

How to Install Python on Windows

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by **Jason Fitzpatrick** on July 11th, 2017

Python doesn't come prepackaged with Windows, but that doesn't mean Windows users won't find the flexible programming language useful. It's not quite as simple as installing the newest version however, so let's make sure you get the right tools for the task at hand.

First released in 1991, Python is a popular high-level programming language used for general purpose programming. Thanks to a design philosophy that emphasizes readability it has long been a favorite of hobby coders and serious programmers alike. Not only is it an easy language (comparatively speaking, that is) to pick up but you'll find thousands of projects online that require you have Python installed to use the program.

Which Version Do You Need?

Unfortunately, there was a significant update to Python several years ago that created a big split between Python versions. This can make things a bit confusing to newcomers, but don't worry. We'll walk you through installing both major versions

When you visit the [Python for Windows download page](#), you'll immediately see the division. Right at the top, square and center, the repository asks if you want the latest release of Python 2 or Python 3 (2.7.13 and 3.6.1, respectively, as of this tutorial).



RELATED: [Add Dungeons, Ruins, and Treasure Hunts to Your Minecraft World with MCDungeon](#)

Newer is better, right? Maybe so, maybe not. The version you want depends on your end goal. Let's say, for example, that you read [our article about expanding your Minecraft world](#)

with [MCDungeon](#) and are excited to add cool stuff to your worlds. That project is coded in Python and requires Python 2.7—you can't run the MCDungeon project with Python 3.6. In fact, if you're exploring hobby projects like MCDungeon, you'll find that nearly all of them use 2.7. If your goal is to get some project that ends in a ".py" extension up and running, then there's a very, very good chance you'll need 2.7 for it.

On the other hand, if you're looking to actually learn Python, we recommend installing both versions side by side (which you can do with zero risk and only a tiny bit of setup hassle). This lets you work with the newest version of the language, but also run older Python scripts (and test backwards compatibility for newer projects). Comparing the two versions is an article unto itself, though, so we'll defer to the Python project wiki where you can read their [well written overview of the differences](#).

You can download just Python 2 or Python 3 if you're sure you only need a particular version. We're going the distance today and will be installing both of them, so we recommend you download both versions and do the same. Under the main entry for both versions you'll see an "x86-64" installer, as seen below.

