

Girls' Programming Network

Cryptography

Create a Vigenere Cipher encryptor and decryptor!

TUTORS ONLY

This project was created by GPN Australia for GPN sites all around Australia!

This workbook and related materials were created by tutors at:

Sydney, Canberra and Perth



Girls' Programming Network

If you see any of the following tutors don't forget to thank them!!

Writers	Testers
Renee Noble	Jess Austin
Caitlin Macleod	Julia Wong
Alex Kaczmarek	
Levie Cabuang	
Pamita Mund	
Courtney Ross	
Feona Sims	
Deanna Arora	
Alex McCulloch	

Part 0: Vigenere Ciphers

A vigenere cipher is like several Caesar ciphers combined.

Previously in our Caesar cipher we had a single rotation. For instance a rotation key number of 3 would mean we rotate our cipher wheel like this:

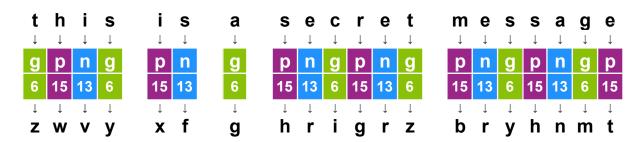


For Vigenere ciphers we use several rotations. Instead of having the same rotation for each letter, we take turns using different rotations for different letters in the message we are encrypting.

Instead of one rotation key number we have a keyword, for instance our keyword might be "gpn". "gpn" is a way of telling you the different rotations, 6, 15 and 13.

Keyword								
g	р	n						
6	15	13						
TABCOURTH ON THE GHILL ON THE G	ZABCOERGHI WWYDPQRSJUWXXX THOPQRSJUWXX THOPQRSJ	A THOUSA OUNTY THE TANK THE TA						

So if we want to encrypt a secret message we take turns at using the different rotations. This is what it looks like if we encrypt the message "this is a secret message":

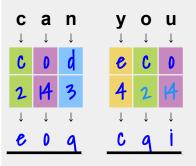


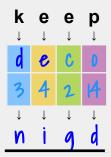
Use your cipher wheel to encrypt these messages with vigenere ciphers

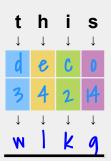
Task 0.1: Hide this message

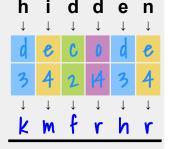
Encrypt "can you keep this hidden" using the key "code".

We've done some of the work for you. .









Task 0.2: Hide another

Encrypt "hide this message" using the key "key".

h	i	d	е
1	1	1	\downarrow
K	e	Y	K
10	4	24	10
\downarrow	\downarrow	\downarrow	\downarrow
٢	M	b	0





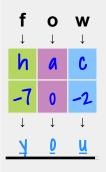
Use your cipher wheel to decrypt these vigenere encrypted messages

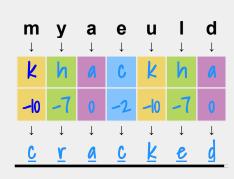
Just like Caesar ciphers, use the negative of each letter in the key to decrypt the message

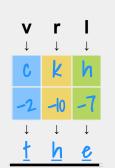
Task 0.3: Uncover the message

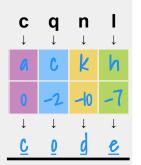
Can you decrypt this message using the key "hack".

We've done some of the work for you. .









Task 0.4: Crack another Can you decrypt this message using the key "bug". k У m X -20 -6 1 -20 -6 -1 -20 -6 -1 -20 -20 -6 -1 -20 N

☐ CHECKPOINT ☐	
If you can tick all of these off you can go to Part 1:	
☐ You encrypted <i>"can you keep this hidden"</i> !	
☐ You encrypted <i>"hide this message"</i> !	
☐ You cracked the first decryption!	
☐ You flew through the last decryption!	

Part 1: Key questions

Task 1.1: New file, new welcome

- 1. Create a new python file 'vigenere_cipher.py'
- 2. Print out a welcome message to the users. Something like "Welcome to Vigenere Cipher"

Task 1.2: Ask the user for a message

Ask the user for the **message** they want to encrypt. Store it in a variable.

Task 1.3: Ask the user for a keyword

Ask the user for the keyword they want to use to encrypt the message. Store it in a variable.

☑ CHECKPOINT **☑**

If you can tick all of these off you can go to Part 2:
☐ You should have a file called vigenere_cipher.py
☐ A welcome message is printed
\square You have asked for and stored a message
☐ You have asked for and stored a keyword
Run your code.

