## Using Al Tools and Python to Automate Tasks

A two-day, beginner-friendly journey to streamline workflows, boost productivity, and integrate AI into everyday tasks.

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- 2. Explore ways to leverage LLMs in combination with Python
- 3. Learn how to automate tasks such as file organization and data entry
- 4. Use Python scripts to integrate with external LLM APIs

## Survey Question: Do you have a subscription for ChatGPT/Claude/Gemini?

### Why Learn to Automate?

• Automate Repetitive Tasks

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- Increase Productivity

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  - Replace expensive subscription tools with your own scripts

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- Analyse Massive Amounts of Data

#### The Real Reason....

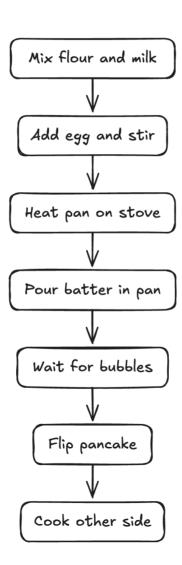
## Writing code = the most general skill you can have!

It is a superpower! :)

## Scripting vs. Programming

An important distinction!

#### Both are About Following Recipes



• Writing code to full fill a set of pre-defined steps that accomplish a task

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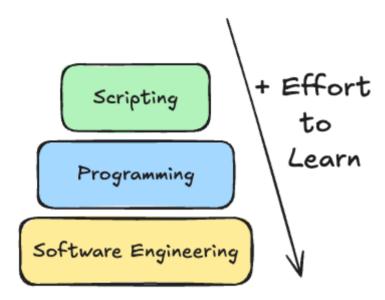
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- Toy example -> Renaming multiple files

```
# Rename all .txt files in a directory to include today's date
import os
from datetime import date

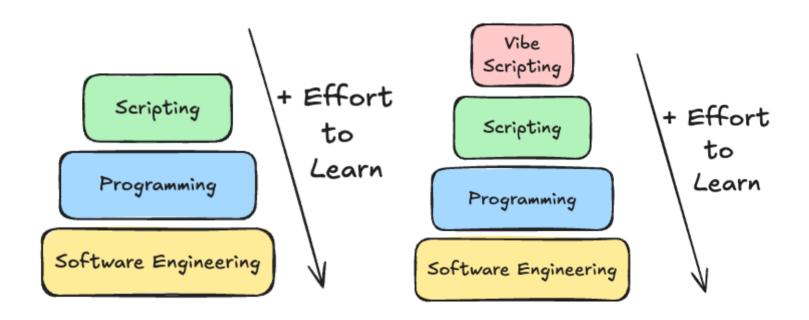
today = date.today().strftime("%Y-%m-%d")

for filename in os.listdir("."):
    if filename.endswith(".txt"):
        new_name = f"{today}_{filename}"
        os.rename(filename, new_name)
```

#### Vibe Scripting?



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- I call it "The Ostrich Approach to Learning Python"





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#### **≡** Ostrich algorithm

攻 14 languages ∨

Article Talk Read Edit View history Tools ∨

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

In computer science, the **ostrich algorithm** is a strategy of ignoring potential problems on the basis that they may be exceedingly rare. It is named after the ostrich effect which is defined as "to stick one's head in the sand and pretend there is no problem". It is used when it appears the situation may be more cost-effectively managed by allowing the problem to continue to occur rather than to attempt its prevention.

## It's about Learning What We Need for Our Tasks!

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And purposefuly ignoring that which does not seem to have any effect on its success.

### Learning Python with Al

Your Personal Programming Tutor

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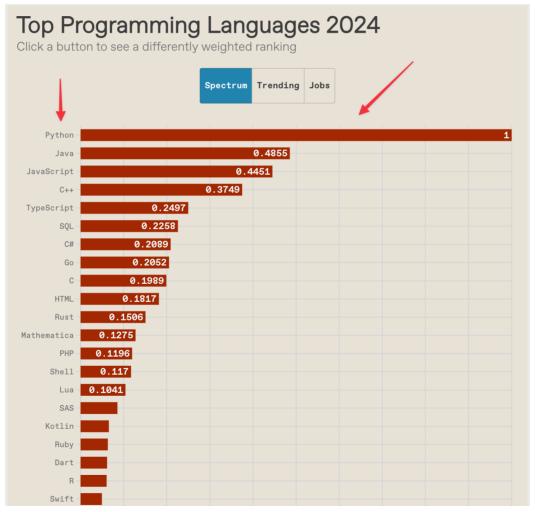
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- Example conversation starter:

# Why Python?







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- Python is super easy to learn due to its proximity with natural language

