Installing Python on a Mac

A Installing Visual Studio Code

A.1.1: Go to the Visual Studio Website at VS Code, and download the file for Mac.

A.1.2. Drag and drop the "Visual Studio Code" file in Downloads to the Applications folder.
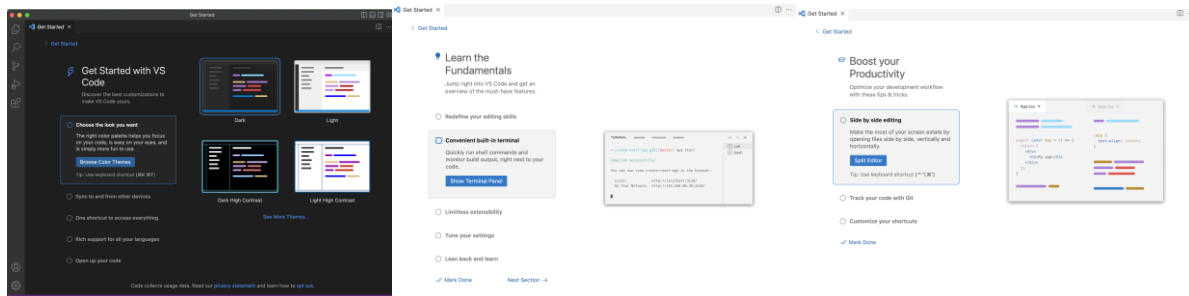

A.1.3 Open VS-Code from the Applications folder.

A.1.4 Select the theme, this is mostly aesthetic. There is no need for any further customization at this stage. Once you've selected the theme, scroll down and click on the next button. In the next tutorials I will proceed with the "Light" version but this is largely a matter of taste.
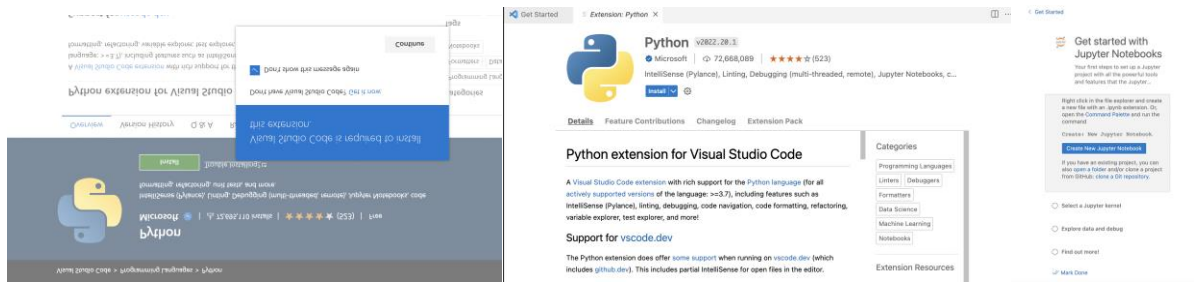
For now leave the rest of the options blank in the next two screens. You can come back to these later in the "Getting Started" tab of VS Code.

When you're finished selecting the options click on "Mark Done"

A.2.1 Go to https://marketplace.visualstudio.com/items?itemName=ms-python.python and download the Python extension for VS-Code. Click on "Install". When you see the popup, click "Continue". When it asks you to open Visual Studio Code click "Allow".

The link should lead you back to Visual Studio, in the Extensions tab. Click on "Install". A screen will appear for you to create a Jupyter Notebook. For now, just click "Mark Done".

NOTE: At this stage we've only downloaded the graphical interface but not the Python Interpreter software itself. We are not ready to run Python code just yet!
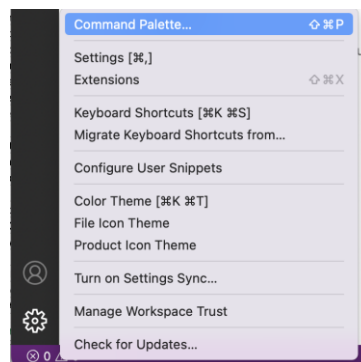
B: Installing Python

B.1 Download the latest version of Python from https://www.python.org/downloads/. When you get a pop-up window, click "Allow".
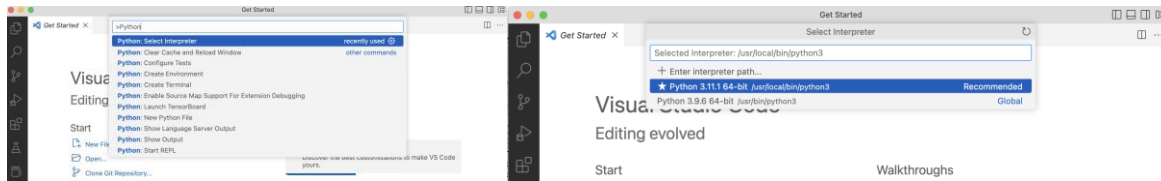

B.2 Go to downloads and double click the Python package, you will get a prompt that asks you permission to open the installer. Click on all "Continue" options and select the installation location. Choose all the default options.

C. Connecting Python with Visual Studio Code

C.1 Open VS-Code, go to the lower left corner and click the Settings button (the gear symbol). Then click "Command Pallette".

C.2 You will get a search bar, where you should type "Python". You will get several options. Click on "Python: Select Interpreter". Then select your preferred Python installation. If this is our first installation you will only get one option.

D. Install key packages:

Open the Mac terminal and run the command

pip3 install jupyter

Opening your first notebook in VS-Code

Open VS-Code and select "New File". You will get a pop-up window. Seelct "Jupyter Notebook". This will open a new tab with a "Jupyter-Notebook" File. You will see a file with an empty empty box. Type in the following command in the box:

print("Hello World")

Then click the "Run all" button in the top panel. You should now see the output below the box, with your desired text. Try to play around with including your own text. NOTE: print() is our first example of a function that takes a text as an input and output the desired message on the console. We have to denote text between quotations.