TUTOR TIPS

```
# <the student's name>
print('Welcome to Vigenere Cipher')
message = input('What do you want to encrypt? ')
key = input('What is the encryption key? ')
```

★ BONUS 1.4: Customised Welcome

Waiting for the next lecture? Try adding this bonus feature!!

- 1. Ask the user for their name
- 2. Print a customised message for the user using their name. Something like this:

```
Welcome to the Vigenere Cipher, Lyndsey
```

TUTOR TIPS

```
# <the student's name>
name = input('What is your name? ')
print('Welcome to the Vigenere Cipher, ' + name)
message = input('What do you want to encrypt? ')
key = input('What is the encryption key? ')
```

Part 2: Calculating Keys!

Task 2.1: Lots of keys, lots of maths

This part can be a little tricky, so let's do it by hand first so that we know what the computer should be doing and we can check that it's doing the right thing!

First we have to take the keyword that we are using - let's use gpn for an example. We need to turn it into a bunch of number keys. We do this by finding how far each letter in the key is from the letter A! That's its rotation number!

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Keyword	g	р	n
Keynums	6	5	13

Now it's your turn!

Try this one:

Keyword	С	o	d i		n	g	
Keynums	2	14	3	8	13	6	

And this one:

Keyword	m	у	k	e	у	
Keynums	12	24	10	4	24	

Task 2.2: Create the alphabet

1. Create a variable called alphabet to store the letters a-z.

This variable should be the same as the one that you made in the caesar cipher

TUTOR TIPS

Encourage them to put their alphabet variable at the top of their code. This is the standard place to put global variables like this. It will make sure it's available when they need to use it in the code rather than it getting lost and in the wrong place in their code.

Task 2.3: Create a list for keys

We're going to need a place to store our key numbers. Let's store them in a list!

 Make an empty list called key_nums. We'll put the key numbers in later!

Hint

You can make an empty list like this:

```
Fruits = []
```

The two square brackets create a list with nothing inside it. An empty list can have items added to it later!

Task 2.4: Get loopy

We're going to want to find the index of every letter in our key.

Create a for loop that loops through the letters in our key. You might want to store the current letter as you loop through in something called current key letter.

Hint

An example of looping through letters in a name with a for loop looks like this:

```
for letter in name:
   print(letter)
```

Letter is the variable that will change to hold all the letters of a name, one at a time.

Task 2.5: The index is the rotation!

When we did it by hand we saw the rotation number is actually just the index of the key letter in the alphabet. Let's get the index for each letter.

- 1. Go to the line below your for loop line, we're going to add code in an indented block here.
- 2. Our for loop looks at the key letters one at a time. Find the index of the current key letter. Store it in a variable called current key num.

TUTOR TIPS

 You can find the index of a character in a string by using .index like this:

```
alphabet.index(current key letter)
```

Task 2.6: Keep the keys!

Now we need to add the current key num to our list.

- 1. Go to the line below where you got current key num, make sure you are still indented inside the loop.
- 2. Add the current key num to the list of key nums.

Hint

Remember, you can use append() to add an item to a list!

```
foods = ["chocolate", "pizza", "lollies"]
foods.append("apples")
```

Task 2.7: Print the keys!

To make sure this worked, print out key nums to confirm that the numbers are what you expect.

☑ CHECKPOINT **☑**

If you can tick all of these off you can go to Part 3:	
\square You have the alphabet stored	
\square You used a for loop to loop through the letters in the key	
\square You found the index of each key and stored it in a list	
☐ You checked your list by printing it out	
☐ Run your code	

TUTOR TIPS

The code should look like this (no bonuses):

alphabet = 'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz'

```
key_nums = []
name = input('What is your name? ')
print('Welcome to the Vigenere Cipher, ' + name)
message = input('What do you want to encrypt? ')
key = input('What is the encryption key? ')
for current key letter in key:
      current key num = alphabet.index(current key letter)
      key nums.append(current key num)
print(key nums)
```



Part 3: Encrypt!

Remember Caesar ciphers! Vigenere ciphers are like a lot of Caesar ciphers put together. We rotate through multiple keys, instead of using just one.

So we're going to turn some of our Caesar cipher code into a function that helps use do Caesar cipher encryption for one letter for any key we give it.

Task 3.1: Write the scaffold

Now it's time to write our function. Let's put it right after our alphabet variable.

- 1. Name it encrypt letter
- 2. Make it take two parameters:
 - The letter we want to encrypt
 - o The key we will use to encrypt it.
- 3. For now, make it return the letter without doing anything to it.