### The Busy Person Guide to Python Basics

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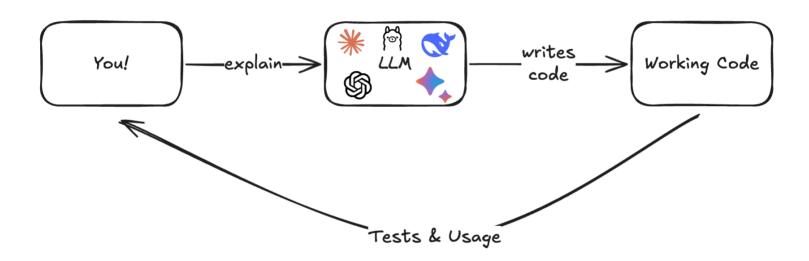
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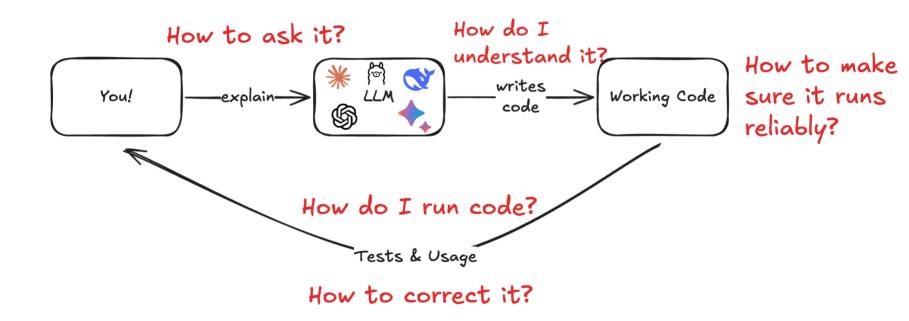
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- Use AI conversationally! Asking questions and clarifying what you don't know!

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### Demo - Setting Up Your Environment

(Installing Python, uv, Editor, Jupyter Notebook, AI chatbot)



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- To organize things, we use **variables** to define what each thing is

#### Data Types, Operations, Variables - Example

• Here is a piece of code that defines a variable of some type and performs a simple operation on the data stored in the variable

```
# This is data of type string!
name = "Lucas"

# This is data of type integer!
actual_age = 33

# This is data of type integer!
mental_age = 12

# our operation
average_age_between_actual_and_mental = (actual_age + mental_age) / 2

# special function that displays what goes inside of it
print(average_age_between_actual_and_mental)

# this would be a float!
# Output: 22.5
```

### Data Types; Operations; Variables - Demo

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- Logical operations (and, or, not)
- Comparison operations (>, <, >=, <=, ==, !=)</li>

• Variables: Storing data for reuse, assigning and reassigning values:

```
a = 10
b = 20
print(a + b)
# Output: 30
```

### Demo: Functions, Lists & Loops

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- For example, a function that calculates the total cost of an item including tax
- We could do this by simply writing a script:

```
# Arithmetic operation: multiplication of parameters
tax = price * tax_rate
# Arithmetic operation: addition of variables
total = price + tax
```

But what if I want to re-use this code for different prices and tax rates?

• Here is what it would look like if we define a function to do this:

```
def calculate_total(price, tax_rate):
   tax = price * tax_rate
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def calculate_total(price, tax_rate):
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```

• Now we can re-use the function for different prices and tax rates:

```
shirt_price = 10
shirt_tax_rate = 0.05
pants_price = 20
pants_tax_rate = 0.1

print(calculate_total(shirt_price, shirt_tax_rate))
# Output: 10.5
print(calculate_total(pants_price, pants_tax_rate))
# Output: 22.0
```

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- **Defining a Function**: def function\_name(parameters):
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- Best Practices: Keep them short, descriptive, and single-purpose

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print(tasks[0:2])
# Output: ['Buy groceries', 'Finish project']
```

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# Below we use an imaginary function that asks a robot to do a task
for task in tasks:
    ask_robot_to_do(task)
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**Common Uses**: Batch renaming files in a directory, processing data from tables, etc...