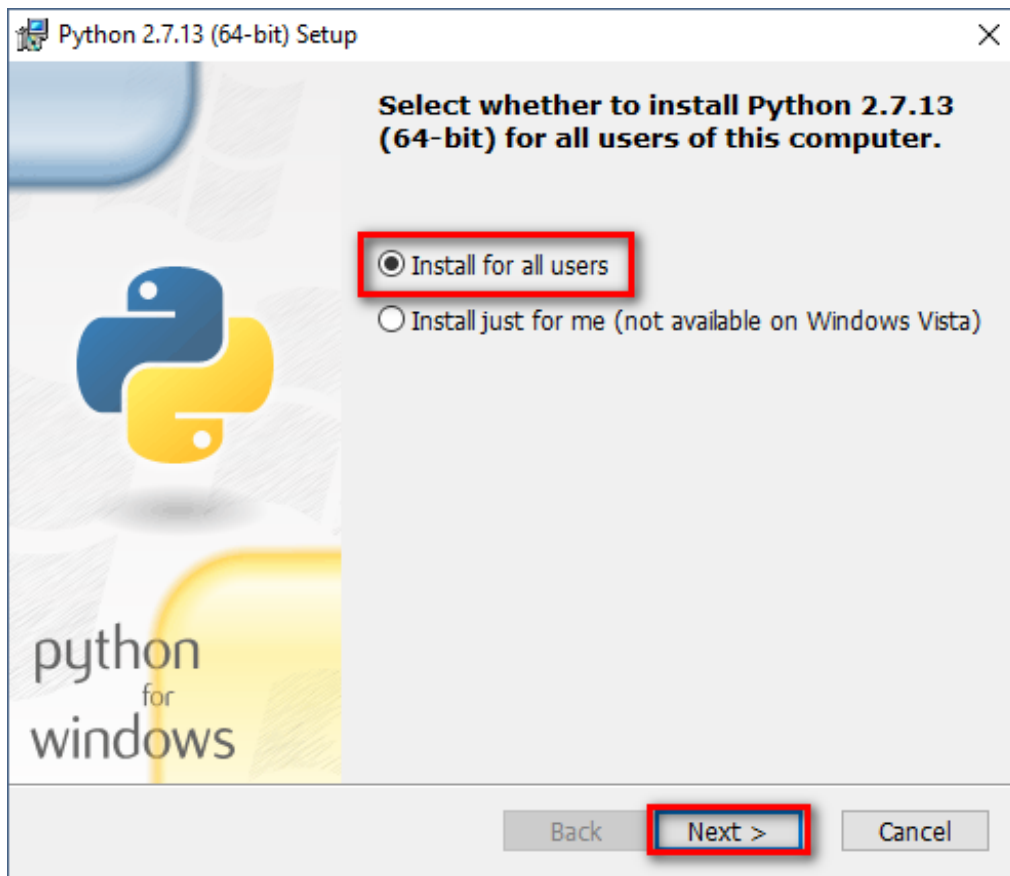
- [Python 3.6.1 - 2017-03-21](#)
 - Download [Windows x86 web-based installer](#)
 - Download [Windows x86 executable installer](#)
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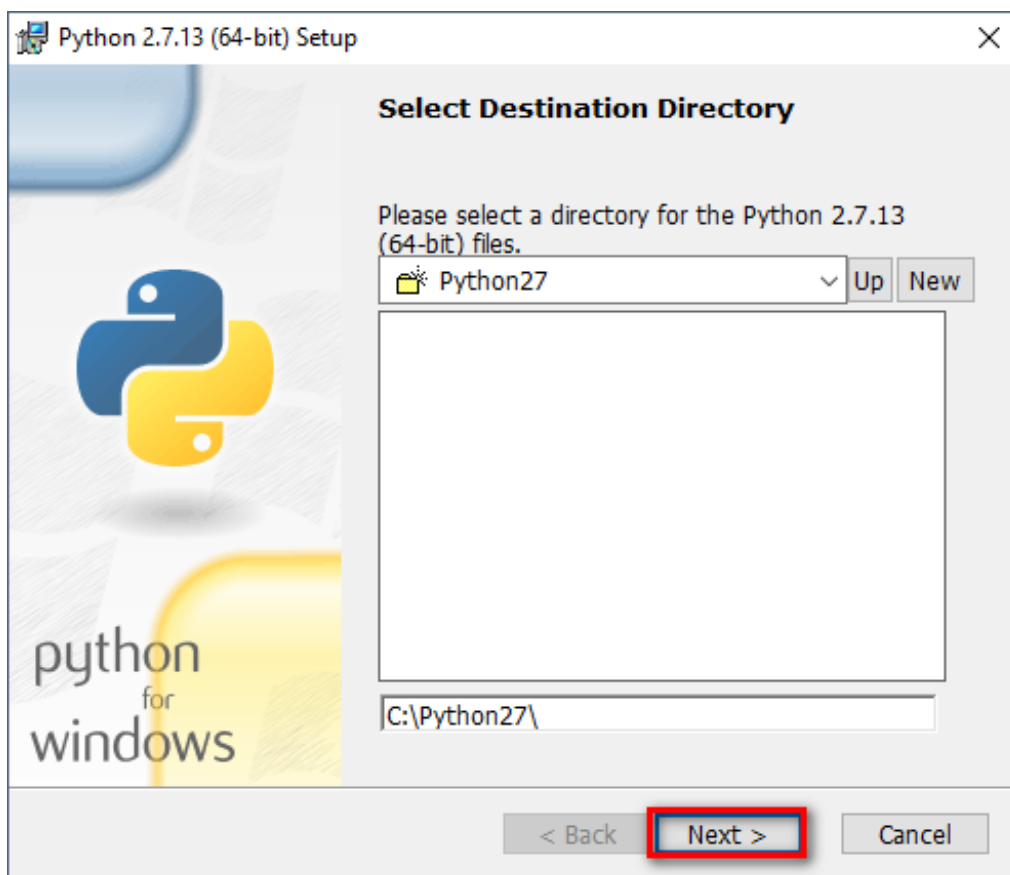
This installer will install the appropriate 32-bit or 64-bit version on your computer automatically (here's [some further reading](#) if you want to know more about the differences between the two).