Hint

Below is a function that adds two numbers together.

- It is called add
- It passes num1 and num2 as parameters
- It adds the two numbers together
- It returns total as the result

```
def add(num1, num2):
    total = num1 + num2
    return total
```

Task 3.2: Make it work

Now we need to make our function do something. Let's make our function do caesar cypher encryption on the letter that was put in using the key that was put in.

In the body of your function make it:

- 1. Find the index of the current letter
- 2. Calculate the rotated index of the current letter
- 3. Find the encrypted letter based on the rotated index

Hint

This is the code you should bring in from the caesar cypher:

```
current_index = alphabet.index(letter)
new_index = (current_index + key_num) % 26
new letter = alphabet[new index]
```

Task 3.3: Return

1. Update your return line to return the new encrypted letter

Task 3.4: Test it!

Now that your function is running some code, you can test it! Just below where you print key_nums, call your function and print the result. Does it do what you expect?

Hint

Here's how you can call the sum function and store the result in the result variable:

```
result = sum(1,2)
```

☑ CHECKPOINT **☑**

If you can tick all of these off you can go to Part 4:

- ☐ You wrote a function for encrypting letters
- ☐ Your function returns the encrypted letter

TUTOR TIPS

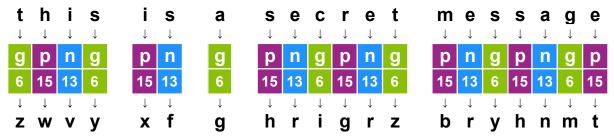
<the student's name>

```
alphabet = 'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz'
key_nums = []
def encrypt letter(letter, key num):
      current index = alphabet.index(letter)
      new_index = (current_index + key_num) % 26
      new_letter = alphabet[new index]
      return new letter
name = input('What is your name? ')
print('Welcome to the Vigenere Cipher, ' + name)
message = input('What do you want to encrypt? ')
key = input('What is the encryption key? ')
for current_key_letter in key:
      current key num = alphabet.index(current key letter)
      key_nums.append(current_key_num)
result = encrypt letter('a', 1)
print(result)
```

Part 4: Matching messages to keys

Normally our message is longer than our key. We saw at the start that we use the same key over and over again by rotating through using the different letters.

Remember this example where the key was **gpn**:



To make the computer do this we'll need to give it a way to keep count of which key we are up to. This way we won't ask for a position in the key that doesn't exist and get and error!

How do we do that?

1. We keep count of which letter we are up to in our message:

Message	s	е	С	r	е	t
Count	0	1	2	3	4	5

2. Find a way for those numbers to wrap around to match the number of letters in the key. Since our key is GPN we only want to use numbers 0, 1, 2.

We can use remainders to wrap around! (remember module (%) from earlier)

These are the remainders when we divide the count for each position by 3:

 $0 \div 3 = 0$ remainder 0 $3 \div 3 = 1$ remainder 0 $1 \div 3 = 0$ remainder 1 $4 \div 3 = 1$ remainder 1 $2 \div 3 = 0$ remainder 2 $5 \div 3 = 1$ remainder 2

Look all the remainders are 0, 1 or 2!

3. Put those remainders in the table, find matching letter from that position in the key:

Message	ø	е	С	r	е	t
Count	0	1	2	3	4	5
Remainder	0	_	2	0	_	2
Key letter	9	P	n	9	P	N

Task 4.1: Counting keys

Now it's your turn!

Let's use the key word "code"

Message	С	r	у	р	t	0	g	r	а	р	h	у
Count	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Remainder	0	- 1	2	3	0	- 1	2	3	0	-	2	3
Key letter	C	0	d	e	C	0	d	e	C	0	d	e

The way that we get the computer to figure out a remainder is by using modulo like this:

remainder = 5%3

This will make remainder = 2 since the remainder of $5 \div 3$ is 2

Task 4.2: Start counting

We need somewhere to count how far we are through the secret message.

- 1. Go to your code after the loop where we added things to key nums.
- 2. Create a variable called count and set it to 0

Task 4.3: How long is the key

We need to know how long the key is so we'll be able to work out when to loop around.

1. Use len to find the length of the key. Store it in a variable called key len.

Hint

You can find the length of something using the len function like this:

```
word = "hello"
word length = len(word)
```

Task 4.4: Looping through message letters

It's time to take a look at the message one letter at a time!

1. Create a for loop that loops through the letters in the message. Store the current letter in a variable called current letter.