## Demo - Dictionaries, Tabular Data, Conditionals

• Dictionaries: Key-value pairs for storing related data

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prices = {
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print(prices["apple"])
# Output: 0.50

print(prices["banana"])
# Output: 0.75
```

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Accessing Values: Use keys to lookup values quickly

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• **Common Uses**: Storing configurations, mapping relationships, caching data

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```
# Example of a boolean comparison
a = 10
b = 20
print(a == b) # Output: False
print(a != b) # Output: True
print(a > b) # Output: False
print(a < b) # Output: True
print(a >= b) # Output: True
print(a <= b) # Output: True</pre>
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• Logical Operators: and, or, not

```
# Example of a logical operator
print(True and False) # Output: False
print(True or False) # Output: True
print(not True) # Output: False
```

```
# Example of an if statement
if a > b:
    print("a is greater than b")
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# Example of an if/elif/else statement
if a > b:
    print("a is greater than b")
elif a == b:
    print("a is equal to b")
else:
    print("a is less than b")
```

## Demo - Working with Data, APIs & Packages

# Reading/Writing

• Tabular Data: Data that is organized in a table format

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- Common Formats: .csv, .json, .xlsx, .xls
- CSV Files store data in rows and columns via comma-separated values:

Name, Age, City John Smith, 32, New York Jane Doe, 28, San Francisco

Name	Age	City
John Smith	32	New York
Jane Doe	28	San Francisco

# APIs, Packages, and AI as an API

• **APIs 101**: Application Programming Interface—send a request, get a response

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- APIs 101: Application Programming Interface—send a request, get a response
- Python Packages: Example: requests library to make HTTP calls
- AI as an API: Connect to services like OpenAI or Claude for text generation, content analysis, and more

# Demo - Vibe Scripting with UV + AI

# How to Use AI to Learn/Use Python

A quick detour to set up an AI toolkit to speed up our Automation skills

#### **A**sk,**R**un,**U**nderstand,**F**ix,Be **S**afe

• Ask  $\rightarrow$  how to ask effectively, give the right context

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- Be **S**afe → pittfalls & security risks

• Be detailed

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- **Tools** to help with feeding data/repo into LLMs
  - <a href="https://github.com/yamadashy/repomix">https://github.com/yamadashy/repomix</a>
  - gitingest
  - r.jina.ai
  - arxiv-txt.org
  - o llms-txt
  - files-to-prompt
- Use **meta-prompts**:

```
I have this problem: {describe the problem}
Help me write a good prompt that encapsulates this into a single Python script.
```

- For tough problems use **reasoning models** 
  - Claude + Extended Thinking
  - O-series models from OpenAI
  - o Gemini 2.5 Pro
  - o DeepSeek R1

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  - LLM generates the script
  - You run the script
  - You inspect the output
  - You ask the LLM to fix the script (if needed)

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  - LLM generates the script
  - You run the script
  - You inspect the output
  - You ask the LLM to fix the script (if needed)
- Ask for comments on the code
- Feed the output of the terminal to the AI and ask to fix it

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- Check file paths ensure scripts won't delete important files
- Add safeguards for loops (break conditions, iteration limits)
- Respect rate limits and website terms of service when scraping
- Quick Safety Checklist: Read code → Test with dummy data → Have backups → Use version control

# Demo - Implementing the A.R.U.F.S Framework

# Demo - Automating Data Extraction

## **Automating Data Extraction**

• Target Websites or Documents: Identify patterns or structures (tables, IDs, HTML tags)

## **Automating Data Extraction**

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- Target Websites or Documents: Identify patterns or structures (tables, IDs, HTML tags)
- Techniques: Using Beautiful Soup, Pandas, or request-response cycles
- **Practical Examples**: Extracting data from a CSV, scraping a simple webpage for product listings

### Automating Basic Data Analysis

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- Basic Analysis: Calculating averages, sums, or finding patterns in data
- Visualization: Creating simple charts or graphs to represent findings

### **Automating Slides**

• Effective data wrangling for high quality slides

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- Effective data wrangling for high quality slides
- A Hybrid Approach: AI + Python Scripts
- Bulk Processing to save time

# Automating the Browser

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- **Common Tasks**: Logging in to websites, navigating pages, clicking buttons, scraping dynamic elements
- Why Automate Browser Tasks?: Speed up online research, data entry, or repetitive website interactions

### **Automating Filling Out Forms**

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- **Scripts**: Using selenium to locate elements by ID/class/xpath and input data
- **Real-World Use**: Automating repetitive website sign-up processes, survey completion, or internal data-entry forms

### Demo - Prompts, Tips & Tricks

## Using Al!= Slop

### Using Al != Slop

Slop is using unreviewed output (like code) from AI models



Watching in real time as "slop" becomes a term of art. the way that "spam" became the term for unwanted emails, "slop" is going in the dictionary as the term for unwanted AI generated content



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- 1. Working with AI involves having a system for effectively reviewing high quality outputs
- 2. Means having good systems for generating good outputs on the first place
- 3. Then learning to put in place a procedure for effective review and feedback on top of the outputs you get