Before using, initialize the state by using init_genrand(seed)
or init_by_array(init_key, key_length).

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Any feedback is very welcome.
http://www.math.keio.ac.jp/matumoto/emt.html
email: matumoto@math.keio.ac.jp

C.3.2 Sockets

The socket module uses the functions, getaddrinfo(), and getnameinfo(), which are coded in separate

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C.3.4 MD5 message digest algorithm

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L. Peter Deutsch
ghost@aladdin.com

Independent implementation of MD5 (RFC 1321).

This code implements the MD5 Algorithm defined in RFC 1321, whose text is available at
   http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc1321.txt
The code is derived from the text of the RFC, including the test suite (section A.5) but excluding the rest of Appendix A. It does not include any code or documentation that is identified in the RFC as being copyrighted.

The original and principal author of md5.h is L. Peter Deutsch <ghost@aladdin.com>. Other authors are noted in the change history that follows (in reverse chronological order):

2002-04-13 lpd Removed support for non-ANSI compilers; removed references to Ghostscript; clarified derivation from RFC 1321; now handles byte order either statically or dynamically.
1999-11-04 lpd Edited comments slightly for automatic TOC extraction.
1999-10-18 lpd Fixed typo in header comment (ansl2knr rather than md5); added conditionalization for C++ compilation from Martin Purschke <purschke@bnl.gov>.
1999-05-03 lpd Original version.
C.3.5 Asynchronous socket services

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Modified by Jack Jansen, CWI, July 1995:
- Use binascii module to do the actual line-by-line conversion
  between ascii and binary. This results in a 1000-fold speedup. The C
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- Arguments more compliant with Python standard

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INDEX

Symbols

- `–help` command line option, 4
- `–version` command line option, 5
- `-3` command line option, 7
- `-B` command line option, 5
- `-E` command line option, 5
- `-O` command line option, 5
- `-OO` command line option, 5
- `-Q <arg>` command line option, 5
- `-S` command line option, 6
- `-V` command line option, 5
- `-W arg` command line option, 6
- `-c <command>` command line option, 3
- `-d` command line option, 5
- `-h` command line option, 4
- `-i` command line option, 5
- `-m <module-name>` command line option, 4
- `-s` command line option, 5
- `-t` command line option, 6
- `-u` command line option, 6
- `-v` command line option, 6
- `-x` command line option, 7

... 25
%PATH%, 16
%PYTHONPATH%, 17
__future__, 27
__slots__, 30
>>>, 25
2to3, 25

A
abstract base class, 25
argument, 25
attribute, 25

B
BDFL, 25
bytecode, 25

C
class, 25
classic class, 25
coercion, 25
command line option
  –help, 4
  –version, 5
  -3, 7
  -B, 5
  -E, 5
  -O, 5
  -OO, 5
  -Q <arg>, 5
  -S, 6
  -V, 5
  -W arg, 6
  -c <command>, 3
  -d, 5
  -h, 4
  -i, 5
  -m <module-name>, 4
  -s, 5
-t, 6
-u, 6
-v, 6
-x, 7
complex number, 26
context manager, 26
CPython, 26

D
decorator, 26
descriptor, 26
dictionary, 26
docstring, 26
duck-typing, 26

E
EAFP, 26
environment variable
%PATH%, 16
%PYTHONPATH%, 17
exec_prefix, 12
PATH, 7, 12
prefix, 12
PYTHON*, 5
PYTHONCASEOK, 8
PYTHONDEBUG, 5, 8
PYTHONDONTWRITEBYTECODE, 5, 8
PYTHONDUMPPREFS, 9
PYTHONEXECUTABLE, 8
PYTHONHOME, 5, 7
PYTHONINSPECT, 5, 8
PYTHONIOENCODING, 8
PYTHONMALLOCSTATS, 9
PYTHONNUMBERSITE, 8
PYTHONOPTIMIZE, 5, 8
PYTHONPATH, 5, 7, 17, 22
PYTHONSTARTUP, 5, 7
PYTHONTHREADDEBUG, 9
PYTHONUNBUFFERED, 6, 8
PYTHONUSERBASE, 8
PYTHONVERBOSE, 6, 8
PYTHONZ2K, 8
exec_prefix, 12
expression, 27
extension module, 27

F
finder, 27
function, 27

G
garbage collection, 27
generator, 27
generator expression, 27
GIL, 27
global interpreter lock, 27

H
hashable, 27

I
IDLE, 28
immutable, 28
importer, 28
integer division, 28
interactive, 28
interpreted, 28
iterable, 28
iterator, 28

K
keyword argument, 28

L
lambda, 28
LBYL, 28
list, 29
list comprehension, 29
loader, 29

M
mapping, 29
metaclass, 29
method, 29
mutable, 29

N
named tuple, 29
namespace, 29
nested scope, 29
new-style class, 29

O
object, 29

P
PATH, 7, 12
positional argument, 29
prefix, 12
Python 3000, 30
Python Enhancement Proposals
  PEP 11, 15
  PEP 230, 7
  PEP 238, 5
  PEP 302, 27, 29
  PEP 338, 4
  PEP 343, 26
PEP 370, 5, 8
PYTHON*, 5
PYTHONDEBUG, 5
PYTHONDON'TWRITEBYTECODE, 5
PYTHONHOME, 5, 7
Pythonic, 30
PYTHONINSPECT, 5
PYTHONOPTIMIZE, 5
PYTHONPATH, 5, 7, 17, 22
PYTHONSTARTUP, 5
PYTHONUNBUFFERED, 6
PYTHONVERBOSE, 6

R
reference count, 30

S
sequence, 30
slice, 30
special method, 30
statement, 30

T
triple-quoted string, 30
type, 30

V
virtual machine, 30

Z
Zen of Python, 30