Task 4.5: Getting the right key

We need to use count and key len to get the correct key to use for the current letter!

- 1. You can use <code>count % key_len</code> to get which position you are up to in the key. Store this in a variable called <code>key position</code>.
- 2. Get the key number that corresponds to the key_position. You'll need to look up the key_position in your keys_nums list, store it in a variable called current key num.

TUTOR TIPS

This is probably one of the hardest parts of the workbook both logically and in terms of python knowledge.

It has a complex combination of numbers and indexes.

We are looking for these lines:

```
# finds the position in the key number list that we will need
key_position = count % key_len

# Goes and gets the key number out of the list
current_key_num = key_nums[key_position]
```

Task 4.6: Call the function

You now have the current letter and the current key num. We can encrypt!

- 1. Go to the spot below where you get the <code>current_key_num</code>. Make sure you are still inside the loop.
- Call your encrypt_letter function for the current_letter and current key num.
- 2. Store the result and print it out. Don't forget to make it print on one line!

Hint

Here's how you can call the sum function and store the total in the result variable:

```
score1 = 10
score2 = 9
result = sum(score1, score2)
```

Task 4.7: Keep counting

Finally we are finished with this letter!

- 1. After you have printed the encrypted letter, add a new line inside the loop.
- 2. Add 1 to count to get ready for the next position in the message.
- 3. Add a temporary line to print out what the <code>current_key_num</code> is too. Run your code. Does it loop through the numbers like we did in 4.1 when we did it by hand?

☑ CHECKPOINT **☑**

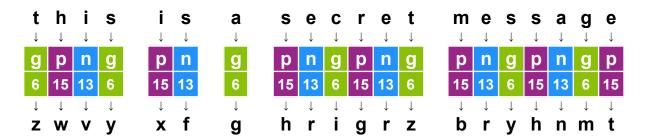
If you can tick all of these off you can go to Part 5:	
\square Your code loops through the positions in the key	
☐ Your code encrypts all the letters in the message	
☐ You printed out your encrypted message on one line.	
☐ Run the code!	

TUTOR TIPS

```
# <the student's name>
alphabet = 'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz'
key_nums = []
def encrypt_letter(letter, key_num):
      current_index = alphabet.index(letter)
      new_index = (current_index + key_num) % 26
      new letter = alphabet[new index]
      return new letter
name = input('What is your name? ')
print('Welcome to the Vigenere Cipher, ' + name)
message = input('What do you want to encrypt? ')
key = input('What is the encryption key? ')
for current_key_letter in key:
      current_key_num = alphabet.index(current_key_letter)
      key_nums.append(current_key_num)
count = 0
key_len = len(key)
for current letter in message:
      key position = count % key len
      current_key_num = key_nums[key_position]
      result = encrypt letter(current letter, current key num)
      print(result, end='')
      count += 1
      print(current key num)
```

Part 5: Space Ace

Remember this example, notice how we don't encrypt spaces:



Task 5.1: Testing With A Space!

- 1. Test your code with 2 words now instead of one, what happens?
- 2. What about something with an exclamation mark?

Did you get an error? Good!

At the moment, your code can encrypt any letter of the alphabet that you told it at the start. But doesn't know what to do with spaces and other funny characters!

Task 5.2: Check for funny characters

We can see that our program tries to encrypt all the characters, but sometimes it breaks. We only want to encrypt letters of the alphabet variable we set-up earlier.

- 1. Create an if statement inside your message for loop. It should be on the line directly after where you start using the for loop.
- 2. Your if statement should check if the current letter is in the alphabet.
- 3. Indent all your code about getting the current_key, calling your encrypt letter function and increasing count, inside the if statement.

Hint

Why put the count inside the if statement?

See in the example above, we don't move along a position in the key when we do a space. So we only increase the count for letters in the alphabet.

Spaces and other non-alphabet characters don't count!

Task 5.3: Ignore the spaces

- 1. Create an else statement to handle when characters are not in the alphabet.
- 2. Inside the else statement, print the character you are on, but don't encrypt it. Make sure they stay on the same line too.