How to Install Python 2

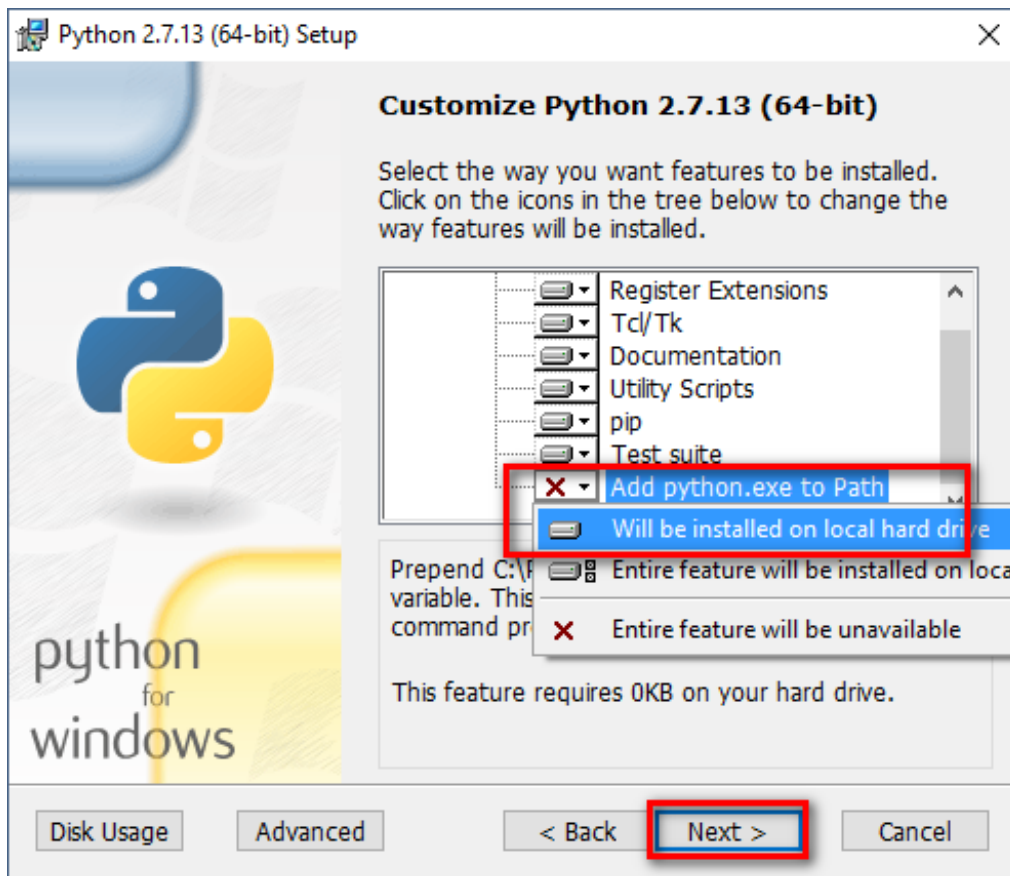
Installing Python 2 is a snap, and unlike in years past, the installer will even set the path variable for you (something we'll be getting into a bit later). [Download and run the installer](#), select "Install for all users," and then click "Next."



On the directory selection screen, leave the directory as “Python27” and click “Next.”



On the customization screen, scroll down, click “Add python.exe to Path,” and then select “Will be installed on local hard drive.” When you’re done, click “Next.”



You don't have to make any more decisions after this point. Just click through the wizard to complete the installation. When the installation is finished, you can confirm the installation by opening up Command Prompt and typing the following command:

```
python -V
```

```
C:\Users\Jason>python -V
Python 2.7.13
```

Success! If all you need is Python 2.7 for some project or another, you can stop right here. It's installed, the path variable is set, and you're off to the races.