Hint

```
An else always needs to be attached to an if statement
if raining == True:
      print ('oh no!')
else:
     print ('Yay!')
```

☑ CHECKPOINT **☑**

If you can tick all of these off you can go to Part 6: You only encrypt letters of the alphabet Spaces and non-alphabet characters print out unencrypted

TUTOR TIPS

```
The code should look like this (no bonuses):
```

```
alphabet = 'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz'
key_nums = []
def encrypt_letter(letter, key_num):
      current_index = alphabet.index(letter)
      new_index = (current_index + key_num) % 26
      new letter = alphabet[new index]
      return new_letter
name = input('What is your name? ')
print('Welcome to the Vigenere Cipher, ' + name)
message = input('What do you want to encrypt? ')
key = input('What is the encryption key? ')
for current key letter in key:
      current_key_num = alphabet.index(current key letter)
      key_nums.append(current_key_num)
count = 0
key len = len(key)
for current letter in message:
      if current letter in alphabet:
            key_position = count % key len
            current_key_num = key_nums[key_position]
            result = encrypt letter(current letter,
current_key_num)
            print(result, end='')
            count += 1
      else:
            print(current letter,end='')
```

Part 6: Decrypt!

So far we've only been able to encrypt, but what if we've received a secret message and need to decrypt it?

Task 6.1: To decrypt, or not to decrypt - that is the question

- 1. Just like in our Caesar cipher, ask the user whether they want to encrypt or decrypt (e or d)
- 2. Store the answer in a variable called mode

Task 6.2: Create the decryption key

Just like our Caesar Cipher, if we rotate by the negative of the rotation we can decrypt. We just need to do that for all of our key numbers!

- Go to the part of your code where you loop through the letters of the key to find the key numbers. Go to the line after where you got the current key number
- 2. On the next line add an if statement that checks what mode the user entered. We want to check if we are in decrypting mode.
- 3. If we are in decrypting mode we want to multiply the current key number by -1. Overwrite the current value with this new value.
- 4. Make sure your append is not inside the if statement

☑ CHECKPOINT ☑
If you can tick all of these off you can go to the Extensions:
\square Your code now has two modes, encrypt or decrypt
☐ Your code can now decrypt an encrypted message

TUTOR TIPS

```
# <the student's name>
alphabet = 'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz'
key_nums = []
def encrypt letter(letter, key num):
      current index = alphabet.index(letter)
      new_index = (current_index + key_num) % 26
      new_letter = alphabet[new_index]
      return new_letter
name = input('What is your name? ')
print('Welcome to the Vigenere Cipher, ' + name)
mode = input('Do you want to encrypt or decrypt? ')
message = input('What do you want to encrypt? ')
key = input('What is the encryption key? ')
for current key letter in key:
      current key num = alphabet.index(current key letter)
      if mode == 'decrypt':
           current_key_num *= -1
      key_nums.append(current_key_num)
count = 0
key_len = len(key)
for current letter in message:
      if current_letter in alphabet:
           key_position = count % key_len
           current_key_num = key_nums[key_position]
           result = encrypt_letter(current_letter, current_key_num)
           print(result, end='')
           count += 1
      else:
           print(current_letter,end='')
```

Extension 7: Files!

Instead of typing out a huge long secret message, let's make python read it from a file!

Task 7.1: Getting a file

- 1. Get a text file either from girlsprogramming.network/crypto-files or write you own
- 2. Make sure you save it in the same place as your code.

Task 7.2: Read the text!

- 1. Remove the line where you asked the user for a message
- 2. At that same location, get python to open the file
- 3. Read the contents of the file
- 4. Store that file data in a variable called message

Hint

Reading from python files is a two step process.

Step 1: If we had a file called "cats.txt" (which is in the same folder as your code) we could use:

```
f = open("cats.txt", "r")
```

Step 2: But that will just open the file. To put the text inside it in a variable, we then have to use:

```
text_inside_cats = f.read()
```

Task 7.3: Decrypting files

1. Try your file extension on one of the secret message files from the website using the key provided.

TUTOR TIPS

```
# <the student's name>
alphabet = 'abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz'
key_nums = []
def encrypt letter(letter, key num):
      current index = alphabet.index(letter)
      new_index = (current_index + key_num) % 26
      new_letter = alphabet[new_index]
      return new_letter
name = input('What is your name? ')
print('Welcome to the Vigenere Cipher, ' + name)
mode = input('Do you want to encrypt or decrypt? ')
f = open('message.txt', 'r')
message = f.read()
key = input('What is the encryption key? ')
for current_key_letter in key:
      current_key_num = alphabet.index(current_key_letter)
if mode == 'decrypt':
          current_key_num *= -1
      key nums.append(current key num)
count = 0
key_len = len(key)
for current_letter in message:
      if current_letter in alphabet:
           key position = count % key len
           current_key_num = key_nums[key_position]
           result = encrypt_letter(current_letter, current_key_num)
           print(result, end='')
           count += 1
      else:
           print(current_letter,end='')
```